

elders there, and they wrote back to the heads of the Church, and it caused him a great deal of trouble. I think if you would once come here, you would not put so much confidence in all who go by the name of Mormons.

"I am very much obliged for the pin ball; I think it is very pretty, and it comes from Mother so far, from old Massachusetts. I shall appreciate it highly. My health has been very good since I came to the West notwithstanding it is a sickly part of the country. I enjoy myself well this summer, My husband is every thing I could wish, and I hope we may live all the days of our appointed time together. Joseph had two balls last winter and a dancing-school through the winter. There was a theatre established in the spring; some of the twelve took a part — Erastus Snow and many of the leading members of the Church. Dear Mother, I hope the time is not far distant when we can enjoy each other's society, but when and where I suppose time only will determine. There is a report that a mob is coming to Nauvoo.

Sarah Scott"

The above letter was written just two weeks before Joseph's death. Sarah Scott wrote another letter shortly after he was killed. Below are some excerpts from her letter.

"Nauvoo, Illinois
July 22, 1844

My Dear Father and Mother:

"Having an opportunity to send to the east by way of brother Eames, who expects to return in a few weeks. I thought I would improve it and send to you a few lines. I suppose you received our letter and was somewhat prepared, when you heard of the dreadful murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith in Carthage jail. Little did we think that an event like that would ever transpire. The Church believed that he would be acquitted as he had been on former occasions, and Joseph prophesied in the last Neighbor that was published before his death that they would come off victorious over them all, as sure as there was a God in Israel. Joseph also prophesied on the stand a year ago last conference that he could not be killed within five years from that time; that they could not kill him till the Temple would be completed, for that he had received unconditional promise from the Almighty concerning his days, and he set Earth and Hell at defiance; and then said, putting his hand on his head, they *never* could kill his Child. But

now that he *is* killed some of the Church say that he said unless he gave himself up.

"My husband was there at the time and says there was not conditions whatever, and many others testify to the same thing....The governor visited Nauvoo the day that Joseph and Hyrum were killed and made a speech. He told the people of Nauvoo the burning of that press was arbitrary, unlawful, unconstitutional, and that they had hurt themselves more than ten presses could have injured them in ten years... The governor was met on his return to Carthage by a messenger informing him of the assassination.... Who the vile murders were I suppose never will be known till the day when all flesh shall stand before God to answer for the deeds done in the body. Many of the Mormons lay it on the Missourians, others to the apostates, as they call them. If it is apostasy from Mormonism to come out against the doctrines of more Gods than one, more wives than one, and many other damnable heresies that they have taught, I hope and pray that I and all the rest of the Church may become apostates.

Sarah Scott"³²

This letter, in conjunction with the numerous affidavits from women who were sealed to Joseph Smith, provides overwhelming evidence that it was Joseph, and not Brigham Young, who legalized by revelation an already existing domestic pattern of moral life in Nauvoo.

For Further Information Concerning
Joseph Smith's Teachings, Contact:



**Box 1536
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Did Joseph Smith Practice Polygamy?

The following letter was written in 1844 by Isaac and Sarah Scott who had joined the Latter Day Saint church in Massachusetts and then had "gathered" to Nauvoo.

In the letter, which is addressed to Sarah's parents, Isaac and Sarah are writing as disillusioned Saints, horrified at the behavior of their beloved prophet Joseph Smith and other church leaders they had previously revered. Like others, the Scotts were crushed to discover that these men while publicly condemning the doctrine of polygamy, had been actively practicing it privately for some time. The letter begins with Isaac greeting his in-laws whom he had not yet had the opportunity of meeting.

"Vicinity of Nauvoo,
June 16, 1844

My Dear Father and Mother:

"For such I suppose I may call you, on account of the relationship that now exists between us. Altho far distant, and having never had the privilege of beholding your faces, yet I rejoice exceedingly in the pleasure which I this day enjoy of sitting down to write a few lines to two so near and dear to me as you are. I have greatly desired to see you since I became acquainted with your daughter, and adopted into your family. But I have had to do with only hearing from you thus far. By a letter that Mrs. Haven received from you a few days since, we have the pleasing intelligence that you are all well, which blessing we also enjoy. I am glad that I ever became united to your family, for by this step I have gotten what Solomon says is a good thing. He says he that hath gotten a wife from the Lord, hath gotten a good thing. So say I. And were it not for troubles that exist in the land, we would rejoice continually.

"But because of the things that are and have been taught in the Church of Latter Day Saints for two years past which now assume a portentous aspect, I say because of these things we are in trouble. And were it not that we wish to give you a fair unbiased statement of facts as they really exist, we perhaps would not have written you so soon. But we feel it to be our duty to let you know how things are going on in this land of boasted

liberty, this Sanctum-Sanctorum of all the Earth, the City of Nauvoo. The elders will likely tell you a different tale from what I shall as they are positively instructed to deny this things abroad. But it matters not to us what they say; our object is to state to you the truth, for we do not want to be guilty of deceiving anyone. We will now give you a correct statement of the doctrines that are taught and practiced in the Church according to our own knowledge. We will mention three in particular.

"A plurality of Gods. A plurality of living wives. And unconditional sealing up to eternal life against all sins save the shedding of innocent blood or consenting thereunto. These with many other things are taught by Joseph, which we consider are odious and doctrines of devils.

"Joseph says there are Gods above the God of this universe as far as he is above us, and if He should transgress the laws given to him by those above Him, He would be hurled from his Throne to hell, as was as was Lucifer and all his creations with him. But God says there is no other God but himself. Moses says he knows of no other God. The Apostles and Prophets almost all testify the same thing.

"Joseph had a revelation last summer purporting to be from the Lord, allowing the saints the privilege of having ten living wives at one time, I mean certain conspicuous characters among them. They do not content themselves with young women, but have seduced married women. I believe hundreds have been deceived. Now should I yield up your daughter to such wretches?

"Mr. Haven knows these statements are correct, for they have been in the quorum to which he belongs by the highest authority in the Church. He has told me that he does not believe in these teachings but he does not come out and oppose them; he thinks that it will all come out right. But we think God never has nor ever will sanction such proceedings, for we believe he has not changed; he says "*I am God I change not.*" These things we can not believe, and it is by Sarah's repeated request that I write this letter.

"Those who can not swallow down these things and came out and opposed the doctrine publicly, have been cut off from the Church without any lawful process whatever. They were not notified to trial, neither were they allowed the privilege of being present to defend themselves, neither was any one permitted to speak on their behalf. They did not know who was their judge or jury until it was all over and they [were] delivered over to all the buffetings of Satan; although they lived only a few rods from the council room. These are some of their names: William Law, one of the first Presi-

dency; Wilson Law, brigadier general; Austin Cowles, president of the High Council; and Elder Blakesly, who has been the means of bringing upwards of one thousand members into the Church. He has been through nearly all the states in the Union, the Canadas, and England preaching the Gospel. Now look at the great sins they have committed: the Laws, un-Christian-like conduct—Blakesly and others, Apostasy.

If it is apostasy to oppose such doctrines and proceedings as I have just mentioned (which are only a few of the enormities taught and practiced here), then we hope and pray that *all* the Church may apostatize.

"After they had been thus shamefully treated and published to the world they went and bought a printing press determined to defend themselves against such unhallowed abuse. It cost them six hundred dollars [They] commenced their paper, but Joseph and his clan could not bear the truth to come out; so after the first number came out Joseph called his Sanhedrin together tried the press; condemned it as a nuisance and ordered the city marshal to take three hundred armed men and go and burn the press, and if any offered resistance, *to rip them from the guts to the gizzard.* These are his own words. They went and burnt the press, paper and household furniture. The Laws, Fosters, Cole Hickbies (*sic*), and others have had to leave the place to save their lives. Those who have been thus unlawfully cut off have called a conference; protested against these things; and reorganized the church. William La is chosen president, Charles Ivans, bishop, with the other necessary officers. The Reformed Church believe that Joseph has transgressed in his priestly capacity and has given himself over to serve the devil, and his own lust. We will endeavor to send you a paper and you can judge for yourselves. They had only commenced publishing the dark deeds of Nauvoo. A hundredth part has not been told yet. (Written by Isaac Scott to this point; the rest is in Sarah Scott's hand.)

"The people of the state will not suffer such things any longer. But I am sorry that the innocent must suffer with the guilty. I believe there are hundreds of the best hearted souls in Nauvoo, but some of them I think have forgotten what they were once taught: that curse is he that putteth his trust in man. It would offend some of them more to speak irreverently of Joseph, than would of God himself. Joseph says that he is a God of this generation, and I suppose they believe it. Any one needs a throat like an open sepulcher to swallow down all that is taught here. There was an elder once written in confidence to a friend in England; told him the story of the Church here, and they showed it to some of