

Hyrum Smith and LDS D&C 132

"The question arose as to whether Joseph the Martyr taught the doctrine of polygamy. President Marks said Brother Hyrum came to his place once and told him he did not believe in it and he was going to see Joseph about it and if he had a revelation on the subject he would believe it. and after that Hyrum read a revelation on it in the High Council and He (Marks) felt that it was not true but he saw the High Council receive it."

(Minutes, meeting of the First Presidency and Quorum of Twelve, Fox River, Illinois (May 1, 1865), Council of Twelve Minutes, Book A, 11-12, RLDS Library-Archives as quoted in Richard P. Howard, The Church Through the Years Volume 2: The Reorganization Comes of Age, 1860-1992 [Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 1992], 75)

Richard Van Wagoner wrote:

"Less than two months later Hyrum became the catalyst for Smith's receiving the key revelation on 'celestial marriage' (D&C 132). On 12 July the brothers, along with William Clayton, were in Smith's office discussing Emma's opposition to polygamy. Hyrum still harbored concerns that polygamy was adulterous. Charles Smith, a Nauvoo elder, later said that Hyrum told the Elders' Quorum in the winter of 1843-44 'that the doctrine of Plurality of Wives had bothered him considerably and he felt constrained to ask wherein Abraham, Moses, David & others could be justified before God in practicing this to him repugnant doctrine - He asked his brother the Prophet Joseph to ask the question of the Lord - Joseph did so and the Revelation given 12 July 1843 was the answer' (St. George Record)."

[St. George Historical Record, 26 Nov. 1882, LDS archives)

(Mormon Polygamy: A History [Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2nd ed., 1989], 55-56)

Summary - Background to Doctrine and Covenants 132

Joseph Smith responded to a request of his brother Hyrum relating to biblical patriarchs' practice of having many wives and concubines. The Book of Mormon had been used by Hyrum Smith as a text to counter belief in men having many wives. Emma Smith, Joseph's wife since January 1827, also used the Book of Mormon (book of Jacob) to counter reports that polygamy was being lawfully practiced in the church. In the revelation of 12 July 1843 Emma was addressed and told to accept the wives and teachings of her husband Joseph in these matters.