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REORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

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In this tract we purpose treating the above subject in as brief and condensed manner as possible, under the following heads; viz.:

1. Do the revelations of God through Joseph the Seer make ample provision for a reorganization of the church?

2. Does rejection of the first organization imply rejection of either the membership or priesthood of all the individuals composing that body?

3. Is the Utah church itself a reorganization?

4. Is the idea of reorganization in conflict with Daniel 2: 44?

Respecting question number 3, we shall call upon the authorities of the dominant church in Utah to make answer for themselves.

In considering the other queries, we shall appeal to the word of God chiefly.

“What is written in the law? How readest thou?”—
Luke 10: 26.

“Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled. What I the Lord have spoken I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether

by mine own voice, or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.”—Doc. and Cov. 1:7, 8.

So we begin at once to make the required “search” of the revelations, with confidence and delight. Reader, are you prepared to accompany us? No? Too self-sufficient to perceive you may have erred; too egotistical to understand the folly and shame of judging before hearing “the conclusion of the whole matter;” too arrogant to listen to your brother; too fearful, lest you might see with your eyes, hear with your ears, understand with your heart, and be converted; or, are you simply too disgusted by what you have seen and heard to follow farther conflicting claims of factions of the church; too indifferent to care which, if either, is right? Then stop here. Close all the avenues of your mind and heart. Let no ray of light come in. But be ye prepared to meet the awful consequences of a course fraught with such folly and fatality, both in this world and that which is to come. If you are not willing to assume the responsibilities thus involved, then arise in the strength of true manhood and womanhood, free yourselves from the maladies mentioned, follow this investigation to the end, and you shall discover the old paths of Latter Day Saintism, the good way, and find rest to your souls.

Taking up these topics in their order, we inquire,

1. Do the revelations of God through Joseph the Seer make ample provision for a reorganization of the church?

The answer is simple.

“I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say, but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise.”—Doc. and Cov. 81:3. Utah edition, 82:10.

Did the original organization receive and retain the chief promise the Lord made to it by doing satisfactorily to him, what he had said; did it accomplish the principal purpose the Lord had in mind in effecting it? If so, there is no room for reorganization; if not, there is a demand for it.

Was not the great promise to the Saints, that of a land, a place for a home, both in time and eternity?

“And I hold forth and deign to give unto you greater riches, even a land of promise; a land flowing with milk and honey, upon which there shall be no curse when the Lord cometh; and I will give it unto you for the land of your inheritance, if you seek it with all your hearts: and this shall be my covenant with you, Ye shall have it for the land of your inheritance, and for the inheritance of your children forever, while the earth shall stand; and ye shall possess it again in eternity, no more to pass away.”—Doc. and Cov. 38: 4.

To learn the importance and necessity of the Saints gathering to this land of promise, please read:

“And ye are called to bring to pass the gathering of mine elect, for mine elect hear my voice and harden not their hearts; wherefore the decree hath gone forth from the Father that they shall be gathered in unto *one place*, upon the face of this land, to prepare their hearts, and be prepared in all things, against the day when tribulation and desolation are sent forth upon the wicked.”—Doc. and Cov. 28: 2. Utah edition, 29: 7, 8.

“And righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out my own elect from the four quarters of the earth unto *a place* which I shall prepare; a holy city, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my com-

ing; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem."—Doc. and Cov. 36:12.

Reader, do you know where the land of Zion, the one place unto which the Saints must gather, is located?

"Hearken, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land which is the land of *Missouri*, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints: wherefore this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion."—Doc. and Cov. 57:1.

Under the administration of the first organization of the church, the Saints did not obtain this land, though they were promised that they should, "if you seek it with all your hearts." That they failed because they did not do what the Lord had said is clearly manifested in many revelations of God to them, of which we note the following:

"Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days; and the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land."—Doc. and Cov. 64:7.

"Verily, I say unto you, concerning your brethren who have been afflicted, and persecuted, and cast out from the land of their inheritance, I, the Lord, have suffered the affliction to come upon them, wherewith they have been afflicted in consequence of their transgressions; yet, I will own them, and they shall be mine in that day when I shall come to make up my jewels."—Doc. and Cov. 98:1. Utah edition, 101:1-3.

"Therefore, it is my will that my people should

claim, and hold claim, upon that which I have appointed unto them, though they should not be permitted to dwell thereon; nevertheless, I do not say they shall not dwell thereon; for inasmuch as they bring forth fruit and works meet for my kingdom, they shall dwell thereon; they shall build, and another shall not inherit it; they shall plant vineyards, and they shall eat the fruit thereof. Even so. Amen.”—Doc. and Cov. 98:13. Utah edition, 101:99–101.

“But verily I say unto you, that I have decreed a decree which my people shall realize, inasmuch as they hearken from this very hour, unto the counsel which I, the Lord, their God, shall give unto them. Behold, they shall, for I have decreed it, begin to prevail against mine enemies from this very hour, and by hearkening to observe all the words which I, the Lord their God, shall speak unto them, they shall never cease to prevail until the kingdoms of the world are subdued under my feet; and the earth is given unto the saints, to possess it forever and ever. But inasmuch as they keep not my commandments, and hearken not to observe all my words, the kingdoms of the world shall prevail against them; . . . they are as salt that has lost its savor, and is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.”—Doc. and Cov. 100:2. Utah edition, 103:5–10.

Did the Saints “begin to prevail over mine enemies” from the “very hour” this revelation was given, 1834; and did they never cease to prevail until the kingdoms of the world were subdued; or was the very reverse of all this true? Were they cast out of the land of promise and trodden under foot of men? Let the persecu-

tions, bloodshed, fearful calamities, and final expulsion of the smitten Saints from Missouri answer!

They evidently failed to observe all of the Lord's words; they did not keep his commandments; they did not do what the Lord had said.

In "Priesthood and Presidency," by Charles W. Penrose, page 3, note how completely the author avoids a discussion of the real causes of church rejection, viz.: transgression of the commandments of God, and makes it dependent upon the dissolution of the quorum of the Presidency. He manufactures this position for his opponents and then charges the absurdity of it to them! Hear him:

"First, let us examine the grounds on which *it is asserted* that the Church established by the Prophet Joseph has been disorganized and rejected. . . . At the death of Joseph Smith the First Presidency of the Church consisted of Joseph Smith, President, Sidney Rigdon, Counselor. . . . The martyrdom disorganized that council or quorum, but did that disorganize the Church? If so, then the Church will be disorganized whenever its President shall be removed by death or otherwise."

Who "asserted" this "ground" for disorganizing and rejecting the church, save the writer just quoted?

To further study the real cause of the rejection of the church and the character and gravity of the evils which were introduced into the church at a very early date, and which continued to develop until they wrought such disaster to the hopes of the Saints, please read the following, given January, 1831:

"And now I show unto you a mystery, a thing which is had in secret chambers, to bring to pass even your

destruction, in process of time, and ye knew it not, but now I tell it unto you, and ye are blessed, not because of your iniquity, neither your hearts of unbelief, for verily some of you are guilty before me."—Doc. and Cov. 38: 4.

Revelation given May, 1831:

"Behold, I the Lord have looked upon you, and have seen abominations in the church, that profess my name; but blessed are they who are faithful and endure, whether in life or in death, for they shall inherit eternal life. But woe unto them that are deceivers, and hypocrites, for thus saith the Lord, I will bring them to judgment."—Doc. and Cov. 50: 2.

In August, 1831, the Lord reproved them thus:

"Wherefore, I, the Lord, am not pleased with those among you, who have sought after signs and wonders for faith, and not for the good of men unto my glory; nevertheless, I gave commandments and many have turned away from my commandments and have not kept them. There were among you adulterers and adulteresses; some of whom have turned away from you, and others remain with you, that hereafter shall be revealed. Let such beware and repent speedily, lest judgment shall come upon them as a snare, and their folly shall be made manifest, and their works shall follow them in the eyes of the people."—Doc. and Cov. 63: 4.

Matters went from bad to worse, as shown by revelation of September, 1832:

"And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received, which vanity and unbelief hath brought the whole church under

condemnation. And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all; and they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written, that they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom, otherwise there remaineth a scourge and a judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion; for, shall the children of the kingdom pollute my holy land? Verily, I say unto you, Nay."—Doc. and Cov. 83: 8. Utah edition 84: 54-59.

Having thus, by numerous and flagrant transgressions, forfeited their right to retain the Lord's "holy land," they were mercilessly expelled from Missouri. Finding a resting place at Nauvoo, the Lord in pity and compassion gave them another and final opportunity to secure for themselves a permanent home. Hear him (January, 1841):

"And if my people will hearken unto my voice, and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people, behold, verily I say unto you, they shall not be moved out of their place."—Doc. and Cov. 107: 13. Utah edition, 124: 45.

The compulsory exodus of many of the Saints from Nauvoo to the valley of the mountains tells the story of their disobedience. The cup of their iniquity was full. Listen to the last voice of warning to them in this same revelation, paragraphs 10, 11:

"But I command you, all ye my saints, to build a house unto me; and I grant unto you a sufficient time to build a house unto me, and during this time your baptisms shall be acceptable unto me. . . . And if you do

not these things at the end of the appointment, ye shall be rejected as a church with your dead, saith the Lord your God."

In an epistle of the Quorum of Twelve, December, 1841, signed by President Brigham Young and eight other members, is this statement:

"The building of the Temple of the Lord, in the city of Nauvoo, is occupying the first place in the exertions and prayers of many of the saints at the present time, knowing as they do, that, if this building is not completed, speedily, 'we shall be rejected as a church with our dead,' for the Lord our God hath spoken it."—*Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, p. 625.

Was this building ever completed? Let President Young answer:

"It is true we left brethren there [at Nauvoo] with instructions to finish it [the temple], and they got it nearly completed before it was burned. . . . Now we have a temple [at St. George, Utah] . . . of which there is enough completed to commence work therein which has not been done since the days of Adam, that we have any knowledge of."—*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 18, p. 304.

Nauvoo temple not completed, and no temple since the days of Adam sufficiently completed to commence work in! That settles it. The church was rejected.

2. Does rejection of the first organization imply rejection of either the membership or priesthood of all the individuals composing that body?

From the instruction contained in the following revelation we answer, No, decidedly, emphatically, No:

"Those . . . might have power to lay the foundation of this church, . . . the only true and living church upon

the face of the whole earth, with which I the Lord am well pleased, speaking unto the church collectively and not individually; for I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance."

Could anyone infer from this, "the only church" the Lord was pleased with, that he was pleased with every person in the church? No; because he is careful to say, "speaking of the church collectively and not individually." Precisely. And that is just the manner in which he spoke of the rejection, "Rejected as a church," not as individuals.

3. Is the Utah church itself a reorganization?

Respecting this, I extract the following from a purported revelation to P. P. Pratt, shortly after the martyrdom of Joseph Smith:

"Go and say unto my people in Nauvoo, that they shall continue to pursue their daily duties and take care of themselves, and make no movement in church government to re-organize or alter anything until the return of the remainder of the quorum of the Twelve."—Autobiography of P. P. Pratt, p. 371.

This document contemplates reorganization in church government, upon the return of the Twelve. But President Young forever settles this question. Hear him:

"And we now, having it in contemplation soon to reorganize the church according to the original pattern, with a First Presidency and Patriarch."—*Millennial Star*, vol. 10, p. 86.

4. Is the idea of reorganization in conflict with Daniel 2: 44?

Whatever value there is in this criticism, it applies with equal force to the Utah church, for it is committed to the same "idea." But it is urged that "church rejec-

tion" is in conflict with Daniel 2: 44. Let us see. The most technical disputant must admit that the Lord intended and actually threatened to reject them as a church, if they did not comply with certain requirements.

"God is not a man that he should lie."—Num. 23: 19.

Therefore, had they not complied with the conditions mentioned, the Lord would have carried out his intention and threat, viz.; reject them as a church. Had he forgotten his word, recorded in Daniel 2: 44, or elsewhere, when he made this threat? Or, did he threaten to do what he could not do without contradicting a previous statement of his own, and which, therefore, he had no intention of doing? Preposterous!

Let the searcher after truth compare Daniel 2: 44 with the discussion of church rejection in this pamphlet, under question number 2. The difficulty is imaginary, not real. As proof of this, see the epistle of the Twelve, signed by Brigham Young as President, page 9 this tract. Therein they manifested great anxiety lest "we shall be rejected as a church with our dead."

In 1841 the apostles were urging the Saints to avoid this awful calamity and calling their attention to the necessity of completing the temple at Nauvoo as the only means of escaping it. Now at the mere mention of rejection of the church, the successors of these same apostles, the present "living oracles," exclaim, "Impossible; the Lord could not reject the church without conflicting with his own word!" When were the living oracles right; *in 1841*, when they actually feared the church would be rejected, or are they right now, when they say such a thing is an impossibility? Why this change of attitude? Is it because they themselves

now really believe there is confliction between the idea of church rejection and Daniel 2:44; or, is it rather because the completion of the temple at Nauvoo, the very thing, according to their own saying, upon which the safety of the church depended, was never accomplished? Let the candid reader judge, and with his decision we shall be content.