

*A Brief History of*  
*the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints*  
*(Commonly Called Mormons Including an Account of*  
*Their Doctrine and Discipline, with the Reasons of the*  
*Author for Leaving the Church)*

John Corrill  
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HISTORY of THE MORMONS

Chapter I.

Introduction to the work-- New Revelation-- Golden Bible-- Curiosity excited-- Book of Mormon-- Campbellites-- Sidney Rigden-- Conversion of--Feelings excited-- Visit to Kirtland-- Situation of the Society--sought argument--Rigden's Answer-- Return home--Reflection and examination-- Evil Reports-- Second Visit--Extraordinary meeting-- Return and Investigation-- Subjects of investigation.

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Sometime in the fall of 1830, Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, Peter Whitmer and Tiba Peterson, came through the county of Ashtabula, Ohio, where I then resided, on their way westward. They professed to be special messengers of the Living God, sent to preach the Gospel in its purity, as it was anciently preached by the Apostles. They had with them a new revelation, which they said had been translated from certain golden plates that had been deposited in a hill, (anciently called Cumorah,) in the township of Manchester, Ontario County, New York. They were deposited about 1400 years since by one Moroni, under the direction of Heaven, with a promise that in the Lord's own due time, they should be brought forth, for the special benefit of the remnant of his people, the house of Israel, through Joseph, of Egypt, as well as for the salvation of the Gentiles upon this continent. This soon became the topic of conversation in that section of the country, and excited the curiosity of the people,--at first, more to inquiry than otherwise, as these messengers stopped in the place only one night. In the course of two or three days, the book of Mormon, (the Golden Bible, as the people then termed it, on account of its having been translated from the Golden plates,) was presented to me for perusal. I looked at it, examined the testimony of the witnesses at the last end of it, read promiscuously a few pages, and made up my mind that it was published for speculation. In my feelings and remarks I branded the "messengers" with the title of impostors, and thought I would not trouble myself any more about them. But I shortly heard that these messengers had stopped in Kirtland, about thirty miles distant, among a society of people called Campbellites, at whose head stood elder Sidney Rigden, a noted preacher of that order. With this news I was at first much pleased; for, from my former acquaintance with that society, I knew that they were well versed in the Scriptures, and I supposed that, without fail, they would confound the impostors, convince them of their folly, and send them home again. But, to my astonishment, in a short time I heard that they had converted the majority of the society,

together with Elder Rigden, to their faith. What does this mean, thought I? Are Elder Rigden and these men such fools as to be so duped by those impostors? I became much excited in my feelings; for in that society were several men for whom I had formed the most favorable opinion, and for whom I felt the greatest veneration and respect. By the advice of a neighbor whose feelings were similar to mine I concluded to pay them a visit, with a determination if I could, to persuade Elder Rigden to go home with me, on a preaching visit; for I thought, if I could get him away from them until his mind became settled, he might be saved from their imposition. But before I arrived at his residence, I heard that he had embraced their faith, and had been baptized by them. On receiving this news, my feelings became much embittered, and I felt more and more determined in my opposition. But when within a short distance of their residence, I was met by a respectable gentleman, (whose name I forget,) who tried to check my violence, and cautioned me not to go there with prejudiced feelings, but to weigh the matter carefully. I said very little to him in reply, but resumed my journey. On arriving at the place, I found the society under a high state of religious excitement, well pleased with their new religion, enjoying as they supposed, the gift and power of the Holy Ghost. I felt indignant, and sought an argument with Oliver Cowdery, who refused. Tiba Peterson then took the ground, and we contended a short time. After supper I was invited to see Elder Rigden. I requested to converse with him on the subject of his new religion. He observed that he was now beyond the land of contention, and had got into the land of peace. I proceeded to ask him if the scriptures were not sufficient for our salvation, and what we wanted with another revelation. He answered that the scriptures informed us of perilous and distressing times, great judgments that should come in the last days, and destructions upon the wicked; and now God had sent along his servants to inform us of the time, that we might repent and be prepared against it, and if we rejected them, it would be with us as it was with the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, who rejected the words of Lot. With this he refused to talk any more upon the subject. I then tried others, and found them of the same spirit. I could make no impression on them. The next day, I started home with my heart full of serious reflections. I thought of Solomon's words,--"that he is a fool who judges a matter before he hears it;" that perhaps it might be well enough to investigate the matter; investigation could certainly do me no harm. The ancients rejected the prophets and apostles through a hasty spirit, and the people of Borea were said to be more noble than the people of Thesalonica, because they "searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed."--Acts, xvii. Now, it is not impossible, thought I, but that ere I am aware of it, I may be found fighting against God; perhaps I had better stop and reflect on the subject a little; weigh the matter more closely, and compare this new doctrine with the Scriptures; and if it does not agree with the Scriptures, I shall certainly know that it is not of God. Two or three weeks were spent in reading the Book of Mormon, comparing it with the scriptures, and in reflecting and conversing with others upon the subject. Scarcely a day passed but I heard of some evil report against the new sect. These reports I need not relate. Suffice it to say, that every thing bad was reported against them, as I thought, that could be invented by man. I was always careful, however, to inquire after the author, and the truth or ground-work of his statement, and always found these reports to be without foundation. Apprehending there might be some truth in them, I went to Kirtland to see for myself, and whilst there, watched every movement with a jealous eye. I attended several meetings, one of which was the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, which, I thought, would give me a good opportunity to detect their hypocrisy. The meeting lasted all night, and such a meeting I never attended before. They administered the sacrament, and laid on hands, after which I heard them prophesy and speak in tongues unknown to me. Persons in the room, who took no part with them, declared, from the knowledge they had of the Indian languages, that the tongues spoken were regular Indian dialects, which I was also informed, on inquiry, the persons who spoke had never learned. I watched closely and examined carefully, every movement of the meeting, and after exhausting all my powers to find the deception, I was obliged to acknowledge, in my own mind that the meeting had been inspired by some supernatural agency. The next day I returned home, satisfied that the evil reports were not true, and spent about six weeks more in the further investigation of the subject. [p.9]

I shall now proceed to set forth the faith and principal doctrines peculiar to the church that presented themselves to my view; and I would remark, in advance, that I always believed the Bible, (the Old and New Testament,) to be true. The whole course of my investigation was predicated upon that fact, and I felt safe in embracing anything that corresponded with the scriptures. The following were the subjects of my investigations:

- 1st. On the subject of prophets, prophesying, and the gift of revelation, in modern times.
- 2nd. The Book of Mormon and its origin.
- 3rd. The singularity of the hiding up, preservation, and coming forth of the same.
- 4th. Its contents.
- 5th. The doctrine of the gospel.
- 6th. The work of gathering.
- 7th. The morality and effects of the new religion.

I will treat each of these points in distinct chapters. . . .

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## Chapter II

Investigation-- Prophets and Revelations-- God the same in all ages-- References to  
Scripture-- Conclusion.

- 1st. On the subject of prophets, prophesying, and the gifts of Revelation in modern times.

It was objected, and I admitted, that we had no such things in our day. But what is the reason that we are not to look for them? They certainly were expected in ancient times, and were received. Has God changed? Are the scriptures false? Has the plan of salvation been altered? Or have we departed from God, transgressed his laws, changed the ordinances and broken the everlasting covenant, as the prophet said?--(Isa. xxiv. 5. Mal. iii. 7.) Or has the time come, spoken of by the Apostle, when men would not endure sound doctrine, but turn their ears from truth, give heed to fables, and heap up to themselves teachers having itching ears, having a form of Godliness, but denying the power.--(2 Tim. iv. 3, 4, and iii. 5.)

I found, on searching the scriptures, that from the commencement of time, through every age, God continued to send prophets to the people, and always when God had a message for the people, he chose a special messenger to send it by, and it was always headed with a "thus said the Lord." This was certainly the case in the days of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and so on down to the apostles, and Jeremiah declares that the Lord sent them daily.--(Jer. vii. 25.) Now, if God did these things formerly, why not now? If he supplied every other age and people with prophets and special messengers, why not this? Many such reflections passed through my mind. But I was told that the prophets continued until the Saviour came, but since that we have no need of them. On searching the New Testament, I found that the Church had prophets in it after Christ as well as before, and the apostle said that God had placed them in it for its benefit.--(1 Cor. xii. Eph. iv. 11, 12.) And the Apostle Peter, in explaining the prophecy of Joel, said, "And it shall come to pass in the last days," (saith God) "I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams, and on my servants and on my handmaidens, I will pour out, in those days of my spirit, and they shall prophesy."--(Acts ii. 17-20.)

Instead, therefore, of there being no prophets after Christ, it looked to me as if God meant there should be many; for the assertions are positive, "that your sons and your daughters shall prophesy," and this should be in the last days. Now, if the last days are past and gone, then we may give up looking for prophets; but if not, then the promise stands good for more prophets; and if God made this promise and did actually place prophets in his church, as the apostles say he did, I ask by what authority have they been taken out; or who has had authority, since the apostles, to alter or change the order which they established in the Church, and certainly prophets constituted a part of that order. [p.11]

Thus I reasoned, and became satisfied, that it was just as consistent to look for prophets in this age as in any other. As to the person of Joseph Smith, Jr., he might as well be a prophet as anyone else, but it was said of him that he was a money hunter, and a bad man before he was called to be a prophet. So it was said of Moses, that he murdered a man, hid him in the sand, and ran away from justice, and while in this state God called him to be a prophet.-- (Exod. ii. 11-25 & xii. 1-18.) As to the gift of prophecy and revelation, it is well known to every man who is acquainted with his Bible, that God always endowed his prophets with the gift of prophecy, and through them revealed his will. As, however, God never called a servant without having something for him to do, the question was what

did he want with Smith? What great work had he to perform? This leads me to my second proposition.

### Chapter III.

Book of Mormon, the production of Smith-- Witnesses-- Bible, the production of many generations.

#### The Book of Mormon and its origin.

This was the first production of Smith after his call to the prophetic office. As to the origin of the book, I made very diligent inquiry, and from all I could learn, I became satisfied that Smith was the author, and I never have been able to trace it to any other source. As to its being a revelation from God, eleven persons besides Smith bore positive testimony of its truth. After getting acquainted with them, I was unable to impeach their testimony, and consequently thought that it was as consistent to give credit to them as to credit the writings of the New Testament, when I had never seen the authors nor the original copy. As the Bible, (although we see it bound in one volume) was made up of many detached parts of revelation given from time to time, as God saw proper, through the space of four thousand years, for the special benefit of those to whom it was given, I thought it was no more than reasonable that we should also receive additional revelation for our special benefit; for this was according to his promise, to give line upon line, precept upon precept here a little and there a little.--(Isa. xxviii. 9, 10.)

### Chapter IV.

Account of the Golden Plates, and the finding of them--Smith chastened by an Angel-- his wickedness--Plates obtained and translated-- the Language--Martin Harris-- Characters shown-- Urim and Thummim--Translation published--Plates shown to witnesses-- Church organized-- Reflections-- Scriptures not complete--Word of God sealed and hid-- Ezekiel's two Records.

The singularity of the hiding up, preservation, and coming forth of the Book.

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The simple story as related by others was this. Sometime in A. D. 1825, as nearly as I can recollect, Smith was informed by an angel, that there was a valuable record concealed in the earth, and the time had now arrived for it to be brought forth and published to the world. After being warned several times, he went to the spot and found the record engraved on leaves or plates of gold, fastened together by rings passing through one edge of all the leaves, on which they would turn as you opened them. The plates, as near as I can remember, were said to be about six by eight inches square, and very thin. This book was carefully enclosed in a stone box, provided for that purpose, which Smith broke open. After he obtained the plates, and before he left the place, he began to contemplate the vast riches that he would acquire by their means. While thus thinking and contemplating upon the subject, the angel hid the plates from his view, and chastised him for his wickedness in acting contrary to the commandment; for the purposes in the salvation of his people, that the Lord gave him access to the plates; but as he thought to become rich and aggrandize himself, therefore he should not obtain the plates any more till he repented of his folly. A year or more elapsed before he obtained the plates again, which I think he did in A. D. 1827; after which, through much difficulty, on account of persecution and poverty, he translated it by degrees, with the assistance of Oliver Cowdery and others, who wrote as he dictated. If I remember right, the language in which it was written on the plates, was the reformed Egyptian. And Martin Harris, who contributed much towards the publication of the book, drew off several of the characters on paper, took them to the learned in New York, to see if they could be translated, but was requested to bring them the plates, which Smith was forbidden to do of the Lord, but was commanded to translate them himself, which he did, by the help of what he calls the Urim and Thummim, two stones set in a bow, and furnished by an angel for that purpose.

After finishing the translation, the plates and stones of Urim and Thummim were again taken and concealed by the angel for a wise purpose, and the translation published to the world in the winter of A. D. 1829 and '30.

In the course of the translation, these plates were shown to eleven persons, by the

special command of God; three of whom had it manifested and shown to them by an angel from heaven, who declared the truth of the book, and the other eight saw the plates and handled them; and all were commanded to bear testimony to the world, of the truth of what they had seen and handled, which they did, and published their testimony in the end of the book.

On the sixth day of April, A. D. 1830, they organized the first church in the state of New York, consisting of six members only.

This tale, simple as it is, formed a new subject of contemplation for me. As to the preservation of the record, if the plates were pure gold, of course they would remain pure any length of time, and as to the language, it might as well be reformed Egyptian as any other language, if it had to be translated by the power of God. [p.12 - p.13]

I searched the scriptures again to see if God had ever concealed or hid up his word, or commanded his servants to do so for a wise purpose. I always thought before, that we had all the scripture that we ever should have, and that the Bible was complete; but on searching the scriptures, I found to my surprise, that they, in many instances, refer to books for information that they do not contain; nor are they anywhere to be found,--such as the Book of Jasher, of the wars of the Lord--of Nathan the Prophet--of Shemaiah the Prophet, of Goed the Seer, and of Iddo the Seer, etc.--(1 Chron. xxix. 29; 2 Chron. ix. 29, and xii. 15.) and many others which I need not mention at this time. This satisfied me at once, that there was much of the word of God that we had not got, and still are referred to it for further information; therefore, the scriptures are not complete without it. Neither could the knowledge of God cover the earth as waters do the sea, without receiving more knowledge or revelation from God. I also found that Habakkuk, (ii. 2, 3,) was commanded to write the vision and make it plain upon tables; for, at the end of the appointed time, it should speak and not lie, and though it tarry, yet we must wait for it, for surely it would come. And Daniel, (xii. 4, 9,) was commanded to shut up the words and seal the book, which was to remain so till the time of the end. And John, the Revelator, was commanded to seal up the words of the seven thunders. And old King David declares, that truth shall spring out of the earth, (Ps. lxxxv. 11) Isaiah, (xxix. 11, 12,) said that all their visions should become the words of a sealed book, that should be delivered to the learned to be read, but they not being able, it should be read by the unlearned, whereupon the Lord would proceed to do a marvelous work, etc. And Ezekiel, (xxxvii. 15-21,) plainly shows, that two records should be written, one for the house of Judah and his companions, and another for the house of Joseph and his companions, and these two records should be brought together for the purpose of bringing about the gathering of all the tribes of Israel, etc.

## Chapter V.

### Contents of the Book of Mormon--the object of bringing it forth-- Offspring of Joseph--Blessings of Jacob--Reflections.

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I then proceeded to examine the contents of the Book of Mormon, which I found to contain an account of the posterity of Joseph, who was sold into Egypt. It gives the history of their journey from Jerusalem across the ocean to this land, and their settlement here, with their manners, customs, wars, and more especially their religion, which was the same as existed among the Jews, both under the law of Moses, (which they brought with them) and also the gospel, after Christ, in its purity. This looked to me very much like the record of Joseph in the hand of Ephadins, (kept by his seed) that should be joined to the record of Judah (our Bible) for the restoration of the house of Israel, according to the prophecy of Ezekiel, as quoted above. For it also contains many promises of great things that should take place in the last days, for which purpose it has come forth, such as the preaching of the gospel in its purity, setting up the true church of Christ, and establishing the regular orders of priesthoods in it as the ancients had them, and to bring about the great work of gathering the saints and the house of Israel--making preparations for and ushering in the great Millennial, building up the New Jerusalem, etc., as spoken by the prophets. [p.14]

As to the seed of Joseph, I found in the scripture a curious blessing pronounced upon them by Jacob his father. It reads thus: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall--The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessing of my progenitors, unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills, these shall be upon the head of Joseph," etc.--(Gen. xlix. 22, 26.)

Now, we know, that Abraham and Isaac were Jacob's progenitors and they had the

land of Canaan promised to them and their seed for an everlasting possession; but Joseph's blessing prevailed above, or exceeded theirs; he was to have an inheritance, somewhere of course, that far exceeded the land of Canaan; it was to extend to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills. Now, when and where did they ever receive it? According to the Book of Mormon they received it upon this continent. And if so, we discover the fulfillment of the promise made to Ephraim and Manassah, that they should become a multitude of nations in the midst of the earth.--Gen. viii. 11, 20.

## Chapter VI.

The Gospel--Promises of God--Belief in their Fulfillment--Want of Faith.

The doctrines of the gospel.

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On this subject the Mormons believe in the same God, and in the same Saviour, and the same gospel that other professors do; and they believe as firmly in the scripture of the Old and New Testaments as any other people. They look upon their new revelations only as bringing about the fulfillment of the Bible. The main difference between them and other professors on the gospel is, that they believe rather more firmly in the promises of God, especially those that require great faith for their fulfillment, than others do. Where the scriptures hold out fair promises to the believers, they believe those promises will be fulfilled, just in proportion to their faith. Hence, when the Savior commanded the apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and gave them a promise that these signs shall follow them that believed; in his name they shall cast out devils, heal the sick, etc.,--(Mark xvi. 15, 18.) they believe to be good to all that believe, whether in this age or any other. There are many promises of this kind, which, perhaps, are not noticed so particularly by others as the Mormons. I will name two or three. The Saviour says, "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me the works that I do he shall do also, and greater works than these shall he do--And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son; if ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it."--(John xiv. 12-14.) Again: "Is any among you sick, let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord--And the prayer of faith shall save the sick."--James v. 13, 14. [p.15]

These promises, the Mormons believe, are plain and sure, and the only reason why Christians do not enjoy them is, because they are wanting in faith. Much more might be quoted, but I will pass to the next topic.

## Chapter VII.

The Gathering-- Prophets quoted-- Power of God to be manifested in the fulfillment of Prophecy-- Many to be called and sent of God-- Conclusions.

The work of the gathering.

On searching the Scriptures, I found that much was said on the subject, though it was little noticed generally. The thirty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel speaks very clearly; but it is too lengthy to quote here. Suffice it to say, that it promises to gather the Israelites from every place where they have been scattered; and that they and their children and their children's children shall inherit the land of Israel forever. Isaiah, ii. 2, 3, and Mich. iv. 1, 2, make similar promises. Isaiah, xi. 11, 16, also speaks of the same, together with the promises of working great miracles for their safe return, such as drying the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and smiting the river (Nile) in the seven streams thereof, and casting up a highway as it was to Israel in the days that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

When, how, where, and by whom shall this great work be accomplished, unless God calls, qualifies, and sends forth men endowed with power to do it; for the house of Israel is scattered to all parts of the earth, and who shall know who they are, and where to find them, and how to gather them, unless God reveals it to, and send them for that purpose? But this he has promised to do; for Jeremiah says that the Lord will send many fishers, and many hunters, and they shall fish them and hunt them from every mountain and hill, and from the holes of the rocks in every land, whither they have been driven, and bring them

again into the land that he gave to their fathers.--(Jer. xvi. 14, 16.) Not only is the house of Israel to be gathered; but God hath purposed in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he will gather all things whether in heaven or in earth.--Eph. i. 9, 10.

Thence, after considering all these scriptural declarations, and many others that might be named, I came to the conclusion that it was not unreasonable to believe that there was to be a gathering in the last days.

## Chapter VIII.

New Religion compared with the Bible-- Mode of admission into the Church-- Effects.

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The morality and effects of the new religion.

I found that the Book of Mormon taught all the morality, piety, virtue, honesty, righteousness and Godliness that the Bible did, and even condemned the whoredoms of David, Solomon and others, and strictly enjoined family and secret prayer, and too, in great faith, that our prayers may be answered; and, in order to be admitted into the Church a person must manifest faith in Christ, and a hearty repentance of their sins. Baptism, by immersion, they believed was for the remission of sins; and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, they think will be attended with signs following, just in proportion to the faith and righteousness of the believer.

## Chapter IX

Join the Church-- Cowdery goes to the West-- Singular behavior of some of the younger members-- Ordained an Elder-- Smith's arrival at Kirtland--Appointment of a Bishop-- The new Revelation called the Law--an outline of its Contents-- Start for the West--Return to Kirtland.

I have thus given a brief account of the investigation I went through in relation to these different subjects. Although I was not fully satisfied, yet viewing this religion to be much nearer the religion of the Bible than any other I could find, I concluded to join the Church, with this determination, that if ever I found it to be a deception, I would leave it. There are other doctrines and discipline of the Church which I shall mention in their proper place, but will now resume my history. During the fall and winter of A.D. 1830 and 1831, Kirtland was continually crowded. Persons came from all quarters inquiring after the new religion. Cowdery and his company left in the fall for the west, to find the spot, as some said, for the temple and place of gathering. [p.16 - p.17]

[LDS D&C 50] Many improprieties and visionary notions crept into the church, which tried the feelings of the more sound minded. Many young persons became very visionary, and had divers operations, of the spirit, as they supposed. They saw wonderful lights in the air and on the ground, and would relate many great and marvelous things which they saw in their visions. They conducted themselves in a strange manner, sometimes imitating Indians in their manoeuvres, sometimes running out into the fields, getting on stumps of trees and there preaching as though surrounded by a congregation,--all the while so completely absorbed in visions as to be apparently insensible to all that was passing around them. I would here remark, however, that it was but a very few of the Church who were exercised in that way. The more substantial minded looked upon it with astonishment, and were suspicious that it was from an evil source. [p.17]

I joined the Church on the tenth of January, 1831, and in the course of three or four days I was ordained an elder. Shortly after this, the Church from the state of New York removed to Kirtland, Ohio. Smith and Rigden, were among the number; for, after Rigden had joined the Church in Kirtland, he was afraid that he had been deceived, so he and Edward Partridge went to the state of New York to inquire further into it. Rigden said he went to the enemies of the Church to find out their feelings and objections, and then went to its friends and heard their story, and became satisfied that it was true, and the marvelous work of God. He remained there till the Church removed to Kirtland, and he came with them. Much curiosity was gratified in looking at the prophet and talking with him.

Shortly after he arrived at Kirtland, Smith received a revelation appointing Edward

Partridge bishop of the Church [LDS D&C 41]. This was the first time that I knew or even thought that there was to be a bishop in the Church, but on reflection I knew that there were bishops in old times, and I said nothing against it. In a short time after this, Smith received the revelation called the Law [LDS D&C 42], which contained several good moral precepts; it also required a consecration of property, and commanded the elders to go west and preach, two by two. They soon started, myself among others. Solomon Hancock was my companion in travel, and a pleasing one he was to me. We went to New London, about one hundred miles from Kirtland, where we built up a church of thirty-six members in about three weeks time, though we were bitterly opposed by other preachers. After which we returned to Kirtland.

## Chapter X.

Increase of the Church-- Further account of the Visionaries-- Revelation concerning them-- Appointed a Counsellor to the Bishop-- Duties--Meeting of Fifty Elders-- the Endowment-- Doubting-- Commandment to go to Missouri-- Arrival in Jackson County-- Smith returns to Kirtland.

[p.17 - p.18]

Other elders proceeded to erect churches in various places, and the work increased very fast. Smith remained in Kirtland. Those visionary spirits spoken of before continued in the church, and rose to such a height that the elders became so dissatisfied with them that they determined to have something done about it. Accordingly, they called upon the Prophet and united in prayer, and asked God to give them light upon the subject. They received a revelation [LDS D&C 50] through the Prophet, which was very gratifying, for it condemned these visionary spirits, and gave rules for judging of spirits in general. After a while these spirits were rooted out of the Church. Some time in May following a church was organized in Thompson, a township a few miles from Kirtland, at which time Isaac Uorley and myself were chosen counsellors to the bishop, to assist him in his business, which was to receive consecrations of property, and attend to the temporal concerns of the Church. [p.18]

Previous to this there was a revelation received, requiring the Prophet to call the elders together, that they might receive an endowment [LDS D&C 38]. This was done, and the meeting took place some time in June. About fifty elders met, which was about all the elders that then belonged to the church. The meeting was conducted by Smith. Some curious things took place. The same visionary and marvelous spirits, spoken of before, got hold of some elders; it threw one from his seat to the floor; it bound another, so that for some time he could not use his limbs nor speak; and some other curious effects were experienced, but, by a mighty exertion, in the name of the Lord, it was exposed and shown to be from an evil source. The Melchizedek Priesthood was then for the first time introduced, and conferred on several of the elders. In this chiefly consisted the endowment--it being a new order--and bestowed authority. However, some doubting took place among the elders, and considerable conversation was held on the subject. The elders not fairly understanding the nature of the endowments, it took some time to reconcile all their feelings. In a few days, however, a commandment was received for the elders to go to Missouri, two by two; no two were to travel in the track of the others, and they were to preach the gospel by the way. After a little delay we started. Smith, Rigdon, and six or eight others came in company. They continued their journey until they arrived in Jackson County, where they found Oliver Cowdery and his companions, Smith pointed out the spot for the temple, received some revelation concerning the purchasing of land and settling the church in that place, appointed some persons to remain there, held one or two conferences, and then returned with part of his company to Kirtland; Cowdery went back with him.

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## Chapter XII.

Wight and Pratt visit Kirtland-- Strength of the Lord's house-- Proceed to Clay County-- Their intentions--The Cholera-- Dispersion--Kirtland--Lord's house-- Description-- Elders gather at Kirtland-- Learning sought for--Solemn assembly and its effects--



[p.21]

About this time, Parley P. Pratt and Lyman Wight went to Kirtland, and after seeing Smith, who resided there, and consulting on the subject, they received a revelation to gather up the strength of the Lord's house, and go up to relieve their brethren, who had been driven out of Zion. Accordingly, they gathered up about two hundred and fifty men, who armed themselves, and with Smith at their head, marching to Clay County, where they arrived some time in June 1834. Meanwhile the Mormons in Clay County made preparations to join them, when they should get there, and they generally thought that the Governor, on a petition to that effect, would reinstate those that had been driven out from their lands, (for they had not sold them) and then their brethren that came up in the camp would enable them to keep possession of their lands. But after arriving in Clay County a council was held, in which it was concluded to give up the expedition at that time.

The cholera broke out among them, and they immediately dispersed, the most of them returning home again, in a short time.

With the exception of some little threatening, the Church lived in peace, until the summer of 1836; and, notwithstanding all these difficulties, it continued to gather in Clay County; and in the adjacent counties, the members hoping that they would get back to Jackson County.

The Church also kept gathering at Kirtland. They laid out a town, appointed certain lots for various purposes, one of which was to build the house of the Lord upon, for the building of which they had received a revelation. This building they commenced, if I recollect rightly, in 1833, in poverty, and without means to do it. In 1834 they completed the work, and in 1835 and 1836 they nearly finished it. The cost was nearly \$40,000. A committee was appointed to gather donations. They travelled among the churches and collected a considerable amount, but not sufficient, so that in the end they found themselves 13 or \$14,000 in debt. This house was 80 feet by 60; and 57 feet high to the top of the wall. It was divided into two stories, each twenty-two feet high, and arched over head. Ten feet was cut off from the front end by a partition and used as an entrance, and it also, contained the stairs. This left the main room 55 by 65 feet in the clear, both below and above. In each of these rooms were built two pulpits, one in each end. [p.22]

Each pulpit consisted of four different apartments; the fourth standing on a platform raised a suitable height above the floor; the third stood directly behind and elevated a little above the fourth; the second in rear of and elevated above the third; and so was the first above the second. Each of these apartments was just large enough, and rightly calculated to receive three persons, and the breastwork in front of each of these three last mentioned, was constituted of three semi-circles, joining each other, and finished in good style. The fourth, or lower one, was straight in front, and had a table-leaf attached to it, that could be raised at pleasure, for the convenience of administering the sacrament, etc. These pulpits were alike in each end of the house, and one was for the use of the Melchizedek, or high priesthood, and the other for the Aaronic, or lesser priesthood. The first, or higher apartment, was occupied by the First Presidency over all the Church; the second apartment, by the president of the high priests, and his two counsellors; the third by three of the high priests; and the fourth by the president of the elders, and his two counsellors. The highest apartment of the other pulpit was occupied by the Bishop of the Church and his two counsellors; the next by the president of the priests and his two counsellors; the third by the president of the teachers and his two counsellors; and the fourth by the president of the deacons and his two counsellors. Each of these apartments had curtains hanging from the ceiling, overhead, down to the top of the pulpit, which could be rolled up or dropped down at pleasure; and, when dropped down, would completely exclude those within the apartment from the sight of all others. The room itself was finished with slips and seats, so calculated that, by slipping the seats a little, the congregation could change their faces towards either pulpit they choose, for in some cases the high priesthood would administer, and in other cases the lesser would. The room was also divided into four apartments, by means of curtains hanging from the ceiling, overhead, down to the floor, which could be rolled up at pleasure, so that the room could be used all in one, or divided into four rooms, and used for different purposes. Thus the house was constructed to suit and accommodate the different orders of priesthood and worship peculiar to the Church. The first story, or lower room, was dedicated for divine worship alone. The second story was finished similar in form to the first, but was designed, wholly, for instruction, and supplied with tables instead of slips. In the roof were finished five rooms for the convenience of schools, and

for the different quorums of the Church to meet in etc.

In the winter of 1834 and 1835, all the principal elders in Upper Missouri went to Kirtland. Some of them spent the summer there, while others travelled and preached in the eastern states, and some went to the South. I was appointed to take charge of the finishing of the Lord's house. [p.22 - p.23]

In the fall, and early part of the winter of 1835, the elders gathered in to Kirtland, to the number, I should think, of three or four hundred, who remained there through the winter. Schools were instituted for the use of the elders and others. Some studied grammar and other branches: they also employed the celebrated Hebrew teacher, Mr. Seixas, who gave them much insight, in a short time, into that language. They had been previously commanded to seek learning and study the best books, and get a knowledge of countries, kingdoms, languages, etc., which inspired them with an extravagant thirst after knowledge. Several months previous to this they had been commanded to prepare themselves for a solemn assembly, as may be seen by referring to the Book of Covenants. [p.23]

At length the time arrived for this assembly to meet, previous to which, Smith exhorted the elders to solemnize their minds, by casting away every evil from them in thought, word, or deed, and let their hearts become sanctified, because they need not expect a blessing from God without being duly prepared for it; for the Holy Ghost would not dwell in unholy temples. This meeting took place in March 1836, a little previous to which the house of the Lord had been dedicated. As well as I can remember, the solemn assembly was conducted nearly as follows. The ceremony was first performed upon the First Presidency, together with the bishops and their counselors; after which the elders in their turn attended to the ceremony, and it was alike upon all occasions. They were to purify their bodies by washing them entirely with pure water, after which they were to wash each other's feet, and anoint each other with oil, pronouncing mutual blessings during the performance. The sacrament was then administered, in which they partook of the bread and wine freely, and a report went abroad that some of them got drunk: as to that every man must answer for himself. A similar report, the reader will recollect, went out concerning the disciples, at Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost. This was followed by a marvelous spirit of prophecy. Every man's mouth was full of prophesying, and for a number of days or weeks their time was spent in visiting from house to house, making feasts, prophesying, and pronouncing blessings on each other, to that degree, that from the external appearance, one would have supposed that the last days had truly come, in which the spirit of the Lord was poured out upon all flesh, as far as the Church was concerned, for their sons and their daughters were full of prophesying. In this prophesying great blessings were pronounced upon the faithful, and also great curses upon the ungodly. Long before this, a committee had been appointed, to collect and compile the articles, covenants, and discipline of the church. This had been done, presented to, and adopted by the Church, and published to the world.

As a preparation, also, to the solemn assembly, all the constituted authorities, or quorums, were filled out in point of numbers, and presented to the Church, each one in its proper place, and acknowledged of the Church as the proper authorities by which the Church should be governed, according to the articles and covenants. These authorities, or different quorums, had been organized and established, one after another, by Smith himself, as the Church increased, and their different powers plainly set forth in the book of Doctrine and Covenants. But, for the satisfaction for those who have not access to that book, I will here give a general account of them.

### Chapter XIII.

The Priesthood described--Zion and her stakes-- Manner of dealing with transgressors--  
Ordinations-- Reflections on the subject.

[p.24 - p.25]

There are in the Church two priesthoods. First, the Melchizedek, or high priesthood, also called the greater priesthood; second, the Aaronic, or lesser priesthood. In the first, or Melchizedek Priesthood, were ordained high priests and elders; in the second were ordained priests, teachers, and deacons. Each different grade chose one of its number to preside over the rest, who was called president, and whose duty it was to call together those over whom he presided, at stated times, to edify one another, and receive instruction from him. The first, or high priesthood, was to stand at the head of and regulate the spiritual concerns of the Church; the second, or lesser priesthood, was to administer in the ordinances, and attend

to the temporal concerns of the Church. Three of the high priests were chosen and set apart by the Church to preside over all the churches, of that order, in all the world, and were called presidents, and constituted what is called the First Presidency, Joseph Smith, Jun. Sidney Rigden, and Hiram Smith, are the persons at present. The church that was to be established in Jackson County was called Zion, the center of gathering, and those established by revelation, in other places, were called Stakes of Zion, or stakes; hence the stake at Kirtland, the stake at Far West, the stake at Adam-ondi-Ahman, etc. Each stake was to have a presidency, consisting of three high priests, chosen and set apart for that purpose, whose jurisdiction was confined to the limits of the stake over which they took the watch care. There was also to be a high council, consisting of twelve high priests, established at each stake, also a bishop, who stood at the head of the lesser priesthood, and administered in temporal things; he had two counsellors who, with himself, formed a court to try transgressors. If two members had a difficulty, they were to settle it between themselves, or by the assistance of another, according to the scriptures; but if they could not do this, then it went before the bishop's court for trial, but if either party was dissatisfied with the bishop's decision, he could appeal it to the high council. There was also a travelling high council, consisting of twelve high priests, called the Twelve Apostles, or the Twelve, whose duty it was to travel and preach the gospel to all the world. They were also to regulate the church in all places where it was not properly organized. One of their number presided over the rest in their councils. There were other bodies formed called the seventies consisting of seventy elders each, (not high priests,) seven of whom presided over the rest in their councils. These seventies were to travel and preach in all the world, under the direction of the Twelve, who were to open or lead the way, and then call upon the seventies for assistance. There were three of these bodies formed, second, and third seventies. The First Presidency, the high council, the Twelve, and each of the seventies, were equal in power, that is to say, each had a right to discipline their own members, and transact other business of the Church within their calling, and a decision of either one of these bodies, when in regular session, could not be appealed from one to any other, for one had no right or power to reverse or overthrow the judgment or decision of the other, but they could all be called together and form a conference, consisting of all the authorities, to which an appeal could be taken from either one and the decision reversed. These were the regular constituted authorities of the Church; but, besides this, Smith and Rigden taught the Church that these authorities, in ruling or watching over the Church, were nothing more than servants to the Church, and that the Church, as a body, had the power in themselves to do any thing that either or all of these authorities could do, and that if either or all of these constituted authorities became deranged or broken down, or did not perform their duty to the satisfaction of the Church, the Church had a right to rise up in a body and put them out of office, make another selection and reorganize them, and thus keep in order, for the power was in the people and not in the servants. The high priests, elders, and priests, were to travel and preach, but the teachers and deacons were to be standing ministers to the Church. Hence, in the last organizing of the Church, each branch of the Church chose a teacher to preside over them, whose duty it was to take particular charge of that branch, and report from time to time to the general conference of elders, which was to be held quarterly. For some time after the commencement of the Church an elder might ordain an elder, priest, teacher, or deacon, when and where he thought proper, but, after stakes were planted, and the Church became organized, they established a rule that none should be ordained without consent of the Church or branch or take charge of it without consent of the same. [p.25]

Thus I have given a brief portrait of the authorities of the Church. In viewing the subject I saw that there were several different bodies that had equal power; I thought, therefore, they would serve as check upon each other, and I concluded there was no danger where the full power and authority was reserved to the people. I did not examine the scriptures much on the subject, but I thought that no man who was acquainted with his Bible would pretend to deny that two priesthoods existed in ancient times. As to the apostolic church, I knew that Paul declared that Christ himself was a priest after the order of Melchisedeck, that it never changed, and was such a priesthood as became them, from which I inferred that it was conferred on them, inasmuch as the New Testament was pretty much silent on the subject, and does not show the precise order in that respect of the apostolic church, every man is left to judge for himself.

## Chapter XIV.

Smith's charge to the elders-- Their return-- Gathering continues-- Mormons leave Clay County and settle in Caldwell-- In debt-- Pride-- Merchandizing-- Banking-- Dissentions and its effects-- Elders go to England.

[p.26]

At the close of the solemn assembly meetings in Kirtland, Smith told the elders that they were now endowed with power to go forth and build up the Kingdom, that they must now call upon God for every man was accountable to God for his own doings, and he charged them to be careful and avoid contention, and not to meddle with other orders of Christians, nor proclaim against their doctrines, but to preach the gospel in its simplicity, and let others alone.

The elders that lived in Upper Missouri returned to their homes in Clay County, in the spring of 1836, but had not been there long before a portion of the people who had been peaceable during their absence, began now to be uneasy. The Church also continued to gather in Clay County, till the appearance was that they would sooner or later be overrun by the Mormons, and this uneasy portion of the people, either because they hated our religion, or were afraid we would become a majority, or for some other cause, I know not what (for the Mormons had committed no crime) continued to stir up excitement, and the Mormons began to prepare for self defence, until the more rational and sensible part of the citizens saw that it was coming to bloodshed, and that something must be done. They accordingly appointed a committee who called upon the Mormons to meet them in conference, which they did, and agreed to leave the county. The committee agreed to, and did help them to obtain a place of residence, which was in the territory of Ray County, since organized into the county of Caldwell, and the people in the vicinity consented to it. The Mormons purchased great quantities of land in Caldwell, made improvements, and their works plainly show that they were industrious, though they labored under many disadvantages, on account of their poverty and former difficulties. Many of them were obliged to seek labor in the neighboring counties for their bread. The people gave them employment, and many of them also borrowed money, to purchase lands with. Friendship began to be restored between them and their neighbors, the old prejudices were fast dying away, and they were doing well, until the summer of 1838. [p.26 - p.27]

And now I return to Kirtland with my story. After finishing the house of the Lord so far as to have it ready for the solemn assembly, the Church found itself something like fifteen or twenty thousand dollars in debt, as near as I can recollect. As the house had been built by faith, as they termed it, they must now continue their faith and contrive some means to pay the debt. Notwithstanding they were deeply in debt, they had so managed as to keep up their credit, so they concluded to try mercantile business. Accordingly, they ran in debt in New York, and elsewhere, some thirty thousand dollars, for goods, and shortly after some fifty or sixty thousand more, as I was informed; but they did not fully understand the mercantile business, and, withal, they suffered pride to arise in their hearts, and became desirous of fine houses, and fine clothes, and indulged too much in these things, supposing for a few months that they were very rich. They also spent some thousands of dollars in building a steam mill, which never profited them anything. They also bought many farms at extravagant prices, and made part payments, which they afterwards lost, by not being able to meet the remaining payments. They also got up a bank, for which they could get no charter, so they issued their paper without a charter, and, of course, they could not collect their pay on notes received for loans, and, after struggling with it awhile, they broke down. [p.27]

During their mercantile and banking operations they not only indulged in pride, but also suffered jealousies to arise among them, and several persons dissented from the Church, and accused the leaders of the church with bad management, selfishness, seeking for riches, honor, and dominion, tyrannizing over the people, and striving constantly after power and property. On the other hand, the leaders of the Church accused the dissenters with dishonesty, want of faith, and righteousness, wicked in their intentions, guilty of crimes, such as stealing, lying, encouraging the making of counterfeit money, etc.; and this strife or opposition arose to a great height, so that, instead of pulling together as brethren; they tried every way in their power, seemingly, to destroy each other; their enemies from without rejoiced at this, and assisted the dissenters what they could, until Smith and Rigden finally were obliged to leave Kirtland, and, with their families, came to Far West, in March or April 1838.

During this strife some of the elders became tired of this scene, and left Kirtland; P. P. Pratt went to the city of New York, where he built up a church.

## Chapter XV.

Debts, how paid-- Difficulty in the Church--Smith and Rigden visit the Church--  
Presidency changed--Dissenters withdraw-- Removal to Far West--New town  
commenced, called Adamondiawman-- Feelings produced-- Boasting-- Settlement of  
Dewit.

[p.27 - p.28]

In order to pay the debts in New York, and elsewhere, many of the Church in Kirtland turned out their farms and stripped themselves of property, took orders on the bishop in Far West, and in their poverty followed Smith and Rigden to Far West as soon as practicable. Some of the dissenters came also, and notwithstanding, they affected a sort of reconciliation of their difficulties, yet it was plain that hard feelings existed. W. W. Phelps and John Whitmer had served as presidents of the Church, in the upper country, from the time they came from Kirtland, but some time in the winter of 1836-7, a difficulty arose between them and the Church, on account of their having entered the town plot and some other lands in their own names, but on an investigation of the matter they gave the town plot and some other lands into the hands of the bishop, as the property of the Church. However, a perfect reconciliation of feelings was not restored; but in the fall of 1837, Smith and Rigden and others came to Far West on a visit. A general meeting was called for the Church to choose whether they would have the old Presidency rule any longer over them or not. Their old difficulties were talked over, and so far reconciled, that they still choose to have Phelps and Whitmer their presidents; but in the winter following, the old difficulty broke out again, and the excitement rose so high that they turned them out of their presidential office, and T. B. Marsh and two others served as presidents, pro tempore, until Smith and Rigden arrived, and even until now. When Smith and Rigden arrived, the Church was much pleased and supposed that things would be managed right by them, and they would have better times; but it was not long before the old feelings began to be stirred up between the Church and the dissenters. Complaints were made to the authorities of the Church against them, upon which they immediately withdrew from the Church. The Church in Caldwell had been doing well, with the exception of these little difficulties among themselves, until the First Presidency came to the Far West, and began to move things to their own notions. Many of the Church had settled in Davies County, and to all appearance, lived as peaceably with their neighbors as people generally do; but not long after Smith and Rigden arrived in Far West, they went to Davies County and pitched upon a place to build a town. L. Wight was already on the ground with his family. They laid out a town and began to settle it pretty rapidly; Smith gave it the name of Adamondiawman, which he said was formerly given to a certain valley, where Adam, previous to his death, called his children together and blessed them. The interpretation in English is, "The valley of God, in which Adam blessed his children." Many of the Church became elated with the idea of settling in and round about the new town, especially those who had come from Kirtland, as it was designed more particularly for them. This stirred up the people of Davies in some degree; they saw that if this town was built up rapidly it would injure Gallatin, their county seat, and also that the Mormons would soon overrun Davies, and rule the county, and they did not like to live under the laws and administration of "Joe Smith." Lyman Wight also would frequently boast in his discourses of what they would do if the mob did not let them alone,--they would fight, and they would die upon the ground, and they would not give up their rights, etc.; when, as yet, there was no mob. But this preaching inspired the Mormons with a fighting spirit, and some of the other citizens began to be stirred up to anger. [p.28 - p.29]

Shortly after the new town was established in Davies, the Presidency concluded to establish a settlement at the mouth of Grand River, in Carroll County. Accordingly Colonel Hinkle and John Murdock went and purchased a number of lots in a little town, called Dewit, and shortly after removed there with their families and increased their settlement as fast as they could consistently.

## Chapter XVI.

Support of Smith and Rigden-- Spirit excited-- Union necessary-- Salt sermon--  
Dissenters expelled-- Murmuring put down.

[p.29]

When Smith and Rigden first moved to Far West they said that they did not intend to meddle with temporal concerns, but attend to their spiritual calling, and they relied upon the donations of the Church for their support; but after a while, it was thought best by the high council to give them some certain amount each year, which should be sufficient to support them. They were to labor in word and doctrine, to write for and superintend the press, and to look to the welfare of the Church.

Notwithstanding, the dissenters had left the Church, yet the old strife kept up, and Smith and Rigden, with others, complained much of the ill treatment they had received from the dissenters and others; they said they had been harassed to death, as it were, for seven or eight years, and they were determined to bear it no longer, for they would rather die than suffer such things; and it was the will of God that the saints should fight their death rather than suffer such things; that if the Church would be united, and exercise faith in God, he would protect them, though their enemies were ever so numerous. But in order to get protection and favor from God, they must become one, and be perfectly united in all things; cleanse themselves from every kind of pollution, and keep the whole law of God; and, if they would do this, God would strengthen them against their enemies, his arm should be their arm, and the time was not far distant when, if they purified themselves properly, one should be able to choose his thousand, and to put their ten thousand to flight. [p.29 - p.30]

This kind of preaching was the chief topic of conversation all last summer, until many of the Church became inspired with the belief that God would enable them to stand against anything, even the state of Missouri, or the United States, if they should come in a mob. Many of the Church, however, became disgusted with these things, and looked upon them as great inconsistencies, and calculated to bring swift destruction upon the Church, that it was of no use to say anything, for the Lord, they supposed, was going to do great things which would require great faith, and they must prepare for it. For this end, much was to be done, and the scripture says, "If ye are agreed, as touching any one thing, it shall be done," consequently, to become one was very essential, and they must be well united in all things, and this, though a great work, must and should be performed at all hazards. But there were many obstacles in the way. The dissenters kept up a kind of secret opposition to the Presidency and Church. They would occasionally speak against them, influence the minds of the members against them, and occasionally correspond with their enemies abroad, and the Church, it was said, would never become pure unless these dissenters were routed from among them. Moreover, if they were suffered to remain, they would destroy the Church. Secret meetings were held, and plans contrived, how to get rid of them. Some had one plan, and some another, but there was a backwardness in bringing it about, until President Rigden delivered from the pulpit what I call the salt sermon; "If the salt have lost its savour, it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under the feet of men," was his text, and although he did not call names in his sermon, yet it was plainly understood that he meant that dissenters, or those who had denied the faith, ought to be cast out and literally trodden under foot. He indirectly, accused some of them with crime. [p.30]

This sermon had the desired effect. Excitement was produced, in the Church, and, suffice it to say that in three or four days, several of the dissenters became much alarmed and fled from the place in great fright, and their families soon followed, but their property was attached for debt. Necessity compelled others of the dissenters to confess and give satisfaction to the Church. This scene I looked upon with horror, and considered it as proceeding from a mob spirit. Thus the work of purifying was commenced, and now it must be carried out. Another thing was in the way; there was a good deal of murmuring, finding fault, and complaining against the First Presidency and others of the leaders for various causes, but more especially, on account of money which the Presidency had borrowed from time to time during the building of the Lord's house in Kirtland, and the carrying on their mercantile and banking operations. Some of the debts had been paid, but several remained unpaid, and many who had lost their farms in paying the New York debts felt bad, and they murmured and complained to that degree that the Presidency and Church got tired of hearing it, until they became determined to have it stopped.

## Chapter XVII.

Secret society formed--Presidency upheld-- Former revelations referred to--  
Organization-- Sampson Arvend-- Intentions-- Perversions--Object of gathering--  
Tyranny exercised-- New constitution-- Names of society and numbers.

p.30- p.32

Some time in June last, a few individuals began to form a society that should be agreed in all things. In order to do this, they bound themselves under very close restrictions. As this society began to increase they secretly entered into solemn covenants before God, and bound themselves under oath to keep the secrets of the society, and covenanted to stand by one another in difficulty, whether right or wrong, but said they would correct each other's wrongs among themselves. As the Presidency stood next to God, or between God and the Church, and was the oracle through which the word and will of God was communicated to the Church, they esteemed it very essential to have their word, or the word of God through them, strictly adhered to. They, therefore, entered into a covenant, that the word of the Presidency should be obeyed, and none should be suffered to raise his hand or voice against it; for, as they stood at the head of the Church, it was considered no more than reasonable that they knew more of the will of God than any others did; consequently, all things must be in submission to them, and moreover, all tattling, lying, and backbiting must be put down, and he that would not submit willingly should be forced to it, or leave the county. Now this secret combination was directly opposed to the former revelation, and especially the Book of Mormon, which declared that God worketh not in secret, and all such as did should be destroyed. Many were opposed to this society, but such was their determination and also their threatenings against them, that those opposed dare not speak their minds on the subject. They said they meant to cleanse their own members first, and then the Church. In order to carry on their operations, they organized themselves into companies of fifties and tens, with a captain to each company, that they might be ready to act in concert on any occasion. It was supposed by the Church at large, that this organization was for the purpose of resisting a mob, if any should arise against them; many of this secret society itself did not understand the true intention of their leaders. Who first started the society I know not, but Doctor Sampson Arverd was the most prominent leader and instructor, and was assisted by others. The First Presidency did not seem to have much to do with it at first; they would, however, go into their meetings occasionally, and sanction their doings. Arverd was very forward and indefatigable in accomplishing their purposes, for he devoted his whole talents to it, and spared no pains; and, I thought, was as grand a villain as his wit and ability would admit of. How much he was assisted by the Presidency I know not, but I thought that they stood as wire workers behind the curtain. Be this as it may, they ran into awful extremes, for it seemed that they felt justified, and thought it was the will of God to use any measures whatever, whether lawful or unlawful, to accomplish their purpose, and put down those that opposed them. In this they perverted the former belief and notions of the Church; for the Church always believed that judgments, pestilence, disease, famine, great troubles and vexations, were sooner or later to be poured out upon all the wicked, and cut them off in the course of time, and this, they supposed, would be done by God himself, and the object of gathering together was that they might purify themselves, and stand in holy places appointed of God for that purpose, and thus escape these judgments. But now, it began to be taught that the Church, instead of God, or rather the Church in the hands of God, was to bring about these things; and I was told, but I cannot vouch for the truth of it, that some of them went so far as to contrive plans how they might scatter poison, pestilence, and disease, among the inhabitants, and make them think it was judgments sent from God. But here let me remark, that this was known only to some half dozen or so of the leaders, and not to the Church, nor even the great majority of this secret society. I accused Smith and Rigdon of it, but they both denied it promptly. Be this as it may, it was clearly evident to me that the leaders of this faction intended to set up a monarchical government, in which the Presidency should tyrannize and rule over all things. In fact, there was so much tyranny and oppression exercised, that for several weeks many persons dare not speak their minds, nor let them be known; and I have learned of late, that a constitution was formed, savoring all the spirit of monarchy, and adopted by the leaders and some others of this society; but I conclude that but few knew about it, for I never heard one lisp on the subject, until Arverd exposed it, after he was arrested. [p.32]

Some individuals went so far as to state, that they would kill any person, if the Presidency would say it was the will of God; for these things were necessary sometimes to

save the Church from corruption and destruction. All the while it was preached to them that they must purify themselves from all evil, for the time was now at hand when every thing that offended in the kingdom of God must be cast out. This they determined to do, whether by fair means or foul, regardless of consequences. They sometimes went by the name of the Big Fan; this, I supposed, was figurative of their intentions to cleanse the chaff from the wheat. They also assumed the name of "The Daughter of Zion," and afterwards were called "Danites." Why they assumed these last names I never knew, but always supposed that they took it from the scriptures, which speaks of them, the first prophetically, and the last historically. (See Mich. iv. 13, read the whole chapter; also Judges, xvii. & xviii. chapters.)

This society increased, as near as I could learn, to the number of three hundred.

## Chapter XVIII.

Fourth of July celebrated-- Rigden's oration-- The election.

The church celebrated the fourth of July by raising a liberty pole, on which they hoisted the American flag. They also formed a civil and military procession, and President Rigden delivered an oration, in which there were one or two sentences to which considerable exception was taken by the people of other counties. The substance was, that they did not mean to suffer vexatious law suits, and other abuses, as they had done, but if a mob fell on them, they would resist, and would follow them to their houses, and it should be a war of extermination to one or the other party. This spirit was kept up until the church, or many individuals, became so inspired with it, that they would not bear any offence. [p.33]

As the Danites had covenanted and agreed to support the heads of the church in all things, so, of course, they must control the elections as well as other matters; therefore, they got up a meeting of their Danite officers on Saturday, before the election, and appointed a committee, consisting of one man from each township in the county, who called upon the First Presidency to assist them in making out a nomination. Accordingly, a ticket was made out to suit them, and a sufficient number printed that night. The next day another meeting of the Danites was convened, two hundred or more in number, and these tickets divided out among them. They agreed to scatter them throughout the county of Caldwell, and support it the next morning at the polls; which they did.

The people supposed that this ticket was from headquarters, and that it was the will of God that all should go for it. But many saw that it was taking an undue advantage of the election, and were extremely dissatisfied; not so much with the ticket itself as with the principle in which it had been got up, for the ticket was democratic, and the Mormons, as individuals, are almost universally of that party. There was some murmuring and finding fault after the election, by those opposed to the proceedings, but this was soon put down by the Danite influence.

## Chapter XIX.

Election in Davies-- Unhappy affray-- Excitement-- Expedition to Davies County-- Adam Black-- Smith and Wight-- Public meeting in Richmond-- The sheriff-- Gathering in Davies-- Trials before Judge King.

The election in Davies County was not conducted in this manner. Every man there voted as he pleased; but an unhappy affray took place there. [p.33 - p.34]

Feelings existed, as I observed before, between the Mormons and other citizens on account of their settling the new town of Adamondiaman, and filling up the county so fast. William Pennington, a citizen and candidate, on seeing that the Mormons were not going for him, made a flaming speech on election day, in which he said, that the Mormons ought not to be suffered to vote. I was informed, however, that they were not prohibited; but still, feelings became somewhat excited on both sides, though there was but little said, until one of the Mormons and one of the other citizens got into a conversation, in which they gave each other the lie: the citizen struck the Mormon, and followed him up for another blow, when he was met by another Mormon, who knocked him down. From this, one after another, on both sides, fell into the ranks, and a general conflict was the result. Some were badly hurt from clubs and boards that were used on both sides. The Mormons got the better, I believe, in that affray, but left the polls I was told, soon after it was over. This affray increased the excitement on both sides. Some of the citizens threatened those Mormons that



had distinguished themselves in the battle, and Mormons kept a look out that night. The next morning, news of the battle came to Far West, and it was stated and believed that they were gathering on both sides, in Davies; that two Mormons had been killed, and that the citizens would not let the Mormons bury them. Doctor Arverd called for volunteers, and raised about one hundred and fifty men who went out to Davies under arms. Smith and Rigden went with them. When they got to Davies they did not meet with any gathering of the mob, though it was said there was a collection at Gallatin. They also found that none had been killed. Instead of returning home again, as they ought to have done, they took a notion to make the citizens agree to live in peace, and not come out in mobs. They went to the house of Adam Black, a justice of the peace, and compelled him to sign a writing to that effect. After staying a day or two, and trying to make some two or three others sign the paper, they went home. But the citizens of Davies were not satisfied. Black went to Richmond and entered complaint. Others went to other parts and made general complaint against the Mormons. Smith, Wight, and others, they said, had broken the law by going into Davies armed, and making Black sign the paper. It was said that L. Wight and J. Smith would not be taken, but would die first. [p.34]

Some one or two meetings were got up in Richmond, in which they took some exceptions to Rigden's orations, but they resolved to do nothing contrary to law, nor approbate a mob. This, I thought had a good effect in suppressing unlawful proceedings. But the law must be enforced. A writ was issued for Smith and Wight, and the sheriff, it is said, informed Wight of it, but, through fear of Wight's threatenings, desisted from trying to take him, but went to Judge King for advice. He advised him to try to serve the precept, but, if Wight resisted, then command assistance of the citizens, and if they were resisted by a superior force, then to call for the militia, until he got force enough. Runners went into other counties to solicit assistance. They requested the citizens to gather in by a day appointed, and be in readiness to assist the sheriff in taking Wight. Accordingly, they gathered in to a considerable number. This excited and alarmed the Mormons. They began to think there was some other object in view besides taking Wight; for Smith had previously told the sheriff that he had never resisted, but was perfectly willing to surrender, and said he would persuade Wight to do so. For this purpose, he sent for Wight to come to Far West and see him, which he did, and agreed to submit, saying that the sheriff had never attempted to take him. The citizens continued to gather, and news came to Smith that there would be four thousand together in a few days. This alarmed Smith, and he sent a messenger to General Atchison to come out to Far West and see him, and to advise what to do. He did so, and also went to Davies, and advised Smith and Wight, and such others as were accused, to surrender, which they did, and were tried before Judge King, and bound over; then Judge King and General Atchison returned home.

## Chapter XX.

Gathering continued-- Prisoners taken--Arms taken-- Dispersion by the militia--  
Gathering at Dewitt-- General Parks-- Petition to the Governor-- Mormons leave  
Dewitt-- Their spirits and feelings become desperate.

p.35

This, however, did not satisfy the people of Davies. In my opinion, their great object was to get rid of the Mormons in their county. The excitement grew worse and worse, the people continued to gather to the number of two or three hundred in Davies, and appointed Dr. Austin, of Carroll, as their leader. The Mormons also gathered at Adamondiaman, under L. Wight, ready for defence. Sentinels were kept out by both parties, and they reconnoitered the country as they thought proper.

A party of Austin's men fired on two Mormons, a man and a boy, the man escaped, but the boy they took prisoner. They also sent to Richmond and got sixty or eighty stand of arms, but on the way to Davies the wagon broke down, and the Mormons got news of it and sent ten men, who took the arms, forty-four in number, and three men prisoners, and carried them to Far West. These were afterwards delivered up to General Doniphan as he passed through on his way to Davies County. A messenger from the Mormons with this news, together with affidavits, taken before Judge King, was sent to General Atchison, who ordered out five hundred militia to quell the disturbance. Gilliam, with a company from the Platte country, had joined Austin's company, and some Mormons from Caldwell had joined Wight's company.

Thus the militia found them. General Doniphan placed the militia between the parties, visited both, and required them to disperse. Wight, I was told, submitted and said he would be governed by the authorities. The troops from Caldwell dispersed and went home, but Austin's company did not disperse under two or three days and then with such reluctance that it was thought necessary to leave a company of militia for thirty days, to keep the peace.

A little previous to this, the citizens of Carroll County had called meetings, and resolved to drive the Mormons from that county. Several of the citizens of Carroll went to assist the people of Davies, but after they were dispersed from Davies they commenced gathering against the Mormons in Dewitt. The number collected was about three hundred, and they also appointed Dr. Austin to be their commander. The Mormons, though weak in that place, prepared themselves for defence, and were commanded by Colonel Hinkle. When they got this news at Far West, they turned out about one hundred in number, and went to assist their brethren at Dewitt. Smith and Rigden went along. General Parks, of Ray County, with two companies of militia, went to the scene of difficulty, but had not force enough to disperse them. Some of the citizens near Dewitt sent a petition to the Governor, praying the dispersion of the mob, as I was informed; but the Mormons were informed that the Governor said they must take care of themselves. [p.36]

This, the Governor has since told me was a mistake, for he was at St. Louis at the time; and, moreover, General Atchison and other officers had full power to act when necessary without an order from him.

General Parks called upon General Doniphan for more militia, but before they arrived, the Mormons concluded to give up the ground and leave the place, and the citizens of Carroll agreed to pay them for their improvements. I never heard of any accusation that the people of Carroll had against the Mormons, but still they were determined they should not settle in that county, so they came to Far West, about fifty wagons in number. [p.36 - p.37]

I have since understood that the people of Carroll did not mean to pay them, as they had agreed, but I know not whether this be true or not. When they came from Dewitt I discovered that the feelings of many were much exasperated at the treatment they had received at Dewitt, and especially at having been obliged to leave the place. News also followed them that the citizens were coming from Dewitt to Davies, with the cannon, for the purpose of driving the Mormons from Davies County. They took two Mormon prisoners on their way, and told them that they meant to drive the Mormons from Davies to Caldwell, and from Caldwell to h---l. Smith and others appeared much excited in feeling. "They (the Church) had been driven from place to place; their property destroyed; their rights as citizens taken from them; abuse upon abuse practiced upon them from time to time; they had sought for redress through the medium of the law, but never could get it; the state of Missouri refused to protect them in their rights; the executive had been petitioned many times, but never would do anything for them." This, in substance, had been their talk for months: "And the Governor," they said, "while they were at Dewitt, refused to do anything for them, but said that they must take care of themselves." Now they meant to do it, for they found that they must take care of themselves, as they could get help from no other quarter. Moreover, they said, that they had found out that several members of the Church had dissented in feeling, and were operating against them by carrying evil reports to their lives; and now they were determined to clear them out or spill their blood in the streets; moreover they meant to make clean work now, and expel the mob from Davies and then from Caldwell County. I asked Smith whether he thought they could hold out in that course and prosper in carrying it into effect. He answered they would, or die in the attempt. I answered that they would not have the whole state on them, but only that party which was governed by a mob spirit, and they were not very numerous; and they, when they found they would have to fight, would not be so fond of gathering together against them. I plainly saw that their feelings were much irritated, and they determined on their course; I therefore said no more. I had highly disapproved of their course for months past, and had taken no part in their warfare. I knew that they were jealous of me as a dissenter, and that it was of no use for me to say anything more; in fact, I felt it was necessary for me to look out for my own safety.

## Chapter XXI.

Public meeting-- Resolutions passed-- Volunteers raised-- Reflections- Expedition to  
Davies-- Doings there-- New order of consecration-- Enthusiastic motives--  
Plunderings-- Piece of ordinance taken.

[p.37]

This conversation was on Sunday morning after they returned from Dewitt. Smith preached that day pretty much from the same spirit, and requested a general meeting of all the male members on the next day. They accordingly met, and passed resolutions to the following effect. All the members of the church should take hold and help; those who had been backward in carrying on the warfare should now come forward, and their property should be consecrated, so far as might be necessary for the use of the army. If any man undertook to leave the place, and go to the enemy, he should be stopped and brought back, or loose his life. As soon as this meeting was over, they collected upon the public square, and called for volunteers. About two hundred were raised to go to Davies County. Others were raised to guard Far West. A company, called the Fur Company, was raised, for the purpose of procuring provisions, for pressing teams, and even men sometimes, into the army in Caldwell. I now saw plainly that they had become desperate, and their career would soon end; for I knew that their doings would soon bring the people on them, and I dreaded the consequences. I would have been glad to have left the county with my family, but I could not get away; the decree was passed, and there was no other chance for me and the other dissenters but to pretend to take hold with the rest. I now understood that they meant to fall upon and scatter the mob wherever they could find them collected.

The next day, which was Tuesday, they marched to Adamondiaman. The following day it snowed, and there was not much done, except perhaps to lay some plans of operation. The next day a company of about eighty mounted men went to Gallatin, where they found from ten to twenty men, who fled as they approached the town. They plundered a store and burnt it, and carried off some other property. Another company of seventy or eighty went to Millport, and on finding the place pretty much deserted they left it as they found it. Another company of about the same size, went on to Grindstone Fork, and professed themselves to be citizens of Carroll. This they did, I was told, to find out who was against them. They also committed some little thefts. Another company, on foot, went somewhere in the country, and returned with a quantity of plundered property.

During these two days I laid by the fire with a lame leg. I clearly saw, from the remarks passing through the camp, and from their doings, that destruction to the Mormons was nigh at hand. I was astonished at the weakness and folly of the Mormons, to think they could possibly hold out in such a course. [p.38]

I heard nothing from the leaders, but in the camp it was said that they meant not only to scatter the mob, but also to destroy those places that harbored them; that Gallatin and Millport were of that number; that the time had arrived for the riches of the Gentiles to be consecrated to the House of Israel, but they meant to confine themselves to the mob characters in their plunderings. They conjectured that job after job, as they termed it, would arise against them, which they would have to subdue, one after another, even till they should reach St. Louis, where Wight said he meant to winter. Many had the weakness to believe that God would enable them to do it.

As yet, they had found no citizens collected in Davies, save those few in Gallatin; though, when we started from Far West, it was currently reported, and believed by all, that there were five hundred in Millport, and that the next day there would be eight hundred to commence operations. On Friday morning, I returned to Far West, with W. W. Phelps, who had come out the day before with some provisions.

When they found no citizens gathered together against them, they ought to have been peaceable, and merely stood on the defensive; but they had become too desperate in feeling for that, and resolved to clear Davies County from everything in the shape of what they called mobs, which they did effectually in the course of that and the next week. It appeared to me also that the love of pillage grew upon them very fast, for they plundered every kind of property they could get hold of, and burnt many cabins in Davies, some say eighty, and some say one hundred and fifty.

They also went with a company to Livingston, and took a piece of ordinance, which had been brought there by the company that came from Carroll County. After this, most of those who belonged to Caldwell returned home.

## Chapter XXII.

Destructionist and destroying angel-- Battle with Bogard-- Great excitement and people in arms-- Marsh and Hyde escape-- General Atchinson and the militia-- Battle at Hawn's Mill.

[p.38 - p.39]

Far West, meanwhile, was well guarded, for they heard they were to be attacked by Captain Gilliam, with a company from the Platte. But he did not attempt it. They also heard that a company of ten men, that were called the Destructionists, whose commander was called the Destroying Angel. Their business was, to watch the movements of the citizens, and if they gathered in Buncum, and left the place for Far West, these Destructionists were to slip in behind them, and burn the place. So they were to do, it was said, by Richmond, or any other place that should turn out men to injure them. I believe they never attempted to burn either place, though it was reported in Richmond that the time was set for them to burn that place, and many left it for a short time; but this, I think, was incorrect. [p.39]

Shortly after the Mormon troops came from Davies, they received news that a company was gathered on Crooked River, and that some of them had been to some houses on Log Creek, in Caldwell, and ordered off the families, with severe threats if they were not off by sunrise the next morning. They took away their arms, and it was said, also burnt a wagon and a house, and took three men prisoners. On receiving this news, a company was fitted out to disperse them. Captain Fear-not (David W. Patten) commanded them. They went in the night to the house of Fields, on Crooked River, but not finding the company there they proceeded to another place, and had not proceeded far till they met with a sentinel, who hailed them, and after a word or two shot one of them down, and then ran to his company, but they followed him up in a hurry, and after a fire or two, charged on the company, and soon dispersed them, and supposed they had killed several. They then gathered up a part of the plunder, and about thirty horses, and returned, leaving one of their men dead on the ground, though they did not miss him till they had got home. Three or four others were badly wounded, and Patten and one other died soon. One of the opposite party was killed and others wounded.

This battle produced great excitement among the people, and the Mormons found in a day or two that it was militia instead of a mob that they had assailed. Captain Bogard had collected a company and got permission to guard Buncum, and was there encamped for that purpose when they fell on him. The excitement increased rapidly, and in a day or two the whole country, seemingly, was in arms. At this I was greatly alarmed, for I expected the people would turn out enmasse against Far West, without order or regulation, and massacre and destroy without mercy, and that nothing could stop them. I tried to contrive some plan to get away with my family, but I could not affect it. T. B. Marsh, O. Hyde, and some others, made their escape in the night, with their families, but were followed the next day by twenty horsemen from Far West without success. [p.39 - p.40]

The Mormons were still collected at Adamondiaman and at Far West, and a small company also collected at Hawn's Mill, who lived in that section of country. General Atchinson seeing the tumult and uproar, called out the militia. The news of this pleased me, for I thought that if they turned out under authority they would, of course, observe good order; and it was also stated that General Atchinson's object was to investigate the affair, and bring the guilty to punishment, and rescue the innocent. I was informed that the Mormons at Hawn's Mill made a covenant with the other citizens to let each other alone, and the Mormons were to remain at the mill. But in a short time, two or three companies of militia came upon them, from what cause I knew not. A battle was the result, and some twenty or thirty Mormons were killed, but none of the militia, as I heard, but some wounded. There were different reports about the number killed, but I heard one of the militia tell General Clark, that a well twenty or thirty feet deep, was filled up with their dead bodies to within three feet of the top. These troops, I was told, were from Davies and Livingston, and some from Carroll, but by what authority they fell upon these Mormons I never could learn.

## Chapter XXIII.

Peace sought for-- Militia encamp at Far West-- Correspondence with the officers--  
Breast-work-- Governor's order.

[p.40]

On Sunday, the fourth of November, we heard that Generals Atchinson and Doniphan, with an army, were encamped on Crooked River.

On Sunday evening Smith came to me to have me accompany Reed Peck the next day to meet their army with a white flag, in order to open a correspondence, if possible, and agree upon some terms of peace. We went in company with Colonel Hinkle and about one hundred and sixty horsemen. When we got near Crooked River we learned that the army had moved on to Log Creek, and were making their way to Far West. We thought proper to return, and it was with difficulty that we got back, for the militia had come between us and town. When we arrived, we saw a line of battle drawn up by the militia, and the Mormons also arrayed to meet them, but the militia, for some cause, withdrew to their camp on Goose Creek. About dark, Reed Peck took a white flag, and went into their camp. He saw General Doniphan and others. General Lucas, with his troops from Jackson County, had joined the army, and they were about thirteen hundred strong. When Peck returned he said that General Doniphan had appointed the next morning at eight o'clock to meet a committee of Mormons and make proposals of peace. He promised that no harm should befall us that night; he stated that their object was to bring the guilty to punishment, but the innocent should have an opportunity to escape before they would attack the place.

That night, the Mormons built a sort of breast-work of rails, house-logs, boards, etc., on that side of town next to the army, but it was about as good a defence as a common fence would be. Much has been said abroad about the Mormons building forts, entrenchments, etc., but this breast-work spoken of above is all that they ever had. In the night both armies were alarmed more or less, each being afraid of an attack from the other. [p.40 - p.41]

Next morning, at the time appointed, Reed Peck, Colonel Hinkle, and myself, went with the white flag, and met Generals Lucas, Doniphan, and some other officers, who informed us that they were waiting for General Clark, whom they expected soon with the Governor's order; that they were not prepared to make proposals of peace until it arrived, for they knew not what it would require of them or us. They agreed to let us know as soon as they received it. At the same time, General Doniphan informed us that General Lucas had the chief command. Smith appeared to be much alarmed, and told me to beg like a dog for peace, and afterwards said he would rather go to States-prison for twenty years, or would rather die himself than have the people exterminated. About three o'clock in the evening we received word that the Governor's order had arrived, so we went again to meet them, and see what it was. Colonel Hinkle, W. W. Phelps, Captain Morrison, Reed Peck, and myself went, and General Lucas read the order to us. [p.41]

Smith had previously requested that after receiving the order, or finding out what the Governor required, we should see him before we agreed to any proposals. We did so, and although the Mormons have accused us of giving up their leaders by intrigue, yet Smith himself was the first man that agreed to the proposals.

The following is a copy of the Governor's order:

“Head Quarters of the Militia, City of Jefferson, October 27th, 1838.”

“Sir--Since the order of the morning to you, directing you to cause four hundred mounted men to be raised within your division, I have received by Amos Rees, of Ray County, and W.G. Williams, Esq., one of my aids, information of the most appalling nature, which entirely changes the face of things, and places the Mormons in the attitude of an open and avowed defiance of the laws, and of having made war upon the people of this state. Your orders are, therefore, to hasten your operations and endeavor to reach Richmond, in Ray County, with all possible speed. The Mormons must be treated as enemies, and must be exterminated, or driven from the state if necessary for the public peace. If you can increase your forces, you are authorized to do so to any extent you may consider necessary. I have just issued orders to Major General Willcock, of Marion County, to raise five hundred men, and to march them to the northern part of Davies, and there unite with General Doniphan, of Clay, who has been ordered with five hundred men to proceed to the

same point, for the purpose of intercepting the retreat of the Mormons to the north. They have been directed to communicate with you by express; you can also communicate with them if you find it necessary. Instead, therefore, of proceeding as at first directed, to reinstate the citizens of Davies in their homes, you will proceed immediately to Richmond, and there operate against the Mormons. Brigadier General Parks, of Ray, has been ordered to have four hundred men of his brigade in readiness to join you at Richmond. The whole force will be placed under your command.

“General John B. Clark, Fayette, Howard Co.” (Signed,) L.W. BOGGS,  
Commander in Chief

#### Chapter XXIV.

Reflections-- Terms of peace-- Surrender of Smith, Rigden , and others-- Arms surrendered-- Place guarded-- Prisoners and arms taken to Jackson County.

[p.42]

This order greatly agitated my mind. I expected we should be exterminated without fail. There lay three thousand men, highly excited and full of vengeance, and it was as much as the officers could do to keep them off from us anyhow; and they now had authority from the executive to exterminate, with orders to cut off our retreat, and the word Mormons, I thought, included innocent as well as guilty; so of course there was no escape for any. These were my first reflections on hearing the order. But General Lucas soon said that they would be more mild than the order required; that if we would give up the heads of the Church to be punished; surrender our arms; give up all our property, (those who had taken up arms,) to pay the debts of the whole Church and the damages done in Davies and elsewhere; and then all leave the state forthwith, except those retained to be punished, they would spare our lives, and protect us out of the state.

The sun was then about two hours high, and he gave us till sunset to make up our minds and deliver the prisoners. A gentleman of note told me that if these men were suffered to escape, or if they could not be found, nothing could save the place from destruction and the people from extermination. We knew that General Lucas had no authority, and his requirements were illegal; for he was out of the bounds of his division, and the Governor's order was to General Clark, and not to him; but there was no other way for the Mormons but to submit. We immediately went into town and collected Joseph Smith, Jr., Sidney Rigden , Lyman Wight, Parley P. Pratt, and George W. Robertson together, and told them what the Governor's order and General Lucas required. Smith said if it was the Governor's order, they would submit, and the Lord would take care of them. So we hurried with them as fast as possible to the place appointed. We met General Lucas, with his army, but a short distance from town. He had made every arrangement to surround and destroy the place; but the prisoners delivered themselves up, and General Lucas, with the army and prisoners, returned to their camp. These prisoners were to be retained as hostages till morning, and then, if they did not agree to the proposals, they were to be set at liberty again. I suppose they agreed to the proposals, for they were not set at liberty.

Next morning, General Lucas marched his army near to town, and Colonel Hinkle marched out the Mormons, who gave up their arms, about six hundred guns, besides swords and pistols, and surrendered themselves as prisoners. [p.42 - p.43]

I would here remark, that a few days previous to this, news had frequently come to Far West that they were soon to be attacked, and Caldwell County destroyed; so the judge of the county court had ordered Colonel Hinkle, with the militia, to guard the county against invasion. They turned out and organized under this order, and in this situation surrendered to General Lucas. A guard was placed around Far West to keep all things secure, and General Parks, with an army, was sent to Adamondiaman, where were about one hundred and fifty armed Mormons, who surrendered to him and gave up their arms. The five prisoners who first surrendered, together with Amasa Lyman and Hiram Smith, who had been added to them, remained in the camp until Friday morning, When General M. Wilson, of Jackson, started the prisoners and arms to Independence. The troops were then discharged except a guard around town.

## Chapter XXV.

Arrival of General Clark-- Number of his troops-- Prisoners selected-- Marched to Richmond-- Prisoners retained-- Charges against them-- Conduct of the soldiers-- Prisoner killed-- Property taken by citizens-- Appropriation--Petition of Mormons.

[p.43]

On Saturday evening or Sunday morning, General Clark arrived with fourteen hundred mounted men, and said there were six thousand more within a day's march, but they were turned back. Previous to the arrival of General Clark, the Mormons were gathered together and about five hundred made to sign a deed of trust, in which five commissioners were appointed, to whom they deeded all their property in trust for the use of all the creditors of the Church, and also to pay all the damages done by the Danites, and the overplus, if any, was to be refunded. General Clark ratified what General Lucas had done, and kept the town well guarded, and permitted none to go out, except now and then one to see their families and then return again. However, in a day or two, he gathered up all the Mormon prisoners and selected forty or fifty, such as he thought, from the best information he could get, ought to be punished, and put them in a store and had them guarded overnight. He then withdrew the guard from town and let the remainder go free, but the next day marched with the prisoners to Richmond, where General Lucas had been previously ordered to return the prisoners and arms he had taken to Independence.

In Richmond, they guarded the prisoners, seven of whom (the leaders) they put in irons and held a court of enquiry before Judge King over them; after which they retained thirty-six for trial, and let the rest, between twenty and thirty, go free. Those retained for trial were charged with various crimes--treason, murder, arson, burglary, and larceny. General Clark, before leaving Far West, sent General Wilson to Adamondiaman with a sufficient force, and he so regulated matters there as to have all the Mormons leave Davies County except a very few, who were to see to the property, etc. The Mormons from Davies mostly went to Caldwell. [p.43 - p.44]

The prisoners charged with treason and murder were confined in jail, in Liberty and Richmond, and the rest let to bail. During this campaign, many reports were circulated concerning the misconduct of the soldiers, but how far they were true I am not able to say, but I thought at the time, the officers tried to keep good order among the troops, and that whatever abuse was practiced on the Mormons ought to have been charged on the individuals that did it, and not upon the officers or community at large. It was said that women were insulted and even ravished, but I doubt the truth of the latter. Some were insulted; yet, as soon as the officers were informed, they set guards to prevent further insult. Two men that were taken prisoners were struck on the head, one was badly hurt and the other killed. The man who killed him accused him of having abused his family and burned his house; but on returning home he found his house had not been burned at all. Why he was not committed for trial, I never knew. Many others were taken prisoners, but generally were well treated and set free without injury. There was much corn, cattle, fodder, etc., used for the army, but the officers said the state would pay for it. There were some instances of soldiers shooting cattle, hogs and sheep, merely for sport, when they did not want them for food, but this, I understood, was contrary to the officers orders. There were also several cases in which persons were plundered of horses and other property, even clothing and furniture out of houses, by the soldiers, but they alleged that they were looking after and getting their property back which had been taken from them. I have been told that the same has been practiced, more or less, by companies passing through the county, since the troops have been withdrawn. Others, to whom they were indebted, have taken their property for debts, until they are literally stripped, and are at this time in a miserable, destitute situation. The Legislature, setting forth a short history of their difficulties, from their first settlement in Jackson County to the present time, and praying the Legislature to rescind the Governor's exterminating order, under which they were compelled to leave the state, and also release them from the deed of trust made in duress; pay them for their arms or return them, and pay them for their arms taken from them, as well as other damages sustained by them in Jackson County, and let them have the privilege of living in the state. (When Colonel Pitcher took their arms in Jackson, he agreed to return them as soon as they left the county, but this he refused to do even on the Governor's order for them.) Some two hundred families have left Caldwell County, and others are preparing to go, but some are desirous to stay in the state; and their object in getting up the petition was to be relieved from their expelling contract, so that men should not have the privilege of abusing them

under a legal pretence, thinking it was right because they agreed to leave the state, though that contract was strictly illegal. This petition I presented to the legislature on the 19th of December. It produced some excitement in the House and was laid on the table for the present.

## Chapter XXVI.

Bible translated-- Egyptian mummies-- Increase and numbers of the Church--  
Opposition-- Laws of Consecration-- Terms established-- Their effect.

p.45

I will now state some things which have taken place in the Church, but not mentioned before. Shortly after the Church was first established, Smith translated the Bible, Old and New Testaments, which differ a little in some places from the old translation. This has not been published, though they contemplated doing it. In the summer of 1835, they purchased three or four Egyptian Mummies, with an ancient Egyptian record, written on papyrus, a part of which Smith professed to translate, making it out to be the writing of Abraham.

The high priests, elders and priests, have from the commencement of the Church, labored indefatigably to proclaim the gospel and gain disciples, and they have generally been successful, though strongly opposed. On the sixth day of April, 1830, there were but six members in the Church, but now their members are differently estimated from ten to forty thousand, though, in my opinion, there are from twelve to twenty thousand. Much exertion has been used to confute and put down their doctrine and belief, but as foolish as it is, their elders have generally been able to compete with and baffle their opponents. Several publications have appeared against them, as well as newspaper prints, but the misfortune generally has been, that they contained so much misrepresentation, that it has destroyed the confidence of the public in the truth they did contain. Men of influence in the Church have, at different times, turned against it, become its violent enemies, and tried to destroy it, but generally without success. If Smith, Rigden and others, of the leaders, had managed wisely and prudently, in all things, and manifested truly a Christian spirit, it would have been very difficult to put them down. But their imprudence and miscalculations, and manifest desire for power and property, have opened the eyes of many, and did more to destroy them than could possibly have been done otherwise. My opinion is, that if the Church had been let alone by the citizens, they would have divided and subdivided so as to have completely destroyed themselves and their power, as a people, in a short time.

I will now proceed to mention some points of doctrine and faith peculiar to the Church, which I have not before mentioned.

It is believed by them that the Church ought to act in concert, and feel one general interest in building up the "great cause;" and that every man ought to consider his property as consecrated to the Lord for that purpose; yet their law gives every man the privilege of managing his own concerns, and provides against taking each other's property without paying for it; and if a man gives for the benefit of the Church, it is considered a voluntary offering. Yet the law requires or enjoins a consecration of the overplus, after reserving for himself and family, and to carry on his business. [p.45 - p.46]

Much has been said, and great exertions used, at times, to inspire the members of the Church with a spirit of consecration and voluntary offering. Some have thus been led to give up all, while others have been backward, which has caused the leaders, at times, to resort to other means of obtaining money to carry on their operations. From some they would borrow, promising to pay again, others they would stimulate to liberality by promising them blessings and prosperity in the name of the Lord, in their business and future prospects; thus, many, from time to time, have lost their property and become dissatisfied, until a great many have lost confidence in their leaders. [p.46]

Shortly after the Danites became organized, they set out to enforce the Law of Consecration; but this did not amount to much. Then they undertook another plan, in which Doctor Averd was very officious and forward, viz.; to constitute large firms, so that every male member of the Church could become a member of the firm. Every man was to put in all his property by leasing it to the firm for a term of years; overseers or managers were to be chosen from time to time, by the members of the firm, to manage the concerns of the same, and the rest were to labor under their direction. In the division of the profits, more regard was to be paid towards the needs and wants of the members, than to the amount of



stock put in. Many joined these firms, while many others were much dissatisfied with them, which caused considerable feeling and excitement in the Church. Smith said every man must act his own feelings, whether to join or not, yet great exertions were used, and especially by Doctor Arverd, to persuade all to join.

## Chapter XXVII.

Healing the sick-- Blessing children-- Age of accountability-- Patriarchs-- Words of Wisdom-- Sacrament-- Resurrection and future state-- Matter eternal-- War law-- Cause of difficulty-- Remarks to the Church.

The Mormons believe in, and constantly practice, the laying on of hands and praying for the healing of the sick. Sometimes they have been healed, sometimes partly healed, and sometimes not benefitted at all. If they are healed they say it was because of their faith, as the Saviour promised, "According to their faith be it unto thee; thy faith hath made thee whole," etc.--Matt. viii.13, and ix. 22. If partly healed, it is still according to their faith, as it was said of some in old times. "And they began to amend from that very hour;" but if they are not healed, or benefitted at all, then it is for the want of faith, as when the lunatic was brought to the disciples and they could not heal him because of their unbelief--Matt. xvii. 20, and xiii. 58. But they think in this as in many other cases, practice makes perfect, and it is necessary to an increase in faith, confidence and the power of God. [p.46 - p.47]

The members of the Church are required to bring their children under eight years old, into meeting, and have the elders lay hands on and bless them in the name of the Lord. This they say, was according to the custom of the ancients, also of the Saviour, who commanded little children to be brought to him for that purpose. They also believe that a child begins to be accountable at eight years old, and not sooner; and it is the duty of the parents to teach and instruct them up to that age, and then have them baptized into the Church. [p.47]

It also was a rule in the Church to have one in each stake (most generally the oldest, if suitable) appointed and ordained a patriarch, whose duty it was to be a sort of father to the Church, and bless such children as had no natural father to bless them.

For a general rule, they excluded the use of ardent spirits, tobacco, tea, and coffee, in accordance with a revelation called the Words of Wisdom, in which the abstinence from these things were recommended, but not commanded. Also, wasting of flesh, or taking of life of animals unnecessarily, or for sport, was forbidden.

The sacrament was administered on every first day, (Sabbath), by a high priest or an elder. Bread and wine are used as emblems, but for wine they prefer the pure juice of the grape when they can get it, and they administer in remembrance of the body and blood of the Saviour, as the scripture commands.

They believe that in the resurrection there are different glories to which persons will be raised and enjoy. The first is compared to the sun, and is called the celestial; the second is compared to the moon, and is called the terrestrial; the third is compared to the stars, and is called the telestial. The last has in itself many different glories, differing from each other as do the stars.--1 Cor. xv. 40-42. They also believe that every man will be raised in his own order, and will enjoy that glory for which he has been prepared, according to his works.

The celestial kingdom, they think, is a kingdom of perfect order, and he that will not submit to the laws and ordinances and established order of God in the Church, can never enter the celestial glory. And they believe that the spirits of the just enter paradise, after death, and remain there until the resurrection, when they are reunited with the body, and enter into a perfect state of glory. They also believe that the wicked will be raised according to the scriptures.

They believe that matter is eternal, and that nothing of all God's works will ever be destroyed or lost; but in the end all things will be restored to their proper place, and the sons of perdition alone will endure the lowest hell, or lake of fire and brimstone.

In matters of war, they hold it a duty to strive for peace, and not resent an injury, but bear patiently at first, second, and third time; but they are not bound to receive or bear the fourth, but may resist to the uttermost in their own defence, and in putting down their enemies.

They esteem the law of God, as given through their prophet, to be vastly superior to any other law; and if they could have the privilege, they would prefer to be governed by that alone; and this, I believe, is the grand cause of jealousy and difficulty between them

and their neighbors, who prefer to be governed by other laws. [p.47 - p.48]

The abolition question is discarded by them, as being inconsistent with the decrees of heaven, and detrimental to the peace and welfare of the community. [p.48]

In a council some three or four years ago, it was agreed that the Church should bear the name of "The Church of Christ of Latter-Day Saints."

Thus I have given a brief sketch of the Church, and now, with a few remarks to the Church, I will close.

I have left you, not because I disbelieve the Bible, for I believe in God, the Saviour, and religion the same as ever; but when I retrace our track, and view the doings of the Church for six years past, I can see nothing that convinces me that God has been our leader; calculation after calculation has failed, and plan after plan has been overthrown, and our Prophet seemed not to know the event till too late. If he said go up and prosper, still we did not prosper; but have labored and toiled, and waded through trials, difficulties, and temptations, of various kinds, in hope of deliverance. But no deliverance came. The promises failed, and time after time we have been disappointed; and still were commanded, in the most rigid manner, to follow him, which the Church did, until many were led into the commission of crime; have been apprehended and broken down by their opponents, and many have been obliged to abandon their country, their families, and all they possessed, and great affliction has been brought upon the whole Church. What shall we say to these things? Did not your prophet proclaim in your ears that the day was your own, and you should overcome; when in less than a week you were all made prisoners of war, and you would have been exterminated, had it not been for the exertions and influence of a few dissenters, and the humane and manly spirit of a certain officer?

But where now may you look for deliverance? You may say, in God; but I say, in the exercise of common sense and that sound reason with which God has endowed you; and my advice is to follow that, in preference to those pretended visions and revelations which have served no better purpose than to increase your trouble, and which would bind you, soul and body, under the most intolerable yoke.

## TO THE READER

[p.48 - p.49]

It is stated in the foregoing narrative that Smith translated the scriptures. The following is a specimen of the manner in which he performed that work. It is the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, but in order to shew the connection, I will commence with the last verse of the twenty-third chapter, viz.: "For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Chap. 24. "Thou understood his disciples that he should come again on the earth, after that he was glorified and crowned on the right hand of God. And Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and his disciples came to him for to hear, saying, Master, shew 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; then, verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here upon this temple one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. [p.49]

And Jesus left them, and went upon the Mount of Olives; and as he sat upon the Mount the disciples came unto him privately, saying, tell us when shall these things be which thou hast said concerning the destruction of the temple and the Jews; and what is the sign of thy coming, and the end of the world, or the destruction of the wicked, which is the end of the world.

Jesus answered and said unto them, take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many; then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and you shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake; and then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another; and many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many; and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold: but he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved. When you, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, then you shall stand in the holy place. Whoso readeth, let him understand. Then let them who be in Judea flee into the mountains; let him who is in the housetop not come down to take his clothes; and woe unto them that are with child, and unto them that give suck in those days. Therefore pray you the Lord that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day; for then in those days shall be great tribulation on the Jews, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, such as was not before sent

upon Israel, or the world, since the beginning of sorrows, and except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake, according to the covenant, those days shall be shortened. Behold, these things I have spoken unto you concerning the Jews; and then immediately after the tribulation of those days which shall come upon Jerusalem, if any man shall say unto you, lo here is Christ, or there, believe him not; for in those days there shall also arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if possible, they shall deceive the very elect, who are the elect according to the covenant. Behold, I speak these things unto you for the elect's sake; and you shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled, for all I have told you must come to pass, but the end is not yet. Behold, I have told you before; wherefore if they shall say unto you, behold, he is in the desert, go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chamber, believe it not; for as the light of the morning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, and covereth the whole earth, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.

And now I shew unto you a parable. Behold, wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together; so likewise shall mine elect be gathered from the four quarters of the earth; and they shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars. Behold, I speak unto you for mine elect's sake; for nation shall rise against nation, and, kingdom against kingdom; there shall be famine, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places; and again, because iniquity shall abound, the love of man shall wax cold; but he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved. And again, this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come, or the destruction of the wicked.

And again shall the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, be fulfilled. And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall be shaken. Verily I say unto you, this generation, in which these shall be shewn forth, shall not pass away till these be fulfilled. Although the days will come that heaven and earth will pass away, but my words shall not pass away, but all shall be fulfilled. And, as I said before, after the tribulation of those days, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man, coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory; and whoso treasureth up my words, shall not be received. For the Son of Man shall come, and he shall send his angels before them with the great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. [p.49 - p.50]

Now learn a parable of the fig tree: when his branches are yet tender and putteth forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh at hand; so likewise mine elect, when they shall see all these things, they shall know that he is near, even at the doors. But of that day and hour knows no man: no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also at the coming of the Son of Man; for it shall be with them as it was in the days that were before the flood until the day that Noah entered into the ark, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, and knew not, until the flood came, and took them all away. So shall the coming of the Son of Man be. [p.50]

Then shall be fulfilled that which is written, that in the last days 'two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other shall be left;' and what I say unto one I say unto all men: watch, therefore, for ye know not at what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to have been broken up; but would have been ready. Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh. Who, then, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler, over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing; and verily I say unto you, he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, my Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in that hour that he is now aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and shall appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth: And then cometh the end of the wicked, according to the prophecy of Moses, saying, they should be cut off from among the people. But the end of the earth is not yet, but by and by.