

The Angel Message Tracts

Chapter 10

"THE LATTER-DAY GLORY"

(CHURCH HISTORY IN BRIEF)

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And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth.—Revelation 14: 6. : : :



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"The Latter-Day Glory"

CHAPTER 10

*The Spirit of God like a fire is burning;
The latter-day glory begins to come forth
The visions and blessings of old are returning;
The angels are coming to visit the earth.*

It is a time-worn axiom that truth is stranger than fiction. No romance ever written is stranger than the history that we are about to recount. Yet it is true. It is the record of that "Marvelous work and a wonder" mentioned by Isaiah. (Isaiah 29:14.)

It is the story of the restoration and growth of the church of Jesus Christ in these last days. For convenience we will divide that history into periods.

1. THE PERIOD OF PREPARATION

One beautiful spring morning a boy came out of the forest, God's first temple, from his season of secret prayer, with tidings that set the world agog. He had seen a heavenly vision. His startling claim was that revelation from God to man had been resumed, in a hard, prosaic age of which the prophet had written, "the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered."—Isaiah 29:10.

Fresh from his forest seclusion he met a clergyman to whom he innocently recounted his experience, only to be told that it was all of the Devil. The

controversy thus begun still rages in press and pulpit and has literally circled the earth. Strange, that a boy by an assertion should thus disturb and disrupt ecclesiastical circles!

This boy was Joseph Smith. He was born December 23, 1805, at Sharon, Windsor County, Vermont, of poor but honest and intelligent parentage. At the time when this history opens he was in his fifteenth year, and was living with his father's family near Manchester, New York.

THE FIRST VISION

A great religious revival had been in progress, conducted by leading denominations. Joseph Smith was powerfully moved upon, and became deeply concerned for his soul's salvation. He sought to find the straight and narrow path, the "one way."

But soon the revival terminated. Amity fled. An unseemly scramble for the lion's share of the converts ensued. Tearful penitents were plucked to and fro by contending pastors. Out of this shameful confusion came a strange *denouement*, best told in the language of Joseph Smith:

While I was laboring under the extreme difficulties caused by the contests of these parties of religionists, I was one day reading the epistle of James, first chapter and fifth verse, which reads: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine.

It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart. I reflected on it again and again, knowing that if

any person needed wisdom from God I did, for how to act I did not know, and unless I could get more wisdom than I then had would never know; for the teachers of religion of the different sects understood the same passage so differently as to destroy all confidence in settling the question by an appeal to the Bible.

At length I came to the conclusion that I must either remain in darkness and confusion, or else I must do as James directs; that is, ask of God. I at length came to the determination to "ask of God," concluding that if he gave wisdom to them that lacked wisdom and would give liberally, and not upbraid, I might venture.

So in accordance with this my determination, to ask of God, I retired to the woods to make the attempt. It was on the morning of a beautiful clear day, early in the spring of eighteen hundred and twenty. It was the first time in my life that I had made such an attempt, for amidst all my anxieties I had never as yet made the attempt to pray vocally.

After I had retired into the place where I had previously designed to go, having looked around me and finding myself alone, I kneeled down and began to offer up the desires of my heart to God.

I had scarcely done so when immediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction.

But exerting all my powers to call upon God to deliver me out of the power of this enemy which had seized upon me, and at the very moment when I was ready to sink into despair and abandon myself to destruction, (not to an imaginary ruin, but to the power of some actual being from the unseen world who had such a marvelous power as I had never before felt in my being,) just at this moment of great alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun; which descended gradually until it fell upon me.

It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two personages (whose brightness and glory defy all description) standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name, and said, (pointing to the other,) "This is my beloved Son, hear him."

My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner therefore did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right, (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong,) and which I should join.

I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong, and the personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; "they draw near me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; they teach for doctrine the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof." He again forbade me to join with any of them: and many other things did he say unto me which I cannot write at this time. When I came to myself again I found myself lying on my back, looking up into heaven.

Some few days after I had this vision I happened to be in company with one of the Methodist preachers who was very active in the beforementioned religious excitement, and conversing with him on the subject of religion I took occasion to give him an account of the vision which I had had.

I was greatly surprised at his behavior; he treated my communication not only lightly, but with great contempt, saying it was all of the Devil; that there was no such thing as visions or revelations in these days; that all such things had ceased with the apostles, and that there never would be any more of them .

I soon found, however, that my telling the story had excited a great deal of prejudice against me among professors

of religion, and was the cause of great persecution, which continued to increase; and though I was an obscure boy only between fourteen and fifteen years of age, and my circumstances in life such as to make a boy of no consequence in the world, yet men of high standing would take notice sufficient to excite the public mind against me, and create a hot persecution; and this was common among all the sects; all united to persecute me.

It has often caused me serious reflection both then and since, how very strange it was that an obscure boy of a little over fourteen years of age, and one too, who was doomed to the necessity of obtaining a scanty maintenance by his daily labor, should be thought a character of sufficient importance to attract the attention of the great ones of the most popular sects of the day, so as to create in them a spirit of the hottest persecution and reviling.

But strange or not, so it was, and was often cause of great sorrow to myself. However, it was nevertheless a fact that I had had a vision. I have thought since that I felt much like Paul when he made his defense before King Agrippa and related the account of the vision he had when he "saw a light and heard a voice," but still there were but few who believed him; some said he was dishonest, others said he was mad; and he was ridiculed and reviled; but all this did not destroy the reality of his vision.

He had seen a vision, he knew he had, and all the persecution under heaven could not make it otherwise; and though they should persecute him unto death, yet he knew and would know unto his latest breath, that he had both seen a light, and heard a voice speaking to him, and all the world could not make him think or believe otherwise.

So it was with me, I had actually seen a light, and in the midst of that light I saw two personages, and they did in reality speak unto me, or one of them did; and though I was hated and persecuted for saying that I had seen a vision, yet it was true.—Church History, vol. 1, pp. 8-11.

THE KEYNOTE: "HEAR YE HIM"

Certain points stand out prominently in this revelation. Let not the reader overlook the most important of them all, the keynote of the message and of the work that followed, to the present day: "This is my beloved Son, hear *him*."

Too long had people listened to men and man-made doctrines. It was time to turn to Jesus and hear him. Within the churches *reformation* had failed to recover the ancient order; the hour of *restoration* had struck.

It was Alexander Campbell, one of the most noted of the reformers, who said:

Since the full development of the great apostasy foretold by prophets and apostles, numerous attempts at reformation have been made.—Christian System, p. 3. (Edition of 1890.)

Societies, indeed, may be found among us, far in advance of others, in their progress toward the ancient order of things; but we know of none that has fully attained to that model.—Ibid., p. 291.

And he concluded his discussion of the creeds:

Do not . . . the practical result of all creeds, reformations, and improvements and the expectations and longings of society—warrant the conclusion that either some *new revelation*, or some new development of the revelation of God must be made, before the hopes and expectations of all true Christians can be realized, or Christianity save and reform the nations of this world? We want the *old gospel back, and sustained by the ancient order of things*.—Ibid., p. 250. (Italics ours.)

CREEDS AND PROFESSORS

Joseph Smith was told to join none of the churches then existing; that the creeds were wrong, and "those professors" corrupt.

This announcement gained for him the enmity of many theologians, and in itself accounts to a large degree for the troubles that his followers afterward encountered. Yet the charge was no more harsh than some of the declarations issuing from Wesley and others of the reformers.

It was not alleged that all religious people were corrupt. Far from it. The term "those professors" may be logically held to find its antecedent in the reference to those professors of religion, particularly the professional clergy, who had conducted the aforementioned revival and had followed it by such disgraceful quarrels: "If ye are not *one*, ye are not *mine*."

But if he choose to do so, the reader may extend the scope of the language to include all professors, who then taught or do now teach "for doctrine the commandments of men" and draw near to God with their lips while their hearts are far from him.

The charge against the creeds stands self-evidently true. Indeed in many instances its truthfulness is self-confessed by those churches which have since revised their creeds and are still revising them, a confession of past error. Some of the doctrines then contained in the creeds, notably the doctrine of election and predestination, may well be considered "abominable" in the sight of God. (See chapter 8, p. 127, of this series.)

A SECOND VISION

A second vision, thrice repeated in one night, was granted some three years later, described as follows:

When on the evening of the above-mentioned twenty-first of September, [1823] after I had retired to my bed for the night, I betook myself to prayer and supplication to Almighty God for forgiveness of all my sins and follies, and also for a manifestation to me, that I might know of my state and standing before him; for I had full confidence in obtaining a divine manifestation as I had previously had one.

While I was thus in the act of calling upon God I discovered a light appearing in the room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noonday, when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside standing in the air, for his feet did not touch the floor.

He had on a loose robe of most exquisite whiteness. It was a whiteness beyond anything earthly I had ever seen; nor do I believe that any earthly thing could be made to appear so exceedingly white and brilliant; his hands were naked, and his arms also a little above the wrist. So also were his feet naked, as were his legs a little above the ankles. His head and neck were also bare. I could discover that he had no other clothing on but this robe, as it was open so that I could see into his bosom.

Not only was his robe exceedingly white, but his whole person was glorious beyond description, and his countenance truly like lightning. The room was exceedingly light, but not so very bright as immediately around his person.

When I first looked upon him I was afraid, but the fear soon left me. He called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Nephi [Moroni]. That God had a work for me to do, and that my name should be had for good and evil, among all nations, kindreds, and tongues; or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people.

He said there was a book deposited written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang.

He also said that the fullness of the everlasting gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants. Also that there were two stones in silver

bows, and these stones fastened to a breastplate constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim, deposited with the plates, and the possession and use of these stones was what constituted seers in ancient or former times, and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book. After telling me these things he commenced quoting the prophecies of the Old Testament.—Church History, vol. 1, pp. 12, 13.

A full account of this vision may be found in Church History, volume one. The heavenly messenger went on to quote Malachi 3 and 4, Isaiah 11 and a part of Joel 2; saying that these were shortly to be fulfilled.

OUTSTANDING POINTS

First. The young man was told in this vision that God had a work for him to do, and that his name should be had for good and evil among all nations. The work that he was to do was unfolded later in the organization of the church after the New Testament pattern, and the restoration of “the old gospel,” with its doctrines and blessings, “sustained by the ancient order of things.”

The prophecy that his name should be had for good and evil was literally fulfilled: the name of the boy who that night communed with a bright messenger from on high has been bandied to and fro for good or for evil among all peoples.

Second. He was told that certain prophecies were about to be fulfilled. A leading prophecy in the chapters referred to was that the Jews should be gathered back to Palestine and their land again be blessed (See in particular Isaiah 11: 11, 12).

At that time the return of the Jews was hardly

dreamed of. To-day the Encyclopedia Britannica (11th edition) says:

Prior to 1858, when the modern building period commenced, Jerusalem lay wholly within its sixteenth century walls. . . . At present Jerusalem *without the walls* covers a larger area than that *within* them. (Italics ours.)

This is in striking fulfillment of the prediction:

And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, and said unto him, Run, speak to this *young man*, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited *as towns without walls* for the *multitude* of men and cattle therein.—Zechariah 2: 3, 4. (Italic ours.)

These tidings Zechariah said should be given to a young man by an angel. Joseph Smith received them in that way and gave them to the world.

The Outlook, April 1, 1914, announced that the city authorities of Jerusalem were contemplating selling the outgrown city walls for building material.

Third. He was told concerning a certain book written upon gold plates and containing a history of the ancient inhabitants of America and God's dealings with them.

Four years later, September 22, 1827, he obtained those plates from the hands of the angel, at the hill commonly known as Hill Cumorah, described as "convenient to the village of Manchester, Ontario County, New York."

By divine assistance he was enabled to translate this book, the Book of Mormon, and it was published in March, 1830. This book is an adequate reply to Ingersoll's charge that "the Christian God did not know of the existence of America until Columbus told him of it."

AUTHORITY RESTORED

Undeniably authority must be had to preach the gospel and officiate acceptably in the ordinances of the church.

And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest.—Hebrews 5:4, 5.

It is not a matter of deciding to go out and preach. A call and an ordination are necessary. Jesus said:

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you.—John 15:16.

Men may attempt to trace their authority and priesthood by succession back to Jesus and the apostles. For those who reject *restored* authority this is the *only* alternative.

Yet that leads every Protestant minister back into the Catholic Church. John Wesley recognized that and said:

When asked by what authority I did these things, I replied by the authority of Jesus Christ conveyed by the Archbishop of Canterbury when he laid his hands on me.

And the Archbishop of Canterbury traced his ordination back to Rome. The same is true of Luther:

His [Luther's] ordination, therefore, and that of all his Protestant successors, is as valid as that of the Romish priesthood at the beginning of the 16th century.—I. Daniel Rupp, *History of Religious Denomination*, p. 400.

But is it sufficient to trace authority back to the Catholic Church and into the mazes of the dark ages of apostasy? There it is lost under the terms of this edict:

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.”—2 John 9.

Others may answer for themselves. We judge them not. But for ourselves we must answer in the negative. We believe in authority restored by angelic administration under divine direction.

THE PRIESTHOOD RESTORED

As the work of preparation progressed the day came when the Aaronic or lesser priesthood was restored. That event is thus described:

We still continued the work of translation, when in the ensuing month, (May, eighteen hundred and twenty-nine,) we on a certain day went into the woods to pray and inquire of the Lord respecting baptism for the remission of sins, as we found mentioned in the translation of the plates. While we were thus employed, praying, and calling upon the Lord, a messenger from heaven descended in a cloud of light, and having laid his hands upon us, he ordained us, saying unto us, "Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion, for the remission of sins, and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness." He said this Aaronic priesthood had not the power of laying on of hands, for the gift of the Holy Ghost, but that this should be conferred on us hereafter, and he commanded us to go and be baptized, and gave us directions that I should baptize Oliver Cowdery, and afterwards that he should baptize me.

Accordingly we went and were baptized, I baptized him first, and afterwards he baptized me, after which I laid my hands upon his head and ordained him to the Aaronic priesthood, and afterwards he laid his hands on me and ordained me to the same priesthood, for so we were commanded.

The messenger who visited us on this occasion, and conferred this priesthood upon us said that his name was John,

the same that is called John the Baptist, in the New Testament, and that he acted under the direction of Peter, James, and John, who held the keys of the priesthood of Melchisedec, which priesthood he said should in due time be conferred on us—and that I should be called the first elder, and he the second. It was on the fifteenth day of May, eighteen hundred and twenty-nine, that we were baptized and ordained under the hand of the messenger.

Immediately upon our coming up out of the water, after we had been baptized, we experienced great and glorious blessings from our heavenly Father. No sooner had I baptized Oliver Cowdery than the Holy Ghost fell upon him and he stood up and prophesied many things which should shortly come to pass: And again so soon as I had been baptized by him, I also had the spirit of prophecy, when, standing up I prophesied concerning the rise of the church, and many other things connected with the church, and this generation of the children of men. We were filled with the Holy Ghost, and rejoiced in the God of our salvation.—Joseph Smith in *Times and Seasons* vol. 3, pp. 865, 866.

Oliver Cowdery thus describes their experiences on that occasion:

This was not long desired before it was realized. The Lord, who is rich in mercy, and ever willing to answer the consistent prayer of the humble, after we had called upon him in a fervent manner, aside from the abodes of men, condescended to manifest to us his will.

On a sudden, as from the midst of eternity, the voice of the Redeemer spake peace to us, while the veil was parted and the angel of God came down clothed with glory, and delivered the anxiously looked for message, and the keys of the gospel of repentance!

What joy! what wonder! what amazement! While the world was racked and distracted—while millions were groping as the blind for the wall, and while all men were resting upon uncertainty, as a general mass, our eyes beheld—our ears heard.

As in the “blaze of day”; yes, more—above the glitter of

the May sunbeam, which then shed its brilliancy over the face of nature! Then his voice, though mild, pierced to the center, and his words, "I am thy fellow servant," dispelled every fear.

We listened—we gazed—we admired! 'Twas the voice of the angel from glory—'twas a message from the Most High! and as we heard we rejoiced, while his love enkindled upon our souls, and we were rapt in the vision of the Almighty!

Where was room for doubt? Nowhere: uncertainty had fled, doubt had sunk, no more to rise, while fiction and deception had fled forever!

But, dear brother, think, further think for a moment, what joy filled our hearts and with what surprise we must have bowed, (for who would not have bowed the knee for such a blessing?) when we received under his hand the holy priesthood, as he said, "Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer this priesthood and this authority, which shall remain upon earth, that the sons of Levi may yet offer an offering unto the Lord in righteousness!"—Church History vol. 1, pp. 37, 38.

In due time, in harmony with the revelation previously quoted, the higher or Melchisedec priesthood was restored to them. Under this authority they were commanded to ordain each other first, and then others, as God should point them out. However, they were instructed to defer this ordination until they should meet for church organization.

II. THE PERIOD OF ORGANIZATION AND GROWTH

The period of preparation drew to a close and the work of organization began. The church was organized on the 6th day of April, 1830, in Fayette, Seneca County, New York. Of that event Joseph Smith writes:

Whilst the Book of Mormon was in the hands of the printer, we still continued to bear testimony, and give in-

formation, as far as we had opportunity; and also made known to our brethren, that we had received commandment to organize the church, and accordingly we met together for that purpose, at the house of the above-mentioned Mr. Whitmer (being six in number) on Tuesday the sixth day of April, A. D. one thousand, eight hundred and thirty.

Having opened the meeting by solemn prayer to our heavenly Father we proceeded, (according to previous commandment) to call on our brethren to know whether they accepted us as their teachers in the things of the kingdom of God, and whether they were satisfied that we should proceed and be organized as a church according to said commandment which we had received. To these they consented by an unanimous vote. I then laid my hands upon Oliver Cowdery and ordained him an elder of the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." After which he ordained me also to the office of an elder of said church.

We then took bread, blessed it, and brake it with them, also wine, blessed it, and drank it with them.

We then laid our hands on each individual member of the church present that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and be confirmed members of the church of Christ. The Holy Ghost was poured out upon us to a very great degree. Some prophesied, whilst we all praised the Lord and rejoiced exceedingly.—*Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, pp. 944, 945.

The work of organization and growth went on rapidly. Even while yet their numbers were so few, they were told by revelation that the church should be organized with apostles, elders, seventies, bishops and all the quorums and officers contained in the New Testament church.

Men came at the call of God. The church grew. Elders were ordained, as we have seen. The first bishop was called February 4, 1831. Twelve apostles were ordained at Kirtland, Ohio, February 14, 1835.

The organization of a quorum of seventy began February 28, 1835. A First Presidency was organized in 1833.

Other officers were called of God and set in their respective places until there existed again a church organized exactly after the original plan, containing all those officers that we are assured in Holy Writ, "God set in the church."

Missions also, and local churches were established. A complete judicial system was organized, also a financial department. The church was fully equipped to carry on its mission work and to perform all necessary legislative, executive and judicial functions of an ecclesiastical nature.

III. PERIOD OF PERSECUTION

The period of persecution may be said to have begun with the period of organization and growth, if not, indeed, previous to that date, as we have seen.

One of the first public baptismal scenes, 1830, was an occasion for mob violence. These persecutions increased in violence as the years went by and as the growth of the church brought it more into public notice.

This may seem strange to some. The fact that the Saints were driven from place to place with great slaughter and suffering is held to be an evidence against them. But Jesus said:

But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another.—Matthew 10: 23.

If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.—John 15: 20.

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.—John 15: 18.

AT KIRTLAND, OHIO

In October, 1830, Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, jr., Ziba Peterson and Parley P. Pratt were appointed on a mission west to the Indians. En route they tarried at Kirtland, Ohio, for a time.

At this place they were very successful. Sidney Rigdon, afterward a member of the First Presidency, was among their converts, and with him many of his congregation. He was a brilliant and powerful "Christian" minister of note in the Western Reserve.

About one hundred and twenty-seven were baptized, including many afterward prominent in the church.

A strong following was built up at Kirtland, and the church was directed to remove to that point. Joseph Smith and others arrived there early in 1831. For a number of years Kirtland continued to be one of the most important points of gathering.

THE KIRTLAND TEMPLE

The corner stone of the Kirtland Temple was laid July 23, 1833. This remarkable structure was completed after great labor, hardship and sacrifice; the dedication occurring March 27, 1836. This building is still in good condition and in use by the church.

The Lord blessed the people wonderfully in this temple. The gifts of the gospel were manifested in tongues, prophecies and visions.

Schools were organized for the instruction of the

elders, and for the study of the Hebrew language and other subjects—the Saints were a studious people, also they were pioneer temperance workers in Ohio. At Kirtland, October 23, 1837, the High Council, Joseph Smith, president, adopted the following resolution:

That we discountenance the use of ardent spirits, in any way, to sell, or to be brought into this place for sale or use.—Church History, vol. 2, p. 110.

Much has been written against the Saints in Ohio, but Robert Lucas, who was governor of Ohio from 1832 to 1836, during the greater part of their sojourn there, and governor of Iowa at the time of their movement to Nauvoo, in a letter to President Martin Van Buren, dated at Burlington, Iowa, April 22, 1839, said:

I think it due to that people to state, that they had for a number of years a community established in Ohio, and that while in that State they were (as far as I ever heard) believed to be an industrious, inoffensive people; and I have no recollection of having ever heard of any of them being charged in that state as violators of the laws.—Church History, vol. 2, p. 97. (This letter is on file in Washington, District of Columbia; a photographic copy being in the possession of the Church Historian.)

At this place, too, grievous persecution occurred. During February, 1832, Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were dragged from their homes at night and cruelly beaten and tarred and feathered.

A REMARKABLE TESTIMONY

But as of old, persecutions were lightened by blessings. It was during this same month that a most remarkable vision was given. As a result of that

vision a testimony was published to the world such as has emanated from no other body of religious believers in this age. We quote:

We, Joseph Smith, jr., and Sidney Rigdon, being in the Spirit on the sixteenth of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two, by the power of the Spirit our eyes were opened, and our understandings were enlightened, so as to see and understand the things of God; even those things which were from the beginning before the world was, which were ordained of the Father, through his only begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, even from the beginning, of whom we bear record, and the record which we bear is the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the Son, whom we saw and with whom we conversed in the heavenly vision. . . . And, now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him, that he lives; for we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father; that by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created; and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God.—Doctrine and Covenants 76: 3.

IN MISSOURI

The history of the church in Missouri is to a large extent contemporaneous with the history of the church in Ohio.

Early in 1831 the missionaries to the Indians continued their journey from Kirtland. In his autobiography one of them says:

After much fatigue and some suffering we all arrived in Independence, in the county of Jackson, on the extreme western frontiers of Missouri, and of the United States.

This was about fifteen hundred miles from where we started and we had performed most of the journey on foot, through

a wilderness country in the worst season of the year, occupying about four months, during which we had preached the gospel to tens of thousands of Gentiles and two nations of Indians; baptizing, confirming, and organizing many hundreds of people into churches of Latter Day Saints.—Church History, vol. 1, p. 178.

Following a conference in Kirtland, June, 1831, it was decided to hold the next conference in Independence. Many elders started on overland missions, to meet at that place.

June 19, 1831, Joseph Smith and others left Kirtland for Missouri, reaching Independence about the middle of July.

In July a revelation was given naming Missouri as a place of gathering, and the spot for a temple at Independence was designated. August 2, Joseph Smith assisted in laying the first logs for a house in Kaw Township. August 4 the first conference was held.

A MOB GATHERS

The community grew rapidly. A publishing house, a store and other institutions were established. But within two years persecution came upon them again. A mob assembled July 20, 1833, and demanded that the Saints should depart. They asked for three months, but were told laconically that they could have fifteen minutes.

The four or five hundred members of the mob then demolished the publishing house, and tarred and feathered Bishop Partridge and a man named Allen.

The mob came against them again on the 23d, at which time Partridge, Phelps, Whitmer and other

church leaders generously offered their lives a ransom for the membership. But an agreement was reached by which the Saints were to leave Jackson County.

Amid great hardship and suffering they removed as rapidly as possible to Clay County. The armistice was not respected and the mob continued to expedite their departure by destroying their homes and property and maltreating their persons.

SEEKING AN ASYLUM

The wrath of the mobbers pursued them, and in 1836 an exodus took place to the newly organized county of Caldwell, which had been especially set aside for their uses. Settlements were formed at Far West and other points. Joseph Smith and others of the brethren came to Far West from Kirtland in 1838.

A pleasant testimonial to the character of the Saints at Far West is found in the History of Caldwell and Livingston Counties, published by the Saint Louis Historical Society:

The Mormons very early gave attention to educational matters. There were many teachers among them and school-houses were among their first buildings.

The Saints were pioneer temperance workers in Missouri as in Ohio. The minutes of a conference at Far West, November 7, 1837, contain the following item:

The congregation, after a few remarks from Sidney Rigdon, unanimously voted not to support stores and shops selling spirituous liquors, tea, coffee, or tobacco.—Church History, vol. 2, p. 120.

THE "EXTERMINATION ORDER"

In the disastrous times which came upon them, one of their worst enemies having been elected governor, they were denied all mercy or redress. October 23, 1838, the famous "extermination" edict of Governor Boggs was issued, in which he said: "The Mormons must be treated as enemies, and must be *exterminated* or driven from the State."

We prefer to draw a veil over the scenes that were enacted. The Saints were at the mercy of the mob and the militia. Their leaders were imprisoned. Bloody butcheries occurred, notably at Haun's Mill, where adults and little children alike were massacred with guns and corn-knives and their mutilated bodies buried in an old well in one common, awful sepulcher.

Joseph and Hyrum Smith were condemned to be shot at eight o'clock on the morning of November 1, 1838, and were only saved by the courageous action of General Doniphan who refused to execute the order, calling it "cold-blooded murder."

Eventually the Saints, those who escaped death, were driven from the State. Their property taken from them, many of them fled for their lives across the Mississippi River in the dead of winter, suffering from cold, sickness and famine. At that time, an unprejudiced newspaper, the *Argus* of Quincy, Illinois, under date of March 16, 1839, had this to say:

We give in to-day's paper the details of the recent bloody tragedy acted in Missouri—the details of a scene of terror and blood unparalleled in the annals of modern and, under

the circumstances of the case, in ancient history—a tragedy of so deep and fearful and absorbing interest that the very lifeblood of the heart is chilled at the simple contemplation. . . . It will be observed that an organized mob aided by many of the civil and military officers of Missouri, with Governor Boggs at their head, have been the prominent actors in this business, incited, too, it appears, against the Mormons by political hatred, and by the additional motives of plunder and revenge. They have but too well put in execution their threats of extermination and expulsion, and fully wreaked their vengeance on a body of industrious and enterprising men, who had never wronged nor wished to wrong them, but on the contrary had ever comported themselves as good and honest citizens, living under the same laws and having the same right with themselves to the sacred immunities of life, liberty, and property.

CAUSES OF PERSECUTION

One cause of the persecution brought against the Saints was their opposition to slavery. They were mostly eastern men and ardent abolitionists; they were surrounded by slave sentiment—a dangerous combination.

Also their customs, speech and dress were different from the western men among whom they had moved. They encountered the prejudice that awaits the “outlander.”

Most of all, their religious convictions were resented. Religious bigotry bore its usual bloody fruit of martyrdom.

Resolutions adopted by certain citizens of Clay County, June 29, 1836, support the above statements, as follows:

These are some of the reasons why these people have become objects of the deepest hatred and detestation to many of

our citizens. They are Eastern men, whose manners, habits, customs, and even dialect are essentially different from our own; they are nonslaveholders, and opposed to slavery, which, in this peculiar period when abolition has reared its deformed and haggard visage in our land is well calculated to excite deep and abiding prejudices in any community where slavery is tolerated and practiced.—Church History, vol. 2, p. 58.

While the document drawn up and signed by the Jackson County mob, July 18, 1833, said:

It is more than two years since the first of these fanatics or knaves (for one or the other they undoubtedly are) made their first appearance amongst us, and pretending as they did and now do to hold personal communication and converse face to face with the most high God; to receive communications and revelations direct from heaven; to heal the sick by laying on hands; and, in short, to perform all the wonder-working miracles wrought by the inspired apostles and prophets of old. . . .

They openly blaspheme the most high God and cast contempt on his holy religion by pretending to receive revelations direct from heaven, by pretending to speak unknown tongues by direct inspiration, and by diverse pretenses derogatory of God and religion, and to the utter subversion of human reason.—Church History, vol. 1, pp. 313, 314.

Was it a crime to believe God to be an unchangeable, loving Father?

If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.—John 14: 23.

Yet for this belief they were driven out.

A CHARACTERISTIC EPISTLE

During these troublesome times Joseph Smith addressed an epistle to the church, December 16, 1838.

The following extracts indicate the ideals of the Saints:

Brethren, from henceforth, let truth and righteousness prevail and abound in you; and in all things be temperate; abstain from drunkenness, and from swearing, and from all profane language, and from everything which is unrighteous or unholy; also from enmity, and hatred, and covetousness, and from every unholy desire.

Be honest one with another, for it seemeth that some have come short of these things, and some have been uncharitable, and have manifested greediness because of their debts towards those who have been persecuted and dragged about with chains without cause, and imprisoned.

Such characters God hates—and they shall have their turn of sorrow in the rolling of the great wheel, for it rolleth and none can hinder. Zion shall yet live, though she seemeth to be dead.

Remember that whatsoever measure you mete out to others, it shall be measured to you again. We say unto you, brethren, be not afraid of your adversaries; contend earnestly against mobs, and the unlawful works of dissenters and of darkness.

And the very God of peace shall be with you, and make a way for your escape from the adversary of your souls. We commend you to God and the work of his grace, which is able to make us wise unto salvation. Amen.

JOSEPH SMITH, JR.

—*Millennial Star*, vol. 16, pp. 628, 629.

IN ILLINOIS

For a time the wandering exiles from Zion found refuge in Quincy. May 1, 1839, a church committee purchased two tracts of land at Commerce, Illinois, for the sum of fourteen thousand dollars. The name of this village was later changed to Nauvoo.

Into an old log block house located at this place

Joseph Smith moved his family, and the Saints began to move upon farms, and build shops, stores, mills and schoolhouses.

June 27, 1839, the first conference was held. By June 1, 1840, two hundred and fifty houses had been erected. June 6 of that year the first company of emigrants from the British Isles Mission started from Liverpool for Nauvoo—the first fruits of a very important foreign mission.

The Saints were pioneer temperance workers in Nauvoo. When provision was made for the “Nauvoo House,” a lodging house where visiting travelers (of whom there were many) might be entertained, the building being promoted by the church under a joint stock company, one provision in the articles of incorporation was, that it should be a “perpetual rule” in said house that spirituous liquors of every description should be prohibited.

By act of the State legislature, Nauvoo received a very liberal charter, signed by the governor, December 16, 1840. Abraham Lincoln was a member of the legislature that granted the charter, and it was signed by Stephen A. Douglas, Secretary of State. Among other things the charter permitted the organization of the University of Nauvoo, and the establishment of a body of troops under State control, to be known as the Nauvoo Legion.

Such powers were common at that time in Illinois, as the State was very near the frontier. Many such independent military companies existed.

THE NAUVOO TEMPLE

April 6, 1841, the corner stone of the temple was

laid. This remarkable structure was built of white limestone quarried near the city; the church artisans giving every tenth day of their labor to the temple building. The temple was erected, but never completed.

The beautiful city of Nauvoo grew rapidly. But the troubles of the Saints were not yet at an end. Their old enemies still harried them, making several attempts to kidnap leading church men and carry them back to Missouri for trial on false charges; also striving by intrigue with Illinois officials to secure them by requisition. Their religious teachings were still extremely unpopular.

With the idea of self-protection they took an active part in politics; also as we have seen they organized the Nauvoo Legion. These steps were taken in all sincerity, but probably did them more harm than good.

Added to their persecutions from outside sources, there were troubles from certain apostates who had been expelled from the church for immoral conduct. These latter began the publication of the Nauvoo *Expositor*, June 7, 1844. This paper was filled with exceedingly vile and slanderous stories.

June 10, the city council, partly composed of non-members, met and voted the paper a nuisance and ordered the mayor to suppress it. On order of the mayor, who at the time was Joseph Smith, the city marshal destroyed the type and press.

This may have been an unwise act. But on June 14, Joseph Smith reported to Governor Ford, of Illinois, offering to appear before any legitimate

court for examination as to the legality of the proceeding.

THE TRAGEDY AT CARTHAGE

The Saints were not afraid of the law, but they had good reason to be afraid of mobs. On the pledged word of Governor Ford that they would be protected, Joseph Smith, his brother Hyrum, and others gave themselves up, and were taken to Carthage.

Before he bade his friends good-by, Joseph said:

I am going as a lamb to the slaughter; I have a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward all men—I shall die innocent, and it shall yet be said of me, he was murdered in cold blood.

The prediction was too literally fulfilled. The men were lodged in the jail at Carthage, like Paul and Silas of old. They were left under an insufficient and hostile guard. And on the afternoon of June 27 a mob of men with faces painted black and yellow surrounded the jail and shot and killed Joseph and Hyrum Smith.

Joseph Smith had approached heaven in his boyhood days with a most vital question. Receiving his answer he had conveyed the heavenly message to men. The fate of the prophet overtook him.

IV. THE "DARK AND CLOUDY DAY"

Following the death of Joseph Smith there ensued a period aptly termed in church parlance, "The dark and cloudy day."

The persecutions of the Saints, their sufferings and their sorrows, were as nothing to the shame that

came upon them because of false leadership and the inroads of corrupt doctrines.

Numerous would-be leaders of the church arose. Most prominent among them was Brigham Young, who at the time of the death of Joseph Smith was president of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. Finding himself in a position of advantage and power he began almost at once to manipulate everything to his own advantage.

FALSE DOCTRINES COME IN

As soon as he was sure of sufficient following he assumed in reality the powers of a dictator. In this he was supported by a part of the Quorum of Twelve. At "Winter Quarters," near Omaha, December 5, 1847, at a council of the Twelve he arrogated to himself the title of first president of the church.

In taking that title it was necessary for him to confirm the resolution by his own vote, as without it a majority vote could not be obtained—there being only six others of the quorum present.

Without divine call and without ordination he proceeded to occupy his self-appointed position. With those who would follow him he moved westward to Utah and established himself by the Great Salt Lake, where for many years he was supreme potentate in things both ecclesiastic and civic.

Once thoroughly established he began the promulgation of doctrines corrupt in nature and utterly opposed to the previous teaching of the church, perhaps most notorious of these being polygamy, blood atonement and Adam-God worship.

We purposely draw a veil over this period of apostasy and transgression, as we wish to make this series of tracts almost wholly affirmative. Suffice it to say that such doctrines and practices were utterly opposed to the teachings of the church under the administration of Joseph Smith, from its inception until his death, in 1844. (The reader may obtain from the Herald Publishing House, books and tracts dealing with this phase of church history and giving evidence in support of this assertion.)

The shame and dishonor brought upon the cause by the promulgation and practice of these doctrines can hardly be overestimated. It has been worldwide; and untold thousands of innocent and sincere believers in the message as delivered in the beginning have thereby been brought under undeserved suspicion and reproach.

Well was this period (approximately from 1844 to 1852) called the "Dark and cloudy day." It seemed at that time that the "latter-day glory" had become the "latter-day ignominy."

V. PERIOD OF REORGANIZATION AND RETURN

But a brighter day dawned. Iniquity had come in like a flood; yet there were many honest in heart who were not moved. God began to feel after them; as indeed they were feeling after the truth, some of them going from faction to faction in their search.

There were thousands in various parts of the world who gave no allegiance to false doctrines. There were some entire branches that maintained

their organization and pursued the even tenor of their way in truth and righteousness.

THE PROPHECY OF 1851

Presently there began a work of reorganization. Evidences of this movement were seen as early as 1851. November 18 of that year Elder Jason W. Briggs received a spiritual manifestation and divine direction, from which we quote:

While pondering in my heart the situation of the church, on the 18th day of November, 1851, on the prairie, about three miles northwest of Beloit, Wisconsin, the Spirit of the Lord came upon me, and the visions of truth opened to my mind, and the Spirit of the Lord said unto me, "Verily, verily, saith the Lord, even Jesus Christ, unto his servant, Jason W. Briggs, concerning the church:

Behold, I have not cast off my people; neither have I changed in regard to Zion. Yea, verily, my people shall be redeemed, and my law shall be kept which I revealed unto my servant, Joseph Smith, jr., for I am God and not man, and who is he that shall turn me from my purpose, or destroy whom I would preserve? Wolves have entered into the flock, and who shall deliver them? Where is he that giveth his life for the flock? Behold, I will judge those who call themselves shepherds, and have preyed upon the flock of my pastures. . . .

Therefore, let the elders whom I have ordained by the hand of my servant Joseph, or by the hand of those ordained by him, resist not this authority, nor faint in the discharge of duty, which is to preach my gospel as revealed in the record of the Jews, and the Book of Mormon, and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants; and cry repentance and remission of sins through obedience to the gospel, and I will sustain them, and give them my Spirit; and in mine own due time will I call upon the seed of Joseph Smith, and will bring one forth, and he shall be mighty and strong, and he

shall preside over the high priesthood of my church; and then shall the quorums assemble, and the pure in heart shall gather, and Zion shall be reinhabited, as I said unto my servant Joseph Smith; after many days shall all these things be accomplished, saith the Spirit.—Church History, vol. 3, pp. 200, 201.

This communication rests upon its own merits. As the years went by its predictions were literally fulfilled. The message was carried from branch to branch and from individual to individual.

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTION

At a conference held at Beloit, Wisconsin, June, 1852, important resolutions were adopted, repudiating the claims of all self-appointed leaders and supporting the law of God as found in the Bible, Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants.

Another conference was held at Yellowstone, Wisconsin, October 6, 1852. And at a meeting January 9, 1853, the following instruction was received from the Lord:

Polygamy is an abomination in the sight of the Lord God: it is not of me; I abhor it. I abhor it, as also the doctrines of the Nicolaitans, and the men or set of men who practice it. . . . Be ye strong; ye shall contend against this doctrine.—Church History, vol. 3, p. 215.

PENTECOSTAL BLESSING

A conference was held at Zarahemla, Wisconsin, April 6, 1853. The gifts of the gospel were enjoyed to a wonderful degree. The occasion was pentecostal with prophecies, tongues, visions and many wonderful and soul-cheering blessings.

The latter-day glory again shone forth. The Saints moved forward with the work of reorganization, as directed.

It may be proper at this juncture to state that at the death of Joseph Smith, his wife, Emma, chose to remain at Nauvoo, refusing to follow designing leaders and rejecting all false doctrines. Here she reared her sons in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The oldest of these sons bore his father's name, Joseph Smith. To him the Reorganization began to look, as directed by revelation; also because he had been blessed by his father and indicated as his successor. (See Church History, vol. 3, p. 506, and True Succession of Church Presidency, pp. 39-49.)

THE CONFERENCE OF 1860

The work of reorganization moved on. Regular conferences were held. And at last dawned the memorable 6th day of April, 1860. The Saints had assembled in conference at Amboy, Illinois.

To that conference came Joseph Smith, son of Joseph Smith the Martyr, accompanied by his mother. At that time he was in his twenty-eighth year. At the afternoon session he made a speech in which he said that he had come in obedience to a power higher than his own.

In harmony with the revelations by which he had been designated, a resolution was adopted: "That Brother Joseph Smith be chosen prophet, seer of the church and revelator of Jesus Christ, and the successor of his father."

He was ordained president of the high priesthood

(which carried with it the office of President of the Church) under the hands of Z. H. Gurley, sr., of the Twelve, William Marks, who had been president of the Nauvoo Stake, and Samuel Powers and W. W. Blair, of the Twelve.

He was joined in his work by his brothers, Alexander and David. Thus after a lapse of nearly ten years the revelation to Jason W. Briggs had been fulfilled in one leading particular: "In mine own due time will I call upon the seed of Joseph Smith and will bring one forth, . . . and he shall preside over the high priesthood of my church."

A PROPHETIC GENERAL EPISTLE

The man thus chosen moved forward with the true prophetic spirit. Let all read carefully this remarkable extract from his first general epistle, and determine for themselves as to its prophetic qualities:

I would not that men should hastily run without tidings, nor do I ask that any should place the stake of their salvation upon an earthly arm. "Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, and maketh flesh his arm."

I ask and desire that all may place their stake of salvation upon the author and finisher of our faith—upon the promises and principles of the gospel, pure as preached from the Savior's lips, for in him was no guile, and in his teachings there was no deceit.

In the name of the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, I now call upon all the scattered Saints, upon all the broad earth, to arise and shake off the sleep that hath bound them these many years, take on the armor of the just, calling on the name of the Lord for help, and unite once more

for the emancipation of the honest in heart from the power of false doctrines and the shackles of sin.

In the name of bleeding Zion, I call upon all those who have been wandering in by and forbidden paths, and have been led astray by wicked and designing men, to turn from their scenes of wickedness and sins of convenience, to turn from their servitude to Satan, in all his seductive devices; from vice in every phase, and from the labor of sin, the wages whereof are ever death, unto their true and delightful allegiance to the principles of the gospel of peace, to the paths of wisdom, to the homage of that God that brought the children of Israel out of bondage; to turn and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon; to lay hold anew upon the rod of iron which surely leads to the tree of life; to remember that those who live to the Lord keep his commandments, and that the promises are unto the faithful, and the reward unto those that endure unto the end.

And in the name of the Lord of hosts, I call upon all the inhabitants of the earth to repent, believe, and be baptized, for the time cometh when the judgments of God are to be poured out upon all nations, and the besom of God's wrath shall smoke through the land; when men shall know that there is a God in Israel, and he is mighty to punish or to save; that the prayers of those under the altar have been heard, and a swift retribution is to come, when the despoiler will be despoiled; when those who denied justice shall be judged, and the measure meted unto others shall be meted unto them; when the prisoner shall go free, the oppressed be redeemed, and all Israel shall cry, "Glory to God in the highest be given, for he that is long-suffering and slow to anger, has arisen, and shall bring again Zion." Amen and amen.

JOSEPH SMITH,

President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

NAUVOO, ILLINOIS, July 19, 1861.

—Church History, vol. 3, pp. 294, 295.

A GLORIOUS REVIVAL

What a splendid message after the councils of darkness that had obscured wisdom and debased morals! Thousands rallied gladly to the call. A time of glorious revival ensued.

In due time other portions of the promise were fulfilled. Jason W. Briggs had been told that the quorums should assemble. This has long ago been literally fulfilled. Every quorum has been filled and set in order.

He was told that Zion should be reinhabited. At the time few if any Saints lived in Missouri, nor would their return even singly have been tolerated. To-day under the wise leadership of the Reorganized Church there are thousands of Saints living in Missouri.

THE RETURN

Best of all, they are living in peace. Their principles are understood. Their morality is unquestioned. This is fully in harmony with a prophecy given during the days of Joseph Smith the Martyr:

Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered, they that remain and are pure in heart *shall return* and come to their inheritances; they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy.—Doctrine and Covenants 98: 4. (Italics ours.)

In 1838 President Joseph Smith, then a child clinging to his mother's skirts, crossed the ice of the Mississippi River, fleeing from the mob. In 1906 he returned to Missouri, and lived and died in Independence, an honored citizen. At his death, December 10, 1914, there appeared in the editorial columns

of one of the leading daily papers of Jackson County, the following well earned tribute:

But in the death of the late venerable head of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints the country loses an interesting and useful citizen. Joseph Smith was considerably more than a powerful churchman into whose keeping had been committed the destinies of one of the great denominations of the world.

Those who ignorantly confounded the Reorganized Church with Mormonism, in the objectional acceptance of that term, will not appreciate the theological distinctions between the two nor understand that nothing was more hateful to Joseph Smith than the doctrines of Brigham Young, with their polygamous teachings and all the other features which make Utah Mormonism obnoxious in the eyes of the average American. . . .

He was the prophet, but first of all he was the Christian gentleman and the good citizen. As such he lived, as such he died, as such he will be remembered by all outside the household of his faith. . . .

Kindly, cheerful, loyal to his own creed, tolerant of those of others, standing for modesty, simplicity, good citizenship, embodying in his private and public life all the virtues which adorn a character worthy of emulation—such is the revelation which Joseph Smith leaves to the world, as the real interpretation of an ecclesiastical message translated into terms of human character.—*Kansas City Journal*, December 12, 1914.

The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is identical with the church from its inception in 1830 until the death of Joseph Smith in 1844. It is the criterion by which the “angel message,” as it is termed, must be judged. It is the true exponent of that which the world from the beginning chose to term “Mormonism.”

IN THE CIVIL COURTS

This claim has twice been sustained in the civil courts, after thorough investigation before unprejudiced tribunals. That fact means more than merely that the Reorganized Church is in true succession, which question of course is not determined by number of adherents but by soundness in the faith. It means that what the Reorganized Church stands for to-day in morals, doctrines and practices, the church under Joseph Smith stood for from 1830 until 1844.

The following is an extract from a decision rendered by Judge L. S. Sherman, in the Court of Common Pleas, Lake County, Ohio. (See Journal entry, February term, 1880) :

That the said Plaintiff, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, is a Religious Society, founded and organized upon the same doctrines and tenets, and having the same church organization, as the original Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, organized in 1830, by Joseph Smith, and was organized pursuant to the constitution, laws and usages of said original Church, and has branches located in Illinois, Ohio and other States.

That the church in Utah, the Defendant of which John Taylor is president, has materially and largely departed from the faith, doctrines, laws, ordinances and usages of said original Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and has incorporated into its system of faith the doctrines of celestial marriage and a plurality of wives, and the doctrine of Adam-god worship, contrary to the laws and constitution of said original Church.

March 16, 1894, Judge John F. Philips, in the Circuit Court of the United States, for the Western District of Missouri, Western Division, rendered a de-

cision in the famous "Temple Lot Case," from which we quote:

The Book of Mormon itself inveighed against the sin of polygamy. . . . Conformably to the Book of Mormon, the Book of Doctrine and Covenants expressly declared "that we believe that one man should have but one wife, and one woman but one husband." And this declaration of the church on this subject reappeared in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, editions of 1846 and 1856. Its first appearance as a dogma of the church [the dogma of polygamy] was in the Utah Church in 1852.

Claim is made by the Utah Church that this doctrine is predicated on a revelation made to Joseph Smith in July, 1843. No such revelation was ever made public during the life of Joseph Smith, and under the law of the church it could not become an article of faith and belief until submitted to and adopted by the church. This was never done. . . .

The Utah Church further departed from the principles and doctrines of the Original Church by changing in their teaching the first statement in the Article of Faith which was, "We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in his Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost," and in lieu thereof taught the doctrine of "Adam-god worship." . . .

In 1852 the scattered fragments of the church, the remnants of those who held to the fortunes of the present Joseph Smith, son of the so-called "Martyr," gathered together sufficiently for a nucleus of organization. They took the name of "The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," and avowed their allegiance to the teachings of the ancient church; and their epitome of faith adopted, while containing differences in phraseology, in its essentials is but a reproduction of that of the church as it existed from 1830 to 1844.—Decision of Judge John F. Philips in Temple Lot Case.

LATER HISTORY

President Joseph Smith continued in the presidency of the Reorganized Church from April 6, 1860, until his death, December 10, 1914. Under his wise administration of over a half century the church was thoroughly reorganized and set in order in all the world.

At his death he was succeeded by his son, Frederick M. Smith, who had been designated by revelation for that position, and who was ordained to the office of president of the high priesthood, and as prophet, seer and revelator, May 5, 1915, in harmony with the action of the preceding General Conference.

The headquarters of the church were removed from Plano, Illinois, to Lamoni, Iowa, in 1881, and continued there until 1920, when official change was made to Independence, Missouri, where about five thousand members reside.

The work is now in a sound position. The annual gains are gratifying. Prejudice and misunderstanding have been removed to a great degree. The church is in a position to prosecute its mission work as never before. No man can justly object to that work, because everywhere those who accept the message and live by it become better citizens.

Wonderful events are ahead of the church, as indicated by the signs of the times. We may expect the "latter-day glory" to shine forth with increased splendor as God makes good his promise to pour out of his Spirit, in the last days upon all flesh.

OUR IDEALS

Identical in faith and organization with the New Testament Church, teaching the same doctrine, guided by the same Spirit, the church goes forward with her work. Our religious ideals include a people gathered and educated in righteousness, equal in things both temporal and spiritual, like the people of Enoch, without rich or poor, every man rendering justly according to his abilities and receiving according to his needs.

Looking forward to the personal second advent of our Lord and Savior, as predicted in the Scriptures, we shall ever pray and endeavor to prepare ourselves and warn all others against that day, of which it is written :

The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap.—Malachi 3: 1, 2.

Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not.—Luke 12: 40.