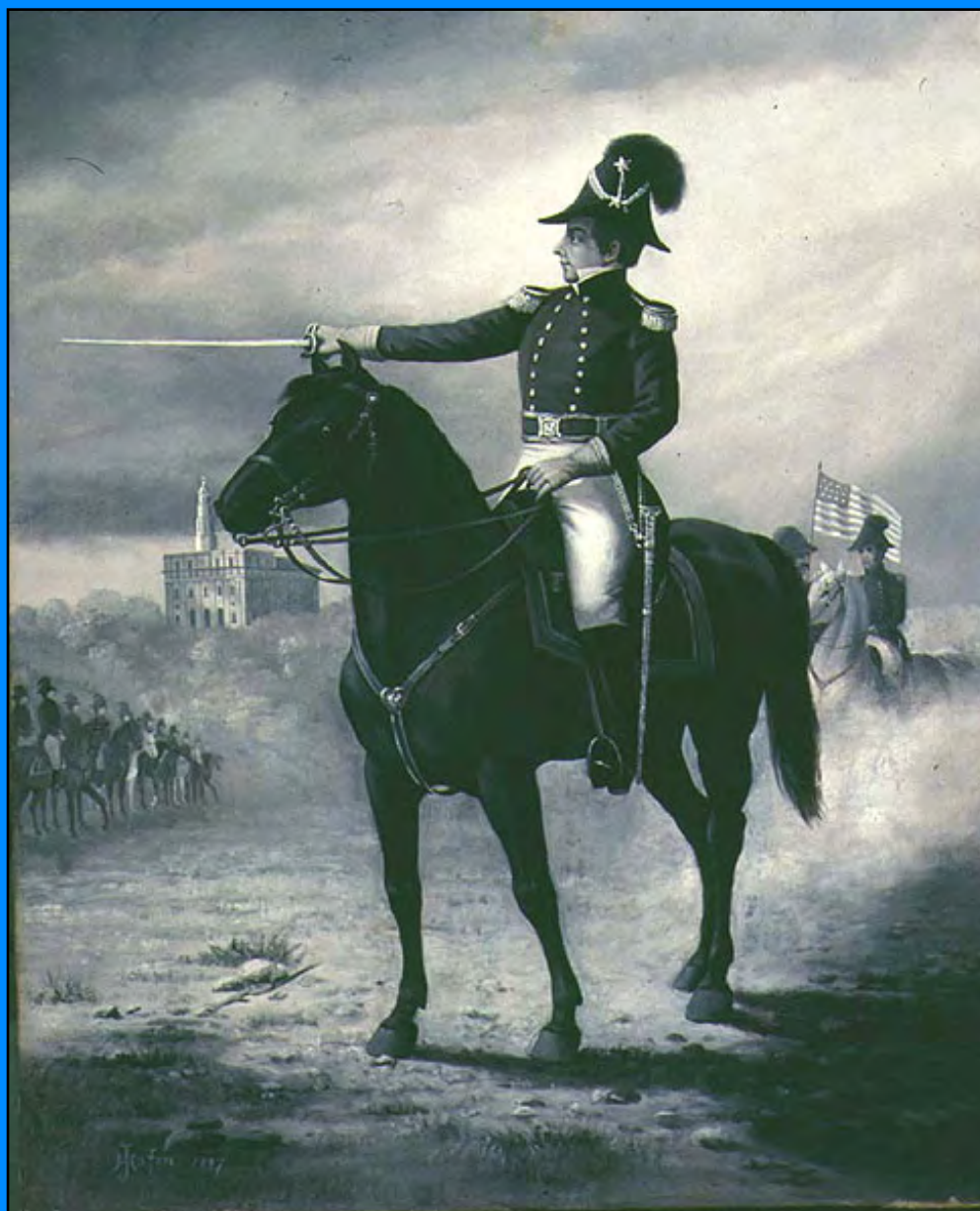


THE MORMON KINGDOM

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VOLUME 1

Jerald and Sandra Tanner

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By Jerald and Sandra Tanner

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Utah Lighthouse Ministry
1358 S. West Temple
Salt Lake City, UT 84115
www.utlm.org

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1. CONFLICT

The Mormon Church was organized in Fayette township, Seneca county, New York, on April 6, 1830. Joseph Smith was to be the leader, and the Mormons were told in a revelation to “give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you . . . his word ye shall receive, **as if from mine own mouth** in all patience and faith” (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 21, verses 4-5).

Because the Mormons taught that all other churches were in a state of apostasy and that they were the only true church, they found themselves in trouble with their neighbors. The Mormon writer Max H. Parkin made this statement:

After the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the year 1830, conflict was often a characteristic feature accompanying the members of that religious faith. Their beliefs and practices were sometimes incompatible with some of the social, religious, and ethical mores of their neighbors. (*Conflict at Kirtland*, Salt Lake City, 1966, page 1)

According to the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts, Joseph Smith was “hailed before the courts at Bainbridge and Colesville,” but he was not convicted of any crime. By the end of 1830 Joseph Smith had decided to move the Church to Ohio. Joseph Smith arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, in February of 1831, and B. H. Roberts tells us that by “early spring of 1831 the church in Kirtland and vicinity had increased to more than one thousand in membership. The New York saints also began to arrive in the spring, and by May all had reached Kirtland, or its vicinity” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, page 250).

In July, 1831, Joseph Smith gave a revelation which stated that the city of Zion was to be built at Independence, Missouri:

Wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion.

And thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the court-house. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 57, verses 2-3)

Some of the Mormons began to build up the city of Zion, but Joseph Smith returned to Ohio. According to B. H. Roberts, “Joseph Smith in September made his home at Hiram, Portage county,—about thirty miles east of Kirtland—with the Johnson family, . . .” (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, vol. 1, page 267). In March, 1832, Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were mobbed at Hiram.

The Mormons not only had trouble with the Gentiles, but there was also dissension within the Church. On February 4, 1831, Joseph Smith received a revelation in which the following appeared:

And again, it is meet that my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., should have **a house built**, in which to live and translate.

And again, it is meet that my servant Sidney Rigdon should live as seemeth him good, inasmuch as he keepeth my commandments. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 41, verses 7-8)

This revelation must have made Sidney Rigdon jealous of Joseph Smith, for Joseph Smith’s mother related the following:

Sidney Rigdon went immediately to Kirtland, . . . as Sidney had not been with us for some time, we hoped to hear from him upon this occasion. . . . My husband said, “Brother Sidney, we would like to hear a discourse from you to-day.” Brother Rigdon replied, in a tone of excitement, “The keys of the kingdom are rent from the Church, and there shall not be a prayer put up in this house this day.” . . . The brethren stared and turned pale, and the sisters cried. Sister Howe, in particular, was very much terrified: “Oh dear me!” said she, “what shall we do? what shall we do? The keys of the kingdom are taken from us, and what shall we do?” “I tell you again,” said Sidney, with much feeling, “the keys of the kingdom are taken from you, and you never will have them again **until you build me a new house**. . . .

Hyrum took a horse, and went immediately to father Johnson’s, for Joseph. . . . Joseph being informed of the precise situation of affairs, he got a horse of father Johnson, and started without delay, with Hyrum, for Kirtland. On his arrival there, the brethren were collected for meeting. Joseph went upon the stand, and informed the brethren that they were under a great

mistake, that the Church had not transgressed; “and, as for the keys of the kingdom,” said he, “I, myself, hold the keys of this Last Dispensation, and will for ever hold them, both in time and in eternity; so set your hearts at rest upon that point, all is right.”

He then went on and preached a comforting discourse, after which he appointed a council to sit the next day, by which Sidney was tried, for having lied in the name of the Lord. In this council Joseph told him, he must suffer for what he had done, that he should be delivered over to the buffetings of Satan, who would handle him as one man handleth another, that the less Priesthood he had, the better it would be for him, and that it would be well for him to give up his license.

This counsel Sidney complied with, yet he had to suffer for his folly, for according to his own account, **he was dragged out of bed by the devil, three times in one night**, by his heels. Whether this be true or not, one thing is certain, his contrition of soul was as great as a man could well live through.

After he had sufficiently humbled himself, he received another license; . . . (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet*, by Lucy Smith, 1853, pages 194-196)

The Apostle George A. Smith made the following statement concerning this incident:

Sidney Rigdon, on one occasion got up to preach, and commenced by saying that the Church and kingdom was rent from them and given to another people. Joseph was absent, when he came home he found Sidney almost like a mad man. He labored with him and with the Church, and finally succeeded in convincing him that he was under the influence of a false spirit. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, page 6)

ZION'S CAMP

In 1833 the Mormons who were attempting to build up the city of Zion in Jackson County, Missouri, were driven out by the Gentiles. The Mormon historian Joseph Fielding Smith gives these reasons for the persecution of the Mormons in Jackson County:

Nearly all the Latter-day Saints were from the Eastern States, while the Missourians were from the South. The Missourians feared that the “Mormons” would increase and take from them their political domination. The question of slavery, even in that day, was quite keen, and the Missourians were determined to keep the state within the control of the slave holders. Above all else, however, was their extreme hatred for the “Mormons” because of their industry and belief. Some of the latter had also failed to show the proper discretion and wisdom, for they openly stated that the Lord had given them the land for their eternal inheritance, and although they were to purchase the lands, yet in time there the city Zion would be built,

unto which none but the faithful would be privileged to come. Such expressions aroused the Missourians to fever heat, for they naturally hated the doctrines of the Church, and to be informed that the lands would ultimately be taken from them, was adding fuel to the flame. (*Essentials in Church History*, page 157)

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement concerning the trouble in Jackson County:

The main reason why the printing press was destroyed, was because they published the *Book of Commandments*. It fell into the hands of the world, and the people of Jackson county, Missouri, saw from the revelations that they were considered by the church as intruders upon the land of Zion, as enemies to the church, and that they should be cut off out of the land of Zion and sent away. The people seeing these things in the *Book of Commandments* became the more enraged, tore down the printing press, and drove the church out of Jackson county. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, Richmond, Missouri, 1887, page 54)

William E. McLellin, who had been an Apostle in the Mormon Church, gave an account of the troubles in Jackson County, Missouri, which was published in the *Salt Lake Daily Tribune*. We quote the following from that account:

My first call was on Dr. William E. McLellin, . . . he went on a mission and returned in 1833. Soon after his return a Mormon meeting was called in the yard in front of John Corril's house, where the Doctor was called upon for remarks. He expounded from the scriptures, (this is his account,) that the Gentile world was in bad straits; that a general wind-up was at hand, and that the result would be blood and destruction to the unbelievers and a glorious triumph for the Saints. The Doctor was careful not to specify how this would be brought about, or to set any time, but the speaker who followed him prophesied that before five years **all unbelievers in Jackson County would be destroyed**. Upon this a few Missourians in the outskirts of the crowd signified an emphatic dissent and went down town. That evening an “indignation meeting” was called in the public square, where Russel Hicks, a lawyer, and Saml. C. Owens, county clerk, gave it as their opinion that the Mormonites intended to raise the slaves, join them and massacre the whites. This set the ball rolling and the next Tuesday three hundred armed men from the county were assembled in town. They tore down the Mormon printing office, chased Dr. McLellin through a corn field and into the woods, but failed to catch him, committed some other outrages and notified the Saints to emigrate. . . . They were driven out en masse the next November.

Dr. McLellin is strongly of opinion that the troubles of the Saints here did not result from anything they had done, but altogether from what the citizens feared they might do if they got a majority. The Saints at that

time interpreted the prophecies much more literally than they now do; in particular Sydney Rigdon, Orson Hyde, W. W. Phelps, and Martin Harris, whether in Kirtland or Missouri, were instant, in season and out of season, in declaring to the Gentiles that the great day of Armageddon was at hand, and that if the Gentiles resisted the ordinances of God, blood would flow even to the horses bridle-bits. With them was a small minority of the Saints, who went about the country notifying the old settlers that they had better sell out and leave, for the Lord was "about to clean up his threshing floor and make a way for the Saints." Of course, this sort of talk created trouble, but the Doctor is very emphatic in his statement that the Saints committed no more actual crime than an equal number of other people. (*Salt Lake Daily Tribune*, October 6, 1875)

Klaus J. Hansen made this statement concerning the trouble in Jackson County:

It is reasonable that the Gentiles objected even more vigorously to Smith's temporal authority. As early as 1833, a resident of Missouri charged that

Their prophet also induced his followers to believe that he would form a temporal kingdom or government, and they would not be subject to the laws of the state, but should make their own laws, have their own civil officers to execute them, Joseph, the prophet, being **dictator**, aided by revelation and his cabinet or council; and when their edicts were sent forth they were obeyed without a murmur by his followers.

Such sentiments, clearly, were at least as important as strictly religious matters for inflaming the passions of the Gentile mob, thus leading to the expulsion of the Saints from Jackson County. (*Quest for Empire*, pages 151-152)

While there may have been a number of reasons for the persecution of the Mormons in Jackson County, the fact that Joseph Smith acted as a dictator must have caused some of the trouble. Heber C. Kimball, First Councilor to Brigham Young, once made this statement concerning Joseph Smith:

When brother Joseph Smith lived, he was our Prophet, our Seer, and Revelator; **he was our dictator** in the things of God, and it was for us to listen to him, and do just as he told us. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 2, page 106)

The fact that the Mormon people were driven out of Jackson County was a great disappointment to Joseph Smith. He had prophesied that his people would build the city of Zion there, and that a temple would be built there in that generation. In one of his revelations we find the following:

Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints,

beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation.

For verily this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 84, verses 4-5)

Since Joseph Smith's reputation as a prophet was at stake, he decided to try to reinstate the Mormons in Jackson County. Klaus J. Hansen states that he "resolved to meet force with force." On December 16, 1833, Joseph Smith gave a revelation in which the Lord was supposed to have said the following:

And now, I will show unto you a parable, that you may know my will concerning the redemption of Zion.

A certain nobleman had a spot of land, very choice;

...
And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive-trees. . . .

And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my **warriors**, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and **redeem** my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money.

Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; **break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen.**

And inasmuch as they gather together against you, **avenge me of mine enemies**, that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 101, verses 43, 44, 51, 55-58)

On February 24, 1834, Joseph Smith gave a revelation in which the following appears:

Behold. I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come **by power**;

Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.

For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm. . . .

Verily, verily I say unto you, that my servant Baurak Ale [Joseph Smith, Jun.] is the man to whom I likened the servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable which I have given unto you.

Therefore let my servant Baurak Ale [Joseph Smith, Jun.] say unto the strength of my house, my

young men and the middle aged—Gather yourselves together unto the land of Zion, . . .

And my presence shall be with you even in **avenging me of mine enemies**, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.

Therefore, if you cannot obtain five hundred, seek diligently that peradventure you may obtain three hundred.

And if ye cannot obtain three hundred, seek diligently that peradventure ye may obtain one hundred.

But verily I say unto you, a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall not go up unto the land of Zion until you have obtained a hundred of the strength of my house, to go up with you unto the land of Zion.

Therefore, as I said unto you, ask and ye shall receive; pray earnestly that peradventure my servant Baurak Ale [Joseph Smith, Jun.] may go with you, and preside in the midst of my people, and organize my kingdom upon the consecrated land, . . .

All victory and glory is brought to pass unto you through your diligence, faithfulness, and prayers of faith. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 103, verses 15-17, 21, 22, 26, 32-36)

Notice that Joseph Smith's name appears in brackets in the 1963 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, quoted above. A footnote in the *History of the Church*, vol. 1, page 255, explains the reason:

It was not always desirable that the individuals whom the Lord addressed in revelations should at the time be known by the world, and hence in this and in some subsequent revelations the brethren were addressed by other than their own names. The temporary necessity having passed for keeping the names of the individuals addressed unknown, their real names were subsequently given in brackets.

Joseph Smith did raise an army as commanded, but he was unable to drive the enemy out of Jackson County. Reed Peck made this statement in a manuscript written in 1839:

In accordance with the interpretation of this parable Joseph Smith called for volunteers collected about 210 "Warriors" and marched to Clay County under arms, but the cholera on the second day after their arrival dispersed them and all hopes were destroyed of "redeem[in]g Zion" for the present, but to console the Mormons under this disappointment, Joseph Smith, before he returned from the campaign prophesied publicly to them, that "within three years they should march to Jackson County and there should not be a dog to open his mouth against them". . . (*Reed Peck Manuscript*, page 3)

Milton R. Hunter, of the First Council of the Seventy, made this statement concerning Zion's Camp:

The following spring (1834), Joseph organized a volunteer, untrained army from the faithful members in Ohio, and traveled 1,000 miles westward to Missouri to "redeem Zion." But upon arriving, Joseph's army, known as Zion's Camp, was abandoned without restoring the refugees to their homes in Jackson County. (*Gospel Through the Ages*, Salt Lake City, 1958, page 282)

The Mormon writer Max Parkin stated:

The Camp, however, **failed to accomplish its objective**, of re-instating the distressed saints and it further aided in festering the sore of unpopular public opinion the Mormons already had in Ohio. (*Conflict at Kirtland*, page 129)

Harold Schindler makes this statement concerning Zion's Camp:

Rockwell had heard of the debacle of Zion's Camp, when Joseph, encouraged by the fiery Lyman Wight, rallied two hundred and four men to his side and marched to free Jackson County from the Gentile curse, thereby securing "the redemption of Zion." **The expedition ended in dismal failure.** A cholera epidemic swept the ranks and killed fourteen Saints despite a revelation to Joseph that "all victory and glory is brought to pass unto you through your diligence, faithfulness and prayers" . . . The Lord was trying the faith of His flock, Joseph explained. (*Orrin Porter Rockwell; Man of God, Son of Thunder*, University of Utah, 1966, page 35)

By the year 1870 the Mormons had still not returned to Jackson County, Missouri, yet the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt assured them that they would return:

. . . God promised in the year 1832 that we should, before the generation **then living** had passed away, return and build up the City of Zion in Jackson County; that we should return and build up the temple of the Most High where we formerly laid the corner stone . . .

We believe in these promises as much as we believe in any promise ever uttered by the mouth of Jehovah. The Latter-day Saints just as much expect to receive a fulfilment of that promise during the generation that was in existence in 1832 as they expect that the sun will rise and set to-morrow. Why? Because **God cannot lie.** He will fulfil all His promises. He has spoken, **it must come to pass.** This is our faith. (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 13, page 362)

But it did not come to pass, and since it has been over 130 years since Joseph Smith gave his revelation, the Mormon leaders have given up all hope of fulfilling Joseph Smith's prophecy that they would return before that generation passed away.

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