THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF ZION
IN MORMON THEOLOGY

by

ROBERT L. MILLET

A Dissertation Submitted to the
Department of Humanities
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved:

[Signature]
Professor Directing Dissertation

[Signature]
[Signature]

April, 1983
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express appreciation to a number of persons without whose assistance this dissertation would not have been begun or completed:

To Dr. Leo Sandon, Jr., who suggested the topic, directed the dissertation, and insisted that the matter of Zion was worthy of closer consideration.

To Professors David Levenson and David Darst, committee members, who made numerous suggestions as to format and content.

To Drs. Charles H. Madsen, Jr. and Richard L. Chapple, colleagues and valued friends, who provided encouragement and motivation during a difficult and full five years.

To Dr. Elwon Lance for support and friendship well beyond what one would expect from a supervisor/employer.

To Earl and Joanne Childers for countless hours of typing and correcting and arranging this manuscript into final form.

To my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Albert L. Millet, who have encouraged me from the beginning to stretch and reach, and who have sought to give me the feelings of
self-worth so necessary in meeting challenge and stress.

And perhaps most importantly, to my own family, without whose strength and patience this undertaking would not have had meaning, and certainly would not have been attainable. My wife, Shauna, has been a loving and firm partner in the pursuit of the doctorate, and has pushed me back on task when I have become weary of the pressures. My children--Angela, David, Michael, Jeffery, and Rebecca--have foregone time with daddy during the past five years, and have considered the entire educational experience as a family enterprise. My deepest and profoundest debt of gratitude is owed to my family.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .......................... 1

Chapter
I. THE DISCOVERY OF ZION .............. 8
   Background and Setting
   The Rise of Joseph Smith
   Zion in the Book of Mormon
   The Scriptural Prototype: The Zion of Enoch

II. ZION AND MORMON SOCIETY .......... 33
    Social Life Among the Mormons
    Education in Zion: Kirtland to Provo
    Zion and the Family
    Zion vs. Babylon
    Summary

III. ZION AND THE ECONOMY .............. 81
    Communal Societies in the Nineteenth Century
    The Law of Consecration and Stewardship
    The Mormon Work Ethic
    Modern Developments in Zion's Storehouse
    Summary

IV. ZION AND THE POLITICAL KINGDOM OF GOD .... 134
    Zion and the Kingdom of God
    Zion and the U.S. Constitution
    The Mormon Theocracy
    From Theocracy to Conservative Politics
    Summary
V. ZION AND THE COVENANT PEOPLE. . . . . . . . . 182

The Restoration of Temple Worship
Zion's Covenant Society
The Priesthood in Zion
The Gathering of The Covenant People
Summary

VI. ZION: THE SHIFTING FOCUS. . . . . . . . . . . 235

The Saints' Expanding Canon
The Many Faces of Zion
The Broadened Image of Zion
Zion: Today and Tomorrow

CONCLUSION. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 274

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 286
INTRODUCTION

"We ought to have the building up of Zion as our greatest object."¹ So stated Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet-leader in July of 1839. The idea of establishing Zion has been the ever-present focus of the Latter-day Saints from the days of Joseph Smith. One cannot understand the Mormon experience without recognizing the central place of Zion in the LDS theological tradition. Zion is and has been the primary focus, the hub of the wheel from which ancillary doctrinal spokes receive real meaning.

This work will concentrate upon three major concepts of Zion evident in LDS theology: (1) Zion as place, or specific geographical location; (2) Zion as community of the Saints; and (3) Zion as an internalized spiritual state. First of all, Zion was recognized as a place to which the people of God could gather. For the Mormons it was that site where the Church was headquartered, the location to which the convert came and

¹History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 7 Vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1957), Vol. 3, p. 390. This is the official published history of the Church through the Joseph Smith era and into the administration of Brigham Young. Unless otherwise indicated, all italics in this work are those of the writer.
physically evidenced his commitment to the new faith. During the lifetime of Joseph Smith, people gathered to Fayette, New York; then to Kirtland, Ohio and Independence, Missouri; and finally to Nauvoo, Illinois. Thus as the Saints were driven from state to state the place of gathering shifted as well. There was, however, one constant and ever-present site for Zion, the city designated by Smith as "the land of promise," the "center place." Independence (Jackson County) Missouri was identified in 1831 as the area for the eventual establishment of Zion and the construction of the New Jerusalem. Even though the Mormons were forced from Jackson County as early as 1833, they maintained (and continue to maintain today) a hope and an anticipation for a future settlement in that area. With the exodus of the Latter-day Saints to the Great Basin in 1847 came another shift in place: Salt Lake City became Zion, the place of gathering. And yet the notion of Zion in Missouri as the eschatological ideal lingers to the present day. In a broader way, the Latter-day Saints looked upon the whole of North and South America as the land of Zion, the promised land and the inheritance of a modern covenant people.

Secondly, Zion for the Mormons was a community of believers, a society of people bound together by mutual covenant love. Zion was to represent the ultimate in
human community, the realization of the ages, the reconciliation of the drive for mature individualism and social union. Zion was to be characterized by an emphasis upon culture and the arts; a stress upon the need for education in the achievement of society's highest ends; and a focus upon the family as the most important social unit in time or in eternity. In addition, Zion was a community in which there were no poor, none who hungered physically or emotionally, a holy commonwealth in which all things were in common and where all shared the wealth of the earth. Joseph the Prophet taught that from the Zion nucleus the expanded Kingdom of God would emerge, directed by inspired leaders who governed in both civil and ecclesiastical matters. In addition, the citizens were "covenant Israel," or "new Israel," a body of believers who had both Hebraic and Christocentric ties; the Mormons believed that through the ordinances (sacraments) of the holy temple they were entitled to the blessings of the ancients (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) and also the right to be joint heirs with Christ to all the Father has.

Zion, finally, was an internalized spiritual state, an order and a people characterized as "the pure in heart." Not only could one live in Zion, but he could through an appropriate style of life have the spirit of Zion within him.
The concept of Zion (as place, community, spiritual state) is dealt with throughout the six chapters. The aspects of Zion (social, economic, political, covenant Israel) are discussed separately in chapters two through five, respectively.

It is the contention of this study that the growth and spread of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints may be attributed largely to what some would feel to be contradictory and irreconcilable processes: (1) constancy and adherence to "the ancient order of things"; and (2) development and change, according to needs and circumstances. Mormonism may thus be characterized as a religious culture with both static and dynamic—priestly and prophetical—elements, a movement acclimated to both conservative and progressive postures. As will be seen, the Saints, in their quest for a Zion, held tenaciously to and grounded themselves in, what they perceived to be the particular beliefs and rites of both ancient Judaism and first century Christianity. At the same time, Mormonism, through a belief in modern and continuing revelation, has made shifts in the concept, as well as the aspects of Zion, when such seemed essential to the preservation (and proliferation) of the vision of the establishment of a holy city.

This dissertation will identify both constancy and change as co-existent elements in the LDS tradition,
and, specifically, will focus upon the place of the notion of Zion in the transformation of the Church from a frontier faith to a major religious body. It will be seen that the constant element in Mormon theology is and has been the quest for a restored Zion community. At the same time, it will become clear that the gradual development of the concept and aspects (characteristics) of Zion has been instrumental in the survival, maintenance, and growth of the Church. In short, "Zion" will be shown to be the essence, the constant, as well as the variable. Zion is the one factor which has provided focus and vision for the LDS people, but the variable whose adaptation has made it possible for the Saints to engage the problems of modernity and the increasing challenges of a secular society. The thesis of this dissertation is that the developing concept of a reestablished Zion is the crucial concept in Mormon theology. This study will undertake to demonstrate the above through answering the following questions: (1) What was the meaning of Zion to the Latter-day Saints? (2) How has the quest for Zion contributed to the doctrinal and historical development of the Church? and (3) How has the concept of Zion developed, and how have these developments contributed to modern Mormonism's self-understanding?

A number of works have dealt heretofore with the
life and thought of Joseph Smith. Within recent years many biographies of early Church leaders (e.g., Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Jedediah Grant, B.H. Roberts) have been written. In addition, commendable one-volume histories of the LDS Church have been prepared for both Mormon and non-Mormon readers. To date, however, no writer has dealt with the concept of Zion as the central concept of Mormon theology. A number of publications have considered separately some of the aspects of Zion (e.g., social, economic, political), but have not utilized the category of Zion as the focal point from which these other related but tangential dimensions receive real meaning. In addition, many studies have been limited in their overall interpretation, inasmuch as they have concentrated upon the Church as a phenomenon of the nineteenth century. This dissertation presents, therefore, the history and development of an idea, from inception through implementation in the present. It is a central idea, one that is so important that the entire LDS theological tradition (1830's through 1980's) will be neither grasped nor circumscribed if it is not understood and given context. Toward the end of his life Joseph Smith drew attention to the centrality of the idea of Zion in these words:

The building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age; it is a theme upon which prophets, priests and kings have dwelt with particular delight; they have looked
forward with joyful anticipations; they have sung and written and prophesied of this our day; but they died without the sight; we are the favored people that God has made choice of to bring about the Latter-day glory . . . .

\[^2\]Ibid., Vol. 4, pp. 609-610.
CHAPTER 1

THE DISCOVERY OF ZION

Mormonism frequently has been identified as a religious movement tied to biblical faith—a group which was spawned in the midst of a generation bent upon the return to the simple and direct appeal of the Bible. Thomas O'Dea has written that Joseph Smith, "together with his followers, offered claims to combine a restoration of primitive Christianity as it had been lived in the time of the Apostles with modern revelation from on high."¹ A look at the social and historical background of Joseph Smith, the Latter-day Saints, and the notion of Zion is therefore a necessary part of this study. We will first review the biblical meaning of Zion. Biblical citations will be taken from the King James Version of the Bible, which for the Latter-day Saint community is the normative translation. Then we shall consider the social and religious milieu of the early nineteenth-century American frontier, the time and place from which the idea of Zion emerged among the Mormons.

Background and Setting

The term "Zion" first appears in the biblical narrative in conjunction with David's conquest of Jerusalem, in which it is written that David has taken "the stronghold of Zion: the same is the city of David." (2 Samuel 5:6-10.) With the movement of the Ark of the Covenant to the Temple Mount, "Zion" came to be used interchangeably with the idea of the holy mountain of Yahweh. "Great is the Lord," wrote the Psalmist, "and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion." (Psalms 48:1-2.) "Sons of Zion" (Psalms 149:2; Joel 2:23) or "daughters of Zion" (Isaiah 3:16; Zechariah 9:9) came to refer to the men and women of Jerusalem who were recipients of either God's wrath or his blessing.

"Eschatological and apocalyptic writings commonly use the name of Zion with the same religious overtones. . . . The glorification of the messianic community shall take place on Zion's holy mountain, where the Messiah shall appear at the end of time, or even beyond the consummation of time; in this last instance, Zion becomes the equivalent of the heavenly Jerusalem."2

Through the ultimate defeat of the powers of evil the "city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 60:14) was to be established. Christian

---

writers, using and extending the spiritual aspect of the Zion motif, thus contrasted the fiery and tempestuous experience of Moses and the Israelites (under the Law) at the base of Sinai with the blessed state of the righteous Christian in a future day: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, . . . and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant." (Hebrews 12:22-24.) Before examining some elements of Restorationist thought (which provides the religious backdrop to the rise and growth of Mormonism), it is helpful to first attend to the enormous social changes of the day. "It was in the early part of the nineteenth century," writes one historian, "that physical, institutional, and psychological change accelerated to a degree unknown to previous generations." The population of the young nation doubled in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Growth seemed to lead to movement—movement in values and ideology as well as topography. Alexis de Tocqueville's assessment is worthy of note: "In the United States a man builds a house in which to spend his old age, and he sells it

---

4 Ibid., pp. 45-47.
before the roof is on; he plants a garden, and leaves it just as the trees are coming into bearing."\textsuperscript{5} Orestes Brownson, a prominent thinker of the era remarked:

No tolerable observer of the signs of the time can have failed to perceive that we are, in this vicinity at least, in the midst of a very important revolution; a revolution which extends to every department of thought, and threatens to change ultimately the whole moral aspect of society. Everything is loosened from its old fastenings, and is floating no one can tell exactly whither.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, in speaking of the period from 1820 to 1845, mentioned that "no one can converse much with different classes of society in New England, without remarking the progress of a revolution. Those who share in it have no external organization, no badge, no creed, no name. They do not vote, or print, or even meet together. They do not know each other's faces or names. They are united only in a common love of truth and love of its work."\textsuperscript{7} Some scholars contend that such a social and intellectual transformation laid a foundation for a competitive, individualistic personality type that evidenced a shift from an external locus of authority and control to a personal, inner-directed and independent

\textsuperscript{5} Democracy in America, II, p. 164.
\textsuperscript{6} See Orestes A. Brownson, in Boston Quarterly Review, III, pp. 265-323.
\textsuperscript{7} Ralph Waldo Emerson, The Dial, I, pp. 1-4.
man. The decision by some Americans to remove the "shackles" of institutional churches and to reject religious creedal statements opened the door to Restorationist movements.

An apt description of the spirit of Restorationism is given by one historian:

Like many European reformers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many Americans of the early republic earnestly sought a restoration of New Testament Christianity. These Americans determined that the leaders of the Reformation had failed to restore the fulness of the gospel and that all Christian religions had inherited from the Medieval church incorrect doctrines and practices. Such conclusions inspired the restorationists to seek the truth and to organize eventually new religions which in their opinion more closely resembled the Primitive Church.

In 1794 James O'Kelly, a Methodist minister, revolted against episcopal authority and organized a group into the "Christian church." The Bible was to serve as the sole standard of behavior, and was to be the group's only creed. O'Kelly believed that the power to interpret the scriptures was an individual right, and further taught that each congregation should be an autonomous body. In 1801 Abner Jones and Elias Smith led a group of New


10Ibid., p. 238.
Englanders away from their Calvinist Baptist way of life, and established themselves as "Christians." These rejected predestination, religious creeds, and cooperative activities. They pushed for congregational autonomy and a return to biblical faith. ¹¹ Barton W. Stone, a Presbyterian minister who had himself been converted through a camp meeting of the great James McGready, led a camp meeting in Cane Ridge, Kentucky in 1801, at which as many as 20,000 persons attended. Stone, a popular and important figure in the "Second Great Awakening," led many dissidents of the Presbyterian Synod in Kentucky to form the "Christian Church" in 1804. In 1832 Stone and his followers combined with another group led by Alexander Campbell to form the "Disciples of Christ." ¹²

¹¹Ibid., p. 238.

¹²George C. Bedell, Leo Sandoz, Jr., and Charles Wellborn, Religion in America (New York: Macmillan, 1975), pp. 160-161. The discussion of Thomas and Alexander Campbell which follows is important primarily because of Campbell's contact with and influence upon such men as Sidney Rigdon (who later became a member of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) and Parley P. Pratt (who became one of the original Mormon apostles). These men had rejected the Christianity of the day and begun to pattern beliefs and practices after what they felt to be the pattern of the New Testament Church. Their brief union with Campbell may be traced to Campbell's similar desires to recapture the "ancient order of things." Rigdon's break with him in 1830 came over such doctrinal issues as the gifts of the Spirit, the need for a communal society, and the Millenium. (See F. Mark McKiernan, The Voice of One
Thomas and Alexander Campbell came to America from Ireland. Educated and trained as Presbyterian ministers in Scotland, Thomas Campbell and his son began another of the many campaigns against creeds and a strict Calvinism. Thomas had arrived in America first, and, after having obtained a pastorate in a Presbyterian parish in southwestern Pennsylvania, had managed to incur the wrath of the synod for teaching heretical doctrines. Campbell rejected the notion that the Church should hold the Westminster Confession of Faith as a term of communion. He denied that faith came through some mystical-emotional experience, and stressed that faith resulted rather from "an intelligent response of the mind to evidence." After dismissal by the Presbyterians, Thomas continued to teach his doctrines to the farmers in western Pennsylvania, and organized the "Christian Association of Washington" in 1809. This society stressed "a pure Gospel ministry, that shall reduce to

Crying in the Wilderness: Sidney Rigdon, Religious Reformer [Lawrence, Kansas: Coronado Press, 1971], pp. 26-27.) Pratt learned of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon and was baptized into the new faith in September of 1830. He later returned to Ohio and was responsible for the conversion of Rigdon in December of the same year.

practice that whole form of doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, expressly revealed and enjoined in the word of God."^{14}

Alexander Campbell joined his father in America in 1809, learned of the beliefs and practices of the movement, and assumed leadership. Alexander accepted the doctrine of believer's baptism by immersion, was baptized, and in 1811 accepted the pastorate at the Brush Run Baptist Church in what is now Bethany, West Virginia. Maintaining his restorationist beliefs proved to be a serious concern to the Baptists, and he was rejected by many Baptist colleagues in the ministry. In 1823 the younger Campbell began editing a magazine entitled the Christian Baptist, the title of which was changed in 1830 to the Millennial Harbinger, evidencing a firm belief in the imminence of Christ's Second Coming. Campbell's dissatisfaction with nominal Christianity is apparent in a statement from the first volume of the Christian Baptist: "We are convinced, fully convinced, that the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint of modern fashionable Christianity."^{15} One historian, in speaking of Campbell, said: "The iconoclast condemned all beliefs

---

^{14}Ibid., pp. 146-148.

and practices that could not be validated by apostolic mandates. He proclaimed that missionary societies, tract societies, Bible societies, synods, associations, and theological seminaries were inconsistent with pure religion."\textsuperscript{16}

Alexander Campbell's disillusionment with nineteenth-century religion did not represent an isolated perception. As late as 1838 Ralph Waldo Emerson stated in his famous Divinity School Address at Harvard that "the need was never greater of new revelation than now." Further, "the Church seems to totter to its fall, almost all life extinct." Continuing,

I look for the hour when the supreme Beauty, which ravished the souls of those eastern men, and chiefly of those Hebrews, and through their lips spoke oracles to all time, shall speak in the West also. The Hebrew and Greek scriptures contain immortal sentences, that have been bread of life to millions. . . . I look for the new Teacher, that shall follow so far those shining laws, that he shall see them come full circle; shall see their rounding complete grace. . . .\textsuperscript{17}

A number of later Mormon Church leaders spoke of their own quest for truth and of the frustrations they felt before their encounter with Joseph Smith. Brigham

\textsuperscript{16}Backman, \textit{American Religions and the Rise of Mormonism}, p. 241.

Young, intimate associate of Joseph Smith and second president of the Church stated: "My mind was opened to conviction, and I knew that the Christian world had not the religion that Jesus and his Apostles taught. I knew that there was not a Bible Christian on the earth within my knowledge."\textsuperscript{18} Wilford Woodruff, an early apostle and the fourth president of the Church said: "I did not join any church, believing that the Church of Christ in its true organization did not exist upon the earth."\textsuperscript{19} Willard Richards, later a counselor to Brigham Young, became "convinced that the sects were all wrong, and that God had no church on earth, but that he would soon have a church whose creed would be the truth."\textsuperscript{20}

Nothing of consequence arises in a social or intellectual vacuum, and Mormonism was no different. What began as a frontier faith and later survived and blossomed into a full-scale world religious movement would not come into being in "dry ground." The ground was prepared through a general dissatisfaction of large

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{18} Brigham Young, \textit{Journal of Discourses}, 26 vols. (Liverpool, England: F. D. Richards, 1855), Vol. 5, p. 75. This is a collection of sermons by Church leaders from 1851 to 1886.


\textsuperscript{20} History of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 470.
\end{flushleft}
groups of people with mainline religious bodies, and the roots of the new religion would sink into the soil because individuals were anxious for a "new revelation."

The Rise of Joseph Smith

Joseph Smith, Jr. was born in Sharon, Vermont on December 23, 1805. His family moved thereafter to Tunbridge, Vermont; Lebanon, New Hampshire; Norwich, Vermont; and finally (in 1814) settled in western New York. After two years of hard labor and financial strain, Joseph Smith, Sr. purchased one-hundred acres of unimproved land two miles south of Palmyra, New York, on the Palmyra-Manchester town line.\footnote{See Ivan J. Barrett, \textit{Joseph Smith and the Restoration} (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1973), pp. 33-41.}

Joseph Jr. reported that some time in the second year after his family's move to Manchester, "there was in the place where we lived an unusual excitement on the subject of religion."\footnote{\textit{History of the Church}, Vol. 1, p. 2.} He was referring to the avid spirit of revivalism and religious fervor prevalent in New England in the early nineteenth century. During the first half of the century the area west of the Catskill and Adirondack Mountains was so caught up in religious
zeal as to be labeled the "Burned-Over District." Smith's account continued: "It [the religious excitement] commenced with the Methodists, but soon became general among all the sects in that region of country. Indeed, the whole district of country seemed affected by it, and great multitudes united themselves to the different religious parties. . . ."

It has been pointed out concerning this period that "between 1816 and 1821 revivals were reported in more towns and a greater number of settlers joined churches than in any previous period of New York history."

During this era of religious explosion, the Smith family was proselyted by the Presbyterian and Methodist.

---


25 In 1816, Presbyterian membership in western New York increased 1,050; in 1817, the increase was 1,989; in 1818, 1,516; and in 1819, the reported increase was 1,513. Since the report for 1819 did not include the membership of the Genesee presbytery, the increase in 1819 was probably greater than any previous year except for 1817. Methodist increase in membership in approximately the same region . . . indicates that there was an increase in membership in 1816 of 1,873; of 1,613 in 1817; and of 2,154 in 1818. After a major realignment occurred in the districts in 1819, membership reports reveal that during the year 1820 another significant increase in membership took place, there being an increase of 2,256. (Milton V. Backman, Jr., "Awakenings in the Burned-Over District: New Light on the Historical Setting of the First Vision," Brigham Young University Studies [Provo, Utah: BYU Press], Vol. IX, no. 3 [Spring 1969], p. 302.)
sects. Young Joseph (in his fifteenth year) leaned toward the Methodists, and felt some desire to join with them, while most of his family united with the Presbyterians. Yet he remained an interested investigator of truth without fully committing himself to any church. His major concern was a doctrinal one, for "the teachers of religion of the different sects understood the same passages of scripture so differently as to destroy all confidence in settling the question [of which of all the churches was right] by an appeal to the Bible." 26 And yet, Joseph felt himself drawn to the Bible. Impressed with the invitation in James 1:5 to ask God if one lacked wisdom, he sought answers through prayer. He walked to a grove of trees not far from his father's farm and knelt to pray. "Information was what I most desired," Smith later wrote, "and with a fixed determination to obtain it, I called on the Lord for the first time." 27 Concerning the events of that spring day in 1820 Joseph Smith made a remarkable claim, one which is the basis for the LDS belief in Smith as a modern prophet:

26 History of the Church, Vol. 1, p. 4.

27 Taken from the 1835 account of the First Vision, in Dean C. Jessee, "The Early Accounts of Joseph Smith's First Vision," Brigham Young University Studies, Vol. 9, no. 3 (Spring 1969), p. 284.
While fervently engaged in supplication my mind was taken away from the objects with which I was surrounded, and I was enwrapped in a heavenly vision and saw two glorious personages who exactly resembled each other in features, and likeness, surrounded with a brilliant light which eclipsed the sun at noon-day. They told me that all religious denominations were believing in incorrect doctrines, and that none of them was acknowledged of God as his Church and Kingdom. And I was expressly commanded to "go not after them," at the same time receiving a promise that the fulness of the gospel should at some future time be made known unto me.  

Three years passed. The young Smith had received no further divine communication, and had simply refrained from joining any of the existing churches (as he had been instructed). On the evening of September 21, 1823, Joseph knelt in prayer to determine his standing before God. According to the Prophet's record, an angel of God named Moroni appeared and delivered a message.

He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants.

Joseph Smith eventually received the plates, which he claims to have then translated into English through divine assistance. In March of 1830 this record was

28Times and Seasons (Nauvoo, Illinois: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1839:1846), Vol. 3, pp. 706-707. This was the official Church newspaper during the Saints' stay in Illinois.

29History of the Church, Vol. 1, p. 12.
published as the Book of Mormon.

Zion in the Book of Mormon

The Book of Mormon purports to be an additional book of scripture, what the Latter-day Saints call "another testament of Jesus Christ." About thirty pages of the 531-page book deal with a group known as the Jaredites, who leave the eastern hemisphere at the time of the building of the tower of Babel (Genesis 11) and are divinely led to America. Directed by prophets and inspired men, this group prospers or stumbles as they either follow or reject the counsels of God through their leaders. The struggles of this group result in a final great battle in which the entire nation is destroyed in or around 588 B.C. The majority of the Book of Mormon, however, deals with a group of Hebrews (descendants of the tribe of Joseph) who leave Jerusalem in the first year of the reign of King Zedekiah, anticipating (being divinely directed concerning) the overthrow of Judah by the Babylonians. These travel south and eventually set sail for a "promised land," a land "choice above all other lands." The early story highlights the dissension between Nephi, a righteous and obedient leader of his people, and his rebellious and murmuring brothers Laman and Lemuel. Eventually the internal squabbles result in a total break of the migrants into two separate bodies of people—the followers of Nephi (Nephites) and the
followers of the older brother (Lamanites). The remainder of the Book of Mormon is essentially a story of the constant rise and fall of the Nephite nation (similar to the accounts of the children of Israel contained in 2 Kings), as the people either choose to obey God or yield to the enticings of riches and pride. The book of 3 Nephi, chapters eleven to thirty, contains an account of a visit and brief ministry by Jesus Christ to the Nephites in America, following his death and ascension in Palestine. While teaching and comforting these "other sheep," Jesus organizes a church and establishes standards for a Christian community. An era of peace and unity follows for approximately two hundred years, as the people see to the needs of one another through having "all things in common." The material blessings of God eventually lead to pride and class distinctions, resulting in a continuation of the former struggles between good and evil. The story of the Book of Mormon culminates in a final battle between the Nephites and Lamanites, in which the former (who had proven over time to be more wicked than their idolatrous enemies) are exterminated. The history of the people from the time of Nephi had been kept by the prophets or civic leaders, and the final task of completing and editing the thousand-year collection of metal plates remained for the prophet Mormon (for whom the book-collection is named) and his
son, Moroni, in about A.D. 400.

It is in the Book of Mormon that we find the first usage of the word "Zion" in an unusual manner. Other than on those occasions in the record where Isaiah is quoted (and thus "Zion" generally has reference to Jerusalem), the word Zion is used in a very different way. Note the following verses:

And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost. . . . (1 Nephi 13:37.)

Wherefore, they that fight against Zion and the covenant people of the Lord shall lick up the dust of their feet; and the people shall not be ashamed. (2 Nephi 6:13.)

And this land [America] shall be a land of liberty unto the Gentiles, and there shall be no kings upon the land, who shall raise up unto the Gentiles.

And I will fortify this land against all other nations.

And he that fighteth against Zion shall perish, saith God. (2 Nephi 10:11-13.)

He [God] commandeth that there shall be no priestcrafts; for, behold, priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion.

Behold, the Lord hath forbidden this thing; wherefore, the Lord God hath given a commandment that all men should have charity, which charity is love. And except they should have charity they were . . .

Whole chapters of Isaiah or parts of the same are quoted in the Book of Mormon. The Nephite people claimed to have access to another set of records (the "plates of brass") before leaving Jerusalem, which contained essentially the Old Testament record down to the ministry of Jeremiah.
nothing. Wherefore, if they should have charity they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to perish. But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish. (2 Nephi 26:29-31.)

For behold, at that day shall he [Satan] rage in the hearts of the children of men, and stir them up to anger against that which is good. And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell.

Therefore, wo be unto him that is at ease in Zion. (2 Nephi 28:20-21,24.)

Verily, verily, I say unto you [Christ speaking to the Nephites during his ministry among them], thus hath the Father commanded me—that I should give unto this people this land for their inheritance. And then the words of the prophet Isaiah shall be fulfilled, which say:

Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing, for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion. (3 Nephi 16:16-18.)

The use of the word "Zion" in the Book of Mormon is thus seen to be much broader than a reference to the Old Testament city of Jerusalem. Zion is to be established or "brought forth," under God's direction, and those who fight against it are to incur the displeasure of the Almighty. From the passages in 2 Nephi, chapters twenty-six and twenty-eight, the use of the word "Zion" to describe what seems to be a community or society of the Saints is introduced. This society is one in which the citizens are to labor for "the welfare of Zion," and not for personal aggrandizement; further, the members of the community are to avoid the attitude that "all is well
in Zion." (Cf. Amos 6:1.) The words ascribed to Jesus in the passage from 3 Nephi 16 are instructive in the fact that a prophecy from Isaiah (52:8) is given a unique interpretation. The inheritance of the land of America by the descendants of the tribe of Joseph is seen to be a fulfillment of the prophecy that "the Lord shall bring again Zion." Thus two usages of "Zion" emerge in the Book of Mormon, each of which would play a key role in the development of the notion of Zion among the Latter-day Saints: (1) Zion as community, and (2) Zion as place: the land of America.

The Scriptural Prototype: The Zion of Enoch

In June of 1830, just three months after the publication of the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith began a careful study of the King James Version of the Bible, and prepared what came to be known as an "inspired translation" of the scriptures. This task he pursued actively through July 2, 1833. Working without the use of ancient languages or manuscripts, Smith suggested changes in the text that ought to be made, according to what he felt to be the spirit of revelation. A statement found in the early chapters of the Book of Mormon attested to the fact that "because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book [the Bible] which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, . . . because of these things which
are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceeding great many do stumble. . . ." (1 Nephi 13:29.) With this principle in mind, the Prophet proceeded in his study from Genesis to Revelation, as time would allow, making alterations in the text where he sensed that content or intent was rendered incorrect or vague.

There was nothing particularly unusual about a new translation of the Bible in the 1830's. As we have discussed, religious revivalism reached a peak in the New York area in the early nineteenth century, and with it came a heightened awareness of the need for the Bible as a divine standard for living. New England was not the only section of the country which manifested an intense interest at this time in a study and scrutiny of the Bible. Records indicate that from 1777 to 1833 more than 500 separate editions of the Bible (or parts thereof) were published in America.31 Many of these represented new translations or "modern translations," often with an attempt to prepare paraphrased editions or alternate readings based on comparisons with Greek and Hebrew manuscripts.

Joseph Smith's "translation," however, was quite

different. Here there were no language skills and no manuscripts with which to work. Joseph felt that he had been called of God to serve as a translator, as well as a prophet, seer, and revelator.32 On October 8, 1829 Joseph Smith and an associate, Oliver Cowdery, had purchased a large pulpit-style edition of the King James Bible (containing the Old and New Testaments and Apocrypha) from the E. B. Grandin store in Palmyra, New York. It was this Bible which was used in the translation.33 Joseph would read the Bible and then

32 In November of 1831 Joseph Smith and a number of associates began to make arrangements for the compilation and publication of all of the revelations he had received to that point in the Church's development. This collection was published in 1833 as the Book of Commandments and later expanded in 1835 (to include additional revelations) into the Doctrine and Covenants. This book of Doctrine and Covenants was later edited to contain many more revelations and items of information for the administration of the Church. This book, along with the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Pearl of Great Price, is recognized and canonized by the Latter-day Saints as scripture.

In three sections of the Doctrine and Covenants (D&C) Joseph Smith's role as a translator is stressed. He is to be "called a seer, a translator, a prophet, an apostle of Jesus Christ." (D&C 21:1.) Joseph is to be sustained as "a seer, a revelator, a translator, and a prophet, having all the gifts of God which he bestows upon the head of the Church." (D&C 107:91-92.) Finally: "I give unto you my servant Joseph to be a presiding elder over all my Church, to be a translator, a revelator, a seer, a prophet." (D&C 124:125.)

dictate alterations to a scribe who recorded the changes on manuscript pages. In all, Joseph Smith suggested changes in 3,410 verses, with Genesis and Luke receiving the most adjustment in the Old and New Testaments, respectively.

For the purposes of this study, a journal entry of Joseph Smith in December of 1830 (regarding the work with the Bible) is extremely important. The Prophet recorded:

It may be well to observe here, that the Lord greatly encouraged and strengthened the faith of his little flock . . . which had embraced the fulness of the everlasting Gospel, as revealed to them in the Book of Mormon, by giving some more extended information upon the Scriptures, a translation of which had already commenced. Much conjecture and conversation frequently occurred among the Saints, concerning the books mentioned, and referred to, in various places in the Old and New Testaments, which were now nowhere to be found. The common remark was, "They are lost books"; but it seems the Apostolic Church had some of these writings, as Jude mentions or quotes the Prophecy of Enoch, the seventh from Adam. To the joy of the little flock . . . did the Lord reveal the following doings of olden times, from the prophecy of Enoch. 34

Whereas the biblical record in Genesis 5 contains only three verses descriptive of the ministry of Enoch, the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) of Genesis consists of over one hundred verses. A careful reading of the text reveals the following concerning Enoch:

34 History of the Church, Vol. 1, pp. 131-133.
1. At the age of sixty-five Enoch was called of God to cry repentance to a wicked people.

2. Though shy, hesitant, and slow of speech, Enoch was given divine assurance and promised great power: "Behold my spirit is upon you, wherefore all thy words will I justify; and the mountains shall flee before you, and the rivers shall turn from their course; and thou shalt abide in me, and I in you; therefore walk with me." (JST, Genesis 6:36.)

3. Enoch became a seer, and was given a knowledge of "things which were not visible to the natural eye." (JST, Genesis 6:38.)

4. Enoch's preaching led many people to repent. The people became so righteous that "the Lord came and dwelt with his people, and they dwelt in righteousness." Further, "the fear of the Lord was upon all nations, so great was the glory of the Lord, which was upon his people." (JST, Genesis 7:20-21.)

5. Enoch established an economic order to care for the poor and needy. "And the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them." The city of Enoch came to be known as "the City of Holiness, even Zion." (JST, Genesis 7:23,25.)

6. Enoch saw in vision a future day when the "elect" would be gathered to a "Holy City," a latter-day
community that "shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem." (JST, Genesis 7:70.)

7. Enoch and his city were eventually translated, or taken into heaven without experiencing death. "And Enoch and all his people walked with God, and he dwelt in the midst of Zion; and it came to pass that Zion was not, for God received it up into his own bosom; and from thence went forth the saying, Zion is fled." (JST, Genesis 7:77-78.)

It will be seen in the chapters which follow that Joseph Smith's "Enoch Experience" is pivotal in the quest for a Zion society among the Mormons. Enoch becomes the pattern, the prototype by which all social or economic programs are to be judged. From the 1830's through the 1980's, the Latter-day Saints are encouraged by their leaders to be "of one heart" and to seek out the poor among them. One anthropologist has written:

The vision of Enoch . . . helped define Zion's social order, which was called on occasion the "city" or "order of Enoch." Enoch's city came to be the divine model for the Mormons' earthly undertakings, the platonic essence, if you will, of Smith's subsequent commandments and revelations on the subject. According to this vision, Zion's ideal urban order would be permeated by religion. Religion, not politics, would ensure domestic tranquility. Religion, not the military, would provide for a common defense. Religion, not economics, would promote the general welfare.  

35Steven L. Olsen, "Zion: The Structure of a Theological Revolution," Sunstone, Vol. 6, no. 6
In short, "the vision of Enoch gave theological, cosmological, eschatological, social, and personal sanction to the quest for Zion. Strains of these ideas had been present in Mormonism prior to the vision, but the vision integrated and energized them in a powerful and unmistakable manner."\(^{36}\)

\[^{36}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 25.}\]

CHAPTER 2

ZION AND MORMON SOCIETY

The establishment of a Zion society entailed more to Joseph Smith than simply the explication of religious doctrine on Sunday mornings. Although as we have noted, religion was the basis or foundation for such a community, yet the challenge of the Church leadership was to so structure the activities of the citizens as to engender the principles of Zion within all phases of life—social, economic, and political—on all days of the week. "I intend to lay a foundation," Joseph Smith boldly declared, "that will revolutionize the whole world." And then, emphasizing the source of this revolutionary movement, he added: "It will not be by sword or gun that this kingdom will roll on; the power of truth is such that all nations will be under the necessity of obeying the gospel."¹ Zion was to stand as a banner, an ensign to the people of the earth.

Zion as the heart of the kingdom of God was to be an ensign and a standard to the world, that all men might look to her and pattern their lives and their social arrangements after her example of truth and righteousness. An ensign is a distinguished flag or

¹History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 365.
banner, used in ancient times to direct the actions of men such as in a military campaign. As an ensign to the world in the last days, Zion was to be a rallying point of truth—a true banner of freedom, justice, union, and human dignity—to attract the attention of all men and direct them into the paths of peace and progress.

As a messenger before the Lord, the society of Zion was to be a nucleus of the millennial kingdom—an opening wedge—containing the basic principles and powers through which, eventually, peace and good will could be established universally among men. The divine system was to be developed among the Saints first, and then expanded throughout the earth as the millennial kingdom of Christ was ushered in."

To achieve this exalted end, the Mormon Prophet stressed that the Saints must achieve a level of personal integrity that would qualify them to be known as the "pure in heart." Thus a revelation to Smith in 1833 declared: "Verily, thus saith the Lord, let Zion rejoice, for this is Zion—the pure in heart." While striving for purity of heart, it was expected that the Latter-day Saints should apply the proper standards of judgment to every facet of life, so as to insure that all programs and policies were grounded in the truth. "Behold, I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a hill, or in a high place, to judge the nations. For it shall come to pass that the inhabitants

---

2 Hyrum L. Andrus, Doctrines of the Kingdom (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973), pp. 28, 29.

3 Doctrine and Covenants, section ninety-seven, verse twenty-one. Cited hereafter as D&C, with appropriate section and verse numbers.
of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion."  

Social Life Among the Mormons

Brigham Young stated that if the "enemies of truth" would allow the Saints time to implement the principles of Mormonism, "we will show them the most civil community—a community farther advanced in the arts of refinement than any other people upon the earth. We will show them men and women the most profound in learning, and mechanics the most expert and ingenious. We will show them men endowed with the most brilliant natural talent and the most wisdom that can be found in the world."  

Joseph Smith claimed to have received in vision an understanding of the physical layout of the city or complex of cities of Zion. On June 25, 1833 Joseph and his counselors in the presidency of the Church, then in Kirtland, Ohio, sent to the local Church leaders in Missouri a “plat for the City of Zion.” The land area of the ideal community was to be approximately one mile square, with all city blocks (with the exception of the

---

4D&C 64:37-38.  
7The following description (plat) is given in detail in History of the Church, Vol. 1, pp. 357-362.
center section of town) containing ten acres each (forty rods square). Each block was to be made up of twenty individual lots of one-half acre each (66 feet front by 330 feet back). The city would contain from 15,000 to 20,000 people. Three blocks in the center of town would allow space for municipal buildings. The community would follow the "farm village" pattern of land settlement, in which "the homes and yards are located in the village, from which the farmers travel to and from their farms in the neighboring fields."\(^8\) In addition, it would appear that "when cities were built in industrial areas, industries would also be located outside the city. The city was to be a residential area, with the means of support for its inhabitants located outside their living area."\(^9\) In the center of the city upon thirty acres of ground was to be located a temple complex, an "administrative center"\(^10\) in which twenty-four temples would serve the community. Though Joseph Smith gave little detail as to the appearance or function of the temples, one twentieth-century Church leader has written:


\(^9\) Andrus, *Doctrines of the Kingdom*, p. 304.

It would seem for communication purposes that the temples will be interconnected in some fashion, perhaps with richly embellished porticoes, with easy gliding stairways to match the adornments of the temples, which no doubt will be beyond that which human eyes have ever seen, especially the temple where the Lord will appear and hold forth his administrative councils. The embellishments of the complex will no doubt come from the saints from all parts of the earth, including the riches, treasures, and adornments of the lost tribes. The beauty and embellishments of the temple complex in Zion will be greater than that of Solomon's temple, the main structure of which was smaller than any one will be of the temple complex.

Communications within the temple complex, and with all of the cities throughout the world, especially the city of Jerusalem, the city of the House of Judah, will be perfect. Contact will be spontaneous, and the voice of the Lord will be heard through perfected audio and video mediums, such as we have not yet been able to achieve in the field of electronics. Concerning this the Lord declared in a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith: "He shall utter his voice out of Zion, and he shall speak from Jerusalem, and his voice shall be heard among all people." (D&amp;C 133:21.)

It is of passing interest to note that the temples numbered 19, 20, and 21, described on the plat [designated "House of the Lord, the Law of the Kingdom of Heaven, and Messenger to the People"], will perhaps, among other functions, be centers of communications, described as "the messenger to the people." 11

When the city of Zion was completed and the population had grown to 20,000, then the Prophet indicated that the Saints were to "lay off another in the same way, and so fill up the world in these last days." 12 Even though the plan described above was understood to have been received by revelation, the early members recognized that

12 History of the Church, Vol. 1, p. 358.
variety and change might well characterize the layout and design of other cities of Zion.\textsuperscript{13}

With regard to cultural pursuits, the leaders of the Mormon Church have repeatedly emphasized that "the greatest and most important labor we have to perform is to cultivate ourselves."\textsuperscript{14} The society of Zion was to effect a synthesis of all that was ennobling and enjoyable, and was to make available to its people all that was meant to "please the eye and gladden the heart." The Saints in Zion, though under strict covenantal obligations to their God and to each other, were not to be ascetics, but were to enjoy life, to find happiness and enrichment in everyday activities, and were to have "cheerful hearts and countenances."\textsuperscript{15} It was not only the elect people that were to be gathered to Zion (to be discussed in detail in Chapter Five); in addition, "every accomplishment, every polished grace, every useful attainment in mathematics, music, in all science and art belong to the Saints, and they [the Saints] . . . rapidly collect the intelligence that is bestowed upon the


\textsuperscript{14}Brigham Young, \textit{ibid.}, Vol. 10, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{D&C} 59:15-18.
nations, for all this intelligence belongs to Zion."\(^{16}\)

Debates were a common occurrence in the early
Mormon communities, and for some time were held
weekly.\(^{17}\) These were sponsored "for the purpose of
eliciting truth, acquiring knowledge, and improving
public speaking."\(^{18}\) In the journal of Joseph Smith under
the date of December 12, 1835 is found the following
entry:

In the evening attended a debate at Brother
William Smith's on the following question--Was it
necessary for God to reveal Himself to mankind in
order for their happiness? I was on the affirmative,
and the last to speak on that side of the question."

Also very prevalent in early Mormon communities were art
exhibits,\(^{20}\) lyceums,\(^{21}\) museums,\(^{22}\) and drama.\(^{23}\) "There is
no true enjoyment in life," stated Brigham Young,
"nothing that can be a blessing to an individual or a

---

\(^{16}\) Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vols. 10,
p. 224; 8:279.

\(^{17}\) See *History of the Church*, Vols. 2:317, 330;
4:514.


\(^{21}\) Journal and Memoirs of Wandle Mace, 1809-1890,
typewritten copy, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young
University, p. 83. See also *Juvenile Instructor*, XXVII,
(June 15, 1982) p. 399.

\(^{22}\) *Times and Seasons*, Vol. 4, pp. 201-203.

community, but what is ordained of God to bless his people." This statement by Young emphasizes his adherence to the belief that no enjoyment is to be had in life outside of God and his laws. Similarly, no practice or behavior in Zion could lead to success or to fulfillment independent of the principles upon which Zion was established.

In statements of Church leaders toward music and the arts we have reaffirmed the notion that the "spirit of Zion" is to permeate all phases of life. Brigham Young remarked that "there is no music in hell, for all good music belongs to heaven."

Sweet harmonious sounds give exquisite joy to human beings capable of appreciating music. I delight in hearing harmonious tunes made by the human voice, by musical instruments, and by both combined. Every sweet musical sound that can be made belongs to the Saints and is for the Saints. The following ideas, attributed to Joseph Smith, demonstrate even more forcefully the Zion spirit that was meant to be part of every facet of life:

He [Joseph Smith] recommended the Saints to cultivate as high a state of perfection in their musical harmonies as the standard of the faith which he had brought was superior to sectarian religion. To obtain this, he gave them to understand that the refinement of singing would depend on the attainment of the Holy Spirit. ... When these graces and refinements and all the kindred attractions are

---

obtained that characterized the ancient Zion of Enoch, then the Zion of the last days will become beautiful, she will be hailed by the Saints from the four winds, who will gather to Zion with songs of everlasting joy.  

Recent LDS leaders have continued to stress the place of personal spirituality in the development of literary or artistic talents in Zion. In 1976 Boyd K. Packer, one of the Mormon apostles, quoted an earlier Church official in an address to Brigham Young University students: "We shall yet have Miltons and Shakespeares of our own. God's ammunition is not exhausted. . . . In God's name and by His help we will build up a literature whose tops will touch the heaven, though its foundation may be low on the earth." Packer emphasized that the greatest hymns and symphonies of the world's history had not yet been composed, the greatest poetry or prose set down, or the most important paintings finished. "When they are produced," he asked, "who will produce them? Will it be the most talented and the most highly trained among us? I rather think it will not."

They will be produced by those who are the most inspired among us. Inspiration can come to those whose talents are barely adequate, and their


contribution will be felt for generations; and the Church and kingdom of God will move forward just a little more easily because they have been here."

Spencer W. Kimball, twelfth president of the Church, has also called for a type of "renaissance in Mormon art," an artistic tradition which he feels should emerge from a peculiarly religious culture. "Our writers, our motion picture specialists, with the inspiration of heaven, should tomorrow be able to produce a masterpiece which would live forever. Our own talent, obsessed with dynamism from a CAUSE, could put into such a story life and heartbeats and emotions and love and pathos, drama, suffering, fear, courage. . . ."

Take a daVinci or a Michelangelo or a Shakespeare and give him a total knowledge of the plan of salvation, of God and personal revelation, and cleanse him, and then take a look at the statues he will carve and the murals he will paint and the masterpieces he will produce. Take a Handel with his purposeful effort, his superb talent, his earnest desire to properly depict the story, and give him inward vision of the whole true story and revelation, and what a master you have!"

Packer and Kimball have emphasized (along with their earlier Mormon associates) a "healthy" approach to the production of great works of art; that is, the "Zion" approach emphasizes the results which flow from the healthy personality, from one possessed of the spirit of

---

28 Ibid., p. 277.

Zion. This proposal was that greater accomplishments could result from one "obsessed with dynamism from a CAUSE," particularly the cause of Zion, than from one caught in the throes of struggle and inner conflict. Kimball noted: "It has been said that many of the great artists were perverts or moral degenerates. In spite of their immorality they became great and celebrated artists. What could be the result if discovery were made of equal talent in men who were clean and free from the vices, and thus entitled to revelations?" 30

Education in Zion: Kirtland to Provo

An axiom of religious faith among the Mormons was given by Joseph Smith in 1833: "The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth." 31 "In knowledge there is power," Smith explained on another occasion. "God has more power than all other beings, because he has greater knowledge." 32 Thus it was that education assumed a prominent position among Mormon priorities from the very beginning. In the first issue of The Evening and the Morning Star, the official Church periodical in Independence Missouri, is found the

30 Ibid., p. 4.
31D&C 93:36.
following:

The disciples should lose [sic] no time in preparing schools for their children that they may be taught as is pleasing unto the Lord, and brought up in the way of holiness. Those appointed to select and prepare books for the use of schools, will attend to that subject, as soon as more weighty matters are finished. But the parents and guardians, in the Church of Christ need not wait— it is all important that children, to become good should be taught so. Moses, while delivering the words of the Lord to the congregation of Israel, the parents, says [quotes Deuteronomy 6:6-8]. . . . if it were necessary then to teach their children diligently, how much more necessary is it now, when the Church of Christ is to be an ensign, yea, even a sample to the world for good?33

Schools were established for adults as well as children. For a number of years Joseph Smith directed a number of men in what came to be known as the "School of Elders" or the "School of the Prophets." Although theology was at the core of all that was studied, a revelation declared that this body of men should immerse itself in a varied curriculum. They were instructed to study "things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms."34

33 The Evening and the Morning Star (Independence, Missouri: June, 1832), Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 6.
34 D&C 83:79.
addition, Joseph Smith and a number of others taught and studied English grammar and Biblical Hebrew.

The philosophy of education in a society of Zion placed theology at the "hub of the wheel," with the secular disciplines serving as "spokes." In the mind of Joseph Smith, the other disciplines had meaning only as they drew the same from the religion of Zion. From the writings of Parley P. Pratt, early Mormon apostle, comes the explication of the place of "the science of theology":

It is the science of all other sciences and useful arts, being in fact the very fountain from which they emanate. It includes philosophy, astronomy, history, mathematics, geography, language, the science of letters; and blends the knowledge of all matter of fact, in every branch of art, or of research... all that is useful, great, and good; all that is calculated to sustain, comfort, instruct, edify, purify, refine, or exalt intelligences; originated by this science, and this science alone, all other sciences being but branches growing out of this—the root.

Sidney Rigdon, former Campbellite minister and counselor to Joseph Smith, asked the question: "What is religion without intelligence? An empty soul." Rigdon then continued: "Intelligence is the root, from which


all time enjoyments flow. Intelligence is religion and religion is intelligence, if it is anything."38 One LDS theologian has suggested that "Zion represented a new synthesis—the combination of separate and subordinate elements of thought into a new form, a new whole—in which all known truth would be integrated into the supreme truth of Christ, and be exalted and sanctified by His divine power."

Consistent with this approach, Joseph Smith's philosophy of education suggested the need, first, for a practical program to assist the Saints to acquire divine truth by revelation through the Holy Spirit; and, second, for a program to promote learning by human reason and analysis, and to integrate that knowledge into the central core of spiritually acquired truth. On the basis that the Saints would follow this approach, the Prophet encouraged them to seek for and acquire knowledge in all fields of inquiry.39

The principles of Zion not only defined the field of study (circumscribing all into one great whole), but also described the method by which learning may be facilitated. Since all truth is of God, and since the things of God are to be known best through God's influence (1 Corinthians 2:11-14), then it followed for the Saints that one's ability to acquire knowledge (even

38 Speech delivered by Sidney Rigdon at the laying of the cornerstone of the temple to be built in Far West, Missouri, July 4, 1838; in files of the Chicago Historical Library.

39 Hyrum L. Andrus, Doctrines of the Kingdom, p. 315.
of secular things) was directly proportional to one's ability to draw upon the infinite storehouse of available spiritual power. "And if your eye be single to my glory," the members of Zion were taught in 1832, "your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things." ⁴⁰ One Latter-day Saint writer stated in 1910:

Knowledge, then, is to be obtained by study and by faith, and where faith is strong enough, knowledge may be more easily acquired. The Lord had declared that nothing may be obtained unless a person strives for it; yet to him who obeys the commandments of God, the Holy Spirit may be given in such great abundance that knowledge may come easily. Therefore... a righteous man may acquire knowledge more rapidly than an unrighteous man. It is through the Comforter or Spirit of God that the Latter-day Saints are to receive the gift of knowledge. ⁴¹

Joseph Smith and the Mormons established school systems in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. It was in Illinois that interest in formal education reached a peak in the formative period of Church history, for it was in the city of Nauvoo that the Saints were able to live in relative peace (freedom from persecution) for seven years. Having been granted an extremely liberal and broad charter (act of incorporation) by the State of

⁴⁰D&C 88:67.

Illinois, the Latter-day Saints set about to establish common schools and a local university. The University of the City of Nauvoo, organized February 3, 1841, "was a strange combination of the traditional church college and the French inspired 'university of the state' under which were combined all educational functions within the state. The University of the State of New York (1784), and the University of Michigan (1817) may have furnished the pattern for the university at Nauvoo, although in Nauvoo both the universal direction of education in the city and the parent university were established in fact under one authority." John C. Bennett, who later became disaffected from the Church, was appointed Chancellor, with Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and twenty-one additional persons acknowledged as Regents of the university. Orson Pratt was given direction for the departments of Mathematics and English Literature. In addition, courses were taught by Pratt in Algebra, Geometry, Conic Sections, Plane Trigonometry, Surveying, Navigation, Differential and Integral Calculus,

---


Philosophy, Astronomy, and Chemistry. Orson Spencer, a graduate of Union College and the Baptist Literacy and Theological Seminary in New York, was given supervisory responsibility for the Department of Languages. Sidney Rigdon was appointed as head of the Department of History. Gustavus Hill was given the position of head of the Department of Music. Besides the supervision of higher education the regents of the Nauvoo school system were expected to take the general supervision of all matters appertaining to education, from common schools up to the highest branches of a most liberal collegiate course. They will establish a regular system of education, and hand over the pupil from teacher to professor, until the regular graduation is consummated and the education finished.

A continued push for education was evident in the administration of Brigham Young, even as the Saints had been driven from Illinois following the murder of Joseph Smith. On the banks of the Missouri River near Council Bluffs, Iowa (en route to the Great Basin), Young stressed that "all the Saints should improve every opportunity of securing at least a copy of every valuable treatise on education—every book, map, chart, or diagram

---


that may contain interesting, useful and attractive matter, to gain the attention of children, and cause them to love to learn to read."48 Regular school classes were held at the more permanent sites along the way. The establishment of school buildings was one of the primary considerations of the Mormons upon reaching the Salt Lake Valley, and the early growth of "private" educational facilities (no public funding was available until some years later) followed the pattern that had been set in Illinois. One of the first acts of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Deseret was the institution of the University of Deseret (later known as the University of Utah). Like the university in Nauvoo, this university was intended to provide supervision and control for all educational endeavors within the state.49

Religious instruction was, from the beginning, an essential part of the curriculum of the school system in Utah. This came to be a problem as more and more non-Mormons found their way into the valley. A separation of Church and State in educational matters seemed inevitable, although ecclesiastical leaders resisted such a secularization of the schools. As late as 1867 Daniel

H. Wells, a counselor to President Brigham Young, expressed the feelings of a number of citizens.

Let us provide schools, competent teachers, and good books for our children, and let us pay our teachers. I would have no objection to seeing the standard works of the Church [Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants] introduced into our schools, that our children may be taught more pertaining to the principles of the gospel in the future than they are in the present, and let one test of the fitness on the part of those who teach be a thorough acquaintance with and love for the principles which we have received, that our children may be taught the principles of truth and righteousness, and be trained from their youth in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Let this course be taken50 in our schools, and let us pay our teachers.

A similar sentiment was expressed by Wilford Woodruff on another occasion. Note how in 1888 the fourth president of the Church (even more emphatically than Wells) sensed that the principles and doctrines of Zion must be a part of the overall educational experience.

Religious training is practically excluded from the district schools. The perusal of books that we value as divine records is forbidden. Our children, if left to the training they receive in these schools, will grow up entirely ignorant of those principles of salvation for which the Latter-day Saints have made so many sacrifices. To permit this condition of things to exist among us would be criminal. The desire is universally expressed by all thinking people in the Church that we should have schools where the Bible, The Book of Mormon, and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants can be used as text books, and where the principles of our religion may form part of the teaching of the schools."51

By President Woodruff's day the secularization was obviously well under way. Of additional interest is the "desire" mentioned for schools in which the scriptures may be taught. This sentiment laid the foundation for the growth of the LDS Church School System.

The Church soon began to establish academies and colleges. From 1875 to 1911, twenty-two such institutions were organized, in which all students were required to enroll in a course of religious instruction. The expenses associated with the construction and maintenance of the academies, plus the cost for parents of sending children (from the home community) to other areas where the Church schools were located, led to a close evaluation of the entire philosophy of education. In 1912 a "released-time" seminary program was established adjacent to the Granite High School in Salt Lake City, in which high school youth would be permitted to leave the public school to receive one hour of religious training. This idea spread throughout the Western states. In addition, by 1920, a Church Commission of Education recommended that a number of the academies be sold to the state or converted to Church-related buildings.\(^5^2\) Over the years since this time, the

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has involved itself in the development of educational facilities (in foreign countries) only when the government has not made provisions to provide the same for the community. In 1926, a "college seminary" program was established at the University of Idaho to provide religious instruction for university students. The Church has since organized such programs (known now as Institutes of Religion) adjacent to most colleges and universities in the U.S. and in a number of foreign countries.

In 1875, Brigham Young appointed Karl G. Maesar as President of the Brigham Young Academy. Young's instructions to Maesar were brief: "You should teach not even the alphabet or multiplication tables without the inspiration of the Lord. That is all. God bless you, good-bye." Every President of the Church (who serves as the head of the Board of Trustees for the university) and every president of the university since Maesar has labored to make of BYU "the university of Zion." Leaders of the university are fond of citing the following remarks of Charles H. Malik, former president of the United Nations general assembly. Malik looked forward to

a day when a great university will arise somewhere—I hope in America—to which Christ will return in his full glory and power, a university which will, in the promotion of scientific, intellectual and artistic excellence, surpass by far even the best secular universities of the present, but which will at the same time enable Christ to bless it and act and feel perfectly at home in it.\footnote{54}

Spencer W. Kimball, in making reference to Malik's statement, said: "Surely BYU can help respond to that call!" Later, in the same address, Kimball spoke of the price to be paid at BYU to achieve the stated end:

We must do more than ask the Lord for excellence. Perspiration must precede inspiration; there must be effort before there is excellence. We must do more than pray for these outcomes at BYU, though we must surely pray. We must take thought. We must make effort. We must be patient. We must be professional. We must be spiritual. Then, in the process of time, this will become the fully anointed university of the Lord, about which so much has been spoken in the past.\footnote{55}

He further instructed the faculty to speak the language of faith, as well as the language of the academy. "Your double heritage and dual concerns," he pointed out, "with the secular and the spiritual require you to be 'bilingual.' As LDS scholars you must speak with


authority and excellence to your professional colleagues in the language of scholarship, and you must also be literate in the language of spiritual things. We must be more bilingual, in that sense, to fulfill our promise in the second century of BYU.  

The administration of BYU has seen fit to encourage standards in conduct and dress consonant with the standards of the Church; they view such standards as necessary in establishing the image of the Church-owned university as an "ensign" among other campuses across the country. And yet the Board of Education has repeatedly stressed that the BYU student body is to represent more

56"Second Century Address," p. 446. We come face to face here with the classic inevitable tension encountered when a religious body begins to seek definition and establish parameters in the secular society. To be "bilingual" in the sense used by Kimball is to invite the possibility that adherence to the particulars of one's discipline and the depth of one's devotion in his religious life might be perceived as incongruous. In fact, being academically "in the world, but not of the world" is generally a far greater challenge to one's sense of integrity than most would assume. For example, how does an orthodox Latter-day Saint geologist reconcile the tension between his own training as to the antiquity of the earth and the Church's traditional hold upon Bishop Ussher's chronological history? How does an LDS botanist reconcile organic evolution with Mormon scripture (and vocal modern Church leaders) which stress special creation? Or how does an LDS Freudian or Behaviorist reconcile principles of his discipline with the scriptural injunction that man is a free agent?
than a non-smoking, non-drinking, non-violent, clean-cut group of young people on a clean campus. Brigham Young University must, as Spencer Kimball emphasized, excel in the realm of secular knowledge as well as in the area of religious truth. Dr. Chauncey C. Riddle, Professor of Philosophy (and, at the time of the following remarks, Dean of the Graduate School at BYU) spoke to a graduating class at the time of the university's centennial celebration. His Topic: "A BYU for Zion."

The question I ponder is, what kind of an institution must BYU be to be fully acceptable to the Lord as part of Zion? Now I do not suppose that Zion needs BYU; it could be established without this institution. But BYU is part of the Church Educational System. If it does not grow and increase in glory as the Church will, that would be a calamity. But a great and glorious BYU could well be a great contributor to the beauty of Zion. In referring to the moral, dress and grooming standards at the university, Riddle said: "Those who obey [God's] commandments are thus moral. Being moral, they can then be trusted with great knowledge, for they will not abuse it. They will use it only to further the cause of righteousness in the earth." And then, regarding grooming: "I see that standard as an invitation on the part of the living prophets to the children of light to please the Savior, that he might shower light and truth

upon their heads. But if we do not search out the source—if we 'hem and haw' over skirt and hair lengths—how can we be taught and trusted with the riches of eternity?"58

Chauncey Riddle, in the address cited above, described a "Zion university" as one that, out of pure love, has a genuine concern for the poor. In Enoch's Zion (the prototype), the citizens of the City of Holiness had "no poor among them." Riddle asked, "How will BYU care for the poor? Its primary mission is not to the physically or the spiritually or the emotionally poor. Its direct mission is to those who are poor in knowledge and ability. To make them rich answers the ends of its creation."59 In summing up, what seems to be the function of BYU in the eventual establishment of Zion among the Mormons, Riddle quoted from a revelation to Joseph Smith, in which the Saints are given to understand that through the Spirit light and knowledge are to come as natural endowments to the faithful.60 Then he adds:

Does this mean that faculty and students at BYU will cease to read books and journals? Will all scientific investigation cease? Will all creation become a waiting for God to reveal? Not at all. All efforts to learn will increase, but they will then

58Ibid., pp. 489, 491.
59Ibid., p. 492.
60D&C 76:5-10.
all be fruitful. For reading shall be done with discernment, and the reading of error will often be an occasion for a revelation of truth. Experiments will be conceived in revelation to capture insights of truth which will flash into well-disciplined, cultivated, and informed minds. Artistic creation will spring forth from the bosom that hungers to edify and will find physical embodiment through persons skillful in all useful endeavors. The glory of man will not then be the pretense to create or discover. The glory will be given to the Father of lights as men humbly seek to embody his will in material things of this earth, even as it is done in heaven. Morality will be the key to knowledge, to creation, to every success.\textsuperscript{61}

With the understanding that "Brigham Young University will never surrender its spiritual character to a sole concern for scholarship,"\textsuperscript{62} there is another potential challenge to the university (and thus to the creation of Zion) which needs attention. In addressing this problem, Hugh Nibley, Mormon apologist and Professor Emeritus of Ancient History and Scripture at BYU (and a perceptive social critic) noted: "True knowledge never shuts the door on more knowledge, but zeal often does. One thinks of the dictum: 'We are not seeking for truth at the BYU; we have the truth!' So did Adam and Abraham have the truth, far greater and more truth than what we have, and yet the particular genius of each was that he was constantly 'seeking for greater light and knowledge.'"

\textsuperscript{61}From "A BYU For Zion," p. 490.

The young, with their limited knowledge are particularly susceptible to excessive zeal. Why do it the hard way, they ask at the BYU, when God has given us the answer book? The answer to that is, because if you use the answer book for your Latin or your math, or anything else, you will always have a false sense of power and never learn the real thing. 63

It seems that despite the constant emphasis by Church and university administrators on the need for study as well as faith, some students, highly equipped with zeal, attempt to move forward without the directional signals that proper knowledge could provide. "The quality in which the Saints have always excelled is zeal," said Nibley. "Zeal is the engine that drives the whole vehicle; without it we would get nowhere. But without clutch, throttle, brakes, and steering wheel, our mighty engine becomes an instrument of destruction, and the more powerful the motor, the more disastrous the inevitable crack-up if the proper knowledge is lacking." 64 In the same vein, even though the Board of Trustees has placed "a heavy and primary emphasis on transmitting knowledge--on the quality of teaching at BYU" 65--Nibley has stressed what he feels to be equally important: the need for


64Ibid., p. 266.

quality faculty and student research.

Publication is especially important in a church university; for where the severe standards imposed by professional journals are not applied, scholars inevitably succumb to the occupational hazards of the religious teacher, easily lapsing into superficial pseudo-scholarship, irresponsible speculation, ill-informed controversy and authoritarian pomposity. 66

Zion and the Family

As was pointed out in Chapter One, the early nineteenth century may be characterized as a time of social and intellectual unrest and upheaval. Among the many institutions faced with potential change and pointed toward inevitable renovation and reinterpretation was the family. "The possibility," writes one historian, "that individuals might separate with greater ease from parental and community ties left them freer to develop their own practices and life styles."

Of course, there was still much mobility in kinship and community groups, and many traditional forms of social control remained. However, in the increasing number of cases of individuals who were temporarily or permanently separated from home by many miles, families could hardly maintain as much influence on their children's choice of marriage partners or on the way in which their married lives would be conducted. The growing emphasis in the antebellum period on individualistic "romantic love" as the basis for marriage was parallel in many ways to the increasing individualism of the whole

66 From "Writing and Publication in Graduate School," paper delivered to the History Honors Banquet, Brigham Young University, 12 May 1965, p. 1.
Lawrence Foster has suggested that among the many responses to the additional freedom and latitude in family relations was an attempt to keep in check potential anarchic sexual or social behavior patterns through attributing "enormous, even cosmic, importance to the home." Such an attitude toward family life characterized such groups as the Shakers, the Oneida Perfectionists, and the Latter-day Saints. "Any religion," writes Foster, "which attempts to encompass the whole of life must inevitably come to terms with the problems of the family and the regulations of relations between the sexes."

All three of the above religious groups found meaning in the following New Testament passage (Luke 20:34-36):

The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels: and are the children of God, being children of the resurrection.

---


68 Foster, Religion and Sexuality, p. 13.

69 Ibid., p. 15.
In the briefest sense, Mother Ann Lee and the Shakers (United Society of Believers in Christ’s Second Appearing) interpreted the Lucan passage to mean that no sexual relations would take place in the world to come, and therefore the highest expression of Christianity in the here and now is manifest through a completely celibate life. John Humphrey Noyes insisted that it was marriage, not sexual relations, that would be done away in the hereafter. Noyes therefore established a "complex marriage" arrangement among the members of the Oneida Community, in which love was expressed freely and openly to all, and in which exclusive and legalistic marriage and sexual attachments were discontinued.\textsuperscript{70}

An axiomatic expression in Mormonism is: "The family is the most important unit in time or in eternity." Further, it is understood that the Church exists as a service agency, an auxiliary, to bless and strengthen individuals and families.\textsuperscript{71} David O. McKay, ninth president of the Church, said:

Latter-day Saints, the responsibility of saving this sacred institution [the family] devolves largely upon you, for you know that the family ties are eternal. They should be eternal. There is nothing temporary in the home of the Latter-day Saint. There is no element of transitoriness in the

\textsuperscript{70}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 15-16.

\textsuperscript{71}\textit{Bruce R. McConkie, Let Every Man Learn His Duty (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978), p. 24.}
family relationship of the Latter-day Saint home. To
the Latter-day Saint the home is truly the cell-unit
of society; and parenthood is next to Godhood.

The last thought of the above quotation that "parenthood
is next to Godhood" is not just platitude and symbolic
rhetoric to the Mormons; they believe that God is an
exalted man, and that he "lives in the family unit."
Earthly families are, therefore, meant to be patterned
after the family of heaven, the latter being that from
which every man took leave (from a pre-mortal existence)
to come to mortality. His/her eternal responsibility is
to be born, to marry, to have children, and to so
organize the family as to follow the example of the
Divine Patriarchal Order of heaven. McKay said on a
later occasion: "I picture heaven to be a continuation
of the ideal home." Marriage is an earthly or mortal
responsibility that should be performed in the temple (to
be discussed in detail in Chapter Five), where it can be
sealed (through legal Priesthood power) for time and
eternity.

It is believed by the Mormons that Joseph Smith
received by revelation the idea for plural marriage as
early as 1831, while involved in his translation of the

72Conference Report (Salt Lake City: The Church
of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 1917), p.
56.

King James Bible. While studying the lives of the ancient patriarchs, and of such personalities as David and Solomon, Joseph noticed the frequency with which these men (acknowledged in the biblical account as worthy and noble men) had taken more than one woman to wife. According to Mormon historian Daniel Backman, Smith seemed to have asked three main questions of God regarding ancient polygamous relationships and marriage in general, the answers to which are given in a revelation now recorded as section 132 of the Doctrine and Covenants.74 The three questions were: (1) Why did God allow or justify the ancient practice of polygamy? (2) Why did not the practice constitute adultery? and (3) What is the meaning of Christ's reply to the situation posed by the Saducees in Matthew 22:23-30 (the parallel passage is in Luke 20, cited earlier in this section)? The answers to the three questions were recorded in some detail by the Prophet, but in briefest form are as follows: (1) Plural marriage is a part of eternal marriage, and is a "new and everlasting covenant" between the participating parties and the Almighty. The commandment is given from time to time to raise up a righteous posterity unto the Lord.

All those who "abide not that covenant," when commanded, "are . . . damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory." (D&C 132:4.)

(2) Joseph Smith learned that a man could only commit adultery when he entered into a relationship not authorized by God; if a man "do anything in my name, and according to my law and by my word, he will not commit sin, and I will justify him." A man "cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth unto him and to no one else." (D&C 132:59, 61.) Finally, (3) the statement of Jesus that "they neither marry nor are given in marriage" has reference to the doctrine of eternal marriage. They who do not enjoy the blessing of marriage in the resurrection are the persons who did not enter into the new and everlasting covenant of marriage while here on earth (not necessarily a polygamous marriage but an eternal marriage). "Therefore, when they are out of the world they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory." (D&C 132:16.)

Though no doubt the most controversial element of Mormon history and theology, the doctrine of plurality of wives was seen as essential to the establishment of a Zion people and society. First of all, as we indicated
in Chapter One, the Mormons (like many of their contemporaries) were eager for the return of the "ancient order of things." Latter-day Saints recognized the law of eternal marriage (and also plural marriage, a part of eternal marriage) as one of many things which needed to be restored to earth. Mark E. Petersen, one of the senior Mormon apostles today, has written:

When the apostle Peter spoke [Acts 3:19-21], . . . he referred to the second coming of the Savior and indicated that this great event will not take place until the time of the restoration of all things spoken by the Lord through his prophets from the beginning of the world.

All things were to be restored!
Would this include plural marriage?
It did, and hence section 132 of the Doctrine and Covenants was given. In verses 40 and 45 of that section, as he speaks of plural marriage to Joseph Smith, the Lord refers to it as part of the restoration of all things.

The Prophet Joseph did not wish to enter polygamy. It was farthest from his mind. But he was the restorer, and through him "all things" must be restored. Hence under the persuasion of the Lord, he accepted it. This is why there was polygamy among the Mormons.75

Secondly, as indicated by Petersen, strict obedience was required to live a law so foreign to a people's background and upbringing. Though there were certainly those who "ran before they were sent" to enter (illegally) into polygamous relationships, the majority of the members of the Church complied hesitantly and

slowly. It was seen by many as a great test of faith, a "refiner's fire" whereby the mettle of the best of the Saints was tested. One of Joseph Smith's plural wives recalls that Joseph "said that the practice of this principle would be the hardest trial the Saints would ever have to test their faith."76 John Taylor, third president of the Church taught: "When this system was first introduced among this people, it was one of the greatest crosses that ever was taken up by any set of men since the world stood." And then, to indicate the importance of plural marriage in the creation of Zion and the Kingdom of God, Taylor continued: "Joseph Smith told others; he told me, and I can bear witness of it, 'that if this principle was not introduced, this Church and kingdom could not proceed.'"77 In this regard, the doctrine of plural marriage served to sift the "chaff" from the body of the faithful in Zion.

In this dispensation, the promulgation of the law of plural marriage had an effect similar to the presentation of the doctrine of the Bread of Life, in the meridian dispensation. Opposition from without the Church increased, while some unstable members of the kingdom itself found themselves unable to accept the fulness of the revealed program of the Lord. There were many important reasons why the Lord revealed the doctrine of plurality of wives. But if plural marriage had served no other purpose than to sift the chaff from the wheat, than to keep the

77 Journal of Discourses, Vol. 11, p. 221.
unstable and semi-faithful people from the fulness of gospel blessings, it would have been more than justified.  

Finally, Joseph Smith taught the Latter-day Saints that if properly practiced, plural marriage would result in a renewal and moral reformation of society. Strange as such a notion may seem to those outside the Church, the Mormon Prophet believed that "this order has to spread and increase until the inhabitants of the earth repent of their evils and men will do what is right towards the females." Heber C. Kimball explained that "this doctrine is a holy and pure principle, in which the power of God for the regeneration of mankind is made manifest." Hyrum L. Andrus of Brigham Young University has suggested four means by which the practice of plural marriage could have reformed the society of the nineteenth century:

First, by maintaining its underlying spiritual program, the families of men within the system would be established upon a high spiritual and moral plane. Second, the program of regenerated men taking plural wives to raise up seed unto Christ assured that this class of men would propagate more rapidly than others. The multiplication of such families would raise society to a higher spiritual and moral standard.

---


Third, the new order was designed to remove single women from the sphere where they could be preyed upon by perverse men.

Finally, plural marriage introduced a competitive principle into the marital scene (not found in monogamy), designed to persuade men to upgrade their lives morally and spiritually. The fact that a righteous and capable man was married did not eliminate him from the field of possible husbands a woman could consider as she made the decision to marry. Women had no need to marry an inferior man, or a worldly one. 81

The official suspension of the practice of polygamy came in 1890. Saints believe that God had commanded polygamy, and that (knowing of the pressures and persecutions facing the Church should the practice continue 82), he had ordered it stopped. Whatever the theological underpinnings of the 1890 Manifesto, it is fairly obvious that the Saints and the Church would continue to elicit controversy and disdain so long as the practice continued. Statehood, growth, and acceptance (the movement into the world) would not be realized until this order of marriage was discontinued. Many in the LDS Church feel that plural marriage will in a future day be reinstated. Recently, Bruce R. McConkie, noted Mormon apostle and theologian, quoted the passage from Isaiah 4:1 regarding seven women taking hold of one man. Then he wrote:

81 Doctrines of the Kingdom, pp. 484-485; see also Petersen, The Way of the Master, pp. 41-42.

82 See the addendum to Official Declaration - 1 in the 1981 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.
One of the most provocative millennial passages forecasts the order of marriage that will then prevail... This shall come to pass after the destruction of the wicked [at the coming of Christ], and it is one of many scriptural intimations that the generality of women are more spiritual than are most men. The inference is that far more women will abide the day of his coming than will be the case with men. And they, being clean and upright, and desiring family units and children and the exaltation that grows out of all these things, will turn to the marriage discipline of Abraham their father so they may be blessed like Sarah of old.

The focus in Mormonism upon strong families has continued into the twentieth century. Members are taught that Zion cannot be fully established until families are bound together in love and commitment. Particularly in the last twenty years has the work in the home been placed at the peak of parental priorities. "The most important work you will do in the Church," Mormons are taught, "is the work you do within the walls of your own home." In 1915 the First Presidency asked the members of the Church to observe a weekly "Home Evening," in which "father and mother may gather their boys and girls about them in the home, and teach them the word of the

---


84 Harold B. Lee, Conference Report (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 1973), p. 130.
Lord. . . ."\(^{35}\) In the 1960's the emphasis upon a weekly Family Home Evening was renewed, and Monday nights were set aside Church-wide for such occasions. It was decreed that no Church activities were to be scheduled on that night. Teaching, training, family councils, entertainment and activities were to be some of the agenda items for a typical LDS family. In short, Zion and the renovation of society would come only through proper development in the homes.

Home life, home teaching, parental guidance is the panacea for all the ailments, a cure for all diseases, a remedy for all problems.

And in our land, if the home teaching by local leaders, crowned by the home evenings with father and mother enthroned, were the rule in Zion, would not taverns be closed, and gambling dens be boarded up, and licentiousness nearly eliminated, and hoodlumism terminated, and jails reduced, and penitentiaries limited?

. . . let us take hold of this general panacea and heal our wounds and immunize our children against evil by the simple process of teaching and training them in the way of the Lord.\(^{36}\)

**Zion vs. Babylon**

Joseph Smith taught the early Saints the New Testament principle that "whosoever . . . will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."\(^{37}\) In the same

\(^{35}\)Cited by Harold B. Lee in *ibid.*, October 1964, pp. 80-87.

\(^{36}\)Spencer W. Kimball, *ibid.*, April 1965, pp. 60-65.

vein, the Mormons were instructed to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." The people in Zion had been "called out of the world" into a fellowship against the world. This approach to Christianity, called by H. Richard Niebuhr a stance of "Christ Against Culture," clearly delineated the duty of the believer to abandon and reject the world of the unbeliever.

The counterpart of loyalty to Christ and the brothers is the rejection of cultural society; a clear line of separation is drawn between the brotherhood of the children of God and the world. Save in two instances [1 John 2:2; 4:14] the word "world" evidently means for the writer of this letter [1 John] the whole society outside the church, in which, however, the believers live. . . . That world appears as a realm under the power of evil; it is the region of darkness, into which the citizens of the kingdom of light must not enter. . . . It is a secular society, dominated by the "lust of the flesh", the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. . . .

In Niebuhr's words, such withdrawals from society have "maintained the distinction between Christ and Caesar, between revelation and reason, between God's will and man's." 90

For the Mormons, the challenge was to live in the world but not be of the world. The world was called

881 John 2:15.
90Ibid., p. 66.
"Babylon," and the people of Zion were repeatedly directed to "go ye out from among the nations, even from Babylon, from the midst of wickedness, which is spiritual Babylon."\(^91\) Further, "I am the Lord of Hosts; and I will not spare any that remain in Babylon."\(^92\) Ancient Babylon was the capital city of the powerful Babylonian empire. Babylon came to represent (to Judah and Israel) all that was carnal and worldly and wicked. It followed that New Testament writers would apply the title "Babylon" to the forces of evil in the world (Revelation 17, 18). The Saints utilized the same designation for the powers of darkness. Brigham Young thus declared:

We are called upon as individuals, each of us who form this community, to come out from the wicked world, from Babylon... What is Babylon? Why it is the confused world: come out of her then and cease to partake of her sins, for if you do not you will be partakers of her plagues.\(^93\)

For the Mormons under Joseph Smith and Brigham Young and for the Mormons of the twentieth century the proclamation was and is the same: Zion must grow and develop, while Babylon, Zion's counterpart, must eventually decay and fall. "Zion must increase in beauty, and in holiness; her borders must be enlarged; her stakes must be

\(^91\)D\&C 133:14; see also verses five and seven.  
\(^92\)Ibid., 64:24.  
strengthened; yea, ... Zion must arise and put on her beautiful garments.”\(^{94}\) Conversely, the citizens of Babylon "seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own God, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall."\(^{95}\) The two cities (not unlike St. Augustine's City of God and City of Man) were pointed in opposite directions; the wise Latter-day Saint recognized the impossibility of maintaining a hold upon Babylon or her ways while standing in Zion. "There is an unbridgeable gap," says Hugh Nibley, "between Zion and Babylon. We cannot compromise on the two ways, because the two ways lead in opposite directions.... When we try to mix Zion and Babylon, Babylon has already won the game." "Babylon is not to be converted; she's to be destroyed."\(^{96}\) Nibley adds: "Babylon and Zion cannot mix in any degree. A Zion that makes concessions is no longer Zion."\(^{97}\) A nineteenth-century Church leader

\(^{94}\)D&C 82:14

\(^{95}\)Ibid., 1:16.

\(^{96}\)Hugh Nibley, "Our Glory or Our Condemnation," BYU Last Lecture Series, 1971-72, pp. 11-12, 9.

described the task:

Now, God has commanded his people to come out of Babylon. We are trying to do it. We are trying to establish a new order of society, not to tear down the old, but to establish a new order that will grow and increase, and be better than the old one. Everything connected with this people has for its design the renovation of the earth from the evils which exist at the present day.

The challenge of the early Latter-day Saints to build Zion and decry Babylon was a formidable one. And there were times when the Mormons' zeal for Zion far exceeded their wisdom. The New England-bred Mormons moved into the borders of the frontier in Independence, Missouri and announced boldly to the residents of the area that Jackson County, Missouri was the site of the center place of the Zion of God, and the future location of the New Jerusalem. Further, the Latter-day Saints were the people of God, the area was to be given to them, and a holy commonwealth would soon eventuate. The reaction of the Missourians was predictable: the Mormons became an unpopular sect. Governor Dunklin of Missouri stated: "I am fully persuaded that the eccentricity of the religious opinions and practices of the Mormons is at the bottom of the outrages committed against them."  

---

99 Cited in History of the Church, Vol. 3, p. XLVIII.
factors as the Mormons' political threats (coming into the state in great numbers); their almost exclusive economic order; their abolitionist tendencies; and their love for the Indians, and one can see quickly that it was only a matter of time before a full-blown expulsion resulted. Given the unfortunate and trying experiences of the Mormons in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois with regard to building and maintaining friendships and relationships with the non-Mormon populace, it appears that the task of building Zion and eschewing Babylon was an almost impossible one; perhaps only when the Saints had isolated themselves in the Great Basin did they gain the strength to eventually face Babylon and the world head on once again.

B. H. Roberts, Mormon historian, has suggested both an impatience and a misunderstanding of the prophetic word concerning the establishment of Zion in Missouri as key elements in the persecution and removal from the state.

The immediate and triumphant establishment of Zion, though expected by many of the Saints, was nowhere contemplated in the revelations of God to the Church. That hope of immediate establishment and glorification of Zion was the result of faulty deductions from the revelations of God; but the Lord was not blind respecting the events about to take

place on the land of Zion, nor did He hc` d out any false hope to His people had they but read His revelations aright."

The challenges faced by modern Mormonism "in the world" are subtle. In a day when many Latter-day Saints have prospered in financial fields, as well as in the esteem of the non-Mormon element of society, the temptation is great to yield to the notion that prosperity is a sign of righteousness, that the application of a "work ethic" (see Chapter Three for greater detail) will lead to financial independence. This attitude, which has blossomed during the past decades, is what many Latter-day Saints believe to be a sign of Babylon in Zion. Nibley suggests simply that "every step in the direction of increasing one's personal holdings is a step away from Zion."102 Without at the same time denouncing individual initiative, the leaders of the Church have stressed a Book of Mormon axiom that "the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish."103 In a 1982 address to BYU students, President Jeffrey Holland attacked the righteousness-prosperity syndrome prevalent in Mormon culture, and the gullibility which results from greed.

Just three weeks ago I was working with President

---

101 History of the Church, Vol. 3, p. XXXV.
103 Nephi 26:31.
Elliott Cameron on the BYU-Hawaii Campus, only to open the Sunday edition of the Honolulu Advertiser to read this headline: "Mormon Utah Called a Test Market for Scam." May I quote a few lines (as much as I would not like to): "Utah's large Mormon population has become a prime target for con-artists and swindlers, who annually gip the state's residents out of hundreds of millions of dollars. Federal prosecutors say the state has gained a national reputation as a 'test market' for scams: if it works here, they take it on the road. It's happened time and time again; it is very easy for people to bridge the gap from unbelievability to believability, if Church affiliation is used. . . . Mormon leaders denounced the scheme in a stinging editorial, which asked: 'Why do people take chances like this?' Why do people gamble? One answer: 'Well, their greed gland gets stuck.' In this culture, financial success is often equated with righteousness."

Holland then added: "We can get our share of the earth's bounties, but not this way." He then quoted from a talk given a number of years before by Hugh Nibley: "Wealth is a jealous master, and it will not be served half-heartedly, and will suffer no rival—not even God."104

One interpretation of this phenomenon is that many Mormons have dragged Babylon and its approaches to success into the Church. "We have been brought up in Babylon," stated John Taylor, "and have inherited Babylonish ideas and systems of business. We have introduced, too, among us, all kinds of chicanery, deception, and fraud. It is time that these things were

104 From Jeffrey R. Holland, "The Inconvenient Messiah," 1982 Address to BYU students.
stopped, and that matters assumed another shape. It is time that we commenced to place ourselves under the guidance and direction of the Almighty. ¹⁰⁵ In the words of Brigham Young, the Saints are given a very simple choice: "We can make Zion, or we can make Babylon, just as we please. We can make just what we please of this place." ¹⁰⁶

Summary

The growth of the LDS Church and the movement toward a pluralistic society have led to major shifts in the social dimensions of the Zion community. The challenge of the citizens of Zion to live in the world but to avoid the "snares" of the world, the challenge to "flee from Babylon," has been intensified. The secularization of such critical ingredients as education, the arts, and the family have engaged the Latter-day Saints in a significant moment of truth. Questions arise: How much may aspects of Zion shift and still remain Zion-like? Is it possible for an ancient concept to have a contemporary image and approach to life? How does a Zion people interface with those outside the borders of belief to bring about good, without at the


same time opening the doors to the "waywardness and weakness" of the world? The evolution from movement to sect to church more often than not necessitates a broadening of the cultural and theological base, and hence an acceptance of an adherence to "worldly-looking" standards of operation. "Mormonism," wrote Will Herberg, "ran directly counter to the basic pattern of frontier religion: it was hierarchical, collectivistic, in its own way highly theological." Continuing, Herberg noted:

Yet in its earlier days it was genuinely a movement and shared some of the dynamic features of Protestant revivalism. It too, after a time, began to settle down, first into a closed religious community, and then in the twentieth century into a denomination along more or less typical American lines.\(^7\)

It is this "settling down" which has led to the "Americanization" and, to some degree, secularization of the social dimension of Zion.

CHAPTER 3

ZION AND THE ECONOMY

Communal Societies in the Nineteenth Century

As discussed in Chapter One, the period of the early nineteenth century is often characterized as a time of significant movement: in geography, in values, in institutions. This movement of body and mind was not purposeless, however; many were shaking themselves loose from their moorings and were busily in search of new ideas, of a "better way." In particular, "there were individuals traveling from one part of the country to the other, seeking to learn of and understand every social experiment that was being tried. It was a period of utopianism, a period when men by the hundreds were endeavoring to formulate the basis of a new society--endeavoring to reorganize society after a more perfect pattern."\(^1\) Carl Russell Fish, in *The Rise of the Common Man*, wrote concerning this era:

The generation was exposed to a continual close-up without having learned to appear before the camera. Never before was the surface of life so exposed to the gaze of the public and the future. Never before in America were people so much out of their homes and on the move. Never before were there so many travelers to observe them, with so easy a market for their observations when put into print. Never had the busy reporters of the newspapers been so numerous and so alert to catch the mass or the individual in some unusual pose, some amusing gesture.\(^2\)

Social revolution, which one philosopher has identified as an inevitable and natural result of a pluralistic way of life,\(^3\) was in process.

A common idea of the times was that Paradise on earth or Eden or Utopia was to be had only through changing society; some were committed to the axiom that human behavior is altered only through the manipulation of the human environment. From this posture flowed the idea of a "beloved community," a model city, a pure society.

Confident that men would follow the right if only the right were clearly shown to them, reformers who believed in a total reconstruction of social institutions pinned their faith upon model communities. . . . Once successfully established, a model community would be imitated far and wide until at length—and perhaps at no great length—society would be transformed in its image. . . . Sometimes referred to as "utopian socialism," it is more accurately described as "communitarianism," for it undertook to use the model community as a lever for

---


the wholesale reform of society—not merely in the economic sphere, but in education, morals, and social life generally. At the same time, many reformers still sought to restore the practices (as well as the beliefs) of New Testament Christianity. One set of scriptural passages that held special significance to those bent upon change and restoration is found in the fourth and fifth chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. Here is described a Christian community, a group of believers who "were of one heart and one soul," who "had all things [in] common," and who structured society in such a way as to create a colony in which there were not "any among them that lacked." (Acts 4:32-34.) In the minds of a number of social experimenters, therefore, a perfect spiritual union was to be achieved only through a communal organization.

Backman has described a number of general characteristics of the communal societies of the nineteenth century. (1) Almost all of the groups were led by charismatic and influential leaders who claimed either a vision or revelation from God, or at least felt a spirit of destiny and direction in their work. "The

---


5The following characteristics are given in Milton V. Backman, Jr., American Religions and the Rise of Mormonism, pp. 232-237.
Shakers," one set of writers notes, "appeared to be partly a side effect of the frontier revivalism of the Second Awakening, with its emphasis upon the approaching Day of Judgment, individual religious experience with a strong emotional content, and the possibility of human perfection through the help of God's holy spirit." "Father Joseph" Meacham, Ann Lee's successor, organized the followers of "Mother Ann" into communalistic orders, the first of which were established near Albany and New Lebanon in New York in 1787. Members of the community "were organized into family systems, private ownership of property was eliminated, and community homes, shops and farms were established. When Father Joseph died in 1796, eleven communal organizations existed, all of which were located in New York and New England." By the year 1828

6 It is interesting to note that in March of 1831 Joseph Smith dictated a revelation that dealt specifically with the Shaker community and with one Leman Copley, a recent convert to Mormonism who had formerly been associated with the Shakers. Verse 22 of the revelation now constituting section 49 of the Doctrine and Covenants, states: "And again, verily I say unto you, that the Son of Man cometh not in the form of a woman, neither of a man traveling on the earth." The entire revelation (28 verses), which in essence instructed the people of the society to forsake their erroneous beliefs, repent, and be baptized into Mormonism, was taken by Joseph Smith and associates to the Shaker community near Cleveland, Ohio, read to the group, but rejected.

7 Bedell, Sandon, and Wellborn, Religion in America, p. 189.

8 Backman, American Religions and the Rise of Mormonism, p. 231.
eight more Shaker communities had been established. Obviously, however, the family systems (which were relatively small already—there was not one order whose membership exceeded six hundred) declined in numbers over time, since the central doctrine of sexual abstinence dictated against anything but growth through conversion.

In 1788 another group had followed one Jemima Wilkinson, a former Quaker from Rhode Island, in the establishment of a "New Jerusalem" near Seneca Lake in New York. In 1848 John Humphrey Noyes established the "Oneida Perfectionists" in Oneida, New York. Noyes, an associate of the famous evangelist Charles G. Finney, "began to preach that conversion to Christianity brought with it the possibility of complete freedom from sin." Further, Noyes contended "that God wanted men to create a new kind of society in which conditions would be favorable to the attainment of Christian perfection. In such a society the believers, or saints, would not need to be bound by the laws that regulate the conduct of nonbelievers. Thus the community at Oneida included communal ownership of property." As we have already

\(^9\) Ibid

\(^{10}\) Bedell, Sandon, and Wellborn, *Religion in America*, pp. 189-190.
noted, Noyes went well beyond the idea of communal property and established a radically different form of communal family, through his system of "complex marriage."

Other characteristics of the communal societies (according to Backman) included: (2) a belief in the importance of the gifts of the Spirit (tongues, healings, prophecy, etc.); (3) a Millennial Consciousness, a feeling that the second coming of Christ was imminent. Note that the full name of the Shakers was the "United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing." The followers of Jemima Wilkinson were convinced that their leader would be able to present the New Jerusalem society to Christ personally. The Shakers, of course, contended that Christ had already appeared (through Mother Ann), while, interestingly enough, John Humphrey Noyes argued that the second coming may have taken place as early as 70 A.D. (4) A belief in future rewards and punishments; (5) a belief in an unusual view of marriage and the family; (6) an adherence to health codes (including such measures as abstinence from tobacco, strong drinks, and pork); (7) communal forms of living; and, finally, (3) many groups were known by such things as an "emphasis on public confession of sins, for their preaching against war, for their refusal to bear arms or take oaths, for their simplicity of living, and for their frugality,
honesty, temperance, cleanliness and industry.\footnote{11}

Each of these movements, varied as they were, represented a response to the challenge of a perfect life in an ideal utopian community, organized in accordance with the perceived or revealed will of God. All of them reflected the individualism, the optimism, and the confidence of the American frontier. In the American world of the nineteenth century, with its unlimited opportunities, anything seemed possible.\footnote{12}

One of the more interesting preludes to the establishment of an economic system among the Latter-day Saints is found in the organization of certain individuals into "the family." Sidney Rigdon, who had broken with Alexander Campbell over doctrinal matters, continued to maintain a belief in Christian communitarianism. Before joining with the Mormons, Rigdon helped to organize a group based upon the pattern found in the New Testament, and settled upon a farm owned by Isaac Morley near Kirtland, Ohio. The situation at the Morley farm in early 1831 was a total common stock arrangement, and members of "the family" were expected to love one another, share all things, and thereby become "of one heart and one soul." "In this organization," stated one historian, "they followed the prevailing man-made concept of what it means to have all things in

\footnote{11}{Backman, American Religions and the Rise of Mormonism, p. 237.}

\footnote{12}{Bedell, Sandon, and Wellborn, Religion in America, pp. 190-191.}
common. For example, everyone wore everyone else's shirts, shoes, etc. The first one up in the morning was often the best dressed that day."\textsuperscript{13} As one would suppose, this soon led to discord. John Whitmer, a Church historian commissioned by Joseph Smith, wrote of the experiment: "The disciples had all things common, and were going to destruction very fast as to temporal things; for they considered from reading the scripture that what belonged to a brother, belonged to any of the brethren. Therefore they would take each others [sic] clothes and other property and use it without leave which brought on confusion and disappointment, for they did not understand the scripture."\textsuperscript{14} One convert to the Church wrote in his journal of his encounter with "the family."

\ldots Isaac Morley ... was a cooper by trade and one of the most honest patient men I ever saw. The company he maintained looked large enough to bring on a famine. I do not know if they lived on him all the time or not.

While I was in the room at "Father Morley's" as we all called him, [a man named] Hermon Bassett came to me and took my watch out of my pocket and walked off as though it was his. I thought he would bring it back soon but was disappointed as he sold it. I asked him what he meant by selling

"Oh," said he, "I thought it was all in the family."

I told him I did not like such family doings and

\footnotesize\textsuperscript{13}Andrus, Doctrinal Themes of the Doctrine and Covenants, p. 7.

I would not bear it.\textsuperscript{15} "The family" was dissolved as the word of the Restoration through Joseph Smith spread through the areas near Kirtland. Joseph recorded simply in his journal: "The plan of 'common stock,' which had existed in what was called 'the family,' . . . was readily abandoned for the more perfect law of the Lord."\textsuperscript{16}

\textbf{The Law of Consecration and Stewardship}

In the mind of Joseph Smith, Zion represented the fusion of the temporal and the spiritual: seemingly temporal matters had a spiritual basis and were given to achieve divine purposes; spiritual laws were kept and spiritual goals attained through the proper utilization of temporal resources. A revelation given in 1830 stated that all things were spiritual to the Almighty, and that a truly temporal law or commandment had never been given to His earthly servants.\textsuperscript{17} Smith taught his followers further that "the Order of Enoch . . . is in reality the Order of Heaven. It was revealed to Enoch when he built up his city and gathered the people together and sanctified them, so that they became so holy that they

\textsuperscript{15}Journal of Levi Hancock, typescript in Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, p. 27.

\textsuperscript{16}History of the Church, Vol. 1, pp. 146-147.

\textsuperscript{17}D&C 29:34.
could not live among the rest of the people and the Lord took them away."\(^{18}\) The early Latter-day Saints came to understand that in the Zion of Enoch the people were not only righteous—they were fair and just and equitable. That is, the ancient city of Zion was translated, not alone because the people were "of one heart and one mind," or because they "dwelt in righteousness," but also because "there was no poor among them." The Mormons soon began to apply the axiomatic expression that "a religion that has not the power to save a man temporally has not the power to save him spiritually,"\(^{19}\) for "if ye are not equal in earthly things ye cannot be equal in obtaining heavenly things."\(^{20}\)

On February 9, 1831 the Mormon Leader dictated to a scribe what has come to be known as a revelation embracing "the law of the Church." In this section of the present Doctrine and Covenants (section 42) is introduced the Law of Consecration and Stewardship, some principles of the economic order the Saints believe were implemented by Enoch and his people. It is a system intended, first, to minimize and eventually to eliminate inequalities and class distinctions. In this sense, it


\(^{19}\)See Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 208.

\(^{20}\)D&C 78:6.
is very different from what we experience in present-day society in America, or even that to which the nineteenth-century Mormons would have been accustomed. A modern writer has explained:

Under democratic capitalism, inequalities of wealth and power are not considered evil in themselves. They are in tune with natural inequalities which everyone experiences every day. Nature itself has made human beings equal in dignity before God and one another. But it has not made them equal to one another in talent, personal energy, luck, motivation, and practical abilities. . . . Should a good society repress inequalities, or should it respect them, while teaching cooperation and respect? Democratic capitalism is loath to repress natural human energies which manifest obvious inequalities. Such energies are perennial, universal, and irrepressible. . . .

In the words of God to the Latter-day Saints, on the other hand, "It is not given that one man should possess that which is above another, wherefore the world lieth in sin."\textsuperscript{22} "It is my purpose," the members were later told, "to provide for my saints, for all things are mine. But it must needs be done in mine own way; and behold this is the way that I, the Lord, have decreed to provide for my saints, that the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low."\textsuperscript{23} The Saints were to be engaged constantly in "searching after the poor to administer to

\textsuperscript{21}Novak, The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism, p. 84.
\textsuperscript{22}\textit{D&C} 49:20.
\textsuperscript{23}\textit{Ibid.}, 104:16.
their wants by humbling the rich and the proud."\textsuperscript{24} The basis of consecration and stewardship was thus self-denial and brotherly love.\textsuperscript{25}

The Law of Consecration was to be entered into by choice, as a matter of free will.\textsuperscript{26} One entered by consecrating or giving to the Lord, through the local bishop, all personal property or holdings. The revelation to the Mormons embracing the law of the Church explained the duty of each initiate: "And behold, thou wilt remember the poor, and consecrate of thy properties for their support that which thou hast to impart unto them, with a covenant and a deed which cannot be broken."\textsuperscript{27} Note that the consecration was to be a matter of covenant between the member and God, and was to be acknowledged by a deed from the bishop of the Church to the member.

Their covenant of consecration made their act officially binding before God and the Church, and the deed bound it legally according to the law of the land. Zion's economic law, therefore, was founded

\textsuperscript{24}Ibid., 94:112.

\textsuperscript{25}Adam Smith had stressed that "to feel much for others, and little for ourselves, that to restrain our selfish, and to indulge our benevolent affections, constitutes the perfection of human nature." (Adam Smith, The Theory of Moral Sentiments, [Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1969] p. 71.)

\textsuperscript{26}See Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 18, p. 245.

\textsuperscript{27}D&C 42:38.
both in the religious powers of faith and conscience and in the legal power of civil law, that by each it might be given sanction and protection.28 According to Orson Pratt, an early Mormon apostle, consecration was the first step in the achievement of equality. According to Pratt, once a man has given back to God all possessions (since all belongs to God anyway), then he has nothing. When all the members of the society of Zion have nothing (i.e., all have consecrated), then all thereafter are equal, owning nothing. Even that which is deeded back in the form of a stewardship (to be discussed shortly) is not one's own; it is God's. Therefore initial equality is assured through a transition from ownership to consecration.29 Latter-day Saints insist that the act of consecration is a restoration of the pattern given in the New Testament where the Christians, "as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet."30 Though one's consecration was a free-will offering, yet the members were taught that the full blessings of Zion were only available to those who chose to enter the order. "A man is bound," said Smith, "by

28Andrus, Doctrines of the Kingdom, p. 229.
30Acts 4:34-35
the law of the Church, to consecrate to the Bishop, before he can be considered a legal heir to the kingdom of Zion.\textsuperscript{31} Wilford Woodruff recorded the following in his journal:

\begin{quote}
Be it known that I, Wilford Woodruff, freely covenant with my God that I freely consecrate and dedicate myself, together with all my properties and effects unto the Lord, for the purpose of assisting in building up his kingdom, even Zion, on the earth, that I may keep his law and lay all things before the bishop of his Church, that I may be a lawful heir in the kingdom of God, even the Celestial Kingdom.\textsuperscript{32}

Having consecrated all to Zion, members then counseled with the bishop to determine an appropriate stewardship. Property or holdings or industry were deeded back to the Saint, according to his family, his circumstances, needs, just wants, and abilities.\textsuperscript{33}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{31}History of the Church, Vol. 1, p. 364.

\textsuperscript{32}Journal of Wilford Woodruff, December 31, 1834.

\textsuperscript{33}See D&C 51:3-4; Ibid., 82:17; see also Orson Pratt, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 2, p. 100. The idea of stewardship was prevalent in early American thought, and had a great deal to do with the Puritan attitude toward their possessions. "In the Puritan mind the biblical idea of the stewardship was coupled with the idea of the covenant. The doctrine of stewardship held that God had given to His faithful servants a special charge to oversee not just their own material possessions, but the Lord's vineyard (in their case, New England) in its entirety. In other words, the Puritans believed themselves to be responsible for the well-being of the whole commonwealth. It comes as no surprise, then, to learn that they designed for themselves a highly regulated society. Wages and prices were set, production quotas assigned, commerce carefully managed, interest rates controlled." (Bedell, Sandon, and Wellborn,
might be, therefore, that a person would, after consultation with the bishop, be issued a stewardship that consisted of exactly the same holdings as he had consecrated. Or, the person might receive more or less than consecrated, depending upon the verdict of the consultation. Joseph Smith explained:

The matter of consecration must be done by the mutual consent of both parties; for to give the Bishop power to say how much every man shall have, and he be obliged to comply with the Bishop's judgment, is giving to the Bishop more power than a king has; and, upon the other hand, to let every man say how much he needs and the Bishop be obliged to comply with his judgment, is to throw Zion into confusion and make a slave of the Bishop. The fact is, there must be a balance or equilibrium of power, between the Bishop and the people; and thus harmony and good will may be preserved among you. . . .

One was to manage his stewardship as though it were his own property. He had, for all intents and purposes, total control over how his farm or dairy or market or teaching assignment was to be handled. His stewardship represented both his responsibility or job, as well as his contribution to the community. "Each holder of a stewardship—which might be the same farm, workshop, store, or factory that this same person had 'consecrated'—was expected to manage it thereafter in

---

Religion in America, p. 295.) As we will come to see, the LDS concepts of stewardship and accountability also shaped the operation of the commonwealth.

34 History of the Church, Vol. 1, p. 364.
the interest of the whole community; all his gains reverting to a common fund, from which he would derive a sufficient support for himself and those dependent upon him.\textsuperscript{35} Stewardship was not ownership. God owned the property, according to Joseph Smith, and the citizens of Zion were expected to serve as profitable agents of God in managing the Almighty's business. "Behold, all these properties are mine, . . . and if the properties are mine, then ye are stewards."\textsuperscript{36} Orson Pratt asked: "What is a steward? Is he a bonafide owner of property? No."

Then he explains: "If I were called upon to be a steward over a certain farm or factory, the business is not my own, I am only as an agent or steward to take charge of the concern, and act upon it, as a wise steward, and to render up an account to somebody."\textsuperscript{37}

Although the original system did not involve what might be termed (in the strictest sense) private ownership, at the same time the steward enjoyed definite private rights and legal protections with regard to his stewardship.\textsuperscript{38} For one thing, it appears that the


\textsuperscript{36}D&C 104:55-56; see also D&C 42:32.


\textsuperscript{38}See Andrus, Doctrines of the Kingdom, pp. 266-269.
steward, given the assignment to improve upon and expand
his stewardship, had the right to make his goods and/or
services\textsuperscript{39} available on the open market. Leonard
Arrington, an economist/historian, has written:

Each member was free to work as he pleased within the
limitations of his stewardship. The profit system,
the forces of supply and demand, and the price system
presumably would continue to allocate resources,
guide production decisions, and distribute primary or
earned income. Some of the institutions of
capitalism were thus retained and a considerable
amount of economic freedom was permitted.\textsuperscript{40}

Since the principles of consecration and stewardship were
not given to encourage communal living, individuals were
expected to "pay for that which thou shalt receive of thy
brother."\textsuperscript{41} Even though the social and spiritual union
intended in Zion would certainly lead to the trading or

\textsuperscript{39}See D&C 70:12 and 72:14. Not all Saints had
stewardships over temporal matters.

\textsuperscript{40}Leonard J. Arrington, "Early Mormon
Communitarianism: The Law of Consecration and
Stewardship," Western Humanities Review, Vol. 7 (Autumn
1953), p. 344; see also Joseph A. Geddes, The United
Order Among the Mormons (Salt Lake City: Deseret News
Press, 1924), pp. 32, 163-164.

\textsuperscript{41}D&C 42:54; see also Ibid., 72:11. Marion G.
Romney has stated: "The united order is nonpolitical. It
is therefore totally unlike the various forms of
socialism, which are political, both in theory and in
practice. They are thus exposed to, and riddled by, the
corruption which plagues and finally destroys all
political governments which undertake to abridge man's
agency." (Conference Report, April 1977, p. 120.) See
also statements by Joseph Smith in History of the Church,
6, pp. 32-33, 37-38.
swapping of goods and services, the system was established as a money-based order, wherein payment for receipt of goods was the rule of society.

There is little historical precedent for what Joseph Smith felt to be the relationship between the market or stewards in Zion and those outside the order. A few reflections by Church leaders and thinkers, however, are worthy of consideration. "Will our trading and trafficking with the outside world cease?" asked Mormon apostle Erastus Snow. "Of course not. As long as we are in the world, gathering Saints, preaching to the nations and building up Zion, Zion will be as a city set on a hill, which can not be hid." Then, suggesting how the Order may be organized as to bring the greatest profits to the system, Snow continues:

But the Lord proposes to preserve his people as far as possible from the influences of Babylon, and the transactions outside of the Order will be carried on through the Concil of the Order; agents will be appointed by the voice of the Order, that what we bring from abroad may be bought from first hands and in the lowest market, that we may derive the benefits of it, instead of giving the profits to middlemen who are not of us; and what we have for sale we will sell in the best markets, and so enjoy the benefits of our labor. . . . By this combined effort we shall be able to obtain the full market value of our products—the production of the farm, dairy, orchard, vineyard, the products of the woolen and cotton factory, of our shoe shops, and every mechanical appliance, to enable us to procure all labor-saving machinery. . . .

42 Erastus Snow, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 17, pp. 77-78. Even though the "Order" about which Snow is
In speaking of the Saints producing for the open market, Hyrum Andrus proposed the following in a letter to this writer:

The system of economics under the Law of Consecration is that of Christian free enterprise. Under the Law, the saints produce for the open market, not for the Common Storehouse which is merely to house the surplus profits of each steward. Since the saints produce for the free market, there is no reason the finished products cannot be sold outside the circle of the Mormon community and compete with other commodities produced by others. Reciprocally, foreign goods could compete on local markets among the saints.\(^{43}\)

Though the details are wanting as to exactly how equality was to be maintained after the granting of stewardships had occurred, one matter was certain: surplus consecration (that amount above and beyond what a man needed after his initial consecration) and surplus production (any excess beyond personal and family needs resulting from proper management of the stewardship) were not to be kept by the steward; they became a part of the community storehouse.\(^{44}\) The storehouse was the center of economic interests in the community. Funds from the speaking was a modified form of consecration (cooperative movements), the principles hold for both systems. See also Orson Pratt, "Equality and Oneness of the Saints," The Seer, Vol. 2, No. 7 (July 1854), p. 297.

\(^{43}\)Letter to the writer, September 21, 1982.

\(^{44}\)See statements by Orson Pratt in Journal of Discourses Vol. 2, p. 100; Vol. 17, p. 107; D&C 42:33-34, 35.
storehouse (which, we have indicated, came through surplus consecration and surplus production) were to be used for a number of purposes: community improvements,\textsuperscript{45} expansion of stewardships,\textsuperscript{46} and creation of new stewardships.\textsuperscript{47} In a revelation given through Joseph Smith on April 30, 1832, additional instructions were given.

Verily, thus saith the Lord, in addition to the laws of the church concerning women and children, those who belong to the church, who have lost their husbands or fathers:

Women have claim on their husbands for their maintenance, until their husbands are taken; and if they are not found transgressors they shall have fellowship in the church.

And if they are not faithful they shall not have fellowship in the church; yet they may remain upon their inheritances [stewardships] according to the laws of the land.

All children have claim upon their parents for their maintenance until they are of age.

And after that, they have claim upon the church, or in other words upon the Lord's storehouse, if their parents have not wherewith to give them inheritances.

And the storehouse shall be kept by the consecrations of the church; and widows and orphans shall be provided for, as also the poor. Amen.\textsuperscript{48}

Note that widows, orphans and other dependent children, and young adults (e.g., newly married couples) were to be assisted through the funds in the storehouse. Another

\textsuperscript{45}D&C 42:34-35.

\textsuperscript{46}ibid., 104:6, 77.

\textsuperscript{47}ibid., 83:5; see Erastus Snow, \textit{Journal of Discourses}, Vol. 17, p. 78.

\textsuperscript{48}ibid., 83.
means by which individuals were made equal was, therefore, through their right to draw upon the resources of the common storehouse. "And you are to be equal," the Saints were told, "or in other words, you are to have equal claims on the properties, for the benefit of managing the concerns of your stewardships, every man according to his wants and his needs, inasmuch as his wants are just."\textsuperscript{49} Hence having "all things in common" meant two things to the Latter-day Saints: a common storehouse upon which to draw, and common consent as to how the moneys were to be expended in the community.\textsuperscript{50}

Each steward was expected to be wise in the management of God's properties. Accountability was exacted through a system of auditing and interviewing. "It is required of the Lord," stated the law of the Church, "at the hand of every steward, to render an account of his stewardship, both in time and in eternity."\textsuperscript{51} To render an account of the stewardship in time probably had reference to a regular audit and interview, in which the bishop is apprised of the productivity of the steward. To render an account in

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 82:17.

\textsuperscript{50} See ibid., 104:71-75.

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., 72:3; see also Ibid., 104:11-13.
eternity implies one's responsibility to answer to God concerning the stewardship.

Any member of the Order found guilty of the violation of the standards of the Church and the pattern established for Zion, and who was cut off (excommunicated) from the fellowship of the Saints, had no claim on the surplus of the original consecration; such a one could, however, retain (or take with him) his stewardship. That is, "he that sinneth and repenteth not shall be cast out, and shall not receive again that which he has consecrated unto me."\textsuperscript{52} Speaking of the transgressor, Joseph Smith explained:

\textellipsis if he is found a transgressor and should be cut off, out of the Church, his inheritance is his still, and he is delivered over to the buffetings of Satan till the day of redemption. But the property which he consecrated to the poor, for their benefit and inheritance and stewardship [i.e., the surplus], he cannot obtain again by the law of the Lord. Thus you see the propriety of this law, that rich men cannot have power to disinherit the poor by obtaining again that which they have consecrated.\textellipsis \textsuperscript{53}

The Mormon ideal in Zion was not fully realized; the Saints were not able to achieve the goals of economic equality and independence. The reasons for failure? "They have not learned to be obedient to the things which

\textsuperscript{52} Orson Pratt, \textit{Journal of Discourses}, Vol. 17, pp. 32-33.

\textsuperscript{53} Joseph Smith to Edward Partridge, May 2, 1833, as cited in Orson F. Whitney, "The Aaronic Priesthood, "\textit{The Contributor}, Vol. 6 (October 1884), p. 7."
I required at their hands, but are full of all manner of evil, and do not impart of their substance, as becometh saints, to the poor and afflicted among them."54 Orson Pratt suggested that the members of the Church "had been so accustomed to holding property individually, that it was very difficult to get them to comply with this law of the Lord."55 The selfishness of the Saints seemed to manifest itself in a refusal to recognize and surrender one's surplus. "Go around among the Saints, among the immigrants who have gathered up from time to time, and there has been only now and then a man who had any surplus property [if we] let him be the judge."56 When recommended to Pratt that the matter of ascertaining surplus property be left to private judgment, he responded: "Our own judgment! Who in the world among all the Latter-day Saints would have any surplus property if it is left to his own judgment?"57 It remains however, for the frontier wisdom and wit of Brigham Young to describe graphically the problem of selfishness among the early Mormons:

Some were disposed to do right with their surplus property, and once in a while you would find a man who had a cow which he considered surplus, but

54 D&C 105:3.
56 Orson Pratt, Ibid., p. 110.
57 Ibid., Vol. 16, p. 157.
generally she was of the class that would kick a person's hat off, or the wolves had eaten off her teats. You would once in a while find a man who had a horse that he considered surplus, but at the same time he had the ringbone, was broken-winded, spavined in both legs, had the pole evil at one end of the neck and a fistula at the other, and both knees sprung.\footnote{ibid., Vol. 2, p. 307.}

The problem of greed, coupled with the large number of poor people joining the Church (and thus drawing upon the resources of the storehouse\footnote{See Klaus Hansen, \textit{Mormonism and the American Experience}, p. 134.}), led to the suspension of the full law of consecration and stewardship. At a meeting of Church leaders on March 6, 1840, Joseph Smith stated that "the law of consecration could not be kept" in Illinois, and that it was according to the divine will that the members desist from its practice.\footnote{History of the Church, Vol. 4, p. 93.}

During the lifetime of Joseph Smith the Saints were given a lesser order of consecration, in which members were instructed to consecrate only their surplus each year, and in addition to pay a tithing upon their interest or income.\footnote{D&C 119:1-4.} During the administration of Brigham Young, a number of Utah communities began a series of cooperative movements, based in principle upon
the law of consecration. During the twentieth century the Mormons have been asked to pay only ten percent of their yearly income, and to make other offerings to the Church as the situation may require.

There are a few matters which are yet not clearly defined, so far as the Law of Consecration is concerned. One of these issues is how tithing was meant to fit into the entire Mormon economic scheme. Though the word "tithing" is used in early instructions to the Saints, it referred at that time, for the most part, to free-will offerings, and not specifically to a tenth of one's income (as construed by modern Mormons). With the suspension of the full law of consecration, the Saints seem to have received a lesser law (as intimated above), a directive that all surplus property was to be placed in the hands of the bishop, and that the members were to tithe all income from their business or holdings. Here there was no initial consecration, but only a request that surpluses were to be forwarded to the storehouse.

---


63 See D&C 64:23; 85:3; 97:11-12; see also Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl, Doctrine and Covenants Commentary (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1965), p. 749.

Finally, when even this dimension of the order could not be implemented fully, the Latter-day Saints were told to simply pay a tithing on their income. Such is the prevailing condition today.

Again, the question that arises is whether tithing would be operative under the full law of consecration, or whether it would be done away through the implementation of the higher law. In defense of the latter position, President Joseph F. Smith wrote:

Zion can only be built up by the law that God revealed for that purpose, which is the law of consecration—not the law of tithing. The law of tithing was instituted because the people could not abide the greater law. If we could live up to the law of consecration, then there would be no necessity for the law of tithing, because it would be swallowed up in the greater law. The law of consecration requires all; the law of tithing only requires one-tenth of your increase annually.

On the other hand, mention is made in a revelation concerning tithing that the law of tithing "shall be a standing law unto [the Church] forever."66 "The law of tithing is an eternal law," remarked Brigham Young. "The Lord Almighty never had His Kingdom on the earth without the law of tithing being in the midst of His people, and


He never will. It is an eternal law that God has instituted for the benefit of the human family, for their salvation and exaltation."\(^{67}\) On a later occasion, Young said simply: "The Lord instituted tithing; it was practiced in the days of Abraham, and Enoch and Adam."\(^{68}\) One consideration at this point is that tithing funds and surplus consecration and production are, in a sense, two different types of Church moneys which go in two different directions. Andrus proposed:

Tithing was sent to the First Presidency of the Church. Surplus was given to the community storehouse. Tithing belonged to the Church and was used primarily to pay the expenses of the ecclesiastical system. The surplus in each community storehouse belonged to the heirs in that community and was used as a joint expense account and for community expenses. Tithing was spent by the General Authorities of the Church. Surplus was administered by the officers of the community storehouse, by the consent of the stewards who consecrated to the storehouse.

Though Andrus' point is well-taken, it is also slightly anachronistic. Although the Church of the twentieth century draws a careful distinction between those funds which go directly through the "Council on the Disposition of Tithes" (tithing) and those concerned with the maintenance of the Storehouse Resource System (welfare, fast offerings), it is questionable whether such a


\(^{69}\) Andrus, *Doctrines of the Kingdom*, pp. 253-254.
careful discrimination was the order of things in the 1830's.

A second matter which is still debated among some in the Church is whether private ownership was possible under the Law of Consecration. As we cited earlier, such notables as apostle Orson Pratt contended that man did not enjoy private ownership, inasmuch as the member served as the steward over that which belonged to God: how could one own the Lord's property? And yet, J. Reuben Clark and Marion G. Romney, both counselors in the First Presidency of the Church (at different times) spoke to the other side of the issue. "Basic to the United Order," stated Clark, "was the private ownership of property; every man had his own property from which he might secure that which was necessary for the support of himself and his family." Romney likewise explained: "This procedure [stewardship] preserved in every man the right of private ownership and management of his property. Indeed, the fundamental principle of the system was the private ownership of property. Each man owned his portion, or inheritance, or stewardship, with an absolute title, which, at his option, he could alienate, keep and operate, or otherwise treat as his

own."

The question may actually be a semantic one. Both Clark and Romney may be stressing the private ownership aspect of the Law to insure that no one misunderstand the focus or particular practice of the Law, and the relationship of individual to community. Perhaps their stress is to make certain that consecration and stewardship not be perceived as a communal system, such as "the family" on the Isaac Morley farm, or as even an approximation to a socialistic order. Romney explained: "The Church did not own all of the property, and life under the united order was not, and never will be, a communal life, as the Prophet Joseph Smith himself said."

The final area of ambiguity concerns the whole notion of the "United Order" as an expression to describe the system under which equity and justice were to be maintained in the society of Zion. Most Latter-day Saints today tend to equate the United Order with the Law of Consecration and Stewardship; the terms are more often than not used interchangeably. A second group would call the Cooperative movements established in Utah during the latter half of the nineteenth century the "United Order"

71 Marion G. Romney, Conference Report, April 1977, p. 119.
72 Ibid.
(others would call this system the "Second United Order"). Another group has taught that the United Order was an administrative "umbrella," established to maintain the same equality between communities that existed within communities. In addition, it was felt to be a legal organization by which such corportative stewardships (a group of individuals jointly involved in the management of a stewardship) as the United Firm and the Literary Firm could be controlled and handled. Recently, however, a historian from Brigham Young University, Lyndon W. Cook, has proposed a radically new interpretation of the United Order. Cook writes:

Section 78 [of the Doctrine and Covenants] was received by Joseph Smith while he was visiting the Saints in Kirtland, Ohio. The revelation calls for an "order" to be established according to a "bond" or "covenant" that cannot be broken. This order, variously known as the "United Order," the "Order of Enoch," and the "United Firm," was created at this time.

The United Firm was a business partnership consisting of about a dozen Church leaders. Members of the firm were either landowners or merchants whose purpose was to work in concert, using the financial means at their disposal, to generate profits. Inasmuch as the members of the partnership were also presiding Church leaders, it is difficult to determine which of their financial transactions were purely personal and which were Church-related. This

---

dual relationship has led some writers to erroneously conclude that the United Firm administered the law of consecration. Specifically, the Church bishop administered the program of consecration. The United Order was essentially a private business concern. According to Cook, then, the United Order was not an administrative body for the Law at all, but rather was a personal venture constituted of Church administrators. This is quite a bold position, particularly given that many of the leaders of the Church for over a century have continued traditionally to use the expressions "United Order" and "Law of Consecration" interchangably. Based upon the lack of historical evidence to the contrary, one must at least think seriously about Cook's proposal.

The Mormon Work Ethic

In his masterwork, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, the German sociologist Max Weber suggested the basis of the Protestant work ethic. In the words of Michael Novak, Weber demonstrated that in capitalist societies "commerce is given a new meaning. It becomes part of a new sort of cosmic order, a new vision of human history." He notes that man's daily fight for survival is given a religious context in

predominantly Protestant countries. Writes Weber: "It appears that neither the predominantly Catholic peoples nor those of classical antiquity have possessed any expression of similar connotation for what we know as a calling (in the sense of a life-task, a definite field in which to work), while one has existed for all predominantly Protestant peoples." 76

Weber proposes that the doctrine of predestination is at the foundation of what we have come to call the "Protestant Work Ethic," and has been a significant influence in the development of capitalistic societies. Using the work philosophy of Benjamin Franklin as a type of object lesson, Weber reinforces his point that many believed that good works merely evidence one's election. Citing such expressions as "Time is money;" or "Credit is money;" or "The good paymaster is lord of another man's purse," Franklin expressed "not simply a means of making one's way in the world, but a peculiar ethic. The infraction of its rules is treated not as foolishness but as forgetfulness of duty." 77 Even though a man's works are useless and irrelevant, so far as attaining salvation is concerned (a predestinarian might contend), yet works did serve some useful

---

77 Ibid., pp. 48-51.
functions. They represented, on the one hand, a sign of one's election, and, secondly, a means of "getting rid of the fear of damnation."

In practice this means that God helps those who help themselves. Thus the Calvinist, as it is sometimes put, himself creates his own salvation, or, as would be more correct, the conviction of it. But this creation cannot, as in Catholicism, consist in a gradual accumulation of individual good works to one's credit, but rather in a systematic self-control which at every moment stands before the inexorable alternative, chosen or damned. The Protestant Ethic thus became the force behind men's attitude toward their daily labors. One comes to work efficiently and productively, not alone because it leads to a greater profit, or because it brings fulfillment; ultimately a man does his job well (performs his calling, his life-task) because God expects it of him, and because in so doing he is demonstrating his saved status.

From the beginning of the movement, the Latter-day Saints rejected the notion of the unconditional election of certain persons to salvation and others to damnation. "Unconditional election of individuals to eternal life was not taught by the Apostles," Joseph Smith declared in a sermon. "God did elect or predestinate, that all those who would be saved, should be saved in Christ Jesus, and through obedience to the gospel." Then, adding this clarifier: "But He passes

78 Ibid., p. 115.
over no man's sins, but visits them with correction, and if His children will not repent of their sins He will discard them.\textsuperscript{79} While engaged in his "translation" of the King James Bible (during the early 1830's), Smith made the following change, which illustrates an early rejection of predestination.

\begin{tabular}{l}
\textbf{Acts 13:48} \\
\textit{King James Version} \\
And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. \\
\textbf{Acts 13:48} \\
\textit{Joseph Smith Translation} \\
And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; AND AS MANY AS BELIEVED WERE ORDAINED UNTO ETERNAL LIFE. \\
\end{tabular}

For the Mormons, work became not a sign of one's salvation, but a condition for salvation. "Work is a blessing from God," stated one of the General Authorities of the Church. \textit{It is a fundamental principle of salvation, both spiritual and temporal. . . . We are co-creators with God. He gave us the capacity to do the work he left undone, to harness the energy, mine the ore, transform the treasures of the earth for our good. But most important"} [stressing the place of work in the eventual development of a Zion personality], "the Lord knew that from the crucible of work emerges the hard core of character."\textsuperscript{80} For the people of Zion, work is

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{79} \textit{History of the Church}, Vol. 4, p. 360.
\item \textsuperscript{80} J. Richard Clarke, \textit{Conference Report}, April
\end{itemize}
fundamental to the establishment of a society of the pure in heart, and thus of individuals who have pure hearts. "We have a moral obligation to exercise our personal capabilities of mind, muscle, and spirit in a way that will return to the Lord, our families, and our society the fruits of our best efforts. To do less is to live our lives unfulfilled."\textsuperscript{81} Life is to be enjoyed, however, and the Mormon work ethic also entails the appreciation and fondness for work: Zion is to be made up of people who are committed "not only to the pursuit of happiness, but to the happiness of pursuit."\textsuperscript{82}

If there is any character in Zion which is the subject of the wrath of the people under the Mormon work ethic it is the idler. Under the Law of Consecration, any citizen of Zion who chose a life of ease and did not repent of slothfulness was severely reproved; if after sufficient reproof the idler did not attend more carefully to the principles of stewardship, his membership in the Church (and thus in the order) was in jeopardy. A revelation declared that "every man who is obliged to provide for his own family, let him provide, and he shall in nowise lose his crown; and let him labor

\textsuperscript{1982, pp. 109-110.}
\textsuperscript{81}Ibid., p. 110.
\textsuperscript{82}Ibid.
in the church. Let every man be diligent in all things. And the idler shall not have place in the Church, except he repent and mend his ways." The member in Zion was to be busy, involved, and eagerly engaged in the management of his stewardship. No person was to be found taking advantage of either another Saint or the community. Though the storehouse was provided for those in need, that individual who refused to "pull his load" was not possessed of the spirit of Zion. "Thou shalt not be idle," the members were warned. "For he that is idle shall not eat the bread nor wear the garments of the laborer." Idleness was seen by the Church leaders as antithetical to the ethic of a pure society. "Idleness in any form produces boredom, conflict, and unhappiness. It creates a vacancy of worth, a seedbed for mischief and evil. It is the enemy of progress and salvation." Another element of the Mormon work ethic was (is) self-reliance. It was expected that individuals

---

83 D&C 75:28-29; Cf. ibid., 60:13; 68:30.

84 Ibid., 42:42.

85 J. Richard Clarke, Conference Report, April 1982, p. 112.

86 In the eighteenth century Adam Smith had written: "Every man is no doubt, by nature, first and principally recommended to his own care; and as he is fitter to take care of himself, than is any other person, it is fit and right that it should be so." (Adam Smith, The Theory of Moral Sentiments, p. 161.)
requiring assistance learn to become self-reliant as quickly as possible. The society of Zion could only become an ensign to the nations as it met and fulfilled all human needs—social, emotional, economic, etc.—and did so in the context of love and Christian brotherhood. "It was my endeavor," said Joseph Smith, "to so organize the Church, that the brethren might eventually be independent of every incumbrance beneath the celestial kingdom, by bonds and covenants of mutual friendship, and mutual love."

The principles of independence and self-reliance have been taught from the days of the Church's organization, and continue to receive a tremendous amount of emphasis today. Saints are warned against becoming a participant in the "governmental dole," and are encouraged to avoid unearned assistance of any type. In fact, in modern times, Latter-day Saints who choose to seek out state or county welfare assistance (e.g., food stamps) are not eligible to receive Church assistance at all from the bishop. Marion G. Romney recently extended this idea of avoiding the dole to the family.


Governments are not the only guilty parties. We fear many parents in the Church are making [their children] totally reliant through their permissiveness and their doling out of family resources. Parents who place their children on the dole are just as guilty as a government which places its citizens on the dole. In fact, the actions of parents in this area can be more devastating than any government program.

An earlier Church leader counseled: "Brethren, . . . do your best to see that those . . . who consume, shall be among those that produce."  

A prominent passage in the New Testament provides the substance from which the LDS attitude toward wealth and success is derived. To gain a better appreciation of how the early Saints were taught, note the change made in verse 33 of Matthew 6 by Joseph Smith.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>King James Version</th>
<th>Joseph Smith Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.</td>
<td>Wherefore, SEEK NOT THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD BUT SEEK YE FIRST TO BUILD UP THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND TO ESTABLISH HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, and all these things shall be added unto you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This scripture was a favorite axiom of Nathan Tanner, former counselor to four Mormon presidents, and for many years a highly successful and wealthy businessman.

One day a grandson of mine said to me: "I have observed you and other successful men, and I have

---


90 J. Reuben Clark, Jr., from a talk given in Welfare Meeting, April 1960, p. 3.
made up my mind that I want to be a success in my life. I want to interview as many successful people as I can to determine what made them successful. So looking back over your experience, grandpa, what do you believe is the most important element of success?"

I told him that the Lord gave the greatest success formula that I know of: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:33)

Material blessings are a part of the gospel if they are achieved in the proper way and for the right purpose.  

In the mind of Joseph Smith, one who shuns the world (Babylon) and seeks to build up the kingdom of God (Zion) and thus establish righteousness in the earth, is on the path which may lead one to material success. Tanner's comment about how wealth is achieved is probably drawing attention to the message of a popular Book of Mormon passage (which he quotes later in his sermon):

Think of your brethren like unto yourselves, and be familiar with all and free with your substance, that they may be rich like unto you. But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God. And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good--to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted.  

One who has obtained "a hope in Christ" will thus be of a level of spiritual maturity to seek wealth for the right reasons. Brigham Young taught: "When men act upon the

---

91N. Eldon Tanner, Conference Report, October 1979, pp. 117-118.
92Jacob 2:17-19.
principles which will secure to them eternal salvation, they are sure of obtaining all their hearts' desires, sooner or later."

An automatic tension is created at this point. Is the citizen of Zion to seek riches, in order to be able to do good to others? Or is he to view material success in at best a guarded fashion, given what Jesus taught concerning rich men and the kingdom of God? In attempting to reconcile what appear to be two disparate and seemingly irreconcilable ideas, Sidney Rigdon wrote in 1836:

Let industry and enterprise be encouraged, not merely as appendages of our religion, but as an identity with it, as part of it, without which the other parts would be of little consequence; yea, may I not say, let them get riches; however, some might be ready to say in opposition to this, that it is impossible for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven; admitted, but does this argue that those who have sacrificed all for the kingdom of heaven's sake and entered in, should not get rich after they get there? No, verily; for the Savior has said in language not to be misunderstood, "That he that forsaketh father or mother, wife or children, houses or lands, for my sake and the gospel's shall have in this world an hundred fold, and in that which is to come eternal life."

Another problem seems to present itself, at least in the minds of a number of modern Mormons. A过于 strict or inappropriate adherence to the Jacob passage in

---

94 Messenger and Advocate, Vol. 3 (December 1836), p. 422.
the Book of Mormon (above) could lead a person to assume a position not unlike the predestinarian posture discussed earlier. That is, if I am "blessed" with riches, may I therefore conclude that I have obtained a "hope in Christ?" Conversely, what do I conclude about the state of my soul if I constantly struggle financially, managing only to keep the creditors at arm's length? Have I not obtained a hope in Christ? As alluded to by BYU President Jeffrey Holland (Chapter 2), there has been a creeping tendency in the modern Church among far too many to equate financial success with righteousness.

In a significant address given in April of 1982, Dr. Hugh Nibley attacked what he felt to be mistaken notions as to what constitutes the Mormon Work Ethic. In his talk, entitled "Work We Must, But the Lunch is Free," Nibley attempted to re-focus attention upon the statement of Jesus that the devoted disciple should "take no thought" or should avoid anxiety as to clothing and food and shelter. The disciple is rather to funnel his attentions toward seeking and building the kingdom of God, and that "lunch" will be provided. Attacking the prevalent notion that "there is no such thing as a free

95 A condensed version of this address is found in BYU Today, Vol. 36, No. 6 (November 1982), pp. 8-12.
lunch" (which ideology, Nibley contends, too many Mormons have eagerly swallowed), he proposes that "'no free lunch' easily directs our concern to 'nothing but lunch.'" Continuing, Nibley states that "the Adversary [Satan] keeps us to that principle, making lunch [making a living, succeeding] our full-time concern either by paying workers so little that they must toil day and night just to afford lunch (his favorite trick), or by expanding the lunch-need to include all the luxury and splendor that goes with the super-executive lunch."\(^{96}\)

Suggesting that many Latter-day Saints have misunderstood and misused the scriptural passages dealing with independence and self-reliance, he states:

This issue of independence is charged with special emotion for Americans. The word, moreover, has become a fetish for the LDS, and led them into endless speculations and plans, the "temptations and snares of those who would be rich," says Paul—all of which the Lord has strictly forbidden. In the scriptures the word "independent" occurs only once, describing the Church with no reference to any individual: "the church may stand independent above all other creatures" [D&C 78:14], because it is entirely dependent upon "my providence." It is dependence that is important for [the prophets], total dependence on God; and if you serve him "with your whole heart and with your whole soul" you are free from dependence on any other being.\(^{97}\)

Nibley's appeal to Mormons is tied to the LDS notion of salvation by grace: that it is "by grace that we are

\(^{96}\)ibid., p. 12.

\(^{97}\)ibid., p. 10.
saved, after all we can do." A works-conscious ("lunch-conscious") people are in danger of losing the vision of why they do what they do. In a final appeal and warning to his listeners, Professor Nibley points the audience toward the concept of Zion:

... the world as we know it is the very antithesis of Zion, in which we should all be living in this very moment. ... whether we like it or not, in all Dispensations of the Gospel the free lunch was prescribed for all living under the Covenant, and at the same time very special kinds of work were assigned to each and all of them, the object of which was not lunch but the building up of the Kingdom and the establishment of Zion. And yet, even now, the gulf steadily widens between the Zion of God and those babylonian institutions in our midst that brazenly bear the fair name of Zion as a gimmick to promote local business. No one is more completely "of the world" than one who lives by the world's economy, whatever his display of open piety.

Although the Latter-day Saint scriptures stress (as Nibley does) the need for a reliance upon God, at the same time the Mormons have come to adopt a practical approach to the building of a Zion society; pragmatism characterizes the Saints' quest for the city of God. Joseph Smith stated on one occasion that he desired to be with the people of Zion, "whether I ascend to heaven or descend to hell, or go to any other place. And if we go to hell, we will turn the devils out of doors and make a

---

98 Nephi 25:23.
99 Nibley, "Work We Must, But the Lunch Is Free," p. 12.
heaven of it."\textsuperscript{100} Again, in the Mormon attitude toward building a holy commonwealth, we see the attempt to fuse the temporal and the spiritual, the move to begin the construction of the infinite through laboring here and now with the finite. "If you Saints who have just arrived here expect a heaven," Jedediah Grant explained to new arrivals in the Great Basin, "I will tell you how to get it; if you have brought a small one with you, keep it and keep adding to it; that is, \textit{if you want a heaven, go to and make it}."\textsuperscript{101} This pragmatism was no appeal to the innate goodness of man, or a suggestion that the Saints would literally create a millennial state on earth. The doctrine of the Latter-day Saints was clearly defined to the effect that adversity and trials and afflictions awaited the citizens of Zion, and that ultimately the wickedness of the earth would be cleansed through the literal return of Christ in glory (see Chapter Six). The leaders of the Church were not attempting to minimize the apocalyptic scenes ahead, but rather to stress man's partnership with God in the creation of a city of holiness. With a distant vision of a society of the pure in heart (and with Enoch and his

\textsuperscript{100}History of the Church, Vol. 5, p. 517.

people as the divine standard), church leaders wanted to avoid a "pie in the sky" attitude among the members; the pressing need was a concentration upon the work of the here and now. "We can't build up Zion sitting on a hemlock slab singing ourselves away to everlasting bliss; we have to cultivate the earth, to take the rocks and elements out of the mountains and rear temples to the Most High God; and this temporal work is demanded at our hands by the God of heaven."\textsuperscript{102} In summing up, Brigham Young, Prophet/Statesman/Frontiersman, stressed the pragmatic dimension of the Latter-day Saint work ethic. "I have Zion in my view constantly," he said. "We are not going to wait for angels, or for Enoch and his company to come and build up Zion, but we are going to build it," for "we are exhorted to make our own heaven, our own paradise, our own Zion."\textsuperscript{103}

\textbf{Modern Developments in Zion's Storehouse}

The twentieth century has witnessed the gradual movement among the Saints away from a consecrated society in practice and a cooperative-mercantile society in operation to a consecrated society in \textit{principle}. With

\textsuperscript{102}Wilford Woodruff, \textit{Journal of Discourses}, Vol. 16, pp. 268-269; see also Brigham Young, \textit{ibid.}, Vol. 10, p. 328.

\textsuperscript{103}\textit{Journal of Discourses}, Vol. 9, pp. 284, 170.
the influx into Utah of the non-Mormon element, the effects of pluralism were gradually felt, including the difficulty of maintaining a community-wide program of consecration and stewardship. The Church found itself in a financial bondage by the end of the nineteenth century, and it seemed for a while as though the dream of the Latter-day Saints to establish themselves as a "peculiar treasure" to the Lord was evolving into a nightmare; the divine charge to become independent of the world appeared more and more to be an impossible task. Then came Lorenzo Snow to the presidency of the Church in late 1898. Through a stress upon the determined application of the principle of sacrifice and a specific push toward the payment of a full tithing, the Church began to pull itself from financial ruin. 104 Tithing continued to be a primary focus of the Church leadership into and during the twentieth century. In addition, members of Zion were encouraged to observe the Law of the Fast and contribute generously to the Fast Offering. Latter-day Saints were asked to fast at least monthly from food or drink for two consecutive meals (or 24 hours), and to pay the equivalent cost of the meals into a fast offering fund, from which the local bishop could draw financial support for the care of the poor. In other words, the Fast

Offering continued for many years as the closest approximation to the principle of a free-will consecration among the people.105

During the years of the great depression in the 1930's the Mormons were gripped as tightly by the economic tragedy as anyone. In one area of Salt Lake City, for example, of the 7300 members living within the boundaries of the ecclesiastical designation known as the Pioneer Stake (somewhat analogous to a diocese), 4800 were receiving governmental welfare assistance. Harold B. Lee, Stake President at the time, decided to return at least to more of the principles of consecration and stewardship, and to involve his people as much as possible in the economic pattern set forth in the writing of the Doctrine and Covenants. Lee organized a storehouse for the care of the hungry in his stake and made work opportunities available to the unemployed. His people (a relatively small portion of the entire Church) began to progress toward relief and to regain the hope for eventual independence. In April of 1935 Lee was called into the office of the First Presidency of the Church, formally released as the President of the Pioneer Stake, asked to resign from his position as city

councilman, and called to help create and oversee a Church-wide program to provide relief for the members. At the October 1936 General Conference, Mormon Church President Heber J. Grant introduced the Church Welfare program and explained its purpose in these words:

Our primary purpose was to set up, insofar as it might be possible, a system under which the curse of idleness would be done away with, the evils of a dole abolished, and independence, industry, thrift, and self-respect be once more established amongst our people. The aim of the Church is to help people to help themselves. Work is to be re-enthroned as the ruling principle of the lives of our Church membership. \(^{106}\)

The renewed focus upon the establishment of a Zion society through the blending of the temporal and the spiritual was stressed at this same general conference by J. Reuben Clark, counselor to Grant: "The real long-term objective of the Welfare Plan is the building of character in the members of the Church, givers and receivers, rescuing all that is finest down deep inside of them, and bringing to flower and fruitage the latent richness of the spirit, which after all is the mission and purpose and reason for being of this Church."\(^{107}\)

The Welfare Services Program, as it is known today, has developed additional resources as the Church

\(^{106}\) Conference Report, October 1936, p. 3.

\(^{107}\) J. Reuben Clark, Jr., from address delivered at a special meeting of stake presidencies, October 2, 1936; cited by Spencer W. Kimball in "Welfare Services: The Gospel in Action," Ensign, November 1977, pp. 76-78.
has faced new and more sophisticated needs. At the time of this writing, the original notion of a storehouse (a physical building to house funds and commodities to be extended to the poor) has expanded to what is now known as the Storehouse Resource System. Quoting directly from the *Welfare Services Resource Handbook* (1980):

The Storehouse Resource System consists of a number of interrelated resources: an employment system, bishops' storehouses, production projects [e.g., farms, dairies, canneries, etc.], LDS Social Services, Deseret Industries ("includes nonprofit family thrift stores where the public can buy refurbished, manufactured, and 'as is' items," and also where work opportunities are made available), fast offerings, welfare services missionaries, and other welfare resources. The immediate objectives of the system are to--

1. Provide cash resources, social services, and rehabilitative assistance to help those in need.

2. Produce, process, store, and distribute needed commodities.

3. Help find regular jobs for those who are able to work.

4. Provide temporary work within the Storehouse Resource System, when possible, for those who cannot be employed otherwise.

5. Serve as a resource to Church leaders in meeting local needs.

Through the Storehouse Resource System the Church seeks to supply those in need (see D&C 51:3). This is to be done not as a dole, but in recognition of
their willingness to labor to the extent of their ability.\textsuperscript{108}

With current Church growth (presently gaining yearly through convert baptisms about 225,000 new members) added to the problems associated with life in a modern world, it can be seen that an expanded system of assistance was necessary. A closer look at LDS Social Services will perhaps demonstrate the growth of the Welfare program to meet twentieth-century challenges. LDS Social Services exists to assist Church leaders and members to address social and emotional concerns. Such licensed programs as Adoption, foster care, work with unwed parents, and Indian Student Placement are provided by the Church Social Services, through authority granted by local state governments. In addition, clinical services available through local agencies include consultation with local Church leaders over possible causes and solutions to social-emotional problems of members; evaluation with the troubled individual and the Church leader; and therapy (parent-child, marital, drug abuse, sexual deviancy, etc.).\textsuperscript{109}

\textsuperscript{108}Welfare Services Resource Handbook, p. 27.

\textsuperscript{109}Welfare Services Resource Handbook, pp. 35-37. The statistical report for 1981 gives an overview of the utilization of some of the resources of the system. For example: Persons assisted by LDS Social Services--62,800;
The very fact that LDS Social Services has been organized suggests that many of the personal and interpersonal problems facing modern Mormons are not unlike those of their friends outside the "walls" of Zion, and that living a Zion-centered life does not necessarily inoculate one against the challenges and traumas of today. Harold B. Lee, the first Managing Director of the Welfare Services program, was ordained an apostle in 1941 and became president of the Church in 1970. In an address to the Church in April of 1972, Lee declared:

The greatest miracles I see today are not necessarily the healing of sick bodies, but the greatest miracles I see are the healing of sick souls, those who are sick in soul and spirit, and are downhearted and distraught, on the verge of nervous breakdowns. We are reaching out to all such, because they are precious in the sight of the Lord and we want no one to feel that they are forgotten.\textsuperscript{110}

Church leaders are optimistic about the future of Church Welfare Services. In fact, Church Welfare is seen to be an approximation to the Law of Consecration and Stewardship, a step along the way to an eventual return to the Order of Enoch. "In the meantime," stated Marion G. Romney, known in the modern Church as the "Dean of the

\textsuperscript{110}Conference Report, April 1973, p. 178.
Welfare program, "while we await the redemption of Zion and the earth and the establishment of the United Order, we as Latter-day Saints should live strictly by the principles of the United Order insofar as they are embodied in present Church practices, such as the fast offering, tithing, and the welfare activities." Romney then concludes: "It is thus apparent that when [these] principles . . . are properly observed and the Welfare Plan gets fully developed and wholly into operation, 'we shall not be so very far from carrying out the great fundamentals of the United Order.'"

Summary

The movement of the Church into the twentieth century and the influx of a non-Mormon element into the Mormon communities led to a spiritualization of Zion's economic order--a move from the practice to the principles of consecration and stewardship: whereas the Saints in Ohio and Missouri (under the law of consecration) and the people of Utah (under the Second United Order) sought to create and practice the ideals of

---

From Marion G. Romney, "Socialism and the United Order Compared," Address delivered at Brigham Young University, March 1, 1966; Romney is quoting from J. Reuben Clark, Jr., Conference Report, October 1942, pp. 57-58; see also Albert E. Bowen, The Church Welfare Plan (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1948), p. 145.
Enoch's Zion, the modern Church has adopted the **principles** of Zion's economy and anticipated the day when they may be fully implemented. Modern Zion is highly capitalistic and reflects, supports, and advocates the cause of the free enterprise system. "Of all the utopias founded in the United States during the nineteenth century," writes one anthropologist, "Mormonism was the most successful. It was also the only American utopia able to turn itself into a national and even international church during the twentieth century."\(^{112}\)

Modern Zion is founded on a work ethic established by Joseph Smith, but has concentrated and directed far more energy in recent times into formulas for success and public image. Zion has "come of age."

---

CHAPTER 4

ZION AND THE POLITICAL KINGDOM OF GOD

"When we see a religion," said Brigham Young, "and one which is claimed to be the religion of Christ, and it will not govern men in their politics, it is a very poor religion, it is very feeble, very faint in its effects, hardly perceptible in the life of a person."¹

For the Latter-day Saints, the Restoration of the Gospel was not alone a reinstitution of theology and praxis; in addition, the Restoration involved a gradual unfolding of the ancient order of things, wherein all matters—civil and ecclesiastical—were patterned after the order of heaven and governed directly by God and his earthly servants. Joseph Smith taught:

When the children of Israel were chosen with Moses at their head, they were to be a peculiar people, among whom God should place his name; . . . While in this state they might truly say, "Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord." Their government was a theocracy; they had God to make their laws, and men chosen by Him to administer them; He was their God, and they were His people. Moses received the word of the Lord from God Himself; he was the mouth of God to Aaron, and Aaron taught the people, in both civil and

ecclesiastical affairs; they were both one, there was no distinction; so will it be when the purposes of God shall be accomplished. . . ."²

Mormons claim that the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was the beginning of the fulfillment of the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar, interpreted by Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed of a day when a great kingdom was to be established, one which would have divine approval, and thus would never be destroyed or "left to other people." (Daniel 2.) Joseph Smith and his successors in the presidency of the LDS Church have taught the Saints that "this kingdom is the kingdom that Daniel spoke of, which was to be set up in the last days; it is the kingdom that is not to be given to another people; it is the kingdom that is to be held by the servants of God, to rule the nations of the earth. . . ."³ The Church was to be the ecclesiastical base upon which ultimately the political government of God would be established. Andrus distinguished between the Zion of God and the Government of God.

Zion and the government of God were to be mutually dependent upon each other, although they occupied different spheres and performed different functions within the kingdom of God. Each of the

²Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Vol. 5, p. 64.

systems was founded upon the principle of covenant [to be discussed in Chapter 3], but they differed in their requirements and in the benefits recipients would receive. The government of God, based upon the covenant of freedom, justice, and equity before the law, would maintain an open society with all of the blessings of freedom and civil justice. But Zion, as the center of the kingdom, was based upon the divine covenant of human regeneration by which the faithful could receive the transforming gifts and powers of the Holy Spirit and build a new social and economic order characterized by a free and open union of mature individuals."

The restoration of the true Church, Joseph Smith therefore affirmed, was prerequisite to the development of a society of Zion, which in turn would prepare the way for the full establishment of the Kingdom of God. And the Kingdom of God would bless all mankind, Mormon and non-Mormon alike. Such was the vision of the early Latter-day Saint leaders.

The Mormons insisted that they were neither anarchists nor civil revolutionaries. Though they held ever before them the society of Enoch as the pattern for a city of holiness; though they looked forward to the day when all man-made kingdoms would be "broken in pieces" and when "the thrones were cast down" (Daniel 2:44; 7:9); though they yearned for a time when the Kingdom of God would be allowed full rein, yet they were taught to "be subject to the powers that be, until he reigns whose

\[4\text{Hyrum L. Andrus, Doctrines of the Kingdom, p. 387.}\]
right it is to reign, and subdues all enemies under his feet." In 1835 the Saints issued a "Declaration of Belief regarding governments and laws in general." The first paragraph reads: "We believe that governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man; and that he holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them, both in making laws and administering them, for the good and safety of society." Until "he reigns whose right it is to reign," the members of the Church were instructed that they could build Zion only to the degree that they were honorable and law-abiding citizens of their nations. "Let no man break the laws of the land," the people were told as early as 1831, "for he that keepeth the laws of God hath no need to break the laws of the land." An article of faith in Mormondom is given as follows: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring and sustaining the law." The Mormons were enjoined to patience and prudence, and were asked to demonstrate support and loyalty toward "the powers that be." Such must have

5D&C 58:22; Cf. ibid., 38:21; Titus 3:1.

6Ibid., 134:1.

7Ibid., 58:21.

proven to be a challenge to a people who believed that (1) the present national government was temporary; (2) the Church was the nucleus of a grander government; and (3) in time the society of Zion "will extend, eventually to cover the entire world. There will be no nook or corner upon the earth but will be in Zion. It will all be Zion."⁹

John F. Wilson, Professor of Religion at Princeton University, has suggested an important development in the early 1840's in the Mormon attitude toward the federal government and the U.S. Constitution. Wilson points out that by 1843 Joseph Smith had begun to identify and stress the functional utility of the constitution for men making laws for themselves; such statements by Joseph as "The Constitution is not a law, but it empowers the people to make laws," or "The Constitution is not law to us, but it makes provision for us whereby we can make laws," are examples of what Wilson proposed to be "a shift [in the idea of the Constitution as the law] to an enabling view of the Constitution."¹⁰ Rather than viewing the work of the Founding Fathers as


totally inferior and inadequate, the Saints began to look
with optimism upon the grand political document as a
means of securing and insuring personal and societ al
liberties. In summary,

... under persecution the Mormon movement
wrestled with and developed a general position on the
relationship between religion and government. The
starting point was the two kingdoms or two realms
pattern [God and man] which is so deeply imbedded in
the Christian tradition.

... adoption of this two-fold pattern as a
means of defining church-state issues often means
devaluation of this world in comparison with the
next, or de-emphasis of the realm of governmental
affairs in relationship to the religious realm. This
devaluation does not take place in the early Mormon
movement. Indeed, loyalty to the United States
remains strong and religious liberty is emphasized.

Zion and the Kingdom of God

In general, the distinction between the Church of

---

Ibid., p. 77. Actually, the early LDS attitude
toward the Church and the state was a bit more complex
than Wilson has suggested above. Though the Saints did
maintain a loyalty to the nation and thus demonstrate
optimism with regard to the constitution and the
government (their prophets proclaimed that the principles
of democracy and of constitutional government were
divinely inspired), the Mormons still viewed the world
with suspicion and as a source of carnal contamination.
The constitution was, to Joseph Smith, a "glorious
standard" and a "heavenly banner." At the same time it
was "like the cooling shades and refreshing waters of a
great rock in a thirsty and barren land. It is like a
great tree under whose branches men from every clime can
be shielded from the burning rays of the sun." (History
of the Church, Vol. 3, p. 304.) The prophet's
characterization of the world as barren or dry or sterile
thus points up the type of attitude the saints would have
had with regard to those matters in the world not
divinely inspired. In short, the Constitution was an
illuminating standard in the midst of a darkened world.
God (and Zion which develops) and the Government of God is not one that is common among modern Mormons. In fact, if any ten Latter-day Saints from all parts of the country (or the world, for that matter) were asked today to define the "Kingdom of God," chances are high that at least nine would equate the Kingdom with the Church. The scope and function of the political aspect of the Kingdom are seldom discussed in this day; such a situation is perhaps indicative of the settled and patient posture of the modern Church. This is in marked contrast to the nineteenth-century body of Saints who seemed to anticipate the nearness of the return to Missouri and imminent establishment of Zion and the New Jerusalem. "We talk a good deal," declared Brigham Young, "about the Church and kingdom of God. I sometimes think we understand very little about either."\(^{12}\) Young and his colleagues continually stressed the need for the teaching and implementation of the principles of truth, so that the Zion of God might "give birth" to the full Kingdom of God. In Smith's work with the King James Bible, he made a number of changes in the 12th Chapter of Revelation. Of particular interest to our present discussion are the alterations of verses seven and eight.

And there was war in heaven; Michael and his

angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon and
his angels fought against Michael.
And the dragon prevailed not against Michael,
NEITHER THE CHILD, NOR THE WOMAN WHICH WAS THE CHURCH
OF GOD, WHO HAD BEEN DELIVERED OF HER PAINS, AND
BROUGHT FORTH THE KINGDOM OF OUR GOD AND HIS CHRIST.

This scriptural emendation, which would have been made by
Joseph as early as 1832 or 1833,\textsuperscript{13} evidences that the
Mormon leader was aware at an early date, of the fact
that a kingdom would grow out of a Church. His immediate
successor explained that the "kingdom grows out of the
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but it is
not the Church. . . ."\textsuperscript{14} John Taylor, Brigham's succes-
sor, emphasized the same matter:

We talk sometimes about the church of God, and why? We talk about the kingdom of God and why? Because, before there could be a kingdom of God, there must be a church of God, and hence the first principles of the gospel were needed to be preached
to all nations, as they were formally when the Lord
Jesus Christ and others made their appearance on the
earth. And why so? Because of the impossibility of
introducing the law of God among a people who would
not be subject to and guided by the spirit of
revelation. Here the world have generally made great
mistakes upon these points. They have started

\textsuperscript{13}See Robert J. Matthews, \textit{A Plainer Translation},
p. 96. This change in Smith's Bible translation is
enlightening when we consider the following from David
Austin in 1794. Austin stated that the stone cut out of
the mountain by God (without human hands) in Daniel 2:45
"was begun on the Fourth of July, 1776, when the birth of
the MANCHILD--the hero of civil and religious liberty--
took place in these United States." ("The Downfall of
Mystical Babylon," in \textit{The Millennium} (Elizabethtown,
1794), p. 353.

\textsuperscript{14}Brigham Young, \textit{Journal of Discourses}, Vol. 2,
p. 310.
various projects to try to unite and cement the people together without God; but they could not do it.\footnote{ibid., Vol. 18, p. 137; see also ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 173-174; Vol. 2, pp. 192-193; Vol. 5, p. 265; Vol. 10, pp. 240-241; Vol. 13, p. 126; Vol. 21, p. 65; Vol. 25, pp. 335-336.}

George Q. Cannon, counselor to both Young and Taylor, said: "We have been taught from the beginning [i.e., by Joseph Smith] this important principle, that the Church of God is distinct from the Kingdom of God... In the midst of all of us who understand this matter there is a clear distinction between the Church in its ecclesiastical capacity and that which may be termed the government of God in its political capacity."\footnote{Juvenile Instructor, Vol. 31 (1896), p. 140.} As stated by Andrus earlier, Zion and the Kingdom of God were mutually dependent upon one another. The Church would give birth to the kingdom. The kingdom, once fully established, would provide freedom and protection for the Church, and for all men of good will.

The Church of Jesus Christ will produce this government, and cause it to grow and spread, and it will be a shield round about the Church. And under the influence and power of the Kingdom of God, the Church of God will rest secure and dwell in safety, without taking the trouble of governing and controlling the whole earth. The Kingdom of God will do this; it will control the kingdoms of the world.\footnote{Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 2, p. 317; see also a revelation given to John Taylor in June or July 1882; cited in Fred C. Collier, Unpublished Revelation of the Prophets and Presidents, Salt Lake...}
We have established clearly that Joseph Smith and his early followers understood a fundamental distinction between Church and Kingdom. What is more difficult to assess, however, is the precise manner in which the Church of the nineteenth century viewed the matter of Church and State. In the "Declaration of Belief Regarding Governments and Laws," for example, the document reads: "We do not believe it just to mingle religious influence with civil government, whereby one religious society is fostered and another proscribed in its spiritual privileges, and the individual rights of its members, as citizens, denied." D&C 134:9. There can be no question that the Latter-day Saints (like many of their contemporaries) appreciated deeply the principles of religious toleration and liberty, and would have fought another revolution to avoid their opposites. At the same time, it would not be accurate to propose that the Mormons believed in what we could call today a complete separation of church and state; indeed, there is much evidence (to be discussed shortly) to demonstrate the reverse. How then do we account for the paradox, the statement (above) in the "Declaration of Belief," that societies should not "mingle religious influence with


civil government"? One possibility, of course, would be that the Mormons simply did not want religious beliefs imposed upon or denied them by government, while at the same time they maintained the importance of teaching and spreading "the truth," until eventually all men would be required, not to join the Church, but to abide by established moral and ethical principles.\textsuperscript{19} In other words, perhaps the Saints did not feel it proper to have "incorrect" religious views fostered, but felt no hesitation about the doctrines and policies of Zion being implemented from the top. A second possibility is simply that the Declaration of Belief did not fully represent the sentiments of Joseph Smith. It is believed by many that the document was prepared by Oliver Cowdery (and not by the Prophet), and adopted by a group of the Saints while Smith was absent from Kirtland, Ohio.\textsuperscript{20} There would seem to be no other alternatives, given that later policies and procedures of Joseph and his successors were pointed toward a theocratic mode of Church-state relations, in which the political was tied to the ecclesiastical. "Was the kingdom that the Prophets

\textsuperscript{19}See a statement in \textit{Millennial Star}, Vol. 10, pp. 81-88.

\textsuperscript{20}See a sermon by Jedediah M. Grant delivered March 12, 1854; cited in Gene A. Sessions, Mormor Thunder, p. 125; see also Lyndon W. Cook, The Revelations Of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 296.
talked about, that should be set up in the latter times (e.g., Daniel 2), going to be a Church? Yes. And a State? Yes, it was going to be both Church and State, to rule both temporally and spiritually.\textsuperscript{21}

An interesting analysis of the Church-state issue among the Latter-day Saints is given by John Wilson. "Religious movements," he points out, "in their early years literally envision and advocate a new world—that is, conditions of life and a culture very different from what prevail. The conventional differentiations that characterize normal life do not exist within such a movement."

What is "religious," as opposed to "worldly," when a mission is involved? What is "political," as opposed to "religious," when Zion's Camp is to be organized? In short, early Mormonism, like early Christianity and a host of other vital religious movements in their years of origin, did not rest content with the conventional lines of distinction it might establish between itself and the whole society and the culture. In the urgency and compellingness of a new movement, conventional distinctions are unimportant and thus disregarded. The categories of the old world are literally rendered anachronistic—and that is precisely why the church-state or religious liberty-governmental authority formulations of the society have little claim in the experience of the members.\textsuperscript{22}

Joseph Smith's "disregard" for the principle of


\textsuperscript{22}John F. Wilson, "Some Comparative Perspectives on the Early Mormon Movement and the Church-State Question, 1830-1845," p. 71.
separation of Church and State may also be attributed to the Mormon leader's attempts to restore the ancient Israelite order, in which (under the theocracy) Church--state boundaries were non-existent. In Nauvoo, Illinois Joseph served as mayor, lieutenant general of the Nauvoo Legion, judge of the municipal court, and president of the Church. The pattern established by Joseph was continued and extended by Brigham. Young was elected president of the "camp of Israel" in Iowa, during the exodus to the Salt Lake Valley. In the valley, with Young serving as President of the Church, the work of the Church organization spread into all phases of life, including civic affairs. A High Council record for January 1, 1848 is interesting:

    Be it ordained by the High Council of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Residents upon the Pottawattamie lands. That any person belonging to said church (who) shall steal from the Brethren, he or she, shall pay four fold the amount, or in case they have not the amount of property they shall receive not exceeding thirty-nine lashes [cf. Deuteronomy 25:1-3; 2 Corinthians 11:24] and if they shall steal from a person not belonging to the church but living among us they shall make satisfaction to the person from whom they have stolen and then

---


24The High Council, first organized in 1834 (See D&C 102), was made up of at least twelve men who served an advisory and staff function, working in conjunction with (and under the direction of) the three members of the stake presidency.
receive not exceeding thirty-nine lashes, or if they shall go to Missouri, Iowa, or any other place where there is jurisdiction of civil laws and there steal and come up here upon their being demanded and satisfaction given to this [High] Council by the person coming and identifying the property and the person they shall be given up to the laws where they have transgressed for trial."25

The High Council of Salt Lake City took the lead in establishing community regulations regarding such matters as vagrancy, disorderly conduct, adultery, theft, arson, and drunkenness. "Penalties were established commensurate with each offense. Compulsory work, lashes not to exceed thirty-nine on the bare back, fines not to exceed $1,000, and restoration of stolen property four-fold were the teeth to back up the ordinances."26

25 From "Pottawattomie High Council Record"; cited in J. Keith Melville, "Theory and Practice of Church and State During the Brigham Young Era," Brigham Young University Studies, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Autumn 1968), p. 42. This statement is particularly instructive, in light of what Cowdery wrote in verse 10 of the Declaration of Belief regarding governments and laws. Note: "We believe that all religious societies have a right to deal with their members for disorderly conduct, according to the rules and regulations of such societies; provided that such dealings be for fellowship and good standing; but we do not believe that any religious society has authority to try men on the right of property or life, to take from them this world's goods, or to put them in jeopardy of either life or limb, or to inflict any physical punishment upon them. They can only excommunicate them from their society, and withdraw from them their fellowship." (D&C 134:10.)

26 J. Keith Melville, "Theory and Practice of Church and State During the Brigham Young Era," pp. 43-44; see also Gene A. Sessions, Mormon Thunder, pp. 169-170.
speaking at a session of the legislature in January of 1863, President Brigham Young reminded the men: "We are called the State Legislature, but when the time comes, we shall be called the Kingdom of God... For the time will come when we will give laws to the nations of the earth." 27

Brigham Young sought to dispel the myth that only Mormons would survive the cataclysmic cleansing at the time of the coming of Christ, and that only Saints would participate in the glories of the Millennium.

If the Latter-day Saints think, when the Kingdom of God is established on the earth, that all the inhabitants of the earth will join the church called Latter-day Saints, they are egregiously mistaken. I presume there will be as many sects and parties then as now. Still, when the Kingdom of God triumphs, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ, to the glory of the Father. Even the Jews will do it then [cf. D&C 45:51-53]; but will the Jews and Gentiles be obliged to belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints? No; not by any means.

From Brigham's perspective, then, those who remained on earth would recognize the Kingship and Messiahship of Christ and abide by ethical standards, 29 though many would continue to participate in their own chosen denominational patterns of worship. If we could but live

27 Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, January 19, 1863.


to see the Kingdom established, Young contended, we "would see the Roman Catholic, the Greek Catholic, the Episcopalian, the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Baptist, the Quaker, the Shaker, the Hindu, the Mahometan [sic], and every class of worshippers most strictly protected in all their municipal rights. . . ."30

Inasmuch as the Government of God was separate and apart from the Church, and since the government had a responsibility to all men (Mormons and non-Mormons), it followed naturally that there would be non-members of the Church serving in numerous capacities of civic responsibility.

There may be men acting as officers in the Kingdom of God who will not be members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On this point the Prophet Joseph Smith gave particular instructions before his death, and gave an example, which he asked the younger elders who were present to always remember. It was to the effect that men might be chosen to officiate as members of the Kingdom of God

---

30 Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 342; Cf. Vol. 2, pp. 309-310, 317. It is worth noting here, however, that persons living in the Millennium would be expected to eventually join the "true Church." In a recent treatment of the LDS conception of the future, Bruce R. McConkie pointed out that "there will be many churches on earth when the Millennium begins. False worship will continue among those whose desires are good, 'who are honorable men of the earth,' but who have been 'blinded by the craftiness of men'. . . . It follows that missionary work will continue into the Millennium until all who remain are converted. Then 'the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' (Isaiah 11:9.) Then every living soul on earth will belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." (The Millennial Messiah, p. 652; Cf. Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, Vol. 1, p. 86.)
who had no standing in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Kingdom of God when established will not be for the protection of the Church alone, but for the protection of all men, whatever their views or religious opinions may be. Under its rule, no one will be permitted to overstep the proper bounds or to interfere with the rights of others.

Zion and the U.S. Constitution

Mormonism has been called a typically American religious movement. Even with the spread of the Church to most foreign lands, it is held by some that the tenants and focus of the faith remain basically western.

31 George Q. Cannon, in History of the Church, Vol. 7, p. 382; see also Journal of Discourses, Vol. 20, p. 204; Vol. 2, p. 310. Though speculative at best (because of little historical precedent), it might be worthwhile to consider in slight detail the place of the non-Saint in the proposed city of Zion. The non-member would be one within the community who chose to be a part of a Zion people but also declined baptism and entrance into the Church. For one thing, it would seem difficult for the non-member to participate fully in the Law of Consecration and Stewardship, inasmuch as such a commitment and involvement was accomplished only by members who had entered the New and Everlasting Covenant of the Gospel. The Covenant of Consecration was in reality an extension of the Covenant of baptism. The non-member would obviously not participate in the worship of the society of Zion. At the same time, there seemed to be provision (as indicated by Andrus in Chapter 3) for the non-LDS to compete with and offer his goods/services to the consecrated Saints. As we gather from Cannon's remarks above, the umbrella of the Kingdom of God opened wide enough to encompass and involve all persons, member and non-member. It is thus my contention that the non-Saint would be a part of the broader Kingdom of God, could be a member of the community of Zion, but would not be a fully consecrated citizen of the commonwealth. In this sense, he could enjoy the freedom and protection of the Kingdom of God, but was denied the full socio-economic and spiritual benefits of Zion.
and primarily American. One obvious reason for this focus is, of course, because the Church had its inception in upstate New York, and drew upon the socio-intellectual traditions and thought of New England in its formative years. At the same time, there are fundamental theological reasons for the Latter-day Saint affinity for the land of America. Joseph Smith taught the early members that the whole of America was the land of Zion, the continent where life on this planet had begun, and that the Garden of Eden had been located in Independence, Jackson County, Missouri. The Book of Mormon purports to be a record of Hebrew migrants to America, a people who grew into a powerful nation. Mormons frequently call the section of the Book of Mormon which deals with a visit of the resurrected Jesus to the Nephites (3 Nephi, chapters 11 through 30) their "fifth gospel," inasmuch as it contains extended sermons and instructions from the man the Nephites recognized to be the Promised Messiah.

Latter-day Saints are taught to revere the land of

---


America also because it was a country prepared by God to extend political and religious asylum to people of good will everywhere. The Book of Mormon makes prophetic reference to an event which the Saints have identified with Columbus’ discovery of America: "And I [Nephi] looked and beheld a man among the Gentiles, who was separated from the seed of my brethren [the Lamanites] by the many waters; and I beheld the Spirit of God, that it came down and wrought upon the man; and he went forth upon the many waters, even unto the seed of my brethren, who were in the promised land."34

Most pointedly, however, the Latter-day Saints look to America as the land divinely prepared to receive a Restoration of the "ancient order of things." Jonathan Edwards, one of the greatest theologians of America, spoke as early as 1742 of America as a land prepared to receive the "latter-day glory." The following are excerpts of a sermon delivered by Edwards:

It is not unlikely that this work of God's

34 Nephi 13:12. The Mormons enjoy quoting an excerpt from a letter from Columbus to the Spanish hierarchy in this vein: "Our Lord unlocked my mind, sent me upon the sea, and gave me fire for the deed. Those who heard of my enterprise called it foolish, mocked me, and laughed. But who can doubt but that the Holy Ghost inspired me?" (Jacob Wasserman, Columbus: Don Quixote of the Seas [Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1930], pp. 19-29.) Cf. also Peter Marshall and David Manuel, The Light and the Glory (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1977).
Spirit, so extraordinary and wonderful, is the dawning, or at least, a prelude of that glorious work of God, so often foretold in scripture, which, in the progress and issue of it, shall renew the world and mankind. . . . the beginning of this great work of God must be near. And there are many things that make it probable that this work will begin in America. . . .

... God has made as it were two worlds here below, two great habitable continents, far separated one from the other. . . . This new world is probably now discovered, that the new and most glorious state of God's church on earth might begin a new world in a spiritual respect, when he creates the new heavens and new earth.

... And if we may suppose that this glorious work of God shall begin in any part of America, I think, if we consider the circumstances of the settlement of New England, it must needs appear the most likely, of all American colonies, to be the place whence this work shall take its rise. 35

Just how much Joseph Smith or his little flock may have been influenced by such sentiments as those of Edwards is difficult to assess. Smith probably never read any of Edwards' works, but was in an environment which certainly looked toward a great day of restoration, a day wherein the "latter-day glory" would be revealed. 36 Finally, as we have intimated, America was a land preferred above


others, "a land which is choice above all other lands," because of the great events to take place in the Americas in the last days. The tenth article of faith of the LDS Church is: "We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory." For the Mormons, great things were initiated on the American continent, and great things will be consummated here as well.

In a revelation given to the Church in December of 1833 instructions are contained as to the Saints' course in obtaining redress for persecutions and grievances encountered in Missouri. In the same verses are given the LDS position with regard to the constitution and the work of the Founding Fathers.

And again I say unto you, those who have been scattered by their enemies, it is my will that they should continue to importune for redress, and redemption, by the hands of those who are placed as rulers and are in authority over you-

According to the laws and constitution of the people, which I have suffered to be established, and should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to just and holy principles;

That every man may act in doctrine and principle pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency

37Ether 2:10; 1 Nephi 2:20.
which I have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his sins in the day of judgement. Therefore, it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another. And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed that land by the shedding of blood."

A number of important points surface from a reading of the above statement. First, it is interesting to note the choice of language with regard to the giving of the constitution to man: God "suffered" it to be established. That is, He allowed, permitted, or tolerated its establishment. Joseph Smith saw the U.S. constitution as divinely given, and as the best available system of political organization available at the time. It was, however, a shadow or type or approximation of what would be had in a future day. Orson Pratt taught that "many great and glorious principles are contained within the Constitution of our country, not to say that it is perfect, but it is perfect so far as it pertains to the rights and privileges of the children of men." In the same sermon Pratt explained:

\[\ldots\] The Lord had a hand in framing [the] Constitution. Why did not the Lord at the time, introduce a perfect government—a theocracy? It was simply because the people were not prepared for it. \ldots\] They were far from being prepared for the government of God, which is a government of union.

---

39 D&C 101:76-80; Cf. ibid., 98:5-10.

But will the government of the United States continue forever? No, it is not sufficiently perfect; and notwithstanding it has been sanctioned by the Lord at a time when it was suited to the circumstances of the people, yet the day will come... when the United States government, and all others, will be uprooted, and the kingdoms of this world will be united in one, and the kingdom of our God will govern the whole earth. . . .

Second, the revelation expressly stipulated that the constitutional government of the U.S. "should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh." In an earlier revelation Joseph Smith explained that "that law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, belongs to all mankind, and is justifiable before me." It is easy to understand how the Saints would have developed an "expansionist" perspective with regard to the growth of America. In Joseph Smith's "Views on the Powers and Policy of the Government," the Mormon leader boldly declared:

Oregon belongs to this government honorably; and when we have the red man's consent, let the Union spread from the east to the west sea; And if Texas petitions Congress to be adopted among the sons of liberty, give her the right hand of fellowship, and refuse not the same friendly grip to Canada and Mexico.

The Prophet's approach to national acquisition of new lands was "Come--yea, come, Texas; come, Mexico; come,

41Ibid., pp. 71-73.
42D&C 98:5.
43History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 206.
Canada; and come, all the world; let us be brethren, let us be one great family, and let there be universal peace." In Smith's mind, God had prepared and established the land of America and had sent wise men to write a constitution for the maintenance of equity and justice in America; it seemed appropriate to conclude that what was good for America was good for the world, that it "belonged to all mankind." Ernest L. Tuveson has written: "Manifest Destiny has been described as a 'nationalistic theology.' The statement implies that simple nationalism, the pride of a new and ambitious nation, with many virtues and advantages, spontaneously generated a religious justification for its desire to acquire new and rich territories." In the minds of most Mormons, the movement was primarily theological and secondarily political: God had given a "mission" to the

---

44 Ibid., p. 208.

45 Regarding Joseph's adoption of what later came to be known as a policy of "Manifest Destiny" for America, G. Homer Durham was quick to point out: "Mormon students should be warned not to take too many liberties with the Mormon idea of the mission of America. Such an idea was the common property of all Americans along the frontier and further east roughly after 1815. However, the Mormon interpretation of the idea, and its support and origin in Mormon doctrine are unique. These things should be stressed; not the originality of the idea." (G. Homer Durham, Joseph Smith, Prophet-Statesman [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Publishers, 1944], p. 327.)

land choice above all others, and Divine Providence would aid in the fulfillment of the nation's destiny.

Third, the constitution was established to enable men to enjoy liberty and to have a hand in the planning of their own futures. Further, slavery was expressly condemned.**47**

Finally, the Constitution was prepared by wise men who were raised up by God to perform their sacred duty. Brigham Young said simply: "The signers of the Declaration of Independence and the framers of the Constitution were inspired from on high to do that work."**48** Ezra Taft Benson, former Secretary of Agriculture under Eisenhower and, at the time of this writing, the President of the Mormon Quorum of Twelve Apostles, spoke in 1976 of recent attempts to marr the names and reputations of the Founding Fathers.

---

**47**This position is interesting in light of another verse in the "Declaration of Belief". In voicing the Church's right to "preach the gospel to the nations of the earth," Cowdery continues: "But we do not believe it right to interfere with bond-servants, neither preach the gospel to, nor baptize them contrary to the will and wish of their masters, nor to meddle with or influence them in the least to cause them to be dissatisfied with their situations in this life. . . ." (D&C 134:12.) It begins to appear that this document was an expedient statement of political position, and was issued partly to placate non-Mormon neighbors and allay fears and suspicions.

Not infrequently [a] penchant for historical criticism has resulted in the defamation of character of the founding fathers. It is done under the guise of removing the so-called "myths" that surround their background. A favorite target of this defamation has been George Washington, our nation's most illustrious leader. Some of these so-called "new" historians have questioned his honesty, challenged his military leadership and executive ability, and impugned his moral character.

Then, in challenging such approaches to the writing of history, Benson warned: "When one casts doubt about the character of these noble sons of God, I believe he or she will have to answer to the God of heaven for it." 49

Because he sensed that the "hand of God" was in the formation of the American government, Brigham Young taught that "the Constitution and laws of the United States combine the best form of Government in force upon the earth." Further, "the Constitution, laws, and institutions of our Government are as good as can be, with the intelligence now possessed by the people." 50 In fact, Young declared that the republican form of

49 Ezra Taft Benson, "God's Hand in Our Nation's History," Address delivered at BYU on March 28, 1976; in 1976 Devotional Speeches of the Year (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1976), pp. 305, 307. Mormons claim that all of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and a number of other prominent political leaders of the past appeared (as spirits) to Wilford Woodruff in the St. George Utah Temple and requested that Woodruff perform vicarious temple work for them. This story is often told by members to confirm the integrity and goodness of the founding fathers. (See Wilford Woodruff, Conference Report, April 1898, pp. 89, 90.)

50 Journal of Discourses, Vol. 6, p. 344.
government (under the Constitution) was the closest approximation to a pure government by God, a theocracy.\textsuperscript{51} In a revelation given to the Church August 6, 1833, the Saints learned: "Therefore, I, the Lord, justify you, and your brethren of my church in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land; And as pertaining to law of man, whatsoever is more or less than this, cometh of evil."\textsuperscript{52} In light of this scriptural passage, George Q. Cannon explained in 1879 that there was no righteous liberty or freedom a person could desire in life that was not guaranteed through the Constitution; if interpreted in its proper spirit, according to the original intent of its framers, it "needs no amendment about it; it is broad enough . . . to cover the individual, the continent, and the entire globe and furnish freedom for all."\textsuperscript{53}

Neither Joseph Smith nor Brigham Young were "party men," in the sense of exerting their own and the Church's influence behind a particular political party. In Ohio and Missouri the Saints' decision as to which candidate to support was frequently made on the basis of which candidate did not plan to persecute or exterminate

\textsuperscript{51}Ibid., p. 342.

\textsuperscript{52}\textit{D&C} 98:6-7.

\textsuperscript{53}\textit{Journal of Discourses}, Vol. 20, p. 204.
the Mormons. The Saints were taught to vote for principles, not parties. "We have had Democratic Presidents, Whig Presidents, a pseudo-Democratic-Whig President," Joseph said, "and now it is time to have a President of the United States." And then, stressing the need for candidates to keep campaign promises, the Prophet added: "And let the people of the whole Union, like the inflexible Romans, whenever they find a promise made by a candidate that is not practiced as an officer, hurl the miserable sycophant from his exaltation. . . ."

Young spoke in the same manner:

Are we political people? Yes, very political indeed. But what party do you belong to or would you vote for? I will tell you whom we will vote for: We will vote for the man who will sustain the principles of civil and religious liberty, the man who knows the most and who has the best heart and brain for a statesman; and we do not care a farthing whether he is a whig, a democrat, a barnburner, a republican, a new light or anything else. These are our politics.

As a final item to consider in this section, Joseph Smith taught his followers that during the last days, and while the nation was in the throes of an era of universal chaos, the principles of constitutional government would "hang by a thread." Further, Joseph seems to have declared that if the true and enduring

---


principles were to be preserved, it would be accomplished by the Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. "The question," one early apostle pointed out, "is whether it will be saved at all, or not. I do not know that it matters," he continued, "whether it is or not: the Lord will provide for and take care of his people... and he will not leave us without a constitution." It was never understood by Joseph or Brigham that the leaders of the Church in that day would hasten to Washington to restore the nation to power; rather, since it is "beyond the power of man to destroy the principles of the constitution;" and since "the God of heaven will maintain them until Jesus Christ comes in the clouds of heaven," the day will come when the Latter-day Saints will be the only well-governed people on this continent, and in their midst will be found the only place where constitutional government will be preserved in its old purity and integrity.

Though the LDS picture is not completely clear, it would appear that the principles contained in the present U.S. Constitution would be sufficient for the government of the future society of Zion, until the more perfect system of government is put into operation. The Constitution

---


was therefore recognized as being "a stepping stone to a form of government infinitely greater and more perfect—a government founded upon divine laws, and officers appointed by the God of heaven."  

The Mormon Theocracy

After a number of years of experience with and exposure to man-made systems of economics and politics, Joseph Smith became convinced that any successful attainment of universal peace and happiness would require "the wisdom of God, the intelligence of God, and the power of God." 60 In the preface to what became the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, the Saints had been warned "that man should not counsel his fellow man, neither trust in the arm of flesh." but rather that "every man [should come to] speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world." 61 It was not that the Saints were to distrust one another, nor that they were to disregard the counsel of wise men; the warning was to avoid the advice and direction of unillumined man, uninspired man. Government by the people was fine, as long as the people were filled with the "vision" necessary to lead society in a proper course. There was

60 *History of the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 64.
61 D&C 1:19–20; Cf. 2 Nephi 4:34; Jeremiah 17:5.
no virtue in involvement, so long as "the voice of God [was] still the voice of the Devil." What the Saints sought was the mind of God—Vox Dei, Vox Populi—when the voice of God is the voice of the people. 62 John Taylor, third president of the Church, affirmed that "in politics as in everything else we want to know the will of God, and then to do it. . . . Do we not believe in the voice of the people? Yes, but we believe in the voice of God first, in the middle, and in the end. . . . and we want to be governed by Him in everything. . . . We do not think we have wisdom to manage our political affairs without the interposition of the Most High." 63 Smith's desire to unite Church and State was never more clear than when he stated:

As the "world is governed too much" and as there is not a nation or dynasty, now occupying the earth, which acknowledges Almighty God as their law giver, and as "crowns won by blood, by blood must be maintained, "I go emphatically, virtuously, and humanely for a THEODEMOCRACY, where God and the people hold the power to conduct the affairs of men in righteousness."

63 Ibid., Vol. 11, pp. 355-356.
64 Times and Seasons, Vol. 5, p. 510. Note: "Certainly if any person ought to interfere in political matters it should be those whose minds and judgments are influenced by correct principles—religious as well as political; otherwise those persons professing religion would have to be governed by those who make no professions; be subject to their rule; have the law and
Brigham Young stressed the three critical elements of the Mormon theocracy when he said: "I believe in a true republican theocracy, and also in a true democratic theocracy. . . ." That is, in the society of Zion, (1) God would speak, (2) the people could have their say, and (3) individuals (members and non-members) would be chosen to represent both the mind of God and the mind of the people. Elected (appointed) officials would lead the people in carrying out the mind of God. 66

As we intimated earlier, the Mormon leaders felt that among a people who receive divine direction, political parties were superfluous to the system; inasmuch as the appointed (elected) officials were nominated and approved by the vote of the people, "according to the order of union and oneness which word of God trampled under foot. . . ." (Ibid., Vol. 5, p. 471.) Note also a statement by George A. Smith, cousin to the Mormon leader: "Our system should be a Theo-democracy—the voice of the people consenting to the voice of God." (Journal History, July 12, 1865.)


66 John Taylor explained; "The proper mode of government is this—God first speaks, and then the people have their action. It is for them to say whether they will have his dictation or not. They are free; they are independent under God. . . . still we believe there is a correct order—some wisdom and knowledge somewhere that is superior to ours: that wisdom and knowledge proceeds from God through the medium of the Holy Priesthood." (Ibid., Vol. 9, p. 10.)
prevails among the people of God,"67 many of the elements of electioneering would be unnecessary.68 Furthermore, Young taught, once we have found a righteous leader to direct the government,69 it is ludicrous to limit the official's term in office. "Is it right for the people of the world to elect their presidents and rulers?" Brigham asked. "Yes," he answered, "if they wish to. For four years? Yes, or for one year, or for six months, or one month, if they wish to; but when the Lord appoints presidents, he does not change them every month or year, or every four years. Should they be changed? No, they should not. Should they be changed in human governments? No, they should not. . . ."70 In the pragmatic mind of Brigham Young, an intelligent society would elect a noble man, appoint him for life, and then pray that he lived as

67Orson Pratt, Deseret Evening News, VIII (October 2, 1875), No. 265.

68See Orson Pratt, The Seer, p. 266; in Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 14, p. 93, we read Young's feelings regarding our present system of electioneering. He contends that "every government lays the foundation of its own downfall when it permits what are called democratic elections. If a party spirit is developed, the formation of one party will be speedily followed by another; and furthermore, the very moment that we admit this, we admit the existence of error and corruption somewhere."


70Ibid., Vol. 14, p. 92; see also Vol. 6, p. 345; Vol. 7, p. 11.
long as Methuselah. In summary, Brigham Young asked:

"What do I understand by a theocratic government?"

One in which all laws are enacted and executed in righteousness, and whose officers possess that power which proceedeth from the Almighty. That is the kind of government I allude to when I speak of a theocratic government, or the kingdom of God upon the earth. It is, in short, the eternal powers of the Gods.

On March 11, 1844 Joseph Smith organized a group of men into a special council. The name of this organization was given by revelation: "The Kingdom of God and His Laws with the Keys and Powers thereof, and Judgment in the Hands of His Servants, Ahman Christ." Because the number of men in the group was to be held at fifty, it has come to be known in LDS history as the "Council of Fifty." Intended to be the nucleus for the political kingdom of God on earth, the Council was composed of "a select circle of the Prophet's most

---

72 Ibid., Vol. 6, pp. 346-347; see also p. 342.
74 Andrew Ehat has shown that fifty was "the number which the Lord requires." See Ehat, "It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth: Joseph Smith and the Constitution of the Kingdom of God," Brigham Young University Studies, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Spring 1980), pp. 258-259.
trusted friends, including the twelve [apostles] but not all the constituted authorities of the Church."\(^{75}\)

Through the years, LDS historians and writers have come to view this Council in a mysterious fashion, and some have suggested that it operated totally independent of the Church organization. Others have contended that most of the political and civic matters of consequence from Nauvoo, Illinois to the Great Basin (including the exodus itself) was handled completely by the Council of Fifty.\(^{76}\)

More recently, D. Michael Quinn of the BYU History Department has suggested that "the primary role of the Council of Fifty was to symbolize the otherworldly world order that would be established during the Millennial reign of Christ on earth."\(^{77}\) Here was a body of men, drawn primarily from the Church (with three non-Mormons during Joseph's lifetime\(^{78}\)), having civic

---

\(^{75}\) Letter of Benjamin F. Johnson to George S. Gibbs, April to October 1903 (typed manuscript, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University), p. 9.


responsibilities for the Kingdom of God, but acting totally under the direction of the Church's ecclesiastical order. Quinn writes:

Without question, at certain times the Council of Fifty was centrally involved in extremely important activities of Mormonism. It convened to discuss, approve, and carry out the 1844 campaign for Joseph Smith's presidential candidacy, the 1845 preparations at Nauvoo for the westward exodus, the formation of civil government in Utah in 1849, and the selection of candidates for public office in Utah and the surrounding territories in the 1880's. Nevertheless, even when it was so actively involved, the Council of Fifty was actually under the supervision of the LDS Church leadership. At times, the Council of Fifty was even a rubber stamp for prior decisions of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.  

In the 11 March 1844 meeting, Joseph had given an assignment to the Council to amend the Constitution of the United States, so as to make it the "voice of Jehovah."  

Later in the week, John Taylor, as a representative of a special committee of three, responded that no progress had been made toward the preparation of a constitution for the Kingdom of God. Smith acknowledged their failure by stating that he knew that "they could not draft a constitution worthy of guiding the Kingdom of God." Consequently he had gone

79 Quinn, ibid., p. 174; see also p. 191.

80 Joseph Smith Diary, 10 March 1844, Church Archives.

81 Ehat, in "It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth," citing Minutes of the Council of Fifty, April 8, 1881.
before the Lord, seeking that such a constitution be made known by revelation. The answer had come in an interesting way: "Ye are my Constitution and I am your God and ye are my spokesmen, therefore from henceforth keep my commandments." 82 In commenting on this bit of instruction, John Taylor said many years later:

These words are pregnant with meaning & full of intelligence & point out our position in regard to these matters—it is expected of us that [we] can act right—that our interests [are] bound up in the Kingdom of God. That we should consider we are not acting for ourselves, but that we are the spokesman of God & to bless & exalt all humanity. 83

The point here is an important one in understanding the Mormon conception of a theocratic government. The leaders of Zion and the kingdom were to govern by revelation—current, daily, modern revelation—and not by a written document alone. All of God's purposes and designs for his children cannot and should not be codified (see Chapter 6 on the notion of an expanding canon.); Joseph Smith had taught the Saints in 1842 that the principles on which the government of heaven is conducted is "revelation adapted to the circumstances in

82Joseph F. Smith Minutes of the Council of Fifty, April 21, 1880; see also a revelation to John Taylor on June 27, 1882, in Collier, Unpublished Revelations, p. 134.

83Minutes of the Council of Fifty, April 8, 1881.
which the children of the kingdom are placed." These men, the leaders themselves, by opening their hearts to the mind of the Infinite, were to be the Constitution of the Kingdom of God.

The Council of Fifty convened for the last time as an official body on October 9, 1884. Quinn has given an excellent summary statement as to this body's purpose, focus, and impact in LDS history.

The Council of Fifty had a minimal role in the actual exercise of political power but served as an important symbol of the unattained ideal of a democratically functioning Kingdom of God. Like its economic counterpart, the United Order of Enoch and Law of Consecration, the Council of Fifty required greater perfection in the Saints than existed during the years of Mormon isolation in the Great Basin of the American West. . . . Those who most successfully fulfilled their role in the Council of Fifty recognized it as a symbol of what could and would transpire when the hearts of a sinful world and imperfect Church members turned sufficiently to Christ the King.

The final issue to clarify in understanding the Latter-day Saint notion of the Government of God is the place of the President of the Church. Joseph Smith and his people came to understand that the mortal leader of the Kingdom of God held two related but distinct positions: President of the Church and Prophet, Seer, and

---

84 History of the Church, Vol. 5, p. 135.
86 Ibid., p. 177.
Revelator. As President of the Church, he stood (with his counselors) as the ecclesiastical head of the people as "President of the office of the High Priesthood." As the Prophet, Seer and Revelator to the whole world (and not the Church alone), he had the right to know and reveal the mind of God on all matters. "The prophet," explained Ezra Taft Benson, "is the only man who speaks for the Lord in everything." Thus, in holding both positions (President and Prophet), the leader was authorized to occupy a position over both Church and State. Like Moses, he was appointed to teach and lead the people "in both civil and ecclesiastical affairs." In legislative proceedings under the Government of God, men and women were to utilize the combined wisdom of those involved, and seek in unity to bring before the people what the Almighty would desire. "Any measure that cannot be unanimously decided on, is submitted to the President of the Church [who also may be the Prophet of

87 D&C 107:91.


89 Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Vol. 5, p. 64.

90 Brigham Young explained: "A man may be a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, and it may have nothing to do with his being the President of the Church." (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1, p. 133.)
God], who, by the wisdom of God decides the matter, and all the Councilors and Legislators sanction the decision. There are no hostile parties, no oppositions, no Whig and Tory, Democrat or Republican. They are all brethren, legislating for the common good, and the word of the Lord, through the head of the Church, guides, counsels, and directs. 91

From Theocracy to Conservative Politics

The word "theocracy" seems to have a limited connotation in the twentieth-century Church. Inasmuch as the political kingdom of God is seldom discussed among modern Mormons, one speaks of a theocratic system of government in an almost total ecclesiastical sense: the Church is seen to be theocratic in the sense that its leaders (general and local) are called of God and "sustained" by the members; in the sense that major policy changes and developments are presented to the body of the Church for an expression of personal acceptance or rejection; and in the sense that God directs the affairs of the Church and the members either follow or choose their own paths. In political matters, Latter-day Saints have simply merged into the present temporal republican system of government, leaving behind, for the time being,

the ideal of being led politically by men and women of
prophetic stature. Instead, members are encouraged to:
(1) search out the issues in each election; (2) identify
and support candidates whose personal lives and
ideologies most nearly reflect the values espoused by the
Church; (3) become involved in civic affairs, and seek to
make a righteous influence on society; and (4) run for
political office, where time and commitment allow for
such involvement. In recent years there have arisen more
and more Mormon political figures in society; most
Latter-day Saints view such accomplishments (election to
office) as positive in both a public relations and in a
"worthy influence" sense.

There is today, by far, a much greater emphasis
among the Saints upon the need for a separation of Church
and state. In a message from the First Presidency in
April of 1942 we read the following:

The Church stands for the separation of church
and state. As the church may not assume the
functions of the state, so the state may not assume
the functions of the church. The church is
responsible for and must carry on the work of the
Lord, directing the conduct of its members. . . .
The state is responsible for the civil control of
its citizens or subjects, for their political
welfare, and for the carrying forward of political
policies, domestic and foreign, of the body politic.
For these policies, their success or failure, the
state is alone responsible, and it must carry its
burdens. All these matters involve and directly
affect Church members because they are part of the
body politic, . . . but the Church, itself, as such,
has no responsibility for these policies. . . .

It simply is not feasible for Latter-day Saints living in a pluralistic society to do more than anticipate the day when Church and State will be united. Members are therefore taught to "work within the system" to move things closer to that distant time when the will of God will "be done on earth as it is in heaven." For the time being, the President of the Church (also known as the Prophet, Seer, and Revelator) reserves the right to speak out on any issue—civil or ecclesiastical. Ezra Taft Benson stressed in 1980 that "the prophet may be involved in civic matters," and then warned that "those who would remove prophets from politics would take God out of government." Though the amount of power or political impact the Mormon Prophet might generate is certainly limited in our pluralistic communities, yet Presidents of the Church have continued to speak out on a number of controversial issues—particularly those which Church leaders have identified as moral issues. The First Presidency statement against the proposed Equal Rights Amendment is an illustration of a political issue becoming (for the Saints) a moral issue. Those outside the Church were amazed (or enraged) at the Church's

---

92 Conference Report, April 1942, pp. 92-93.

93 Benson, "Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet," p. 29.
ability to utilize the intricate ecclesiastical structure across the country to marshall members (as "involved citizens") and non-members against ERA. The battle to defeat the ERA was an example of the Prophet speaking and the majority of the LDS people responding according to counsel. In 1933, however, the results of another type of political/moral issue were not so positive for the Church leaders. Joseph Fielding Smith, former Church Historian and tenth president of the Church wrote:

In the year 1918, the people of the United States amended the Constitution of the United States prohibiting the manufacture, possession and sale of liquor. Immediately following this action the liquor interests of the country commenced a vigorous campaign to bring about the repeal of this amendment. In the general election of 1933, enough states voted for repeal to make such action effective. Utah, contrary to the wishes of the General Authorities of the Church, joined with the majority of the states in demanding repeal, and the Beehive state held the doubtful, if not disgraceful, position of being the thirty-sixth state of the union to hold a constitutional convention and thus brought about ratification of repeal.94

One of the main differences between the 1933 episode and the actions of the 1980's is that more disagreement was evident among Church leaders (local and general) over Prohibition than in the case of the ERA. That represents, by the way, another important difference

---

between the Church of the Brigham Young era (and even the Church of the 1930's) and the present Church: an apparent unity among the modern General Authorities once a position or stand by the Presidency has been made known.

There are other possible reasons, however, why the Church would have rallied en masse behind the current president's position and lagged a bit in the 1930's. First of all, Church growth leads automatically to "distance" between Church leaders and Church members, inasmuch as the problems of managing a worldwide organization dictate against the personal contact that would have been evident in Joseph Smith's day. "Distance" of this sort often leads as well to greater decentralization of Church government, thus allowing for increased local flexibility in the making of decisions and the establishment of policy. It may well be that fewer directives from Church headquarters (on fewer issues) led to a stronger reception to those policy statements which did issue from the office of the President; if something is important enough to require a "message," then members ought to comply. Simply stated, with Church growth perhaps directives from headquarters grew in importance. In a related way, someone has suggested that the image of the President of the Church changes with rapid Church growth. With the distance spoken of above, added to the media exposure possible
after the 1950s, the Prophet became a person that more members viewed with awe (and almost reverence); his words were to be followed by the wise.  

Most modern Mormons may be characterized as being on the "right" of the political spectrum. One reason for this is, of course, because of the Church's strict adherence to traditional conservative values of morality and virtue. The frequent alignment with the Republican Party for example, is often a reflection of the LDS posture with regard to conservative moral values. In addition, the Mormon work ethic and insistence upon independence and self-reliance often lead to acceptance of Republican platforms and rejection of many of the Democratic Party's proposed social welfare programs. Such support for the Republican Party has not always been the case. Prior to gaining statehood, it was expected that the Saints be more diverse in their political positions.

So serious were Church leaders about the Saints aligning themselves with both national parties that

95 See Gary Huxford, "The Changing Image of Prophet," in Sunstone, Vol. 5, No. 4 (July-August 1980), pp. 38-41. The impact of the Church "taking a stand" on ERA is seen in the results of a statewide poll in Utah conducted by the Salt Lake Tribune. Of persons polled, only 29% supported passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. However, when asked how they would vote for an amendment that read, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex," 58% of those questioned stated that they would support such a measure! (Salt Lake Tribune, May 15, 1980.)
they even preached it in stake conferences. Traditionally the Saints leaned toward the Democratic party, for the Republicans had been blamed for most anti-Mormon legislation. When it seemed, therefore, that the balance in Utah might favor the Democrats so heavily that it would appear as another Church party, the leaders encouraged some members to join the Republicans.

At the same time, national Republican party leaders looked with increasing favor on Utah statehood, and the Democrats, once thought to be the friends of the Mormons, seemed to be dragging their feet. Church leaders were forming increasingly close friendships with Republican political leaders and businessmen, and it was due to a series of astute political moves by Republicans in Congress that the Utah enabling act was finally passed in 1894. It was signed by the Democratic president, Grover Cleveland, on July 16.  

The counsel to the Saints to stand up for principles and not parties has not really changed since the early days of the Church. The General Authorities today constantly preach the need for studying the issues and the candidates, but take care never to endorse particular candidates or parties. Members know from their study of the stories in both the Old Testament and Book of Mormon (and from an awareness of political struggles in other lands) that "when the wicked rule the people mourn." Consequently, leaders continue to stress that the key to the eventual establishment of Zion and the Kingdom of God is to seek out, encourage,

---


and support honest and fearless individuals to work in
the political arena. Patience, perseverance, and
vigilance are thereafter the watchwords for a people who
dream of the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah (2:2-4).
"The Law for the government of all nations," wrote
Orson Pratt, "will go forth from Zion the same as the
laws for the government of the United States now go forth
from Washington. Zion will be the seat of government, .
. . and have far more influence, than . . . any
government upon the earth." 98

Summary

Although it may be that the Mormon Council of
Fifty established by Joseph Smith was only a symbolic
representation of the future political power to be
wielded in the Kingdom of God, yet the gesture itself
helped to serve as a type of identity, a theocratic badge
for the Mormon people as the citizens of Zion. In short,
the theocratic nature of Zion was a major distinguishing
point between Mormonism and its contemporary religious
counterparts. With the passing of the Council of Fifty
and the state of Deseret went also the end of an
important era in the history of the concept of Zion. The
secularization of politics and the spiritualization of
the theocracy moved the Latter-day Saints into the

98 The Seer, p. 266.
mainstream of American society, and pushed the idea of a pure government by God with inspired leaders into a future (millennial) day. Such developments led automatically to a shift in attitude toward the place of Church and State, and a heightened appreciation for the scriptural dictum: "Wherefore, be subject to the powers that be, until he reigns whose right it is to reign, and subdues all enemies under his feet."\textsuperscript{99}

\textsuperscript{99} D&C 50:22.
CHAPTER 5

ZION AND THE COVENANT PEOPLE

"Mormonism is a most complex phenomenon," Professor W. D. Davies noted. "It arose out of a twofold matrix: Christianity and America. The duality of its origin pervades it. But through Christianity it goes back to an even more ultimate matrix: to Judaism and the Israelite religion. Through Christianity, Mormons came to be connected with the Jews."¹ In the minds of Latter-day Saints, the restoration of the ancient order of things extended beyond the period of first century Christianity; also to be revealed and restored were the means by which a new Zion and a new Jerusalem could be organized among a "new Israel." In an address at BYU, W. D. Davies had lamented that "Christianity has forgotten its Jewish roots." In a 1978 lecture at that institution he spoke concerning the Latter-day Saints and their feeling of kinship with Israel:

Mormonism arose in a place and time when many utopian, populist, socialistic ideas were in the air.

It gave to these a disciplined, organized American outlet and form: what it did was to re-Judaize a Christianity that had been too much Hellenized . . . Mormonism certainly injected and I hope will continue to inject, into the American scene the realism of Judaism and thus challenged a too-Hellenized Christianity to renew its contact with its roots in Israel.

Mormonism’s hold upon ancient Israel was strengthened in at least seven ways. First, the Latter-day Saints placed great stock in the Old Testament and cited passages from it frequently. "But whereas the early Christian Church drew predominantly on the Prophets and Psalms and neglected Leviticus, the Mormon leaders also appealed to the passages in the Old Testament dealing with the priesthood. Although there is no direct dependence on Leviticus, yet Levitical motifs re-emerge in Mormonism with more frequency than in the New Testament."3 We will discuss the nature of Mormon Priesthood later in this chapter.

Second, the Saints’ acceptance of the Book of Mormon as canonized scripture ties them firmly to Israel. The Book of Mormon, in many ways like the Bible, is a commentary upon the people of Israel in their scattered state. These Hebrews (of the tribe of Joseph), in an odd manner, live the Law of Moses while looking forward to

2Ibid., pp. 91-92.

3Ibid., pp. 80-81.
the coming of the Messiah, 4 whom the Nephite prophets declare shall be Jesus of Nazareth. In one sense, then, the Book of Mormon is a type of codification of the Mormons themselves—a book which straddles the Old and New Covenants, just as the Saints attempt to keep one foot in Judaism and one in Christianity.

Third, the Mormons see themselves as Israel wandering toward a promised land, "in this the beginning of the rising up and the coming forth of my church out of the wilderness." 5 They are led by one like unto Moses, 6 and "are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and . . . must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm." 7 While preparing to make the trek across the plains, Brigham Young received a revelation concerning the "Camp of Israel," in which he was instructed to organize the people into companies, presided over by captains of hundreds, captains of fifties, and captains of tens. 8 (Cf. Exodus 18:21-27.)

Fourth, the Mormons believed themselves to be of

5D&C 5:14; cf. ibid., 33:5.
6Ibid., 28:2; 103:16.
7Ibid., 103:17.
8Ibid., 136:1-4.
the actual physical lineage of Jacob of old; i.e., they claimed to be literal children of Israel. Baptism into the Church accomplishes the same thing as birth into Israel, since one may be adopted into the Royal Family through the process of conversion ("grafted" into Israel, to use Paul's language). In the Book of Abraham, which Joseph Smith claims to have translated from papyrus received in 1835, the following amplification of God's covenant with Abraham is found:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations;
And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father . . . .

The Saints did not view the adoption of "Gentiles" (those not a literal descendant of one of the twelve tribes of Israel) as a metaphorical change; to them it was a real process by which one's blood was renewed. Joseph Smith

9A detailed discussion of how the Saints feel they are related to the Old Testament Patriarchs is beyond the scope of this chapter or of this whole work: entire books have been written on the subject. See Earnest L. Whitehead, The House of Israel (Salt Lake City: E.L. Whitehead, 1947); LeGrand Richards, Israel! Do You Know? (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1954.); Howard H. Barron, Judah, Past and Future (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon Publishers, 1979).

explained that one of the works of the Holy Spirit (received after baptism and confirmation) was to renovate the entire system of the initiate.

It [the Holy Ghost] is more powerful in expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding, and storing the intellect with present knowledge, of a man who is of the literal seed of Abraham, than one that is a Gentile, though it may not have half as much visible effect upon the body; for as the Holy Ghost falls upon one of the literal seed of Abraham, it is calm and serene; and his whole soul and body are only exercised by the pure spirit of intelligence; while the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to purge out the old blood, and make him actually of the seed of Abraham. That man that has none of the blood of Abraham (naturally) must have a new creation by the Holy Ghost. In such a case, "there may be more of a powerful effect upon the body, and visible to the eye, than upon an Israelite . . . ."

The Mormons read the Old Testament a bit differently, therefore, than most Christian groups. They see the record of ancient Israel as a lengthy family history, an extended genealogy. "The point is," stressed Davies, "that the Mormons believe themselves to be Israelites in a literal sense. . . . The Mormons, then, are a

---

11 *History of the Church*, Vol. 3, p. 380. In discussing this process, Brigham Young said: "Joseph said that the Gentile blood was actually cleansed out of their veins, and the blood of Jacob made to circulate in them; and the revolution and change in the system were so great that it caused the beholder to think they were going into fits." Continuing, Young spoke further of the adoption into Israel: "If any of the Gentiles will believe, we will lay our hands upon them that they may receive the Holy Ghost, and the Lord will make them of the House of Israel. They will be broken off from the wild olive tree, and be grafted into the good and tame olive tree, and will partake of its sap and fatness." *(Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, p. 262.)
continuation of what the Fathers of the Christian Church were to come to call the old Israel. But for the Mormons there is no old Israel. They simply regard themselves as Israel in a new stage of its history."¹²

Fifth, as children of Israel, the inhabitants of Zion were covenant people, participants in what the Saints called the New and Everlasting Covenant. This notion of the Covenant will be considered in detail later in this chapter.

Smith, to aid in the development of a "peculiar people" (see Exodus 19:5; Deut. 7:6), the Latter-day Saints adopted dietary and health laws as an integral part of their religious practice. "Blessed are ye, "a revelation declared in 1832, "if ye continue in my goodness, a light unto the Gentiles [cf. Isa. 49:6] . . . a savior unto my people Israel."¹³ The word of wisdom, a health law commanding abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, coffee, and tea, was established in 1833 as a code "showing forth the order and will of God in the temporal salvation of all saints in the last days."¹⁴ Those who observe the law are promised that

¹²W.D. Davies, "Israel, the Mormons, and the Land," p. 81.

¹³D&C 86:11.

¹⁴Ibid., 89:2.
they "shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint." (cf. Isa. 40:31.) Notice, finally, the tie to ancient Israel: "And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them." 15

Finally, in Mormonism the center of all religious activity was the Temple. Like ancient Israel, the ritual and religion of the Holy Temple helped the Saints to circumscribe all truth into a great whole, and gave meaning to all that was to be undertaken in a city of holiness. "We know now," said Hugh Nibley, "that there are three worlds. There is the telestial, in which we live, and the celestial, to which we aspire. But in-between them is another world which is called the terrestrial. And this is represented by the temple, according to the ancients. It's the in-between world where the rites of passage take place." 16 It is to the temple that the Latter-day Saints turn in rendering a deeper explanation for their status as modern Israel; it is to the temple that Joseph Smith turned when he desired

15 Ibid., vv. 20-21. This code, given at a time when temperance movements were spread throughout New England, continues to serve as a badge of belonging in modern Mormonism. See Backman, American Religions and the Rise of Mormonism for a discussion of contemporary temperance movements.

to serve as a conduit between the heavens and the earth, a place where, he emphasized, God "may come to and restore again that which was lost . . ., even the fulness of the priesthood."\(^{17}\) We now turn our attention to the place of the temple in the society of Zion.

**The Restoration of Temple Worship**

The Mormons built temples before they built churches. The church was a local meetinghouse. The temple, according to a recently prepared LDS Bible Dictionary (pp. 780-781), "is literally a house of the Lord, a holy sanctuary in which sacred ceremonies and ordinances of the gospel are performed . . . a place where the Lord may come, it is the most holy of any place of worship on the earth." The temple was, for the Mormons, far more than a meetinghouse or an assembly hall. When the Church was but ten months old (February 1831) a revelation through Joseph instructed the Saints: "Sanctify yourselves and ye shall be endowed with power."\(^{18}\) That the endowment spoken of had reference to the spiritual ecstasies of temple worship is made clear by another revelation received on June 1, 1833, in which the people in Kirtland, Ohio are told: "I give unto you a commandment that you should build a house, in which house

\(^{17}\)D&C 124:28.

\(^{18}\)Ibid., 43:16.
I design to endow those whom I have chosen with power from on high; For this is the promise of the Father unto you; therefore I command you to tarry, even as mine apostles at Jerusalem."19 For the orthodox Mormon, it was sufficient to state that the Prophet had received instructions from God that a temple was to be constructed as an integral part of the restitution of all things. For others, it seemed as though Smith were simply responding to the cultural and intellectual phenomena of his day: a tremendous amount of interest in Hebrew culture, archaeology, and Israelite ways was generated in the early nineteenth century in New England. That Smith should find a fascination with Hebrew life is not inconsistent with the spirit of restorationism of the day, what was extremely interesting as Davis has noted above, was the implementation by the Mormons of a number of sacerdotal or Levitical forms of worship. The organization of a priestly hierarchy was not an uncommon development of the day. The construction of an edifice whose involvement in human affairs had been non-existent since A.D. 70 was another matter entirely. In 1833 work went forward on a temple, a three-year labor which taxed the strength and means of the Latter-day Saints to the

19Ibid., 95:8-9. Note the similarity of this passage to the instructions given to the ancient Christian disciples in Luke 24:49.
limits of human capacity. In 1836 the building was completed, and dedicatory services began on Sunday, March 27, 1836. Like ancient Israel, the Mormons had toiled to build a house of God, a place of holiness where the God of Israel could abide. Like the first century Christians, the "first fruits" of their labors were represented in an outpouring of divine favor. A full week of "pentecostal" experiences followed the initial dedicatory service, in which (the Saints affirm) tongues and prophecy and angelic visitations were given, as a portion of the rich endowment of power that had been promised years before. One member recorded in his journal that the outpouring of the Spirit was such that

my pen is inadequate to write it in full or my tongue to express it. But I will here say that the spirit was poured out and came like a mighty rushing wind and filled the house [Cf. Acts 2:1-4], that many that were present spoke in tongues and had visions and saw angels and prophesied; and had a general time of rejoicing such as had not been known in this generation. 21

The highlight of the Kirtland Temple episode came on Sunday, April 3, 1836, in which Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery described a series of visions. These experiences established the Church on a foundation of


21 "A Biographical Sketch of the Life and Travels of William Draper," typescript in Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, pp. 2-3.
temple worship and did more to turn the hearts of the Saints to ancient Israel than anything before or since 1836. Joseph and Oliver claim that Jesus Christ first appeared and accepted the temple. "For behold, I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here; and I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this house." Then followed a series of three appearances.

After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us, and Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north.

Joseph was given the authority to act as a "modern Moses," power to gather the people of Israel. This concept will be considered later in the chapter.

The second of the three visions in the Kirtland Temple is described as follows:

After this [Moses' appearance], Elias appeared, and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying that in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed.

Mormons have a rather unique belief concerning "Elias." "Elias" is understood by most persons as the New Testament (Greek) form of "Elijah." The Saints accept this in many cases, but claim that the word "Elias" is also used as "forerunner" or "preparer" or "one who makes

22 D&C 110:8.
23 Ibid., 110:11.
ready" (e.g., John the Baptist as an Elias before Jesus).\(^{25}\) Elias, whom some Latter-day Saint theologians have identified as Noah,\(^ {26}\) conferred upon Smith and Cowdery the power to establish the ancient patriarchal order; in essence, Joseph Smith became a "modern Abraham," in that through him (his works, teachings, power) all nations would be blessed. "And as I said unto Abraham concerning the kindreds of the earth, even so I say unto my servant Joseph: In thee and in thy seed shall the kindred of the earth be blessed."\(^ {27}\) All of the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were thereafter available (through the Temple) to all who would qualify to participate in the ordinances.

The final appearance in the Kirtland Temple was of great significance in tying the Mormon people to old Israel.

After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us; for Elijah the Prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting

---

\(^{25}\) See a sermon by Joseph Smith on Elias, Elijah, and Messiah in History of the Church, Vol. 6, pp. 249-254.

\(^{26}\) Latter-day Saints teach that Elias = Gabriel = Noah. See Luke 1:19; D&C 27:7; History of the Church, Vol. 3, p. 386; Joseph Fielding Smith, Conference Report, April 1966, p. 72; Joseph Fielding Smith, Answers to Gospel Questions, Vol. 3, pp. 138-141; Bruce R McConkie, The Millennial Messiah, p. 103. See also McConkie, ibid., wherein the author suggests that perhaps the Elias of the Kirtland Temple may have been Abraham himself.

death, stood before us, and said: Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi—testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come—To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse.

During this week of Passover in 1836 the Mormons believe that Elijah of old returned and restored to the Church the power to seal families together for eternity in temples; he also came, they feel, to turn the hearts of children to their ancestors through genealogical research. Now Joseph Smith proceeded not only to organize an ancient Israelite order, but also to make available through temples the power to seal husbands, wives, and children for eternity. As Davies has suggested, the Latter-day Saints seem to be re-Judaizing Christian worship, in the sense that they (as a group who


29"It was, I am informed, on the third day of April, 1836, that the Jews, in their homes at the Paschal feast, opened their doors for Elijah to enter. On that very day Elijah did enter—not in the home of the Jews to partake of the Passover with them—but he appeared in the house of the Lord, erected to his name and received by the Lord in Kirtland, and there bestowed his keys to bring to pass the very thing for which these Jews, assembled in their homes, were seeking." (Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, Vol. 2, p. 101.)

30Joseph Smith asked: "Why send Elijah? Because he holds the keys of the authority to administer in all the ordinances of the Priesthood; and without the authority . . . , the ordinances could not be administered in righteousness." (History of the Church, Vol. 4, p. 211.)
have an allegiance to Jesus Christ) are holding to the temple and the patriarchal order as the focus of religious practice.

There are a number of ways, however, in which Latter-day Saint temple worship may be distinguished from Jewish temple worship. First of all, an important element in the maintenance of monotheistic practice among ancient Israel proved to be centralization of worship—the concentration of religious praxis in one temple site. "Cult centralization," writes Norman Gottwald, "was more than a jealous insistence on priestly prerogatives. To be sure such jealousy of rank prevented the dispossessed priests from outlying sanctuaries being accepted at Jerusalem." Continuing, Gottwald explained:

The primary motivation in the reform [of Josiah] was theological: the unity of God must be mirrored in the unity of worship. As long as a multiplicity of sanctuaries was allowed, the nature of God would be corrupted by the associations and implications of paganism. Polytheism found its perfect mode of expression in the many high places and temples; monotheism must find its counterpart in a single place of worship.\(^\text{31}\)

With the Latter-day Saints, temple worship is another matter entirely. Though control and continuity of doctrine and practice are essential to the perpetuity and purity of the faith, it is felt that such may be achieved

---

through proper communication and instruction. Thereafter, the Church leaders seek to build as many temples as rapidly as the Saints in the area are able to afford, staff, and maintain them.

When there were just two or three thousand members in the Church, the Lord gave a commandment to Joseph Smith that they should build a temple. They built temples in those days before they built chapels. Wherever the Saints settled, the first concern was the building of a temple.

Brigham Young's first act in the Salt Lake Valley was to set his cane to mark the temple site. In 1838, when there were but 20,000 members of the Church, already four temple sites had been selected. By 1880, with 150,000 members, there were four temples in operation or nearing completion.  

At the time of this writing, there are forty-one temples worldwide, either in operation or under plan or construction. Brigham Young stated that to accomplish fully the purposes of temple worship thousands of temples would one day be in operation, with tens of thousands of persons officiating therein.

A second difference between Jewish and Mormon temples is found in the ordinances and rites performed within the temples. Whereas animal sacrifice was an integral part of the religious ritual of the Israelite temples, Latter-day Saints, as Christians, believe that

---


blood sacrifices were "fulfilled" and done away with the death of Jesus. A Book of Mormon passage instructs: "And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings."\(^{35}\) Mormons teach that the offerings of the modern day are a "broken heart and a contrite spirit,"\(^{36}\) and that the "offering of an oblation [see Leviticus 7:38; 2 Chronicles 31:14] consists in giving full devotion unto the Lord."\(^{37}\)

The ordinances and rites in Mormon temples may be broadly classified into two categories: those associated with what is known as the temple **endowment**, and those

\(^{35}\) Neph 9:19; see Alma 34:9-14. Joseph Smith did teach, however, that in a future day the "sons of Levi" would again offer blood sacrifices in the temple at Jackson County, Missouri. (See History of the Church, Vol. 4, pp. 211-212.) Modern LDS theologians have clarified this idea by suggesting that such offerings would be done at most on a limited basis. "The sacrifice of animals will be done to complete the restoration when the temple spoken of is built; at the beginning of the millennium, or in the restoration, blood sacrifices will be performed long enough to complete the fulness of the restoration in this dispensation. Afterwards sacrifice will be of some other character." (Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, Vol. 3, p. 94); see also Bruce R. McConkie, The Mortal Messiah, Book 1, p. 128; Oscar W. McConkie, The Aaronic Priesthood (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1977), pp. 45-46; see also D&C 13 and Malachi 3:1-4.

\(^{36}\) Neph 9:20; D&C 59:8.

\(^{37}\) Oscar W. McConkie, Aaronic Priesthood, p. 78.
related to the sealing of families together. Latter-day Saints hold to a belief in the necessity of certain ordinances or sacraments for accountable persons to gain full salvation. If a person does not receive the ordinance of baptism in mortality, for example, the Saints believe that a baptism may be performed in temples by proxy for that person; this ordinance, known as "baptism for the dead," is one of the major works of LDS temples. Sealing of living and dead families (by proxy) for eternity is another phase of Mormon temple work. The "endowment," which members of the Zion society feel is a fulfillment of "the promise of the Father," wherein the people of Zion were to be "endowed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49), is comprised of

instruction relating to the significance and sequence of past dispensations, and the importance of the present as the greatest and grandest era in human history. This course of instruction includes a recital of the most prominent events of the creative period, the condition of our first parents in the Garden of Eden, their disobedience and consequent expulsion from that blissful abode, their condition in the lone and dreary world when doomed to live by labor and sweat, the plan of redemption by which the great transgression may be atoned, the period of the great apostasy, the restoration of the Gospel with all its ancient powers and privileges, the absolute and indispensable condition of personal purity and devotion to the right in present life, and a strict compliance with Gospel requirements.

The ordinances of the endowment embody certain obligations on the part of the individual, such as covenant and promise to observe the law of strict virtue and chastity, to be charitable, benevolent, tolerant and pure; to devote both talent and material means to the spread of truth and the uplifting of the race; to maintain devotion to the course of truth; and to seek in every way to contribute to the great
preparation that the earth may be made ready to receive her King—the Lord Jesus Christ.

These ordinances, including preparatory or initiatory rites, are received only by Latter-day Saints in good standing who certify by interview their personal worthiness. After having participated in the ordinances for himself the first time, the temple patron is encouraged to return to the temple frequently to perform "work for the dead." One's "sacrifice" in the temple of the Lord is thereafter, in a sense, the performance of a task which Mormons believe may only be performed by the living: i.e., one's sacrifice is to do for another soul what he cannot do for himself.

For the Latter-day Saints, the temple not only grounds one in the ancient tradition of Israel, but also points one toward the universal. "A temple," one LDS

---


40 See Packer, The Holy Temple, Chapter 4.

41 In an epistle to the Church in 1842, Joseph Smith wrote: "Let us, therefore, as a church and a people, and as Latter-day Saints, offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness; and let us present in his holy temple, when it is finished, a book containing the records of our dead, which shall be worthy of all acceptation." (D&C 128:24.) This is the basis for the Mormon genealogical movement; the Saints search out family details to ensure that "the ordinances of salvation" are attended to in the temples.
One scholar has noted, 'a scale-model of the universe, . . . a sort of observatory where one gets one's bearings on the universe.'\(^{42}\) In the temple, protology and eschatology are merged, and perspective is the product. Mormons feel that their focus upon the temple has not only brought to the fore the relevance of the Israelite patriarchal order, but has also made substantive that which the Christian Church has spiritualized and mingled in metaphor for centuries.\(^ {43}\) The temple's place in a Zion society is stated by Nibley as follows:

... the temple is the earthly type of Zion, a holy place removed from contact with the outer world, set apart for ordinances from which the world is excluded. While it is in the world, the temple presents a forbidding front of high gates, formidable walls, narrow doors, and frowning battlements, dramatizing the total withdrawal of Zion from the world and its defensive position over against it. Zion itself, of course, is absolutely impregnable and unassailable since the world has no access to it. Should the world get too close, Zion withdraws.\(^ {44}\)


\(^{44}\) Nibley, "What is Zion? A Distant View," p. 2. In a controversial Presidential Address given to the Mormon History Association in 1973, Dr. Reed Durham suggested what he called a "grabbing on" to surrounding ideas by Joseph Smith as the means by which the Mormon Temple ritual (endowment) came to be. He proposed that the Prophet's involvement in Free Masonry in Illinois, as
Zion's Covenant Society

A covenant is a solemn promise or compact or relationship entered into by two or more parties. The covenant may require actions or obligations of one or more of the parties; may be entered into by parties of equal or differing status; and will usually benefit all involved.45 Covenant is one of the fundamental theological concepts in both the Old and New Testaments (or, the Old and New Covenants). God's covenant with Noah (Genesis 9:8-17), Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3; 13:14-17), the people of Israel (Exodus 19:3-24:14) and David (2 Samuel 7) are prominent Old Testament examples wherein the covenants helped to define the relationship between man,

well as that of his colleagues among the Church authorities (all of the twelve apostles were Masons), led to the development and introduction of the endowment in May of 1842. Some of the early Church leaders called the endowment "celestial masonry." (See Reed C. Durham, "Is There No Help For the Widow's Son?" Presidential address, Mormon History Association, May 1973.)

Mormon apologists are eager to point out that similarities between the endowment and Masonic ritual and lore are due to a common source—the temple of Solomon. Whereas the ceremony in Mormon temples is believed to be similar to the one revealed in the days of the temple of Solomon, the Masonic ceremonies represent an apostate or truncated version of the original ceremony, passed down through the ages by uninspired masonic guilds. (See E. Cecil McGavin, Mormonism and Masonry [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Publishers, 1956]).

Israel as a nation, and her God. Likewise, the early Christians adopted the Covenant motif and declared Jesus to be the mediator of a "new covenant." (Hebrews 8:6; 12:24; 13:20). The American colonists saw themselves as a people bound together and to their God through sacred covenantal obligations. "The Puritans believed that God had deliberately called them out of the decaying Old World into a new relationship with Him in the New World, a relationship in which He was to be their God and they His people. The model was the Israel of old." 46

Into a society which had its roots in covenant theology and practice, the Latter-day Saints came into being. Joseph Smith claimed that after a long night of apostasy God had chosen to restore the "new and everlasting covenant." The new and everlasting covenant was "the sum total of all gospel covenants and obligations." It was new because it was being reintroduced after a long period of time; it was everlasting because it was the same gospel that had been given from the beginning of time. 47 As a part of the

46 Bedell, Sandon, and Wellborn, Religion in America, p. 294.

47 See Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, Vol. I, pp. 152, 156, 158. See also D&C 1:22; 22:1; 49:9; 132:5-7; 133:57. Mormons claim that "the Gospel of Jesus Christ "was given to Adam early in man's history, and has either been lost through periods of apostasy or restored at key moments in the history of the
restoration of the Gospel Covenant, Smith also felt impelled to restore the Church organization and the Priesthood, thus establishing the means whereby a personal covenant between a man and his God could be extended to a social context. "It was my endeavor," the Prophet stated in 1832, "to so organize the Church, that the brethren might eventually be independent of every incumbrance beneath the celestial kingdom, by bonds and covenants of mutual friendship, and mutual love."\(^{48}\)

The overall function of covenant-making in Zion is given by Andrus as follows:

The great object of Zion's covenant society was to elevate man, as a free and responsible creature, to be an heir through Christ of all that the Father possessed. In the divine patriarchal order, Christ, as the Firstborn, was the sole heir of the Father's kingdom, holding the birthright in that eternal family order. But man could become a joint-heir through Christ in the Father's Kingdom.\(^{49}\)

Herein was the ultimate. The process was, however, one of daily commitment to God and man. In the Book of world. They feel that the age in which we live (commencing with Joseph Smith and concluding at the Second Coming of Christ) is the "dispensation of the fulness of times," and represents the fulfillment of Paul's prophecy concerning a day when all things would be "gathered together in one." (Ephesians 1:10.) See Milton R. Hunter, *The Gospel Through the Ages* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Publishers, 1943).


\(^{49}\) Hyrum L. Andrus, *Doctrines of the Kingdom*, p. 118.
Mormon is contained the clearest statement of the nature of the covenant in Zion: A Nephite prophet named Alma speaks to a large group of people:

... and now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light;

Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witness of God at all times and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life—

Now I say unto you, if this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?  

The covenant of baptism thus represents a promise between the initiate, his fellow members, and the Almighty. In Mormonism one is initiated into the faith through the covenant of baptism, and receives the consummate covenants in the temple. Other covenants within the Church are comprehended within the new and everlasting covenant of the Gospel. The highest and most important covenants within Zion (and given and received only within the temples) are the eternal marriage covenants. Like

50 Mosiah 18:8-10.

51 Additional covenants include: (1) the covenant to receive, read, and abide by the message of the Book of Mormon (D&C 39:11; 84:57-58.); (2) Covenants received by boys and men who receive the Priesthood. (D&C 84:33-44; Bruce R. McConkie, Conference Report, April 1982, pp. 48-49.)
the ancient patriarchs (see Genesis 24), parents in Zion encourage their children to marry "within the covenant," meaning to marry a member in good standing in the temple, that the ceremony might be performed by Priesthood authority and the family unit "sealed for eternity." Children born to couples who have been previously married in the temple are said to be "born under the covenant." All covenants with God in Zion are conditional; that is, God is required to keep his part of the sacred obligation only as man observes to keep his part. "I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise."52

And so it is that Zion consists of covenant individuals bound together in the establishment of a covenant society. Zion is not only a personal state of being ("the pure in heart"); it is a community of the pure in heart. The sociologist Robert Bellah has commented about the Latter-day Saints way of life:

... one of the things that links the early Puritans in Massachusetts and the Mormons through much of their history has been the fact that they had a strongly social vision. America is supposed to be the land of radical individualism, and indeed it is. Both Puritans and Mormons have had profound respect for the individual and for the God-given autonomy of the individual. But neither the Puritans nor Mormonism, nor most of the other religious traditions in America, have ever taken the isolated individual

52 D&C 82:10.
as the final good.\textsuperscript{53}

A final area of consideration in this section is the means by which the people of Zion are periodically renewed and reminded of the nature of their covenant relationships. In ancient Israel, Covenant "renewal ceremonies," such as the experience described in the early chapters of Deuteronomy, provided the leaders of the Covenant people a forum to (1) remind the people of their chosen status (cf. Deut. 7:6-11); (2) bring the covenant up to date, and make it applicable to a new time and people (Cf. Deut. 5:2-3); and (3) reaffirm the importance of keeping the original covenant. Similar ceremonies were held in the days of Joshua (Joshua 24), Josiah (2 Kings 22-23), and Ezra (Nehemiah 8-10.).\textsuperscript{54}

Such ceremonies have been held more frequently among the Latter-day Saints than one would expect. In the days of the administration of Brigham Young the Church leaders sensed a gradual "slipping" from the moors of the faith by hundreds of Saints, and sought to reaffirm the Covenant status of the Mormons. Known as the "Mormon


Reformation," this movement sought to "clean up" the Church, in more ways than one. Members were encouraged to clean their yards; paint their barns and houses; repair their run-down fences; abstain from liquor; and live by the Mormon work ethic. As one leader said simply: "I wish the Saints who come here, to be Saints."\(^{55}\) Also: "Let not the saints have appetites like the Turkey Buzzards, but be clean in your tastes."\(^{56}\)

Reformations or covenant renewals in Zion have generally come in less dramatic and more frequent fashion since the 1860's. The ceremony conducted weekly to achieve these ends is the worship service known as Sacrament meeting. In Sacrament meeting the Saints partake of the Eucharist or sacrament of the Lord's Supper; in this action, members are instructed that they "renew their covenants" to God made at the time of baptism. The power of this occasion for renewal is stressed by David O. McKay in the following question: "Do we always stop to think, on that sacred Sabbath day when we meet together to partake of the Sacrament, that we 'witness,' promise, obligate ourselves, in the presence of one another, and in the presence of God, that we will


\(^{56}\) Ibid., p. 152.
do certain things." In addition to partaking of the emblems of the Sacrament, members receive instruction in the Sacrament meeting as to how to maintain a covenant status and how to remain free from the world. A revelation in 1831 described the value of the Sacrament meeting: "And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day. . . . [for] on this, the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacraments unto the Most High. . . ." Monthly the Saints are asked to fast from food and drink for a period of 24 hours (the amount of the meals to be donated to the fast offering—Chapter 3) and come to Sacrament meeting in the "spirit of the fast." The format of the meeting changes as the members participate in a Fast and Testimony Meeting. Following the administration of the Sacrament, members may stand spontaneously (one at a time) and "bear their

57 Improvement Era (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, January 1953), Editor's Page.

58 D&C 59:9-12. Latter-day Saints feel that the partaking of the Sacrament is an act which replaces the need for offering blood sacrifice. Mormons hold to the idea that sacrifices through the years were made in similitude of the coming sacrifice of Jesus as the Christ (Moses 50:5-8.). They feel that the partaking of the emblems of the Sacrament points them toward the body and blood of Christ in a similar manner. See Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, 2nd edition, p. 665; McConkie, The Mortal Messiah, Book I, pp. 125, 128.
testimonies" to the congregation. That is, they verbally affirm their faith in Christ, the prophets, and the Church (among other things), and commit before God and man to live according to the terms of the New and Everlasting Covenant.

Regular temple attendance among the LDS is another form of covenant renewal. Not only is one permitted to "do work for the dead," but he is also in a position to refresh his memory of the endowment ceremony and re-commit himself to the terms and conditions specified in the covenants of the temple. In order to qualify for temple worship, a member must certify before local Church leaders that he is "worthy" to enter. This is ascertained through an annual "temple recommend interview," wherein the candidate is questioned concerning such matters as: sustaining general and local authorities of the Church; regular attendance at meetings; observance of the Word of Wisdom (abstinence from coffee, tea, liquor, tobacco); moral cleanliness; full payment of tithing; honesty in one's dealing with others; and family relationships. The regular accounting to the bishop and a member of the stake presidency serves as a forum for renewal and re-commitment.

Finally, one of the most important forms of covenant renewal for the Mormons is the semi-annual general conference from Salt Lake City. In April and
October Saints from all over the world either travel to Salt Lake or make arrangements to receive the satellite transmission of the Conference sessions. Members receive new policies or have existing ones re-emphasized; are encouraged and bolstered in the faith, and taught to "hold on" to the "iron rod" of the word of God; and are reminded of who they are, and instructed as to how to maintain orthodoxy in doctrine and practice while wrestling with the challenges of modernity. One president of the Church remarked at the close of a general conference: "If you want to know what the Lord would have the Saints know and to have his guidance and direction for the next six months, get a copy of the proceedings of this conference, and you will have the latest word of the Lord as far as the Saints are concerned."59 A later president said:

We hope that the leaders and the members of the Church who have attended and listened to the conference have been inspired and uplifted. We hope you have made copious notes of the thoughts that have come to your mind as the Brethren have addressed you. Many suggestions have been given that will help you as leaders in the perfection of your work. Many helpful thoughts have been given for the perfection of our own lives, and that, of course, is the basic reason for our coming.60

60 Spencer W. Kimball, Conference Report, October 1975, p. 164.
In summary, Joseph Smith understood that the society of Zion would be a community of believers, under covenant to their God and to each other. The renovation of society was to be accomplished through a covenant people: through personal discipline and unselfish service the Saints in Zion were to become His people, and thereby the Lord of ancient Israel was to be their God. The covenant was both Hebrew and Christian in scope—the people of Zion were to qualify through the temple for the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and were to become eventually "joint-heirs with Christ" to all the Father has.

The Priesthood in Zion

Before the Church was organized, Joseph Smith learned that authority was necessary to function in the name of God, and that except there were a "legal administrator" the Kingdom of God (and thus the society of Zion) could not be established on earth.61 "Priesthood," Mormons teach, "is the power and authority of God, delegated to man on earth, to act in all things for the salvation of men; and those who hold the priesthood are the Lord's agents through whom the Church and the gospel are administered."62 Smith claims to have

62 Bruce R. McConkie, Let Every Man Learn His
learned from God that doctrine or policy or organization, though necessary elements in the establishment of the Church and society of Zion, are insufficient without priesthood or divinely given authorization. The Saints believe "that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands, by those who are in authority to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof." 63 Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery explained that on May 15, 1829 they received a heavenly vision, in which John the Baptist conferred upon them the Aaronic Priesthood. 64 This priesthood, named after Aaron, the ancient priest and brother of Moses (see Exodus 28:1-4, 29; Leviticus 8:10-13), was to be a preparatory or schooling order, and was to "administer in outward ordinances." The Aaronic or Levitical order was a lesser order of Priesthood, and an appendage to the higher order, known as the Melchizedek Priesthood. 65 This Melchizedek Priesthood was given to Joseph and Oliver (according to their testimonies) sometime in June 1829, by Peter, James, and John, three of the ancient

Duty, p. 22.


apostles of Jesus. At the organization of the Church on April 6, 1830, Smith was ordained and sustained as the "first elder" of the church and Cowdery the "second elder." In February of 1835 the first quorum of twelve apostles was organized, and soon thereafter the first quorum of the seventy was instituted, according to a pattern given by Joseph Smith in vision. With the coming of Elijah in April of 1836, another dimension of the priesthood was restored—the power to bind and cement the family unit.

The Priesthood was understood to be the source of power for the society of Zion. Zion was not a society of the pure in heart simply because men and women had turned to a life of goodness, or even because they had "all things in common," and had established both social justice and equity. Zion was Zion because the powers of

---

66 Ibid., 20:2; 27:12.
67 History of the Church, Vol. 1, pp. 76-78.
69 Note Moroni's rendering of Malachi 4:5-6 at the time of his appearance to Smith in 1823: "Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the Prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, and he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the father, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers. If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming." (Joseph Smith—History 1:38-39, in Pearl of Great Price, 1981 edition, p. 53; see also D&C 2.)
God were present, and because those having authority to act utilized the divine powers for the blessing of the citizens of the community. The ordinances (sacraments) of salvation could only be performed by authorized personnel, and these ordinances (e.g., baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, ordination to priesthood, celestial and eternal marriage, and sealing) became the channel by which the powers of the heavens were received.

And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God.

Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh;

For without this [the power of godliness] no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.70

The scriptural pattern or prototype of Enoch's Zion was held up by Joseph the Prophet as a model; the means by which the people of the city of Enoch acquired and utilized the powers of the priesthood were an example of what a city of holiness could achieve in righteousness.

Smith had learned from his translation of Genesis:

For God having sworn unto Enoch and unto his seed with an oath by himself; that every one being ordained after this order [the higher priesthood] and calling should have power, by faith, to break mountains, to divide the seas, to dry up waters, to turn them out of their course;

To put at defiance the armies of nations, to divide the earth, to break every band, to stand in the presence of God; to do all things according to his will, according to his command, subdue

70D&C 84:19-22.
principalities and powers; and this by the will of the Son of God which was from before the foundation of the world.

And men having this faith, coming up unto this order of God, were translated and taken up into heaven. 71

As we mentioned earlier, Joseph Smith explained that one function of temple-building was to provide a sanctuary wherein God could give to man the "fulness of the priesthood." 72 To gain the fulness of the priesthood was to qualify to become kings and priests, queens and priestesses unto God in the patriarchal order. "Those holding the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood," Joseph taught, "are kings and priests of the Most High God, holding the keys of power and blessings." 73 It did not matter what ecclesiastical office one held in the Church (elder, seventy, high priest, patriarch, or apostle); what mattered was whether one had qualified to enter the temple, receive the endowment, be sealed in marriage, and endure to the end. 74 Joseph Smith began to instruct the Saints in the particulars of the endowment in Nauvoo in May of 1842, four years before the Nauvoo temple was finished and functional. In his journal for

71Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 14:30-32.
73History of the Church, Vol. 5, p. 555.
May 4, 1842, Joseph wrote:

I spent the day in the upper part of the store, that is, in my private office . . . instructing [a number of the leading elders of the Church] in the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to washings, anointings, endowments and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood, setting forth the order pertaining to the Ancient of Days, and all those plans and principles by which any one is enabled to secure the fulness of those blessings which have been prepared for the Church of the Firstborn, and come up and abide in the presence of the Eloheim in the eternal worlds. In this council was instituted the ancient order of things for the first time in these last days. 75

By August of 1843 he had begun to teach the Saints of the fulness of the Priesthood, and actually began ordaining men kings and priests on September 28, 1843. 76 In doing so he delivered to the people of Zion "all that could be given to man on the earth." 77

With this briefest of historical background, it is perhaps easier to understand the ordination of Joseph Smith as a Prophet, Priest, and King. In his zeal to establish a full theocratic Kingdom, Joseph intended to stand (as we have discussed earlier) as mortal head of the Kingdom of God, holding authority over Church


76 Joseph Smith Diary, September 28, 1843, Willard Richards as scribe; in LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City.

77 Heber C. Kimball Journal, December 26, 1845, kept by William Clayton; in LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City.
(Priest) and State (King). Claiming to have received the power to extend the fulness of the priesthood, and thus ordain men kings and priests unto God in the patriarchal order, he sought his appointment in the closing days of his ministry. William Clayton recorded in his journal for 11 April 1844 (just two and one-half months prior to the martyrdom) that he "was prest [sic]." Joseph chosen as our prophet Priest, & King by Hosannas." According to a revelation received by John Taylor, Joseph was called "to be a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator to my Church and Kingdom; and to be a King and Ruler over Israel." D. Michael Quinn has presented evidence to show that Brigham Young, John Taylor, and other presidents of the Church were similarly called and anointed. When one understands that the Mormons believe the keys for gathering Israel and governing in all matters rest with the Prophet, then such a notion as the President being appointed "King of Israel" is not so foreign or unusual. The anointing was literal. The Mormons feel the authority by which the ordinance was accomplished was of God. The full realization of the appointment, however,

78 Journal of William Clayton, April 11, 1844.
would await a time when Zion was fully established. In discussing the symbolic nature of the office of King, Priest, and Ruler over Israel, Quinn has written (of John Taylor’s appointment):

John Taylor was anointed a theocratic King, Priest, and Ruler in the absence of pomp, in a simple ceremony witnessed by a very few trusted associates, and at a time it was obvious that Mormon theocracy in Utah was in its death throes. As God’s representative on earth as prophet and President of the Church, it was sufficient to John Taylor that he had witnessed to God spiritually through a symbolic ordinance that it was the right of government under Christ to reign on the earth. Like the Council of Fifty itself, the office of Prophet-King was an ultimate symbol in Mormonism of the heavenly Kingdom of God which could only be foreshadowed on a corrupt world and in a temporal church.  

The Gathering of The Covenant People

Inasmuch as the Latter-day Saints see themselves as the fulfillment of much ancient Israelite prophecy, it follows that the concept of a gathering of a chosen people should be central to the establishment of a chosen society. The Saints in the days of Joseph Smith anticipated the complete realization of the prophesied day when "the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations." (Deuteronomy 30:3) An oft-quoted passage among Latter-day Saints is found in Isaiah. Here the Prophet spoke of a day when God would

81Ibid., pp. 188-189.
"lift up an ensign [banner, standard] from far," and of a
time when He would "hiss [or whistle, to signal the
gathering] from the end of the earth: and behold they
shall come with speed swiftly." (Isaiah 5:26.) For
Joseph Smith and his followers, the society of Zion was
the ensign, and the converts to the faith were those who
would gather to the city of holiness. In the words of
Smith, the gathering "is a principle I esteem to be of
the greatest importance to those who are looking for
salvation 'in this generation'. . . ." Continuing, Smith
added, "All that the Prophets have written, . . . in
speaking of the salvation of Israel in the last days,
goes directly to show that it consists in the work of the
gathering."^82

There seem to have been at least seven stated
reasons for a gathering or clustering of modern Israel:
First, the gathering served to establish a sense of
identity and focus for a people who were often shunned or
even persecuted for their peculiar beliefs. The one
thing that all Saints from all parts of the world could
share was an identity as a people, a "nation," a remnant
drawn to a central site.

Second, the gathering provided the Latter-day Saints
with a broader base from which to conduct

---

proselyting or missionary activities. For the Mormons, the various scatterings of Israel through the centuries (e.g., under the Assyrians in 721 B.C.E., the Babylonians in 587 B.C.E.; the Romans in 76 C.E., etc.) had taken place because Israel had forsaken the worship of the only true God and His prophets. In the latter days, therefore, Israel could only be gathered to her rightful locale through the acceptance and worship of the true God as taught in the true Church. The Book of Mormon thus speaks of a time when Israel "shall be restored to the true Church and fold of God." 83 This gathering of "the elect" becomes a major focus of missionary work. "We are gathering the people as fast as we can," Brigham Young stated. "We are gathering them to make Saints of them and of ourselves." 84 The missionaries (about 30,000 full-time at the time of this writing) "preach the Gospel" and "search out the elect." The elect are not those who are predestined to salvation (for we have shown earlier that Smith rejected that notion), but rather those who are "of Israel." "Ye are called to bring to pass the gathering of mine elect," six elders were told


in 1830, "for mine elect hear my voice and harden not their hearts."85 Those who are not of Israel are gathered and adopted into the covenant family through baptism (as we noted earlier). The gathering of the (lost) ten tribes is another matter. Sermons and writings of early leaders of the Church tended to emphasize that the lost tribes were now existing as a body, would return as a body, and that the return would be dramatic in scope.86 Recently, however, Bruce McConkie, apostle and theologian, has suggested that the gathering of the ten tribes will be accomplished in the same manner as the gathering of all other people—through missionary work.87 One may therefore gain a deeper appreciation for the Mormon system of proselyting those not of the faith, when he realizes that the system is not organized just to enlarge the ranks of the Church, but in their minds, also to help in the fulfillment of ancient prophecy concerning the gathering of Israel.

Third, modern Israel gathered to a central location to escape the perils and pull of Babylon. A

85Ibid., 29:7.
revelation to Smith in 1831 announced: "Yea, verily I say unto you again, the time has come when the voice of the Lord is unto you: Go ye out of Babylon; gather ye out from among the nations." Those in "the world," who are among the Gentiles [were to] flee unto Zion."^{88}

Fourth, from a practical standpoint, the gathering to Zion led to strength in numbers. "Persecution had begun almost simultaneously with the birth of the new religion. Scattered believers saw themselves as easy victims of torment; grouped together, they could more easily protect themselves."^{89}

Fifth, the gathered Saints were in a better position to prepare for the calamities to come. To illustrate this dimension of the gathering, Joseph Smith said:

We have another parable [he has been interpreting the parables of Matthew 13]--"Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure hid in a field, the which, when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof, goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field!" The Saints work after this pattern. See the Church of the Latter-day Saints, selling all that they have, and gathering themselves together unto a place that they may purchase for an inheritance, that they may be together and bear each other's afflictions in the day of calamity."^{90}

---

^{88}D&C 133:7,12.


Sixth, the Saints gathered to one location in the nineteenth century to build temples. Brigham Young explained:

We have been gathered to the valleys of these mountains for the express purpose of purifying ourselves, that we may become polished stones in the temple of God. We are here for the purpose of establishing the Kingdom of God on the earth. To be prepared for this work it has been necessary to gather us out from the nations and countries of the world, for if we had remained in those lands we could not have received the ordinances of the holy Priesthood of the Son of God, which are necessary for the perfection of the Saints preparatory to his coming.

In a similar vein, Smith asked: "What was the object of gathering the Jews, or the people of God in any age of the world?" He then answered: "The main object was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house and the glories of His kingdom, . . . for there are certain ordinances and principles that, when they are taught and practiced, must be done in a place or house built for that purpose."  

Finally (and perhaps in summary fashion), people were to gather to a modern Zion to prepare for a city of holiness on earth similar to the one enjoyed by the prototype, Enoch of old. Zion was not to be achieved through righteous individuals alone; sociality and unison

---

92 History of the Church, Vol. 5, p. 423; see also pp. 424, 427.
were also required. "The greatest temporal and spiritual blessings, "stated Joseph, "which always come from faithfulness and concerted effort, never attended individual exertion or enterprise."  

In speaking of the gathering, we mean to be understood as speaking of it according to scripture, the gathering of the elect of the Lord out of every nation on earth, and bringing them to the place of the Lord of Hosts, when the city of righteousness shall be built, and where the people shall be of one heart and one mind, when the Savior comes: yea, when the people shall walk with God like Enoch, and be free from sin.  

With the powers to gather Israel given to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the theophanies of the Kirtland Temple in 1836, the Latter-day Saints became serious about the obligations resting upon them in the matter of gathering. Missionaries were organized and sent to the British Isles in 1837 to open the Church's first foreign mission. During the first ten years of the British Mission's operation, 17,849 persons were baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Such persons were not only counseled in matters pertaining to doctrine and theology, but were also encouraged to gather to Zion in the United States; more

---


than 4,700 of these converts uprooted themselves and traveled at their own expense to Nauvoo, Illinois.\textsuperscript{96} Immigration of LDS converts continued after the death of Joseph Smith in 1844, and the influx of Europeans grew as the place of gathering was re-established as the Great Basin.

Between 1846 and 1887 European emigration to Utah totaled over 85,000. Through 1855 the 21,911 emigrants included 19,535 Britons, 2,000 Scandinavians, and a few French, Italians, and Germans. In the late period the non-British nationalities made up a larger portion of the total. The number of Scandinavians eventually reached over 30,000 before the end of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{97}

The suggestion to gather became fixed as a duty and a commandment during the administration of Brigham Young. In 1862 a periodical published by members of the Church in Germany stressed: "We believe there are relatively few persons who could not find some way to obey this commandment at some time, since they became members of the church if they really knew the importance of the charge."\textsuperscript{98} "You can serve [God] just as well anywhere else," as in the Salt Lake Valley, Young taught, "when it is your duty to be there. If it is not your duty to be

\textsuperscript{96}Arrington and Bitton, \textit{The Mormon Experience}, p. 129.

\textsuperscript{97}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 136.

anywhere else, if you would serve him acceptably, it must be where he calls you.99

A combination of anti-Mormon propaganda toward a steady influx of foreign Saints, as well as government immigration regulations helped to precipitate a change in the Mormon concept of gathering.100 The Mormon settlements in and around Salt Lake City were simply filling up; Saints from abroad would find it more and more difficult to find work. The first available source indicating a shift in policy toward the gathering to Zion is a New York Times article in 1890. George Q. Cannon, counselor to President Wilford Woodruff, remarked: "Our converts are made abroad by missionaries just like those of any other church, but instead of inducing them to come to this country, we really urge our missionaries to dissuade them in any way they can."101 In 1898 Cannon continued this line of preaching in a Church General Conference. He suggested that "the Saints in the various lands where they embrace the gospel [should] remain quiet for a while; to not be anxious to break up their homes to gather to Zion. This counsel is being given by the

100 See Arrington and Bitton, The Mormon Experience, pp. 137-140.
101 New York Times, June 1, 1890.
Elders now in various lands.\textsuperscript{102} Perhaps one of the strongest statements descriptive of this shift in orientation to Zion is a message from the First Presidency of the Church. On February 6, 1911 the Presidency wrote:

The establishment of the latter-day Zion on the American continent occasions the gathering of the Saints from all nations. This is not compulsory, and particularly under present conditions, is not urged, because it is desirable that our people shall remain in their native lands and form congregations of a permanent character to aid in the work of proselyting.\textsuperscript{103}

During the early decades of this century the Church began purchasing permanent mission headquarters in foreign lands. In addition, and perhaps more significantly, in 1913 and 1915 temple sites were dedicated in Canada and Hawaii, thus making it possible for the temple aspect of Zion to be brought to the people.

The trends toward decentralization and a de-emphasis upon gathering to the United States (and particularly to Salt Lake City) continued through the middle of the twentieth century. During the calamities associated with World War II, a number of Saints in different parts of the U.S. became anxious about being so far removed from what they felt was Zion. An apostle

\textsuperscript{102}Cited by Arrington and Bitton in \textit{The Mormon Experience}, p. 140.

\textsuperscript{103}\textit{Messages of the First Presidency}, Vol. 4, 222.
addressed the issue at a general conference in April of 1943.

I was down in Kelsey, Texas, last November, and I heard a group of anxious people asking, "Is now the day for us to come up to Zion, where we can come to the mountain of the Lord [note the LDS interpretation of Isaiah 2:2-4], where we can be protected from our enemies?" I pondered that question, I prayed about it. What should we say to those people who were in their anxiety? I have studied it a bit, I have learned something of what the Spirit has taught, and I know now that the place of safety in this world is not in any given place; it doesn't make so much difference where we live; but the all-important thing is how we live, and I have found that the security can come to Israel only when they keep the commandments, . . . when they are willing to listen to these men whom God has set here to preside as His mouthpieces, and when we obey the counsels of the Church.104

In the early 1970's the Church began a series of "Area Conferences," wherein a contingent of Church General Authorities would travel to different parts of the world (and also central locations around the U.S.) to convene conference meetings intended to renew the local members in their faith and orthodoxy. In what may now be termed a modern "doctrinal benchmark" with regard to the matter of the gathering to Zion, Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained to the Saints of Mexico and Central America in August of 1972: "This gathering has commenced and shall continue until the righteous are assembled into the congregations of the Saints in all the nations of the

104 Harold B. Lee, Conference Report, April 1943, p. 129; see also ibid., April 1970, p. 56.
earth." And then, becoming more specific, McCookie added:

The place of gathering for the Mexican Saints is Mexico; the place of gathering for the Guatemalan Saints is in Guatemala; the place of gathering for the Brazilian, Brazil; and so it goes throughout the length and breadth of the whole earth. Japan is for the Japanese; Korea is for the Koreans; Australia is for the Australians; every nation is the gathering place for its own people.

On June 8, 1978 what might prove to be the most significant doctrinal development in the 150-year history of the Church took place. President Spencer W. Kimball announced publicly that the Mormon Priesthood would be extended to all worthy men of the faith of every race and color. Since the late 1830's there had existed a strict policy forbidding the ordination to Priesthood of any man "of Negroid descent." For decades the controversial position had been debated by persons within and without the Church. Non-Mormons and "liberal" Latter-day Saints viewed the stance (policy) as racist and reflective of a nineteenth-century attitude toward blacks which had simply been perpetuated through the generations. Those firm in the faith contended that the posture (doctrine) was given by revelation to Joseph Smith and was based

---

upon scriptural dictum.\textsuperscript{106} The sociological setting for
the revelation was most interesting. Kimball, the
twelfth LDS President and one of the most missionary-
minded, had emphasized since 1974 Christ's commission to
the first century Christians to go into all the world and
make disciples of all men. In addition, in 1974 the
announcement was made under Kimball's direction that a
temple was to be erected in Sao Paulo, Brazil. As
preparations for the temple continued, it became
painfully apparent to the leaders of the Church that
hundreds of Brazilian Saints (many with black ancestry)
then giving time and means to the construction of the
edifice would not even be entitled to the full blessings
of temple worship upon completion of the structure. This
was the social setting and matrix out of which President
Kimball's startling announcement came. Loyal members of
the Church are bold to testify that although the timing
was critical in the change in policy, the key element in
the whole process was the matter of revelation: the
leaders had sought in prayer, and God had spoken. In
descrating the final occasion on which the First

\textsuperscript{106} See John J. Stewart, \textit{Mormonism and the Negro}
(Provo, Utah: Bookmark, 1960); John L. Lund, \textit{The Church
and the Negro} (Salt Lake City: John L. Lund, 1967);
Lester E. Bush, Jr., "Mormonism's Negro Doctrine: An
11-68; Armand L. Mauss, "The Fading of the Pharaoh's
Curse: The Decline and Fall of the Priesthood Ban Against
Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles considered the issue, McConkie has written:

When we were alone by ourselves in [the temple], ... to transact the affairs of [God's] earthly kingdom, President Kimball brought up the matter of the possible conferral of the priesthood upon those of all races. This was a subject that the group of us had discussed at length on numerous occasions in the preceding weeks and months. The President restated the problem involved, reminded us of our prior discussions, and said he had spent many days alone in this upper room pleading with the Lord for an answer to our prayers. He said that if the answer was to continue our present course of denying the priesthood to the seed of Cain, as the Lord had theretofore directed, he was prepared to defend that decision to the death. But, he said, if the long-sought day had come in which the curse of the past was to be removed, he thought we might prevail upon the Lord so as to indicate. He expressed the hope that we might receive a clear answer one way or the other so the matter might be laid to rest. 107

The result was the public announcement given on June 8th.

Because of its significance in the development of the concept of gathering and its place in the overall LDS perspective of Zion, it is reproduced below in full.

June 8, 1978
To all general and local priesthood officers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints throughout the world:

Dear Brethren:
As we have witnessed the expansion of the work of the Lord over the earth, we have been grateful that people of many nations have responded to the message of the restored gospel, and have joined the Church in ever-increasing numbers. This, in turn, has inspired us with a desire to extend to every worthy member of

the Church all of the privileges and blessings which the gospel affords.

Aware of the promises made by the prophets and presidents of the Church who have preceded us that at some time, in God's eternal plan, all of our brethren who are worthy may receive the priesthood, and witnessing the faithfulness of those from whom the priesthood has been withheld, we have pleaded long and earnestly in behalf of these, our faithful brethren, spending many hours in the Upper Room of the Temple supplicating the Lord for divine guidance.

He has heard our prayers, and by revelation has confirmed that the long-promised day has come when every faithful, worthy man in the Church may receive the holy priesthood, with power to exercise its divine authority, and enjoy with his loved ones every blessing that flows therefrom, including the blessings of the temple. Accordingly, all worthy male members of the Church may be ordained to the priesthood without regard for race or color. Priesthood leaders are instructed to follow the policy of carefully interviewing all candidates for ordination to either the Aaronic or the Melchizedek Priesthood to insure that they meet the established standards for worthiness.

We declare with soberness that the Lord has now made known his will for the blessing of all his children throughout the earth who will hearken to the voice of his authorized servants, and prepare themselves to receive every blessing of the gospel.

Sincerely yours,

Spencer W. Kimball
N. Eldon Tanner
Marion G. Romney
The First Presidency

Whether one adopts either a sociological or a strictly theological explanation for the 1978 development, the overall matter must be viewed as of deep importance to

---

the spread of the faith throughout the earth. If people of all countries (and now of all races) may be baptized and ordained and made ready to participate in temple worship (with a temple in their own area), they need only to settle back and assist in the creation of Zion in Southeast Asia or Australia or Africa.

The initial "commandment" to gather to a specific location has been mollified and modified over time. In summary, then, the growth and decentralization of the Church, as well as its need for strong foreign settlements, have led to a gradual shifting in focus so far as the notion of gathering is concerned.

**Summary of Development**

The most significant development in regard to Zion and the people of the covenant pertains to what it means to gather Israel. In the formative period, converts gathered or clustered to Zion as a token of their discipleship. They were coming out of the world, from the midst of "spiritual Babylon," into the community of believers. By the end of the nineteenth century it became both unwise and counterproductive for new members to flock to the Great Basin. In addition, it became obvious that the society of Zion would never achieve its destined end to spread to all the earth if Zion were no more than a Rocky Mountain Church. And so a major shift in emphasis began. The spiritualization of the concept
of gathering consisted of (1) advising all Saints to stay where they were and thus build Zion throughout the earth; and (2) emphasizing that the grandest definition of Zion was "the pure in heart," a state of being in which place of gathering was immaterial. Simply stated, one gathered to Zion through joining the true Church. Finally, with the efforts of the Church hierarchy in the twentieth century to establish church houses, mission headquarters, and temples in foreign lands, it became evident that to a degree Zion was being "delivered" to the people.
CHAPTER 6

ZION: THE SHIFTING FOCUS

In the Introduction it was stressed that Mormonism as a religious culture contains both static and dynamic—priestly and prophetic—elements, and that the movement may be characterized as possessing both conservative and progressive postures. Mormons see themselves as grounded in the faith of their fathers and established in the ancient tradition of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In addition, Latter-day Saints are quick to point out that as Christians they are neither Catholic nor Protestant; rather, they represent a restoration of the organization and authority of first-century Christianity. In this sense, Mormons are static and set, grounded in biblical religious faith. They are a priestly group in the sense that there is a tradition and order of things to which they hold, and an intricate system of Priesthood hierarchy formed to teach and insure orthodoxy. On the other hand, Saints are eager to inform their "Gentile" friends that a major distinguishing factor of Mormonism is its claim to modern and continuing revelation. The dynamism and prophetic nature of Latter-day Saint thought and practice is to be found in its stress upon a living
religion. In the Preface to the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, a revelation to Joseph Smith specified that the Mormon Prophet would have "power to lay the foundation of this church, and to bring it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness, the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased."¹ In commenting upon this verse, a modern Church authority has written:

> When the word living is used, it carries a divinely deliberate connotation. The Church is neither dead nor dying, nor is it even wounded. The Church, like the living God who established it, is alive, aware, and functioning. It is not a museum that houses a fossilized faith; rather, it is a kinetic kingdom characterized by living faith in living disciples.

Then, in stressing the Church's reaction to social and environmental factors, the writer added: "The living Church is one that responds to stimuli, that has movement, and that has the capacity to reproduce itself."²

The concept of Zion, like a number of practices and ideas of the LDS tradition, has undergone a measurable amount of change. It has meant different things to the Saints at different times, often because of a particular stress by Church leaders. Before

¹D&C 1:30.

considering the shifting tides of Zion in Mormonism, however, one must first grasp the unusual nature of such matters as "canon" and "scripture" in the LDS tradition.

The Saints' Expanding Canon

When one normally thinks of the canon of scripture, he generally thinks not only of a rule or measure of religious authority, but also of a volume of collected writings which are set, fixed, and closed. For most people of the Christian persuasion, for example, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments constitute the accepted canon, and whatever is beyond the closed canon of scripture is generally held to be of questionable authority. The whole Mormon fabric, on the other hand, is built upon an open or expanding canon: Smith's earliest theophany in the spring of 1820 re-opened the traditional canon and began a new and extended chapter of sacred experience and writings.

The publication of the Book of Mormon was and is a radical benchmark for the Saints; from the early part of the nineteenth century the Mormons found themselves reaching beyond Biblical authority. The Book of Mormon's justification for its own existence is, interesting enough, contained in the book of 2 Nephi.

And because my words shall hiss forth—many of the Gentiles shall say: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible.

Thou fool, that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible. . . .
Know ye not that there are more nations than one? Know ye not that I, the Lord your God, have created all men, and that I remember those who are upon the isles of the sea; and that I rule in the heavens above and in the earth beneath; and I bring forth my word unto the children of men, yea, even upon all the nations of the earth?

Wherefore murmur ye, because that ye shall receive more of my word? Know ye not that the testimony of two nations is a witness unto you that I am God, that I remember one nation like unto another? Wherefore, I speak the same words unto one nation like unto another. And when the two nations shall run together the testimony of the two nations shall run together also.

And I do this that I may prove unto many that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and that I speak forth my words according to mine own pleasure. And because that I have spoken one word ye need not suppose that I cannot speak another; for my work is not yet finished; neither shall it be until the end of man, neither from that time henceforth and forever.

Wherefore, because that ye have a Bible ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written.

Mormons feel comfortable in applying the above passage to any and all divine word which may come to the inhabitants of Zion through the constituted authorities. And yet, in a manner of speaking, the Latter-day Saint canon is fixed, at least temporarily. The canon is established by "common consent," by vote of a constituent assembly of the Saints in a general conference. For decades the Church membership accepted as the "Standard Works"—the canonized scriptures—the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants. In October of 1880 the book

32 Nephi 29:3, 6-10.
(collection) known as the Pearl of Great Price was accepted by vote and added to the canon. The Standard Works thus remained intact and unchanged (albeit minor changes in printing and structure through subsequent editions) until the April 1976 General Conference. At this gathering two additional revelations were added to the canon, and are now a part of the Doctrine and Covenants.\(^4\)

To complicate the matter slightly, the Latter-day Saints often make a fine distinction between "scripture" and canonized scripture. The canon to the Saints is comprised of the four standard works, and expands only as additional matters are accepted and added by common consent. Scripture, however, has an unusually broad meaning in Mormondom. In the 68th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, a definition of what constitutes scripture is given to some of the leading elders of the Church.

\[\text{And, behold, and lo, this is an ensample unto all those who were ordained unto this priesthood, whose mission is appointed unto them to go forth— }\]
\[\text{And this is the ensample unto them, that they shall speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost. }\]
\[\text{And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the}\]

\(^4\)Joseph Smith's "Vision of the Celestial Kingdom" and Joseph F. Smith's "Vision of the Redemption of the Dead" were initially placed in the Pearl of Great Price. They are now a part of the Doctrine and Covenants, forming sections 137 and 138, respectively.
will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation."

Scripture is therefore any utterance given by the power of the Holy Ghost, and (by following this description strictly) may or may not be recorded. That scripture which is canonized becomes "commandment," and is thereafter binding upon the Saints: that is to say, it binds them with regard to practice and belief.\textsuperscript{6}

A final insight into Latter-day Saint tradition worth considering is that Mormons tend to accept and revere the words of contemporary Prophets and Apostles--those the Saints call the "Living Oracles"--with as much awe and respect as the canonized scripture. This is as it should be, given that a people follow a belief in continuing revelation. An incident in the history of the Church demonstrates that such an position and attitude may be traced to the early years of Mormonism. Wilford

\textsuperscript{5}D\&C 68:2-4.

\textsuperscript{6}Note the distinction made by Bruce R. McConkie in the two most recent additions to the Canon in 1976. These two visions, "both long known in the Church to be scripture!" had now become "binding upon the people in a particular and special sense." Continuing: "They have both been scripture from the moment they came into being, but now the truths they contain are placed before the people with an emphasis and a witness far beyond the general run of inspired utterances." Finally: "Although the truths in both of these visions have been known and taught since they were first given, it might nonetheless be said that they now constitute a new commandment to the Church." (Bruce R. McConkie, "A New Commandment: Save Thyself and Thy Kindred," \textit{Ensign}, August 1976, pp. 7-8.)
Woodruff, fourth Church president explained:

I will refer to a certain meeting I attended in the town of Kirtland in my early days. At that meeting some remarks were made that have been made here today, with regard to the living oracles and with regard to the written word of God... a leading man in the Church got up and talked upon the subject, and said: "You have got the word of God before you here in the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants; you have the written word of God, and you who give revelations should give revelations according to those books, as what is written in those books is the word of God. We should confine ourselves to them."

When he concluded, Brother Joseph turned to Brother Brigham Young and said, "Brother Brigham, I want you to take the stand and tell us your views with regard to the written oracles and the written word of God." Brother Brigham took the stand, and he took the Bible, and laid it down; he took the Book of Mormon, and laid it down; and he took the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and laid it down before him, and he said: "There is the written word of God to us, concerning the works of God from the beginning of the world, almost, to our day." "And now," said he, "when compared with the living oracles those books are nothing to me; those books do not convey the word of God direct to us now, as do the words of a Prophet or a man bearing the Holy Priesthood in our day and generation. I would rather have the living oracles than all the writing in the books." That was the course he pursued. When he was through, Brother Joseph said to the congregation, "Brother Brigham has told you the word of the Lord, and he has told you the truth."/7

In an even stronger manner, Orson Pratt taught in 1860 that if the Saints "undertake to follow the written word, and at the same time do not give heed to the living oracles of God, the written word will condemn us."/8

---

/7 Conference Report, October 1897, pp. 22-23.
With a better appreciation for the Mormon approach to scripture—the awareness that "nothing is better known or more greatly appreciated than the fact that the canon of scripture is not now and never will be full"—we may now turn our attention to the varied ways in which "Zion" has been construed among the Latter-day Saints.

The Many Faces of Zion

As we noted in Chapter One, Joseph Smith's first serious introduction to the concept of Zion came in his work with the Book of Mormon. In progressing through the books of 1st and 2nd Nephi, it became clear that Zion represented the society of the people of God and that this haven of holiness was the abode of "the covenant people." Further, while moving through 3 Nephi, Joseph learned that another use of the word Zion was as a designation for the land of America. That this idea was still in his mind as late as 1844 is evident from a statement in a sermon delivered on April 8th. "The whole of America is Zion itself from north to south," said Joseph, and is described by the Prophets, who declare

---


11 See 3 Nephi 16:16-18.
that it is the Zion where the mountain of the Lord should be, and that it should be in the center of the land.\(^{12}\) As we discussed earlier, these ideas of the special mission of America as the site where the latter-day glory was to be manifest were the burden of many a sermon of American theologians prior to, contemporary with, and following Joseph Smith. Mormonism, as an American religion, certainly laid stress upon the key role of the American nation in the eventual development of the society of Zion. Through his work of Bible translation Joseph gave to his followers the overall pattern for a Zion society through the revelation of what we indicated to be the scriptural prototype—the Zion of Enoch. From this pattern came the additional insight of an economic dimension of a Zion society, a holy place where the people were of "one mind and one heart," and where there was "no poor among them." The Mormon leader also taught as a result of the Enoch experience that a "New Jerusalem" would be established in the last days, a sacred city to which "the elect" would be gathered. Smith claims to have learned later by revelation that the central site for the New Jerusalem, the Zion of God, was to be Independence, Jackson County, Missouri.\(^{13}\)


\(^{13}\) D&C 57:1-3.
In the revelations which followed the Enoch-experience (revelations now contained in the Doctrine and Covenants), additional principles were given regarding the economic order, but nothing radically different or unusual developed over the next few years in regard to the notion of Zion. Then, in August of 1833, a revelation was given regarding the construction of the Kirtland, Ohio Temple.

And now, behold, if Zion do these things [purify herself] she shall prosper, and spread herself and become very glorious, very great, and very terrible.

And the nations of the earth shall honor her, and shall say: Surely Zion is the city of our God, and surely Zion cannot fall, neither be moved out of her place, for God is there, and the hand of the Lord is there.

Therefore, verily, thus saith the Lord, let Zion rejoice, for this is Zion--THE PURE IN HEART; therefore, let Zion rejoice, while all the wicked shall mourn.  

This definition of Zion as "the pure in heart" is probably the broadest and most oft-used of all the ones considered in this work. Particularly with the shift in emphasis away from a gathering to a central location, the idea that a "Zion people" can be established anywhere Saints come to purify themselves, has grown in acceptance. Even though the notion of Zion as the pure in heart (or the city where the pure in heart dwell) emerged as early as 1833, the Saints of the nineteenth century still focused upon a central location, a specific

---

gathering place: when you spoke of Zion, people understood you to mean Jackson County, Missouri. Brigham Young often spoke of the need for cultivating the "spirit of Zion" or of the importance of having "Zion in one's heart."

. . . unless the people live before the Lord in the obedience of his commandments, they cannot have Zion within them. They must carry it with them if they expect to live in it, to enjoy it, and increase in it . . . as to the spirit of Zion, it is in the hearts of the Saints, of those who love and serve the Lord with all their might, mind, and strength. Zion will be redeemed and built up, and the Saints will rejoice. This is the land of Zion; and who are Zion? The pure in heart are Zion; they have Zion within them. Purify yourselves, sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and have the Zion of God within you, and then you will rejoice more and more.16

The time is nigh when every man that will not take up his sword against his neighbour must needs flee to Zion. Where is Zion? Where the organization of the Church of God is. And may it dwell spiritually in every heart; and may we so live as to always enjoy the spirit of Zion!17

Even though Brigham himself (and the Saints of his day) were focused upon a return to and redemption of the land of Missouri as Zion,18 statements like those above did much to settle the Saints in the Great Basin, and cause


16 Ibid., Vol. 8, p. 193; see also p. 198.

17 Ibid., p. 205.

them to seek the broader achievement of Zion (a society of the pure in heart). By the late nineteenth century (as pointed out in Chapter Five) the concept of gathering had evolved, and members of the Church in all lands were content to build Zion where they were. The new accent in the words of Young, was that Zion was any place "where the organization of the Church of God is." The following entry from a journal kept by an early Latter-day Saint in 1840 (original spelling and punctuation have been preserved) is worthy of consideration:

A few Item from a discourse delivered by Joseph Smith July 19 1840

Read a chap in [Ezekiel] concluding with this saying and when all these things come to pass and Lo they will come then shall you know that a Prophet hath been among you

Afterwards read the parable of the 12 olive tree [in D&C 101:46-62] and said speaking of the Land of Zion that it consists of all N. & S America but that any place where the Saints gather is Zion which every righteous man will build up for a place of safety for his children. . . .

The only way to really sift through and understand the varying Mormon conceptions of Zion is to recognize that obviously more than one idea of Zion was and has been entertained over the years at the same time. While one facet was the object of focus, others were not necessarily discarded, but rather placed on a shelf

---

temporarily for later use and application. Though it is perhaps proper to speak of the original concept of a physical gathering to a Zion location as having been discarded or at least developed in other directions, yet it would be incorrect to suggest that any one notion of Zion (that we have considered) has been lost through development of LDS thought. The Church still holds firmly to a belief in the eventual establishment of Zion in Missouri. The Church still holds firmly to the belief that this city complex will come to be the New Jerusalem. The Church still maintains that the land of North and South America is the land of Zion. What seems to have taken place, however, is that the notion of Zion as the pure in heart has emerged as the most significant of the ideas, with the others being held partially dormant until further instruction from Church Authorities should indicate the need to do otherwise. The preference, therefore, for a given concept of Zion upon which to focus has stabilized markedly in the twentieth century. It is a different world in which contemporary Latter-day Saints move about, and the LDS notion of continual divine direction and "revelation adapted to the circumstances" 20

20 Joseph Smith taught in 1842: "That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another. God said, 'Thou shalt not kill;' at another time He said, 'Thou shalt utterly destroy.' This is the principle on which the government of heaven is conducted--by revelation adapted to the circumstances in
seems to be in harmony with at least a temporary shift away from Joseph or Brigham's focus on Zion as place. Orson Pratt asked: "Are we . . . to be governed in all respects by those limited things that we were governed by in our childhood? Will there be no change of circumstances? Yes, as there is in the growth of grain, . . . but these will all be in accordance with the development made by the progress of the kingdom as is explained in the blade, the ear and the full corn in the ear . . . . New circumstances require new power, new knowledge, new additions, new strength . . . ."

Another early Mormon apostle explained:

When we first heard the fullness of the Gospel preached by the first Elders, and read the revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith, our ideas of Zion were very limited. But as our minds began to grow and expand, why we began to look upon Zion as a great people, and the Stakes of Zion as numerous, and the area of the country to be inhabited by the people of Zion as this great American continent, or at least such portions of it as the Lord should consecrate for the gathering of His people. We ceased to set bounds to Zion and her Stakes.

which the children of the kingdom are placed. Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, although we may not see the reason thereof till long after the events transpire." (History of the Church, Vol. 5, p. 135.) This statement represented Smith's explanation as to how God would condone polygamous marriages in one age and condemn them in another. The idea is also theological support for intermittent shifts in doctrinal focus.

22 ibid., Vol. 25, pp. 30-31.
The Broadened Image of Zion

We turn our attention now to one of the most interesting developments within Mormonism's society of Zion—the image. Here we will concern ourselves with how others have viewed the Latter-day Saints over time; how that public image has made remarkable shifts in the twentieth century; the broadened scope of anti-Mormon propaganda; and, finally, the development of definite and identifiable Mormon subcultures (i.e., the matter of how the Church is viewed from within).

The early image of the Mormons is perhaps best mirrored in the reactions to the Church's founder. Smith wrote of the public reaction to his experience in 1820:

Some few days after I had this vision, I happened to be in company with one of the Methodist preachers, who was very active in the before mentioned religious excitement; and, conversing with him on the subject of religion, I took occasion to give him an account of the vision which I had had. I was greatly surprised at his behavior; he treated my communication not only lightly, but with great contempt, saying it was all of the devil, that there were no such things as visions or revelations in these days; that all such things had ceased with the apostles, and that there would never be any more of them.

I soon found, however, that my telling the story had excited a great deal of prejudice against me among professors of religion, and was the cause of great persecution, which continued to increase. . . .

Prejudice and persecution were indeed the lot of Joseph

Smith during his twenty-four year ministry. Hounded, jailed, beaten, tarred and feathered, the Mormon Prophet led his believing followers from New York to Ohio to Missouri to Illinois, in each case seeking asylum and civil and religious toleration. Why were the Mormon people hated in the Church's formative years? We have suggested earlier (Chapter Two) that the Saints' identification as Zion's Covenant people did prove to be problematic: sometimes their zeal to inhabit the newly settled areas and begin preparations for the New Jerusalem exceeded their wisdom and patience. To identify the Church as the covenant people is to designate outsiders as the "non-Covenant" people or Gentiles; such a label likewise did not prove popular among non-Mormons. To claim visions and angelic ministrations and golden tablets of scripture in nineteenth-century frontier America was to court at best suspicion and ridicule and at worst rejection. Further, to claim to be the "only true Church," and to represent the only religious body with divine authorization was to alienate even the most sympathetic of Church observers. Ironically, even though the Latter-day Saints were involved in missionary work and with proselyting New England as early as 1830, it would appear that public relations or public image were not obvious strengths! For Joseph and his people, the "word" or "testimony"
would carry conviction to the hearts of "the elect;" others (repelled by the movement) were simply not ready for the message, and thus their criticisms manifested their spiritual ineptitude.

The introduction of plural marriage into the Latter-day Saint culture in Ohio and Illinois obviously did little to establish or restore non-member/Mormon rapport. Polygamy, called in later years by the Republican Party one of the "twin relics of barbarism," further branded the Mormons as an immoral lot with seemingly no reverence for traditional values or mores. Even though the Manifesto (declaring polygamous relationships to be illegal in the eyes of the Church Presidency) was issued in 1890, a generalized public ridicule and suspicion continued against the Saints well into the twentieth century.

It would appear that Church growth led gradually to a cessation of public scorn. By the time the membership had reached one million in 1947, Mormons had come to be recognized as a "decent folk" with little to recommend wholesale rejection. With the advent of television and the growth in popularity of the Mormon

---

24Written into the Republican Party Platform for the 1856 national election at Philadelphia on June 17, 1856; cited in Russell R. Rich, An Ensign to the Nations, p. 366. The other "twin relic" of barbarism was, of course, slavery.
Tabernacle Choir around the world, the public image gained measurably. By the 1970's the Church had become intensely interested in its public image, and years of billboards and public service family spots ("take the time to listen") and Reader's Digest inserts followed. Noted LDS politicians, entertainers, and sports figures emerged before the public eye. The Church that had come from adversity had seemed to arrive: the Mormons had become very modern. In the words of one historian, "within a generation a people that had been the very epitome of an antibourgeois mentality" had become "one of the mainstays of American middle class culture."\textsuperscript{25} To the horror and dismay of Mormon "fundamentalists," Latter-day Saints seem to have become very "worldly" in appearance.\textsuperscript{26} In a way, such a metamorphosis had survival value, inasmuch as the preservation and growth of the Church depended so much upon public reaction. Hansen sees the transformation as a perfectly natural one, given the Mormon "work ethic" and typically American pragmatic formula for success.

\textellipsis the Mormons... while building their antmodem kingdom of God, developed those modern habits of initiative and self-discipline.

\textsuperscript{25}Klaus J. Hansen, \textit{Mormonism and the American Experience}, p. 205.

\textsuperscript{26}Martin E. Marty, \textit{A Nation of Behavers} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 71.
that... ushered in a new breed of Mormon thoroughly at home in the corporate economy of America and its corollaries, political pluralism and the bourgeois family. 27

Anti-Mormon propaganda surfaced as early as the 1830's through such works as Alexander Campbell's Delusions: An Analysis of the Book of Mormon (1832) and Eber D. Howe's Mormonism Unveiled (1834). Most nineteenth-century materials were attempts to discredit the movement and its founder, and thus concentrated upon casting doubt on Smith's credibility as a Prophet and religious leader. After the death of Joseph, the propaganda against Brigham and the matter of polygamy

27 Klaus J. Hansen, Mormonism and the American Experience, p. 206. There is an outspoken element in the Church which feels that the Church is, in essence, on the verge of "selling its birthright" for improved public image. Peggy Fletcher, Editor of the somewhat controversial Sunstone, one of the newest "journals of Mormon thought," has written: "To seek approval puts us at the mercy of current society, tyrannized by fashion. If we sell our theology based on market surveys and tell the people only what they want to hear, what sort of prophetic religion is that? . . . A prophetic people must often express difficult, unpopular truths, be world critics, Christian revolutionaries. I am not suggesting that we adopt an obnoxious, insensitive style of presentation. I am saying that we have to teach all aspects of our beliefs, not just the ones that will sell." In summarizing the difficulty and ultimate challenge of image-building, Fletcher observes: "The members of the Church's public communications department are goodhearted and well-intentioned. Theirs is not an easy assignment or one which I envy. It is fruitless and I think frustrating to try and please everyone. Finally it is an impossible task: image-building by its very nature is anathema to Christian living." ("A Light Unto the World," Sunstone, Vol. 7, No. 4 (July, August 1982), pp. 22-23.
often took the form of the spreading of bizarre myths or embarrassing newspaper cartoons. During the early part of this century Senator Reed Smoot of Utah was challenged as a fit candidate for political office, and uncomfortable debates raged for many months. The integrity of Smoot, a Latter-day Saint Apostle (and a monogamist), was questioned, and the anti-Mormons threw the controversy of morals and virtue and former Church practices into the faces of the Saints once again.

Although there were occasional attempts to embarrass the Church through the first half of the twentieth century, it remained for the decades of the seventies and eighties for the Saints to witness an organized and intense Anti-Mormon effort. Most of the negative attention the Church has received of late has come from two fronts: (1) Fundamentalist Christian groups who classify Mormons as para-Christian or cultic; 29

28 One of the most painful yet popular attempts at "debunking" Mormonism's founder came with the publication of Pau M. Brodie's No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet in 1945. Brodie, a niece of Church President David O. McKay, was later excommunicated from the Church for apostasy.

29 Level of "intensity" of religious practice seems to be directly related to level of anti-Mormon sentiment. That is to say, much of the attack is from the "born again" or "charismatic" Christian groups (Baptist, Church of Christ) while more structured, traditional Christian mainliners (Presbyterians, Roman Catholics) hardly give the Mormon Church a second look; few take the time to hurl criticism.
and (2) Mormon apostates who have turned toward a
fundamentalist Christian persuasion (e.g., "Ex-Mormons
for Jesus"). Most of the material printed and
distributed by the fundamentalist Christians is a re-hash
of issues dating back to the 1830's: character
assassinations on Smith; the Smith family as nomadic and
shiftless; the local origins of the Book of Mormon; and
the secret ("cultic") practices of the Latter-day Saints.
More recent anti-Mormon propaganda, however, has elicited
the attention of a larger number of Church members. In
the early seventies the Church Historian's Library and
Archives were opened for use of any persons wishing to do
LDS historical research. Two ex-Mormons, Jerald and
Sandra Tanner of Salt Lake City, became involved in a
more serious attempt to "defame" the Mormon empire, and,
through materials gained from the Church's archives,
began the publication of newsletters, journals, and books
bent upon uncovering what one writer called the "Mormon
Mirage." What was organized on a small scale as Modern
Microfilm, Inc. has expanded to the point today where
people from all over the world are kept informed on the
latest controversy of Mormon's Zion society. The
organized and broadened nature of the anti-Mormon attack
is suggested in the fact that the Tanners' Mormonism--
Shadow or Reality (Modern Microfilm, 1972) was expanded,
updated, and enlarged into The Changing World of
Mormonism and published in 1980 by Moody Press of Chicago. The primary thrust against the Church is the matter of change: rewording of revelations, development in doctrine, changes in major Church positions and issues, etc. Oddly enough, the attack (upon what the anti-Mormons feel to be an achilles heel in Mormonism) is the one area which members who view their history with perspective see as strength, not weakness. In the words of Maxwell cited earlier, the changing nature of the Church is a sign of its life: "It is alive, aware, and functioning." Though the Church is priestly in its adherence to tradition and form and government, it is prophetic in its attention and reaction to contemporary circumstances.

The problem exists, however, that many modern Latter-day Saints do not seem to have the kind of perspective so as to allow Zion to develop and evolve in prophetic fashion. Indeed, large numbers of members have been shaken by such works as the Tanners, simply because they refuse to discard what appears to be a mythical value structure with regard to the Church: its doctrines, policies and leaders. For one thing, many in the LDS culture operate under false assumptions, expectations, and understandings. Davis Bitton, Professor of History at the University of Utah, has described what might be called a balanced and mature approach to one's faith in
Zion's history;

What's potentially damaging or challenging to faith depends entirely, I think, on one's expectations, and not necessarily history. Any kind of experience can be shattering to faith if the expectation is such that one is not prepared for the experience. A person can join the Church with a totally unrealistic mind picture of what it means to be a Mormon or to be in a Mormon ward [congregation]. To go into a real Mormon ward where there are children crying and where there are uninformed comments made in Sunday School classes can be damaging to that person's faith . . . The problem is not the religion; the problem is the incongruity between the expectation and the reality.

History is similar. One moves into the land of history, so to speak, and finds shattering incongruities which can be devastating to faith. But the problem is with the expectation, not with the history. One of the jobs of the historians and of educators in the Church, who teach people growing up in the Church and people coming into the Church, is to try to see to it that expectations are realistic. The Lord does not expect us to believe lies. 30

Anti-Mormon materials are likewise effective against Saints who have an unrealistic belief in infallible or imperfect Church leaders, especially Joseph Smith. People who feel that Smith should never have made a mistake, never have had personality conflicts with others, or never changed a revelation are too soon shaken by evidence to the contrary.

To date the Presidency of the Church has chosen largely to ignore the ever-growing mass of anti-Mormon literature. The leaders have simply pleaded with the members to build their faith on solid grounds and avoid

the contentious and vitriolic debates which too often ensue over a matter so sensitive and explosive as religion. In April of 1980, at the Sesquicentennial anniversary conference of the Church, President Spencer W. Kimball commented concerning the growth of Zion: "These numbers thrill us, as they indicate the progress we are making and remind us, likewise, that we must achieve in even more major ways in the years ahead."

Kimball then noted:

We can also tell that we are making progress by the attention we get from the adversary. Do not falter nor be distressed when others misrepresent us, sometimes deliberately and sometimes in ignorance. This has been the lot of the Lord's people from the beginning, and it will be no different in our time.

Brothers and sisters, pray for the critics of the Church; love your enemies. Keep the faith and stay on the straight and narrow path. Use wisdom and judgement in what you say and do, so that we do not give cause to others to hold the Church or its people in disrepute.  

The final area to be considered in this section is the look (image) of the Church from within. From the time of the earliest dissenters and Mormon apostates, the Saints have witnessed person after person and group after group take issue with Church leaders and reject the faith. Some of the earliest pillars of the movement entered into conflict with Smith and "forsook their

covenants" (e.g., Oliver Cowdery). Others left the Church as developing policies seemed to alter the image of the organization to the degree that they could no longer identify the roots of the faith; some contended they had never left the Church, but that the Church had left them (e.g., David Whitmer). With the death of Joseph Smith contention arose as to his rightful successor, from which (in 1860) a major splinter group emerged (the Reorganized Church), claiming patriarchal or lineal descent through Joseph Smith III. During Brigham’s administration a millenarian group under one Joseph Morris disengaged itself and traveled north to Weber, Utah to await the imminent Second Coming of Christ. Following the issuance of the manifest on polygamy in 1890 numerous break-offs occurred, some dissidents claiming to have received a special dispensation and call to practice plural marriage through former Church President John Taylor. 

A surprising number of offshoots today identify themselves as "fundamentalist Mormons." They claim to have held tenaciously to the faith of their fathers, and to have separated themselves from a larger body that has obviously gone astray. In one way they are a type of Mormon Essene group; in another way they represent a type

---

32See C. LeRoy Anderson, For Christ Will Come Tomorrow: The Saga of the Morristes (Logan, Utah: Utah
of Latter-day Saint Gnostic group. Like the Essene community of old, these apostate LDS feel the mother Church has wandered from its original moorings, and no longer represents the faith of Joseph the Prophet; they seek the zeal and purity of the nineteenth-century body. Like the Christian Gnostics, they often characterize themselves as possessors of a secret, deeper knowledge, a faith and understanding only available to those few initiated into the mysteries of godliness. As one might expect, fundamentalists reject the attempt to update or modernize the image of Zion. These seek a "restoration" of the restored Church!

It is this alleged compromise with Babylon that has aroused the ire of "sectarian" reformers, who want to return the church to its true historic self—to the days of plural marriage, communitarianism, and the political kingdom, and to an identity that is separate from modern American culture. Perhaps no phenomenon establishes a former sect more firmly among mainline faiths than the fact that it spawns sects dedicated to its reform. Needless to say, Mormon leaders vigorously attempt to disassociate themselves from such movements.

The era of the 1960's as a time of free speech, open dialogue, and social upheaval had its counterpart within Mormonism. The Civil Rights movements brought to

State University Press 1981.)

33 Favorite topics of discussion include the practice of polygamy, the Council of Fifty and the theocratic kingdom, blood atonement, and the identity and personality of God.

34 Klaus J. Hansen, Mormonism and the American Experience, p. 213.
focus the almost buried controversial issue of the blacks and the Mormon Priesthood. More and more young Latter-day Saints left the Intermountain West to engage in graduate study at major universities. The result seemed to be a generation of bold and free-thinking Mormons who sought a "reason for the hope" they had in Joseph Smith and the Restored Church. Theirs was a quest for a rational as well as an affective and conative faith. In addition, many Saints found themselves more open than before to the ideology and praxis of non-Mormon associates.

In the Spring of 1966 a new publication saw the light of day: Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought. Though viewed in 1966 by many with suspicion at best (and, without question, still ignored by some Latter-day Saints today for many of the same reasons), its first volume gave as a statement of purpose the following encompassing paragraph: "Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought is an independent national quarterly established to express Mormon culture and examine the relevance of religion to secular life. It is edited by Mormons who wish to bring their faith into dialogue with human experience as a whole and to foster artistic and scholarly achievement based on their cultural
heritage." Through the period of the 1960's and 1970's Dialogue and other similar publications (Sunstone, Exponent II, the Journal of Mormon History, and BYU Studies) provided a forum for research and discussion of social, doctrinal, and historical matters that would seldom receive treatment in either publications produced officially by the Church or by Church leaders themselves. This movement, spawning almost an entire LDS subculture, continues its growth into the 1980's. Such a movement has created an interesting dialectic in the Church—those who speculate and research on doctrinal matters (theologians without authorization) and those who speak with authorization but operate within established and approved parameters (theologians within the Church hierarchy). The real confrontation has come, of course, whenever LDS historians or theologians have chosen to reveal more to the Mormon public than the ecclesiastical authorities have deemed appropriate.

35 Volume 1, No. 1 (Spring 1966), Inside cover.

36 See a talk to LDS Church educators by Ezra Taft Benson, "The Gospel Teacher and His Message," Address given September 17, 1976, Salt Lake City; see also Boyd K. Packer, "The Mantle Is Far, Far Greater Than the Intellect," Address to Church educators at BYU, August 1981. A reaction to Benson's and Packer's charge to LDS writers and historians to prepare a "sacred history" whereby students and readers "will see the hand of the Lord in every hour and every moment of the Church from its beginning till now" was undertaken by D. Michael Quinn in the Fall of 1981. In an address given to the Student History Association at BYU, Quinn, an Associate
It becomes apparent after only slight consideration that the image of a Mormon Zion is definitely a broadening and expanding one. The complexities of a pluralistic and secular society are reflected in a more heterogeneous Zion population, and the challenge of local and general authorities of the Church to create a people "of one heart and one mind" looms ever greater as time goes by and growth continues.

**Zion: Today and Tomorrow**

The route to be taken in the Church's long and uphill march toward a final Zion society has been intimated in earlier chapters. In the economic realm, the adherence to the principles of the Welfare Services program are believed to be preliminary to the ultimate re-establishment of the Law of Consecration and Stewardship. Members receive counsel at every general conference to begin a program of personal and family preparedness. This consists of the need to: obtain a year's supply of food, clothing, and fuel; plant home gardens and learn to live on what you grow; learn to create and operate within a budget, and live on what you

make; avoid overmuch credit buying and use caution in types of consumer debt; pay an honest and generous fast offering, to be used for the care of the poor; take part in local production projects (dairies, canneries, farms, etc.); and, finally, strive to live providently and become as independent as possible. With a little reflection, one soon recognizes that welfare services (specifically, personal and family preparedness) is one of the outward ties to the Church's simpler nineteenth-century society. It seems that Church leaders are asking members to return to the soil, to fundamentals, to simplify, to develop or re-develop basic skills of survival which have almost been lost in the modern world.

"Where you have a plot of land," said Church President Spencer Kimball in 1981, "however small, plant a garden. Staying close to the soil is good for the soul."37 Here again is found the idea of the merging of the temporal and the spiritual to form a disciplined and dedicated people. In 1978 Kimball had said:

With the arrival of spring we hope all of you will put in your gardens and prepare to enjoy their produce this summer. We hope you are making this a family affair with everyone, even the little ones, assigned to something. There is so much to learn and harvest from your garden, far more than just a crop itself.

38 Ibid., April 1978, p. 120.
Kimball's has been perhaps the most compelling voice of most of the Church leaders for many generations in the area of personal and family preparedness.

In the social realm, repeated charges are given to Latter-day Saints to love and care for one another. Regular visits to assigned families are undertaken by both men (home teaching) and women (visiting teaching) in each congregation monthly throughout the Church. "The measure of our love for our fellowman and, in a large sense, the measure of our love for the Lord, is what we do for one another and for the poor and the distressed." In addition, members are encouraged to become involved (to the extent of their abilities) in the overthrow of what the Church regards as social evils. In speaking of the need for holding to and establishing absolute values in order to have a pure society, Kimball wrote with regard to homosexuality:

... let us emphasize that right and wrong, righteousness and sin, are not dependent upon man's interpretations, conventions and attitudes. Social acceptance does not change the status of an act, making wrong into right. If all the people in the world were to accept homosexuality, ... the practice would still be deep, dark sin.

Thus although some shifts in policy and practice are

---


40 The *Miracle of Forgiveness* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969), p. 79.
evident in LDS society, attitudes toward some matters have not varied from the Church's original positions of the nineteenth-century.

One final matter in the social dimension of the culture which continues to be a contested issue is the LDS view of the place of woman in society. Church leaders have held to a strict and conservative stance toward a more traditional role for women. LDS women are encouraged to seek educational and career opportunities, but are also reminded that their highest priorities should be marriage and motherhood. During the heat of the battle of the Equal Rights Amendment, Mormon women and men were repeatedly warned of the need for defending the family against attacks that would come in the form of a questioning of traditional man/woman roles. In Zion, man is the breadwinner and provider; woman is to be the homemaker and heart of the home.41 An early revelation had declared that "every man who is obliged to provide for his own family" should provide, and in so doing "he shall in nowise lose his crown."42 It would appear that any revolution that would question or upset established roles within Mormonism would threaten the system and thus

41A typical example of this type of homiletic is Ezra Taft Benson, "The Honored Place of Women," November 1981 Ensign.
42D&C 75:28.
undermine the very fabric of the culture. The Latter-day Saints claim that the order of heaven is patriarchal, and that the society of Zion is to be erected after the pattern of heaven. The Priesthood is patriarchal. Zion represents "the highest order of Priesthood society." Thus in Zion the directing power is assigned to holders of the Priesthood--men. Women are to serve in a supportive and auxiliary capacity.

As discussed in Chapter Two, one of the hazards of moving a nineteenth-century sect into the twentieth century in its quest for recognition as a reputable religious body and church, is the tendency of the sect to mirror the values of the more modern society. In the mind of Joseph Smith, Zion was to stand in marked contrast to the Babylon of the world. Whereas Babylon was a society bent upon plunder and exploitation, Zion was to be a community which viewed the care of the earth and its creatures as a sacred stewardship. Zion sought to return the earth to as nearly as possible a

---


44 There are obviously many free-speaking LDS women who have voiced opposition to what they see as a male-dominated ecclesial structure. With all the reaction (and particularly the animosity toward the First Presidency's official stand against ERA), it is doubtful whether the traditional role structure will ever change, given the established foundational doctrine of the patriarchal order of government.
paradisical and Edenic state. One of the other challenges facing the twentieth-century Church is to learn how to incorporate and internalize the values of Zion, and not be content with or placated by slogans or catchy labels.

Today, as in the ancient church, those who embrace Babylon in its stark reality do not renounce Zion. They don't need to. As the Great Apostasy progressed, the Christian world got ever more mileage out of the name of Christianity. As the apostolic fathers and the early apologists observed, the farther they fall away from real Christianity, the more loudly they proclaim and the more enthusiastically they display the name and the banner of Christ. . . . As these early church fathers say, the word Christian completely lost its meaning. Today the beautiful word Zion, with all its emotional and historical associations, is used as the name Christian was formerly used to put the stamp of sanctity on whatever men chose to do. . . . From the very first there were Latter-day Saints who thought to promote the cause of Zion by using the methods of Babylon. . . . What do we find today? Zion's Investment, Zion Used Cars, Zion Construction, Zion Development, Zion Bank, Zion Leasing, Zion Insurance, Zion Securities, Zion Trust, and so on. The Institutions of Mammon are made respectable by the beautiful name of Zion.

Politically the Latter-day Saints content themselves (for the time being) with being directed by a republican form of government, looking forward all the


while to that day when "he reigns whose right it is to reign"\textsuperscript{47} and establishes the Kingdom of God in the midst of Zion. In the interim Zion is to be established through the choice and support of honest, wise, and good men and women for political office.\textsuperscript{48} The full development of the theocracy will await the millennial day when the Prophet of God will speak in all matters, civil and ecclesiastical.

During the mid-to-late 1960's there was an unusual amount of "Zion enthusiasm" engendered by the appointment of Elder Alvin R. Dyer by the Church Presidency as a type of special representative to the land of Independence, Missouri. Dyer seems to have spent an appreciable amount of time visiting the area and writing upon the work to be done in the "redemption" of the site of Jackson County as the New Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{49} In some cases anxious groups of people flocked to Missouri, convinced that the time had arrived for the Church's supposed return to Jackson County, only to find that the headquarters of operations remained in Salt Lake City and the exodus was not forthcoming. Since the late sixties there seems to have been almost a de-emphasis upon

\textsuperscript{47}D&C 58:22.  
\textsuperscript{48}Ibid., 98:16.  
\textsuperscript{49}See Dyer's The Refiner's Fire (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1968).
Missouri, in the sense of a gathering place for the Saints. The leaders still speak of a future day in which the locus of Church control will shift from Salt Lake City to Independence. With the developed concept of gathering now in effect, however, Saints cluster in the areas where the Church organization is operative. Bruce R. McConkie has written:

As we are aware, the building of the New Jerusalem lies in the future, at a time yet to be designated by revelation. There is no present call for the saints to purchase land or to live in Jackson County or in any place connected therewith. The revealed word relative to the gathering to Independence and its environs will come through the prophet of God on earth. When it does come—with the consequent return of the saints to that Zion which shall not be moved out of its place—that call will not be for the saints in general to assemble there. The return to Jackson County will be by delegates, as it were. Those whose services are needed there will assemble as appointed. The rest of Israel will remain in their appointed places.  

Church leaders in the 1980's are particularly sensitive to what they fear to be a misplaced emphasis and an intemperate and inordinate zeal about the establishment of Zion. Concerned that the Saints be "balanced" in their approach to life, and that they avoid "gospel hobbies," they have repeatedly counseled the

50 The Millennial Messiah, p. 294.

Mormon people to "stay in the mainstream of the Church." Members are instructed to retain the distant ideal of a Zion society, but to pursue life in a pragmatic and systematic manner, with an assurance that the end of time (Second Coming) is a real but removed eventuality. In January of 1982 William O. Nelson, Assistant Executive Secretary to the Quorum of Twelve Apostles and Administrative Assistant to the President of the Twelve (Ezra Taft Benson) spoke at a symposium in Provo.

What concerns the Brethren [General Authorities] about talking about Zion and becoming a Zion people? I believe you can appreciate that it is easy to raise the anxiety level of idealistic high school and college students about a subject such as building a whole gospel plan and not by specializing and centering on some chosen field as though that field were the gospel. Religious or gospel hobbies are dangerous signs of spiritual instability; they lead to fanaticism and sometimes even to apostasy and the consequent loss of eternal life." (Mormon Doctrine, p. 334.)

52 See McConkie, "Our Relationship to the Lord," BYU Devotional Speech, March 2, 1982.

53 Bruce McConkie stressed the need for balance in life at a special leadership session for Church officers at BYU on October 31, 1981. In the words of one reporter, McConkie "attacked a prevalent idea that the Second Coming of Christ is so imminent that people need not make long range plans. He explained that some members are living day-to-day and are avoiding long range commitments like schooling, believing that there will be no use for it shortly. He said that in his opinion, Christ will not come in the lifetime of anyone present. 'The Lord is not at the door as we measure time,' he emphasized." (Reported in Sunstone, Vol. 6, No. 6. [November-December 1981], p. 39.)
Zion community. This does not mean we do not discuss the subject in its scriptural context. It does mean, however, that we refrain from speculating about the future of Zion and its eventual redemption. Speculation on a subject such as this has sensational appeal, but not much practical value in living the gospel in the real world.

Occasionally, we unintentionally adopt terminology in the Church that labels other members. To suggest that there is a "Zion people" (an ambiguous phrase anyway) assumes that there are others among us who are "non-Zion people." The Church's mission is to save souls, not to create vague class distinctions.

The Church is currently in a phase of preparing Church membership in fundamental, basic principles. We are not ready to implement a Zion government.

***

We should not, therefore, be too anxious about the City of Zion nor a return to the center stake of Zion. We are not ready. We must, therefore, not create a premature anxiety on the part of our students for something that the Church is not ready to embark upon and thus create disillusionment.

***

That promised rendezvous between the Saints of this generation and Enoch's people awaits a time when the Saints of our day will be equal to Enoch's standard.54

The need for patience and a return to and application of fundamental Christian virtues seem to be the areas of greatest stress in preparing late twentieth-century Mormons for their ideal city. In essence, the Latter-day Saints are being instructed to begin the molding of a society of the pure in heart by working upon their own (individual) hearts. "Let our anxiety be centered upon this one thing, the sanctification of our own hearts,"

counseled Brigham Young, "the purifying of our own affections, the preparing of ourselves for the approach of the events that are hastening upon us." And then in a manner which has particular application to modern Mormons, Young added: "Be satisfied to let the Lord have his own time and way, and be patient. Seek to have the Spirit of Christ, that we may ... prepare ourselves for the times that are coming. This is our duty."  

---

55 Journal of Discourses, Vol. 9, p. 3.
CONCLUSION

Ernst Troeltsch once noted that most sects may be characterized by a gradual and continuous metamorphosis into a church.\(^1\) Indeed, change is a particularly constant attribute of religion and religious bodies, whether that change is effected by revolutionary (intellectual) or evolutionary (social) means, whether the changes be reflected in doctrine or praxis. A religious organization's ability to meet the needs of the people of the day in a secular society will require an appreciable degree of adaptability and development.

This dissertation has dealt with the matter of change—expansion and development in the definition and application of the Mormon notion of Zion. Joseph Smith, the Latter-day Saint Prophet-Leader suggested that the concept of Zion was "a theme upon which prophets, priests and kings have dwelt with peculiar delight,"\(^2\) and that the Mormon people "ought to have the building up of Zion as [their] greatest object."\(^3\) This work has demonstrated


\(^2\)History of the Church, Vol. 4, p. 609.

\(^3\)Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 390.

274
that the ideal of a holy commonwealth (Zion) has been a primary focus of Latter-day Saints since the time of the Church's organization in 1830. Further, it has become clear that an ongoing development of the central concept of Zion (and its ancillary principles and programs) has helped to define and direct modern Mormonism.

This study has sought to answer three main questions: (1) What is Zion to the Latter-day Saints? (2) How has the concept of Zion contributed to the doctrinal and historical development of the Church? and (3) How has the concept of Zion developed and evolved over time, and how have these developments helped to bring the Church to its present strength?

What is Zion?

From Joseph Smith's first encounter with the notion of Zion in the Book of Mormon, the Mormon Prophet recognized the challenge to prepare a people for a city of holiness. Though "Zion" was used in other related ways (e.g., old Jerusalem, the land of America), Smith seemed to focus the Saints upon the need for building a holy community—a city of God after what he felt to be a divine pattern. From Smith's encounter with the Bible and his translation of the Enoch material in Genesis, he taught the Mormons of an antedeluvian society, a group which would serve for over a century and a half as a socio-economic and spiritual prototype. Enoch's Zion
became "the divine model for the Mormons' earthly undertakings." Joseph and his successors stressed the need for gathering to Zion; baptism and conversion into Mormonism in the first sixty years of the Church's existence were tantamount in some cases to a major relocation to Illinois or Salt Lake City. Despite the fact that in 1833 Joseph had received a broader and more expansive conception of Zion—"the pure in heart"—he and his immediate successor continued to stress Zion as a place. It was during the Brigham Young administration that Mormons began to hear sermons encouraging them to live worthy of having Zion within them: Saints came to know more and more about Zion as a state of being. By 1890 the emphasis had shifted, and Zion had become any place where the "pure in heart" were congregated. This larger and more developed idea of Zion has continued to the present and is the spiritual state toward which Mormons now point themselves. The "New Jerusalem," or central stake of Zion is yet an attainable reality in the minds of the Saints, but is a future ideal toward which perhaps a purer and better prepared generation will attend.

Zion: Historical and Doctrinal Contributions

5 D&C 97:21.
More than anything else, the idea of Zion became a source of Mormon identity, and a banner or standard (Mormons are fond of using the word "ensign") around which a weary and often beleaguered group of people could rally. "Why resist temptation?" "Because a society of Zion requires a people who are pure in heart and action!" "Why not give in to feelings of frustration and despair? Why not give up?" "Because the day of Zion is just ahead, just around the corner. We must be ready!" "Why not let the poor wretches of our community who have reaped the rewards of their own indolence and sloth take care of themselves? Why must I take of my surplus and give to those who have not worked as hard as I?" "Because we learn that the Zion of Enoch was a place where the poor were cared for, where people had all things in common, and where an entire commonwealth were of one heart and one mind!" "Why break our backs and exhaust our resources to build a temple when we do not even have a Church house? What of those in our midst who are not even properly housed themselves?" "The temple is the center of our Zion complex and is the recepticle of the power by which we as modern Israel are sealed together into the ancient order of the Patriarchs!" In short, Zion was the "certain sound of the trumpet" (1 Corin. 14:8), the rallying point around which the people of God could do battle against the forces of Babylon.
In addition, the Zion concept provided a definite social structure for the Latter-day Saints, and established spiritual parameters in society. Commandments of God regarding such matters as diet and health (the Word of Wisdom--Chapter 5), marital relations (eternal marriage and plural marriage), missionary work (gathering of Israel), loyalty (sustaining Church leaders), and economy (consecration and stewardship, as well as tithing) were given (and received, for the most part) as guidelines for governing a Zion society and creating a "peculiar" people. Ethical and moral questions were easily answered by reference to whether the action would lead to purity of person and sanctity of society. A member of Zion had an individual and a societal obligation: his disobedience was an affront and a hindrance to his community, as well as a crime against his own nature and personal best interest.

One final element which the Mormon concept of Zion contributed was an eschatological framework. The LDS perception of "last times" is inextricably tied to the ultimate establishment of the New Jerusalem, and the Lord's acceptance of and communion with that sacred spot. As contrasted with many of their millenarian contemporary counterparts outside the faith, the Latter-day Saints attempted to channel their emotion and zeal into a pragmatic and rational approach to life. Joseph Smith
said as early as 1833:

When I contemplate the rapidity with which the great and glorious day of the coming of the Son of Man advances, when He shall come to receive His Saints unto Himself, where they shall dwell in His presence, and be crowned with glory and immortality; . . . I cry out in my heart, What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? 

The overriding concern was how to prepare the people for the Parousia. A heavenly city was to be built as well as prayed for. Fawn Brodie, one of Joseph's biographers, has written: "Basically Joseph's was not a revivalist sect. Although he followed some of the revivalist patterns, he appealed as much to reason as to emotion." 7 One theologian has suggested: "In Joseph Smith's program the invitation is not to dream about the date, but to labor for the event. He instilled into the Latter-day Saints the double ability to visualize a millennial reign and yet to work patiently for it." 8 Mormons labor patiently today with the same quiet expectation of an eventual triumph over evil and the redemption and settlement of the New Jerusalem.

6 History of the Church, Vol. 1, p. 442.
7 No Man Knows My History, p. 99.
Zion: Change and Development

In a revelation given in August of 1833, Joseph Smith and his followers were instructed:

And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil and cleave unto all good, that ye shall live by every word which proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God.

For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith.

The restoration of the gospel was understood by Smith and the Saints as a gradual unfolding of light and truth, a movement which would continue until the millennial reign of Christ.10 Brigham Young boldly declared: "I do not even believe that there is a single revelation, among the many God has given to the Church, that is perfect in its fulness." Continuing, Young said:

The revelations of God contain correct doctrine and principles, so far as they go; but it is impossible for the poor, weak, low, grovelling, sinful inhabitants of the earth to receive a revelation from the Almighty in all its perfections. He has to speak to us in a manner to meet the extent of our capacities.11

And thus we see that the Mormons had from the beginning, a theological basis for change, for adaptations which might be precipitated by social or environmental circumstances. What the observer not of the faith would

9D&C 98:11-12; Cf. Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4; Isa. 28:10.

10See Bruce R. McConkie, The Millennial Messiah.

regard as a logical and required ideological shift in policy or doctrine or practice (as a result of given circumstances), the devoted Latter-day Saint would recognize as a response to divine direction given "line upon line, precept upon precept." The open and expanding canon of Mormon scripture prepared the way for eventual new developments and even abrupt departures from nineteenth-century organization.

The movement of the Church to an organization with worldwide status has led to a number of significant developments. It may well be that the change in the concept of gathering will prove eventually to be one of the most significant steps in the Church's present condition. It was only as Latter-day Saints were instructed to remain in their own states and their own lands that the concept of Zion began to spread throughout


13 One LDS historian (with which many present Church authorities would likely disagree) has stated: "From a cultural perspective modern Mormonism differs fundamentally from the Mormonism of the nineteenth century—though little official change in theology has occurred. Yet the sectarian aspects of Mormonism have vanished into a forgotten past." (Hansen, Mormonism and the American Experience, pp. 212-213.)
the world. As mission headquarters and temples were constructed and formally dedicated in foreign lands, local members began to sense that the Church hierarchy was serious about this new concept of gathering and this broadened notion of Zion; Zion was literally being gathered to the people. Mormons would contend, however, that even this universal vista (and expansive perspective on gathering to Zion) was foreseen and foreknown (though set aside at the time) by Joseph Smith. In the midst of the Missouri persecution (1833), a revelation explained to the Saints:

Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered.

They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion—

And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed [Independence, Missouri], for the work of the gathering of my saints—

Until the day cometh when there is found no more room for them; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains or the strength of Zion.\(^\text{14}\)

This passage came to have particular relevance after 1890, when the local (foreign) stakes became the place of gathering throughout the world.

Also of universal importance to the present stature of the Church has been the steady movement toward

\(^{14}\text{D&C 101:17-21.}\)
modernity. It was essential for the society of Zion to be not only peculiar, but *palatable* as well. The continuing challenge of the Latter-day Saints is to hold fast to the ancient Judeo-Christian tradition (static) while making the undiluted message of Mormonism appealing and attractive (dynamic). The announcement in 1978 regarding the lifting of restrictions on Mormon blacks and the Priesthood is critical to the ideal of spreading Zion to all the world. The announcement of the change (which the Saints feel to be one of the greatest "revelations," and interested non-Mormons feel to be one of the most important "policy shifts") is another of the many developments which has done much to pave the way for a world-wide Church. Development is inevitable. It is to the Saints a sign of *life*.

To say that there will be a stated time, in the history of this Church, during its imperfections and weakness, when the organization will be perfect, and that there will be no further extension or addition to the organization would be a mistake. Organization is to go on, step after step from one degree to another, just as the people increase and grow in knowledge of the principles and laws of the kingdom of God.¹⁵

For the Latter-day Saints, Zion has been and will continue to be the *summum bonum*, as well as the primary focus of life. "For many years," stated President Spencer W. Kimball, "we have been taught that one

important end result of our labors, hopes, and aspirations in this work is the building of a Latter-day Zion, a Zion characterized by love, harmony, and peace—a Zion in which the Lord's children are as one."\(^{16}\) We have attempted to demonstrate that this end result is being sought not only through a static and unrelenting hold upon the traditions and structure established by Joseph Smith in the nineteenth century, but by development and change where such have been necessary to the preservation and proliferation of the faith. Note the following from Professor A. Leland Jamison:

The historical evolution of the Mormons furnishes the most thrilling chapter in the whole chronicle of American religion. By comparison, the adventures of the settlers in New England seem tame. It is noteworthy, however, that Puritans and Mormons followed the same star of hope and aspiration: both aimed to build the Kingdom of God in America, to establish Zion in the wilderness. Of the two groups, the Mormons more nearly attained the ideal, at least in terms of their own conception of what the Kingdom could and should be. The brigades fired by Smith's faith and guided by Brigham Young's iron will outstripped their foes, mastered hostile nature, and fashioned a genuine theocracy which ruled a numerous multitude for nearly half a century, certainly down to the acquisition of statehood. It required no outlandish stretching of the pious imagination to find the telling analogy to their saga in the Hebrew exodus: out of bondage they were led by a Moses and a Joshua through wilderness and war into a promised land; they were a Chosen People, in possession of a new Law, and commissioned by Almighty God himself to create the perfect society in a recalcitrant world—

\(^{16}\) *Conference Report*, April 1978, p. 121.
and ultimately to convert that world to their own scheme of things.\textsuperscript{17}

For the Mormons, such a conversion process continues, and the full realization of a Zion society remains just over the horizon.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Latter-day Saint Scriptures


The Book of Mormon. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981.

The Doctrine and Covenants. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981.


The Pearl of Great Price. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981.

Historical and Doctrinal Sources


Anderson, Bornhard W. Understanding the Old Testament,


______. Letter to the Author, 21 September 1982.


Arrington, Leonard J.; Fox, Peramorz; and May, Dean L. Building the City of God: Community and Cooperation Among the Mormons. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1976.


______. "Awakenings in the Burned-Over District: New


______. "The Gospel Teacher and His Message." Address to LDS Church Educators, 17 September 1976, Salt Lake City.

______. "The Honored Place of Woman." Ensign, November 1981.

"A Biographical Sketch of the Life and Travels of William Draper." Typescript in Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.


Clark, J. Reuben, Jr. Address given at a special meeting for stake presidencies, October 2, 1936.


Clayton, William. *Personal Journal under date of 11 April 1844*, LDS Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City.


Deseret Evening News, October 2, 1875.


Hancock, Levi. Personal Journal found in Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.


Johnson, Benjamin F. Letter to George A. Gibbs, April to October 1903. Typescript in Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

Juvenile Instructor. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, June 15, 1892, p. 399.

Kimbball, Heber C. Personal Journal kept by William Clayton, under date of 26 December 1845. Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City.


The Messenger and Advocate, December 1836, p. 422.


Minutes of the Council of Fifty, April 10, 21, 1880; April 8, 1881. LDS Church Historical Library, Salt Lake City.


--------. "Our Glory or Our Condemnation." BYU Last Lecture Series, 1971-72.


--------. "Work We Must, But the Lunch Is Free." Condensed version of an address delivered to the

———. "Writing and Publication in Graduate School." Paper delivered to the History Honors Banquet, Brigham Young University, 12 May 1965.


———. "The Mantle is Far, Far Greater than the Intellect." Address given to LDS Church educators at BYU, August 1981.


Pottawattomie High Council Record, under date of 1 January 1848. LDS Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City.

Pratt, Orson. "Equality and Oneness of the Saints." The
Seer, July 1854, pp. 289-300.


Quinn, D. Michael. "On Being A Mormon Historian." Address given to the Student History Association, Brigham Young University, Fall 1981.


Rigdon, Sidney. Speech delivered at the laying of the cornerstone of the temple to be built at Far West, Missouri, 4 July 1838.


Smith, Hyrum M. and Sjodahl, Janne M. Doctrine and


Smith. Personal Diary, under dates of 28 September 1843, 10 March 1844, LDS Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City.


Revelation received on 27 June 1882.


"Why Have So Many Saints Not Yet Emigrated?" Die Reform, November 1862, pp. 37-41.


Woodruff, Wilford. Personal Journal for 31 December 1834. LDS Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City.


