AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
PARLEY PARKER PRATT
One of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of
Latter-day Saints, Embracing His Life, Ministry and
Travels, With Extracts, in Prose and Verse,
From His Miscellaneous Writings

Edited by his son
PARLEY P. PRATT

ILLUSTRATED

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth;
Yea, said the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and
their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13.

FIFTH EDITION

Published by the
DESERT BOOK COMPANY
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
1907
for four weeks, and at length found ourselves within part of a day’s journey of Detroit. Here we found several small branches of the Church; and being worn down with our journey, we tarried with them six days, during which we ministered the gospel. Brother O. Pratt, in particular, preached in several towns to large and attentive audiences. Taking leave of the brethren, we rode to Detroit, where I found my brother Anson Pratt and family; whom I had not seen for many years, and also my aged father and mother, who were now living with him. My father was now about seventy years of age, and was on his death bed with a heavy fever. We tarried with them two weeks; during which I preached in the City Hall at Detroit, and superintended some printing and publishing matters.

While here we sold our horses and carriage, and at length took leave of our kindred and a last farewell of our sick father, and took passage on a steamboat down Lake Erie to Buffalo; distance three hundred miles.

Previous to our departure from Detroit brothers O. Pratt and Clark took leave of us, and passed down the lake into Ohio; intending to meet us again at New York.

After landing safe in Buffalo, we took the Erie canal and railroad to Albany—distance three hundred and fifty miles; thence to New York by steamer down the Hudson river—distance one hundred and fifty miles. Here we arrived in safety after a journey of about one thousand four hundred miles. We were received by the Saints in New York almost as one of the old saints risen from the dead. I had been absent nearly two years, during which time I had lain eight months in prison. Brother Adison Everett, a High Priest of the Church in that city and one of the first members I had baptized there, related to me that the Church in that city were assembled in prayer for me on the evening of the 4th of July previous, that I might be delivered from prison and from my enemies in Missouri. When, on a sudden, the spirit of prophecy fell on him, and he arose and declared to the Church that they might cease their prayers on that subject; “For,” said he, “on this moment brother Parley goes at liberty.”

We found the Church in New York strong in the faith, and rejoicing in the truth. They had become numerous in the city and in several parts of the country around.

In this city I resided with my family some six months, during which I preached most of the time in the city, and also superintended the printing and publishing of several of our books. I also performed occasional missions in the country; I visited Long Island, New Jersey, Philadelphia and the City of Washington. In this latter place I published an address in a printed circular to each member of Congress, and to the President of the United States and his Cabinet, setting forth our principles in plainness, and bearing testimony of the truth; while, at the same time, our petitions for redress were pending before them—President Joseph Smith and others having visited them in person, with an earnest appeal for investigation and redress of our grievances in Missouri. In Philadelphia I had the happiness of once more meeting with President Smith, and of spending several days with him and others, and with the Saints in that city and vicinity.

During these interviews he taught me many great and glorious principles concerning God and the heavenly order of eternity. It was at this time that I received from him the first idea of eternal family organization, and the eternal union which none but the highly intellectual, the refined and pure sympathies as appertaining solely to this transitory state, as the heart, know how to prize, and which are at the very foundation of everything worthy to be called happiness.

Till then I had learned to esteem kindred affections and something from which the heart must be entirely weaned, in order to be fitted for its heavenly state.

It was Joseph Smith who taught me how to prize the enduring relationships of father and mother, husband and wife; of brother and sister, son and daughter. It was from him that I learned that the wife of my room might be secured to me for time and all eternity; and that the refined sympathies and affections which endeared me to each other emanated from the fountain of divine eternal
love. It was from him that I learned that we might cultivate these affections, and grow and increase in the same to all eternity; while the result of our endless union would be as offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven, or the sands of the sea shore.

It was from him that I learned the true dignity and destiny of a son of God, clothed with an eternal priesthood, as the patriarch and sovereign of his countless offspring. It was from him that I learned that the highest dignity of womanhood was, to stand as a queen and priestess to her husband, and to reign for ever and ever as the queen mother of her numerous and still increasing offspring.

I had loved — with a purity — an intensity of elevated, exalted feeling, which would lift my soul from the transitory things of this grovelling sphere and expand it as the ocean. I felt that God was my heavenly Father indeed; that Jesus was my brother, and that the wife of my bosom was an immortal eternal companion; a kind ministering angel, given to me as a comfort, and a crown of glory for ever and ever. In short, I could now love with the spirit and with the understanding also.

Yet, at that time, my dearly beloved brother, Joseph Smith, had barely touched a single key; had merely lifted a corner of the veil and given me a single glance into eternity; and very large church was opened for him to preach in, and about three thousand people assembled to hear him. Brother Rigdon spoke first, and dwelt on the Gospel, illustrating his doctrine by the Bible. When he was through, brother Joseph arose like a lion about to roar; and being full of the Holy Ghost, spoke in great power, bearing testimony of the Book of Mormon, and translated them by the gift and power of God. He commenced by saying, "If nobody else had the courage to testify of so glorious a record, he felt to do it in justice to the people, and leave the event with God."