

D&C 136-138

Lesson 33, Doctrine & Covenants, Adult Religion Class, Monday, 5 June 2017

David A. LeFevre

General Introduction

General setting

Summary Chronology

D&C 136

- **Fri, 6 Feb 1846, Nauvoo, IL** – The first Church members left Nauvoo, crossing the Mississippi into Iowa Territory.
- **Thu, 16 Jul 1846, Council Bluffs, Iowa** – About five hundred Saints sign up and leave as the Mormon Battalion, to go fight in the Mexican war.
- **Thu, 14 Jan 1847, Winter Quarters** – Brigham Young dictated a revelation (D&C 136).
- **Mon, 5 Apr 1847, Winter Quarters** – The vanguard group left Winter Quarters for the west, destination still not fully known.

- **Sat, 24 Jul 1847, Great Basin** – The first Saints arrived in the valley of the Great Salt Lake (Orson Pratt and Erastus Snow), with most of the vanguard group arriving two days later.

D&C 137

- **Thu, 21 Jan 1836, Kirtland, OH** – JS attended the School of the Prophets, then was involved in washings in the print shop and anointings in the temple with several Church leaders. During the latter, D&C 137 was received.

D&C 138

- **Thu, 3 Oct 1918, Salt Lake City, UT** – While pondering the Atonement and the writings of Peter, Joseph F. Smith had a vision that today we called “The Vision of the Redemption of the Dead.”

D&C 136 – The Exodus

Date and Location

Thursday, 14 January 1847, Winter Quarters, Omaha Nation (modern Omaha, Nebraska), across the Missouri River from Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Setting

After the first wagons rolled out of Nauvoo in February 1846, thousands of Saints began to move west. The advance companies hoped to cross the plains and be in the west before fall. But because of poor weather, a lack of preparedness by some, late starts for many, and the poverty of others, members of the Church were soon scattered across Iowa in places like Garden Grove, Mt. Pisgah, and Council Bluffs. Some were in St. Louis or St. Joseph, Missouri, and others were in various cities in the region. Altogether, perhaps 12,000 refugees of Mormon persecution were trying to survive the winter and continue to work their way west later.

A large group of about 3,500 had managed to cross the western border of Iowa into the Omaha Nation—the Great

Plains that was not yet even a United States territory—and created a settlement they called Winter Quarters. Crude homes and shelters were constructed, with some even living in caves cut out of ground near the river banks. There was not enough food, extreme cold, and poor health to start with that only got worse with the conditions. Hundreds died and graves were dug with difficulty in the frozen ground.

To help care for the poor and the needy, Winter Quarters and other camps were divided into wards, the division they had used in Nauvoo, and a bishop was appointed over each one. To allow personal care by the bishops, the wards were kept small—200-300, typically—thus beginning the practice of bishops presiding over a relatively small group of Saints in a ward.

A challenge and a blessing came just days after Brigham Young arrived on the banks of the Missouri River. Captain James Allen came seeking soldiers for the war with Mexico. The idea had been planted in Washington, D.C., as Church representative Jesse C. Little worked with President James K. Polk on gaining support for the Church’s westward migration. The President agreed to let Mormons

enlist in the army to fight Mexico, and Allen was sent to recruit them. Brigham Young agreed to have five hundred serve in the Battalion in exchange for permission to winter on Indian land on the west side of the Missouri River, which Allen granted (and which was later rescinded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, who said Allen had no authority to grant such a request). The men left on 16 July 1846 for a march of nearly 2,000 miles, from Iowa to southern California. When their one-year enlistment was up, many marched back to Iowa to find their families and bring them out to Utah. The money from the soldiers, which they consecrated back to the Church, proved to be a lifesaver to the Saints, allowing them to purchase critical supplies to survive the winter and being the trek west in the spring.

Though they had several ideas of where they might go, they were not settled on a final location. Explorers and others coming east shared stories and assessments of various parts of the country, and while the Great Basin seemed like a good consideration, no final decision had been made by January 1847.

It was in the midst of these challenges of winter survival, questions about how to move the company ahead in the spring, concerns about the men who left in the Battalion, and questions about how best to organize, that Brigham Young took his concerns to the Lord and received D&C 136. It is his only canonized revelation. He received it in the presence of the members of the Quorum of the Twelve staying at Winter Quarters, dictated in three different sessions on the same day—Heber C. Kimball’s dwelling, Elder Benson’s dwelling, and finally Willard Richard’s place, known as the “Octagon” because of its shape.¹

Documents and Publication

The oldest copies are from the day of the revelation, 14 Jan 1847. It was first published in the *Millennial Star* (1 May 1852), then as Section 136 in 1876.

Outline

- Camp organization (1-16)
- Live the commandments (17-27)
- Celebrate and learn wisdom (28-33)
- Purpose of Joseph’s death (34-42)

Commentary

Camp organization (1-16)

1 ***The Word and Will of the Lord***. It was Brigham Young talking or even the Twelve, but the Lord himself giving his

word and will to the leader of the Church after Joseph’s death.

1 ***the Camp of Israel***. Taking that name on themselves, the people of the first group out of Nauvoo saw themselves as a latter-day group in an exodus experience. Though the revelation is directed at all journeying to the west, it was especially directive with the advance group, the Camp of Israel.

1 ***in their journeyings to the West***. The Saints knew they were going west but were not yet sure of the destination. Texas, Oregon Country, California, and Mexico were all considered. The Great Basin area was a consideration as well but fell into sharper focus later in 1847 as Church leaders met with those who came from exploring those areas.

2 ***be organized into companies***. The Saints had planned before they left Nauvoo to be organized like this verse outlines. However, things had fallen apart as they crossed Iowa, encountering many difficulties, and the companies lost all sense of organization. The Lord calls the people to reorganize under the Twelve (v. 3). Each company would have a president and two counselors, then be divided into groups of hundreds, fifties, and tens, each with a captain (v. 3).

4 ***this shall be our covenant***. Covenant is perhaps the most important word in this revelation; though it only appears twice (vv. 2 and 4), the concept runs throughout most of the verses, calling everyone to live up to the covenants many had made in the temple and almost all had made at baptisms, to keep the commandments (“ordinances”), care for each other, lift burdens, and consecrate what they have for the good of others in need.

5 ***Let each company provide themselves***. Pooling their collective resources, each company was to provide the “necessaries,” including wagons, clothing, and provisions.

6 ***go to with their might, to prepare for those who are to tarry***. The advance Camp of Israel and the groups that followed shortly after them, were to go quickly to find their new home and get it ready for the thousands coming behind them.

7 ***decide how many can go next spring***. Each company determined who was ready for an 1847 trek across the plains to be “pioneers” and prepare the new home.

7 ***able-bodied and expert men***. The 143 men selected for the advance company were chosen for their ability to contribute to this pioneering effort. They were not going for themselves but for all who would come behind them. They

¹ Arrington and Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, 93-101; Allen and Leonard, *The Story*, 223-225, 234-237; Harper, *Making Sense*, 502-503; Cook, *The Revelations*, 297-300.

brought hunters, blacksmiths, teamsters, and others with critical skills that would be needed to accomplish their mission.

8 *bear an equal proportion.* Just as they had done in Winter Quarters and the other settlements with wards and bishops, the various companies (like a ward on wheels) were to share the load of caring for the poor, the widows and orphans, and the families of those who enlisted in the Mormon Battalion, to whom Brigham Young had promised their families would be watched over.

9 *prepare houses, and fields.* It took more than one year to get everyone out of Iowa and into the Great Basin. Some left in 1847, others in 1848, and others in the years following. In addition, other Saints would continue to come for years and take advantage of the homes and crops that those before them left behind for the next group. It was an inspired pattern that was part of the greatest migration of a large group of people recorded in modern history.

10 *Let every man use all his influence and property.* This was consecration applied to the westward migration. As they did in Missouri in 1838 and 1839, as they were driven out of that state, members covenanted to use their means to get everyone out—no one left behind. In Nauvoo, Brigham Young went so far as to include that covenant as part of the endowment ceremony given to each of the more than five thousand who had that experience in the temple.

10 *the Lord shall locate a stake of Zion.* The vision for the new home of the Saints in the west was a new stake. During the Nauvoo period, they had explored establishing stakes in many places in the west, as far south as Texas and north in Wisconsin and many places in between. As this stage, the idea of a new Zion in the west was not envisioned, but eventually that became the Saints' view of their home in the west.

11 *if ye do this with a pure heart.* The commitment to leave was good, and the commitment to bring everyone along was important. But critical to their success was the need to do this in righteousness. Unlike the majority of those heading west, who merely wanted personal improvement with land and opportunity, Church members were also doing it for the glory of God and the advancement of his kingdom.

12 *Ezra T. Benson and Erastus Snow.* Ezra Benson (great-grandfather of future Church president Ezra Taft Benson) had joined the Church after helping struggling members fleeing persecution in Missouri. He was ordained an apostle in July 1846 while in Iowa. Erastus Snow was just twenty-eight years old at the time of this revelation, he had already served several missions and been a leader in Nauvoo. He and Orson Pratt were later the first two men to enter the Salt Lake Valley. Snow was added to the Quorum

of Twelve in 1849 and helped colonize Iron County and founded St. George, Utah.

13 *Orson Pratt and Wilford Woodruff.* Both names are generally well known to Latter-day Saints. Orson Pratt was an enthusiastic missionary, speaker, scholar, and scriptorian. He was a member of the Twelve at this time. Wilford Woodruff was also a member of the Twelve and was later known for his emphasis on temple work and extensive journal keeping. He was Church president and prophet from 1888-1898.

14 *Amasa Lyman and George A. Smith.* Amasa Lyman had served many missions since joining the Church in 1832, and was a member of the Twelve since 1842. Unlike the others listed in these verses, he was not in Brigham Young's advance party but did lead a large group to the valley in 1847, right behind the vanguard company. George A. Smith was Joseph Smith's cousin, also a member of the Twelve. A large man, Smith never let that slow him down and went with the initial pioneer company to the Great Basin. He helped colonize southern Utah later and was a counselor to Brigham Young in the First Presidency.

15 *presidents, and captains.* Even though the vanguard group was small, they still organized with a president and two counselors for the whole group, and with captains over hundreds, fifties and tens, just like the larger groups that came later.

16 *go and teach this, my will, to the saints.* The men called to help were also to take copies of this revelation to Saints in the various camps in Iowa and beyond, and share the revelation with them, so all would act in concert and according to the Lord's will.

Live the commandments (17-27)

17 *fear not thine enemies.* Church members still worried about attacks coming from Missouri or even Illinois. The Lord comforted them on these issues, telling them not to fear but to have faith that their enemies could not stop them.

18 *Zion shall be redeemed in mine own due time.* Zion or Missouri was still on the minds of all those who had lost lands, farms, homes, personal property, and lives there. They were going to traveling a long way from Missouri and many must have wondered when and how they would come back and again get control of their legally purchased lands which had been stolen from them. The Lord assured them that day would come but with no timeframe in mind. Saints needed to now look west.

19 *if any man shall seek to build up himself.* As with the command to be pure (v. 11), the pioneers were called to a life of selflessness and obedience to the Lord's will.

20 **keep all your pledges one with another.** Promises of care and concern were of utmost importance, especially to those whose had lost family members to death or the army.

21 **the name of the Lord in vain.** Swearing and false oaths were forbidden by the Lord.

22 **my arm is stretched out in the last days.** In the Old Testament, the Lord's arm is stretched out both in judgment and in blessing. In this case, it is to save his people.

23 **Cease to content . . . to speak evil.** Charity and love between people in the camp was critical.

24 **Cease drunkenness.** This seems odd to present-day Saints, but in 1847, the Word of Wisdom was still counsel, not commandment. Alcohol had no place as a drink among those journeying west.

25 **restore that which thou hast borrowed.** No one traveled with extra supplies, because wagons were too small for things that were not necessities. If something was borrowed, it was critical for good relations and even for survival that it be returned quickly.

26 **deliver it to him again.** Things could easily get lost on the trail and in the wilderness. If a pioneer found something that could be identified as belonging to another, he was to make "diligent search" to find that person and return the item.

27 **be a wise steward.** Remembering that all things ultimately come from God, and that we are stewards over the great blessings he gives us, the Saints were enjoined to be wise stewards over personal and communal property.

Celebrate and learn wisdom (28-33)

28 **singing, with music, with dancing, and with a prayer.** Many in that day considered music and dancing to be evils, but the Lord taught otherwise, encouraging them to sing and dance and make "merry." Even as people died in Winter Quarters in the winter of 1846-1847, singing and dancing were done regularly, to praise the Lord and give thanks.

29 **call on the Lord.** If sorrows were upon them, then supplicating prayer was the answer, with the promise that joy would come.

30 **Fear not thine enemies.** Repeating what was said in v. 17, the Lord promised that they were in his hands and he would see justice was done at some point.

31 **My people must be tried in all things.** Many things in life are trials but with the covenants of the Church comes the promise to be "tried in all things." Saints are required to "bear chastisement" to be worthy of being in God's kingdom and to prepare them for a great, eternal glory. See D&C 101:1-4.

32 **learn wisdom by humbling.** Wisdom doesn't begin with great study or learning, though those can bring wisdom if pursued in God's purposes. Rather, wisdom starts with becoming humble, teachable, and prayerful, which can open all eyes and ears.

33 **enlighten the humble and contrite.** Those who are meek and repentant will receive and be taught by the Spirit, and a person could have no greater teacher or tutor.

Purpose of Joseph's death (34-42)

34 **the nation that has driven you out.** The United States had declined to help the Saints who illegally had their lands taken from them multiple times and in the end, drove them out of the very country most of them loved and whose principles of government they embraced.

35 **their sorrow shall be great unless they speedily repent.** Many later saw the Civil War as a fulfillment of this promise, coming only fifteen years after this revelation.

36 **they killed the prophets.** In the New Testament, Jerusalem was the city that killed the prophets (Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34) and the Jews the people that did the same (1 Thessalonians 2:15). In our day, the United States killed the prophets Joseph and Hyrum Smith and did nothing to punish those who committed the crimes.

37 **ye are not yet pure; ye can not yet bear my glory.** Joseph Smith had been calling people to purity and righteousness his entire ministry. That call is no renewed in the ministry of Brigham Young, with the promise that those who "are faithful in keeping all my words" in the scriptures from Adam to Joseph Smith who behold God's glory.

38 **Which foundation he did lay, and was faithful.** Joseph Smith did all that was necessary for his restorative mission. When it was time, the Lord "took him to [himself]."

39 **needful that he should seal his testimony with his blood.** The Prophet's death caused great concern among members of the Church; some even left the Church because they struggled to know what to do with him gone. Here the Lord assured the Saints that Joseph's death was not only part of the plan but was "needful" that he might offer a martyr's blood as his final testimony.

40 **I have left a witness of my name.** Joseph was the Lord's own witness. The rest of the Church was delivered from its enemies, but the Prophet and his brother were "left a witness" to declare by their final offering the truths Christ taught to the whole world.

41 **hearken, O Ye people of my church.** To hearken, a common phrase in the Doctrine and Covenants, is to listen and obey. Those who have received the kingdom of God are called to consecrated listening and obedience in this prairie revelation from the duly-appointed Church leader after Joseph Smith.

42 *Be diligent*. The final people of counsel from the Lord is a call to diligence—ongoing obedience. Without diligence, judgments may come, faith may fail, and enemies may triumph.

42 *So no more at present*. Brigham Young received many revelations like this in his life, but following Joseph Smith’s Nauvoo practices, very few are recorded in the voice of the Lord, and only this one is canonized.

Results

Two days after the revelation was received, it was presented to various priesthood quorums and received unanimously as the word of the Lord. The revelation was copied

many times and shared throughout the month with the various camps of Saints who had left Illinois. Many rejoiced that a prophet once again spoke the word of the Lord among them.

In the spring, a vanguard company of 148 left Winter Quarters, with the goal of reaching the Great Basin in time to plant crops and prepare the situation for the arrival of thousands more, then go back and help others make the trek west. This they accomplished, arriving in the valley of the Great Salt Lake on 24 July 1847. Some stayed to plant crops and prepare for others, but most went back and spent another winter at Winter Quarters, leading yet more Saints to Salt Lake City in 1848.²

D&C 137 – The Celestial Kingdom

Date and Location

Thursday, 21 January 1836, Kirtland, Ohio, in the unfinished temple.

Setting

On 21 January 1836, those in Kirtland were anticipating the dedication of the temple, and were participating in ordinances to purify and prepare them for that event in March. After attending the School of the Prophets in the early afternoon, Joseph Smith and other men went to the room above the printing office, just behind the Kirtland temple. There they washed their bodies “in pure water” and applied perfume “in the name of the Lord,” preparatory to an oil anointing. They then moved to the upper floor of the nearly finished House of the Lord, to the “president’s room,” which was Joseph’s office at the southwest corner of the third floor. The group, which included Joseph and his father, the other members of the presidency, Warren Parrish, and the bishopricks of both Kirtland and Missouri. They anointed their heads with oil and gave blessings to each other. One of those blessings was to Father Smith, where the presidency of the high priesthood (First Presidency) laid their hands on Joseph Smith, Sr., and took turns pronouncing blessings on him. Joseph Jr. then took the seat and his father anointed and blessed him, along with the other members of the presidency. As that concluded, the Prophet experienced a vision that was recorded that day by

Parrish, now Section 137. Others also experienced visions and saw “great and marvelous things,” including the face of the Savior and other angels, but the details were not recorded, except for Joseph’s vision.³

When Joseph’s oldest brother, Alvin, had died of illness in 1823, shortly after Joseph had first met Moroni and learned of the plates and his mission to receive them. Alvin’s death was hard for the whole Smith family, but Joseph remembered “pangs of sorrow.” These feelings were worsened when the minister at his funeral all but declared that Alvin had gone to hell because he had not been baptized. In his revelations, Joseph learned that children were saved without the ordinances of salvation but he did not know Alvin’s status, or anyone else like him, until this revelation.⁴

Joseph’s journal introduced the vision, saying they had experienced, “many prophecies, and blessings, many of which I shall not notice at this time, but as Paul said, so say I, let us come to visions and revelations.”⁵ Immediately followed D&C 137:1 and the full revelation.⁶

Documents and Publication

The oldest copy is from 21 Jan 1836, JS Journal, Sept. 1835 – Apr. 1836, 136-138. It was first published in the *Deseret News* (4 September 1852), then as an addendum to the Pearl of Great Price on 3 April 1976, then as Section 137 in the 1981 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants (announced 22 June 1979).

² Arrington and Bitton, *The Mormon Experience*, 93-101; Allen and Leonard, *The Story*, 234-238; Harper, *Making Sense*, 502-503; Cook, *The Revelations*, 297-300.

³ Oliver Cowdery wrote, “The glorious scene is too great to be described in this book, therefore, I only say, that the heavens were opened to many, and great and marvelous things were shown.” *JSP*, D5:158.

⁴ *JSP*, D5:157-158; *JSP*, J1:166-171; Harper, *Making Sense*, 504-505; McConkie and Ostler, *Revelations*, 1137-1138; Robinson and Garrett, *A Commentary*, 4:295-296; Cook, *The Revelations*, 302-304.

⁵ Compare 2 Corinthians 12:1.

⁶ *JSP*, J1:167.

Commentary

1 *The heavens were opened upon us.* As explained in Setting above, several saw visions in the temple as they anointed and blessed each other that evening. Joseph Smith is reflecting that collective experience, then relating his own specific vision. No one else is recorded to have seen what he saw.

1 *I beheld the celestial kingdom of God.* In February 1832, the Prophet had learned about the celestial, terrestrial, and telestial kingdoms. He may have seen them in vision at that time as well, but in this case the vision had another purpose—to teach him and the Church about people *in* that kingdom of glory.

1 *whether in the body or out I cannot tell.* See 2 Corinthians 12:2-3, which is the verse following the quotation the prophet used to introduce the revelation, in the words of his journal.

2 *the transcendent beauty of the gate.* There is a gate through which all must pass to enter the celestial kingdom. The gate is indescribably beautiful, surpassing any words the Prophet could use. He resorted to metaphor: it “was like unto circling flames of fire.”

3 *the blazing throne of God.* The glory of the throne of God, whereon was seated both the Father and the Son, was so great that “blazing” was the best word Joseph could use to describe it. This was perhaps the Prophet’s fifth vision of the Father and the Son.⁷

4 *paved with gold.* The streets of the celestial kingdom appeared to be paved with gold. The fact that the kingdom has streets is fascinating—they are a very tangible, physical element that are used in our world for transportation; how are streets used there?

5 *I saw Father Adam and Abraham.* The original added “and Michael.” Joseph Smith had already published revelations declaring Adam and Michael to be the same person (D&C 27:11) and written about it in letters. It’s not clear if the addition of Michael as a separate being was intentional or some kind of scribal error.

5 *my father and my mother; my brother Alvin.* All three of these people are significant: Father Smith was sitting in the room with Joseph; his mother was safely in their home in Kirtland; and Alvin had died on 19 Nov 1823. Interestingly, the Prophet didn’t seem confused at the sight of his living parents in the future celestial kingdom, but seeing the dead Alvin caught him by surprise. This turned out to be one of the great teachings of this vision, causing him to pause in his description of the kingdom of glory to focus on the question of Alvin’s presence.

6 *had not been baptized.* Alvin had died long before the Church was organized or even before any work was done on the Book of Mormon, even though he expressed belief in Joseph’s calling. This was before baptism for the dead was understood—in fact, this revelation appears to be a major trigger for Joseph Smith asking about baptism for the dead, hoping for an answer for Alvin and his family.

7 *who would have received it if they had been permitted.* As Joseph paused in his tour of the celestial city to ponder Alvin’s state, the voice of the Lord—perhaps from the very throne of fire he had seen earlier—spoke to him and explained that those who would have received “this gospel” but were denied the opportunity, who nevertheless “be heirs of the celestial kingdom.” The Lord judges not as much on our opportunities but on our hearts, intentions, and how we react to and use the light we are given, however little or large that is.

8 *all that shall die henceforth.* Not only did this concept apply to everyone born before 1830, but to everyone born afterwards—in other words, to anyone born any time. If they would have fully embraced the gospel, had they had the blessing to do so, regardless of their time period, would receive a celestial reward.

9 *according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts.* We can all imagine being judged by our actions, because that happens all the time in our world. But it’s very challenging to judge another according to their intentions.

9 *text note:*

After what is v. 9 today, the journal records, “again I also beheld the Terrestrial kingdom,” but then stops that topic and those words are crossed out. Again, was it a copying mistake of some kind, or did he start to explain a vision of that kingdom of glory as well, but then got cut off by Alvin’s status.

10 *all children who die before they arrive at the years of accountability are saved.* Not only those whose intentions were good but all those who die before age 8 (D&C 68:25) go straight to the celestial kingdom. Over the history of the world, that group alone is enormous.

Results

Four years after this revelation, Father Smith lay dying. He had been greatly upset by the teaching of the minister at Alvin’s funeral that his oldest son was going to hell because he had never been baptized. He rejoiced when his namesake son, Joseph the Prophet, dictated a revelation that Alvin was an heir to the celestial kingdom because the

⁷ Robinson and Garrett, *A Commentary*, 4:297.

intent of his heart was right. This was good doctrine to Father Smith, as it is to us. On his deathbed, the final words that Joseph Smith, Sr., uttered were, “I see Alvin.”

D&C 137 is only a partial record of the full vision that Joseph Smith received that night. The rest is recorded in his journal, as follows:

I saw the 12, apostles of the Lamb, who are now upon the earth who hold the keys of this last ministry, in foreign lands, standing together in a circle much fatigued, with their clothes tattered and feet swollen, with their eyes cast downward, and Jesus <standing> in their midst, and they did not behold him, he the Saviour looked upon them and wept— I also beheld Elder McLellen [William E. McLellen] in the south, standing

upon a hill surrounded with a vast multitude, preaching to them, and a lame man standing before him, supported by his crutches, he threw them down at his word, and leaped as an hart [hart] by the mighty power of God

Also Eldr Brigham Young standing in a strange land, in the far southwest, in a desert place, upon a rock in the midst of about a dozen men of colour, who, appeared hostile He was preaching to them in their own tounge, and the angel of God standing above his head with a drawn sword in his hand protecting him, but he did not see it,— and I finally saw the 12 in the celestial kingdom of God,— I also beheld the redemption of Zion, and many things which the tounge of man, cannot discribe in full,⁸

D&C 138 – Christ in the Spirit World

Date and Location

Thursday, 3 October 1918, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Setting

October 1918 General conference was the next day, and the ailing prophet and president of the Church, Joseph F. Smith, sat pondering many things in his room. President Smith had been ill for about five months and his own passing was on his mind, along with what would happen in the next life. His oldest son, Hyrum Mack Smith (named after his father and grandmother) had died in January of that year of a ruptured appendix. Hyrum was forty-five and left behind a family and his calling as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve. His unexpected passing brought grief and questions to President Smith’s mind. He cried out, “My soul is rent asunder. My heart is broken, and flutters for life! O my sweet son, my job, my hope! . . . O God, help me!” Hyrum’s wife, Ida, was pregnant at the time of his passing; she, too, died in September 1918, of heart failure, six days after giving birth, leaving behind five young orphans.

Joseph F. Smith was no stranger to loss. His father, Hyrum, was martyred when he was five, and his mother died from the rigors of pioneer life when he was thirteen. In 1915, he lost a wife, Sarah and an adult daughter, Zina Greenwell.

Altogether, he buried thirteen of his own children, many in childhood.

Additionally, the Great War (World War I) was being fought in Europe at this time, with more than nine million lives lost. And a worldwide pandemic of influenza had killed upwards of fifty million people—195,000 alone in October 1918, the month of this revelation, and the deadliest month in the history of the United States. Schools, offices, and business closed to try to avoid spreading the contagion. Government officials feared that the flu could literally be the end of civilization. Death was thus an inescapable and unrelenting topic.

As described in the opening verses of this section, sitting in his room, Joseph F. Smith opened his scriptures and began to read and ponder the atonement of Christ and the words of 1 and 2 Peter concerning the spirit world. As he did so, a vision opened to his eyes.⁹

Documents and Publication

It was first published in the *Deseret News* (30 November 1918) and *The Improvement Era* (December 1918), and in the *Relief Society Magazine* (vol. 6, no. 1, Jan. 1919), then as an addendum to the Pearl of Great Price on 3 April 1976, then as Section 138 in the 1981 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants (announced 22 June 1979).

⁸ *JSP*, D5:159-160.

⁹ George S. Tate, “‘The Great World of the Spirits of the Dead’: Death, the Great War, and the 1918 Influenza Pandemic as Context for Doctrine and Covenants 138,” in *BYU Studies* 46:1 (2007), 4-40; Lisa Olsen Tait, “Susa Young Gates and the Vision of the Redemption of the Dead,” *Revelations in Context Series*,

<https://history.lds.org/article/susa-young-gates-vision-of-redemption>, accessed 4 June 2017; Harper, *Making Sense*, 508-509; McConkie and Ostler, *Revelations*, 1143-1144; Robinson and Garrett, *A Commentary*, 4:300-302; Cook, *The Revelations*, 305-306.

Outline

- Reflecting on the Atonement (1-4)
- Reading Peter (5-10)
- Jesus among the righteous dead (11-24)
- Preaching to the spirits (25-37)
- Leaders of the effort (38-49)
- The spirit world a bondage (50-52)
- Missionary efforts post-mortality (53-60)

Commentary

Reflecting on the Atonement (1-4)

1 ***On the third of October.*** Like D&C 76 and a few others, the revelation Joseph F. Smith dictated to his son, Joseph Fielding Smith, included background information about the receipt of the revelation.

2 ***reflecting upon the great atoning sacrifice.*** Sometimes we simplify this experience and say he was pondering the scriptures, but before he opened the Bible, he was first thinking about the Savior and his selfless act of atonement “for the redemption of the world.”

3 ***the great and wonderful love.*** The second element on his mind was the love of both the Father and the Son displayed through the sending of Christ to the earth to be the redeemer of mankind, the one that brings us out of the prison of our own creation. Both sacrificed in order to achieve that result.

4 ***mankind might be saved.*** The combination of “his atonement” and our own obedience is what gives us the hope of being saved or being redeemed from sin and death and exalted to live with God in eternity.

Reading Peter (5-10)

5 ***the writings of the apostle Peter.*** He was led to (“my mind reverted to”) the two letters of Peter in the New Testament, and apparently to the first one, in particular. It was reflecting on the Atonement that led him to this letter.

6 ***the third and fourth chapters.*** Not just the verses quoted next, but he read and pondered both chapters of 1 Peter, which are forty-one verses in our Bible. These chapters speak of many topics—actions of wives and husbands, speaking truth and seeking peace, having hope in Christ, suffering for God’s sake, living according to the will of God, charity, and escaping the judgment of God.

6 ***greatly impressed, more than I had ever been before.*** Four verses especially stood out to him, in a way that he

had never understood them before. Those verses are quoted in vv. 7-10 here, from 1 Peter 3:18-20 and 4:6.

8 ***he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.*** Elder James Talmage quoted these same passages in his work *Jesus the Christ*, published just three years previous, and of which President Smith was certainly aware. There Talmage remarked, with less strong language than we might use today because of D&C 138, “The fact that the gospel was preached to the dead necessarily implies the possibility of the dead accepting the same and availing themselves of the saving opportunities thereof. . . . Missionary labor among the dead was inaugurated by the Christ; who among us can doubt that it has been continued by His authorized servants, the disembodied, who while in the flesh had been commissioned to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof . . . is so abundantly implied in scripture as to be made a certainty.”¹⁰ This revelation turns Talmage’s strong but tentative conclusions to certainty.

Jesus among the righteous dead (11-24)

11 ***As I pondered over these things which are written, the eyes of my understanding were opened.*** This is a near-quote from D&C 76:19 (also v. 12 and 110:1). The original phrase comes from Ephesians 1:17-18, where Paul prays that they might be blessed with “the spirit of wisdom and revelation” and that “the eyes of your understanding being enlightened,” they will understand the hope and glory of Christ.

11 ***I saw the hosts of the dead, both small and great.*** The pairing of “small” and “great” happens many times in the scriptures. It has no reference to physical size, but is used to indicate those of lesser status and those of greater. John also saw “the dead, small and great, stand before God” (Revelation 20:12).

12 ***an innumerable company of the spirits of the just.*** This is not all the spirits in the spirit world but only “the just,” which is defined as those “who had been faithful in the testimony of Jesus while they lived in mortality.” We might be inclined to see the history of world as one of war, wickedness, and dominance by powerful and selfish people, because those are the ones that often make it into the history books. But those who are true to the testimony of Christ in this life is a group so large that they cannot be counted by President Smith.

13 ***who had offered sacrifice in the similitude.*** There are two groups among those who are “the just” (v. 12); this is the first, referring to those who lived before the time of Christ and, according to commandment, offered animal sacrifices in the likeness of the future sacrifice of Christ.

¹⁰ James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City; Deseret Book: 1982), 626-627.

13 *suffered tribulation in their Redeemer's name*. The second group suffered for their beliefs. Because of the use of the term “tribulation,” and the juxtaposition of the two groups, this likely refers to those after the coming of Christ who no longer offered sacrifice but now openly bore the name of Christ in their words and deeds, and were persecuted as a result (Revelation 2:10; 7:14).

14 *firm in the hope of a glorious resurrection*. Both groups had completed their mortal probation and were waiting for the promised resurrection that would come “through the grace of God the Father and his Only Begotten Son.”

15 *filled with joy and gladness*. In this massive gathering of righteous spirits, Joseph F. observed a great excitement and joy. The cause of their rejoicing was that they had somehow learned “the day of their deliverance was at hand.”

16 *the advent of the Son of God into the spirit world*. The call had gone out—Christ is coming at this time and place, gather together to see him.

16 *their redemption from the bands of death*. The message that this huge crowd anxiously awaited was to hear from the Savior that death was finally overcome. We might consider the just in the spirit world as being happy and those in spirit “prison” to be in need of redemption, but the righteous still considered their state one of bondage; the separation of the body and spirit is like a prison to those who had experienced the two together and await that restoration (v. 18).

17 *the spirit and the body to be united never again to be divided*. For thousands of years, if earth time matters in that world, spirits had been taught the doctrine of the resurrection. Now that day was almost here, and they anticipated it greatly, “that they might receive a fulness of joy.”

18 *the Son of God appeared, declaring liberty to the captives*. Jesus appeared among these assembled spirits and fulfilled Isaiah 61:1, telling the captive righteous spirits that their liberty was imminent.

19 *he preached to them the everlasting gospel*. Jesus taught this vast multitude the good news of what he had accomplished through the Atonement was would accomplish shortly through the resurrection; both redeemed “mankind from [the consequences of] the fall,” which was death, and “from individual sins” if they would repent. The sting of death and sin were both taken away by the Redeemer (see 1 Corinthians 15:55-57).

20 *unto the wicked he did not go*. There was another group in the spirit world, “the wicked,” who were unrepentant” and who “had defiled themselves” in life. This group of

spirits did not have the blessing of Christ’s personal presence at this time, the period between his death and resurrection.

21 *the rebellious*. A third group was somehow distinguished in his vision: those who rejected the words of the prophets who came among the people in the history of the world. These willfully disobedient did not “look upon his face” either.

22 *darkness reigned*. President Smith observed that among these unrepentant spirits, it was dark, but among the righteous, he observed a peaceful atmosphere. The contrast was stark and easily noticed in his vision.

23 *bowed the knee and acknowledged the Son of God*. Turning back to the righteous who were experiencing Christ’s presence, Joseph F. saw them all bowing down the recognize Jesus as “their Redeemer and Deliverer,” the only one who could release them from “the chains of hell.”

24 *Their countenances shone*. Like the Nephites when Jesus visited them later (3 Nephi 19:25), these righteous spirits were changed in Jesus’ presence. His light enlightened them, and in their changed state, they began to sing praises to the name of Christ.

Preaching to the spirits (25-37)

25 *I marveled*. After seeing the great reception Jesus had among the righteous, President Smith was amazed. He knew that in the vision, Jesus had just come from a roughly three-year ministry in Israel, where by and large, he was rejected and finally crucified, with “but few who hearkened to his voice” and accepted the blessings he offered (v. 26). The contrast between his knowledge of Jesus’ mortal ministry and this glorious encounter in the spirit world made him marvel.

27 *the brief time intervening*. Among the righteous dead, Jesus only had a very short time—just the hours between his death on the cross and his resurrection early Sunday morning. And yet look how well he used those hours!

28 *the Son of God preached unto the spirits in prison*. Turning back to the words of Peter that he had been reading just prior to the vision, he recalled that Peter taught that Jesus preached to the imprisoned spirits. But in the limited time he had, and based on what he had observed, Joseph F. was clear that Jesus had not personally gone to the unrighteous spirits. So what did Peter mean, and how was it all possible in those few hours?

29 *my eyes were opened, and my understanding quickened*. For the second time, his vision and understanding was somehow enhanced by the Spirit in answer to a pondering question, and he was taught the answer he sought.

29 *the Lord went not in person among the wicked*. As he had already learned, Jesus did not personally go among the

wicked and disobedient spirits in the limited time he had to organize the work in the spirit world.

30 **he organized his forces and appointed messengers.** Rather, Christ spent his time with the righteous spirits preparing them and sending them off to preach to the wicked. He gave them “power and authority, and commissioned them” to teach among the darkness of the other spirits. The language is interesting in light of the constant news about war, armies, and battling forces in Joseph F. Smith’s world at that time.

31 **declare the acceptable day of the Lord.** Picking up the language of Isaiah 61:1-2, which Jesus himself used to declare his ministry during mortality (Luke 4:18-19), the message to the wicked spirits delivered by the empowered and commissioned missionaries was to “repent of their sins and receive the gospel.”

32 **Thus was the gospel preached.** Peter’s words were fulfilled by divine delegation: Jesus did indeed preach to the spirits in prison, but through his chosen messengers, who preached his words as if he were there. The people who were in darkness and were taught were again in two groups: those who died without hearing the gospel message, and those who heard and rejected it in mortality.

33 **repentance from sin, vicarious baptism.** The eternal principles taught were the same as those taught in mortality, with the exception that baptism was not an ordinance they could personally perform any more. Instead, they were taught the doctrine of temple work done by their descendants, putting a great deal of timeliness to getting that work done. The reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost, while not specifically called out in the revelation like baptism, is also something only done in the temple for the dead.

34 **judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.** Going back to 1 Peter 4:6, the wording of this phrase has deeper meaning now. Through repentance and acceptance of Christ, these spirits would live according to God’s commandments in the spirit world, but be judged according to other mortals, because they would have the privilege of vicarious ordinances that could only be done in mortality, in their behalf.

35 **so it was made known among the dead.** One can imagine the innumerable host of righteous missionaries quickly fanning out among the wicked spirits, preaching in groups and one-on-one, preaching Jesus crucified and the power of his Atonement to change their lives, even in their post-mortal condition.

36 **instructing and preparing the faithful.** In summary, President Smith taught that he saw that Jesus spent his time teaching and preparing the faithful to take the message all throughout the spirit world, which they did.

36 **the prophets who had testified of him in the flesh.** Of special focus in his teaching and preparation efforts were those prophets or spokesmen who had already proved faithful in taking the message of Christ to the world in mortality. Now theirs was the opportunity to lead the missionary efforts in the spirit world.

37 **because of their rebellion and transgression.** This explanation is fascinating: Christ could not go among the wicked because of their wickedness. I believe we take that to mean not that he was somehow powerless to do it, but rather that he was being merciful to them. Sending servants instead of going personally gave them a better opportunity to exercise agency. It could also be that his presence would somehow overcome them, even as it does for mortals. Either way, it was an act of kindness on his part to delegate this work, even as it was a practical consideration in terms of his ability to accomplish it personally.

Leaders of the effort (38-49)

38 **Father Adam, the Ancient of Days.** As Joseph F. looked at the vast group of righteous spirits and saw those who were leaders in the group, he first saw Adam, the first man, the father of the human race. The title “Ancient of Days” comes from Daniel 7:9-14 and is picked up in D&C 27:11.

39 **our glorious Mother Eve, with many of her faithful daughters.** Working in and leading the preaching of the gospel message to the spirits was Eve, the first woman and mother of the human race, and many other women among her descendants. This marvelous part of the vision declares that the sisters are right there with the men in the great work of the Lord, there and here.

40 **Abel . . . Seth.** Two of the sons of Adam—one who was killed for his commitment to worship the Lord, and the other the inheritor of the covenant even as he appeared to be the twin of his father—were next brought into President Smith’s view.

41 **Noah.** The prophet who bore testimony of God ahead of the great flood came into view.

41 **Shem, the great high priest.** It was a common belief among some in the Church at this time (and among many Jews, based on the Talmud and other literature) that Shem and Melchizedek were one and the same person, perhaps due to a reference in the Book of Jasher.¹¹ Since only

¹¹ Gerald E. Jones, “Apocryphal Literature and the Latter-day Saints,” in C. Wilfred Griggs, ed., *Apocryphal Writings and the*

Latter-day Saints (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center: 1986), 22; see *Times and Seasons* (15 December 1844), 746, for John Taylor’s comment in passing that

Christ (Hebrews 4:14) and Melchizedek (D&C 107:2) are referred to with the title “great high priest” in all of scripture, it stands to reason that Joseph F. Smith made this association with the two men as well.

41 **Abraham . . . Isaac, Jacob, and Moses.** The patriarchs and Moses, “the great law-giver of Israel,” were also seen among the prophetic leaders.

42 **Isaiah.** Recognizing that the proclamations of the righteous came from Isaiah’s writings, Joseph F. also recognized that prophet as one of the leaders.

43 **Ezekiel.** Another one was Ezekiel, the prophet of the exile who had a vision of the resurrection, especially germane to this vision.

44 **Daniel.** The other prophet of the exile and who saw a vision of the stone cut without hands that represents the kingdom of God in the last days, was recognized by President Smith.

45 **Elias, who was with Moses.** Using the New Testament form of his name, Joseph F. saw Elijah in the crowd.

46 **Malachi.** The last prophet of the Old Testament and the one who spoke of the coming of Elijah to turn the key of family history and temple work, was part of the gathering.

48 **the great work to be done in the temples.** Malachi’s prophesy and Elijah’s return drove the vicarious work promised to the repentant spirits in the vast missionary effort described in the previous verses.

49 **All these and many more.** The list could not be comprehensive because of the size of the group, but one important contingent was mentioned collectively—“the prophets who dwelt among the Nephites.”

The spirit world a bondage (50-52)

50 **the long absence of their spirits from their bodies as a bondage.** Returning and being explicit about a theme mentioned earlier, President Smith recorded that all who waited in the spirit world considered their situation to be one of bondage; not having a body after experiencing that, however briefly, felt like a prison.

51 **gave them power to come forth.** At the time President Smith was seeing in vision, Jesus had not yet resurrected. Still, in anticipation of that event, he gave “power” (meaning keys and authority) to the leaders among the people “to come forth” as soon as his own resurrection was complete. With this done, the righteous could enter into the Father’s kingdom and received eternal rewards of “immortality and eternal life.”

the two names were the same person: “Shem (who was Melchizedek).”

52 **partakers of all blessings.** Their spiritual bondage was to end with the resurrection, putting them at last in a position to enjoy every blessing waiting for them.

Missionary efforts post-mortality (53-60)

53 **Joseph Smith, and my father, Hyrum.** Turning next to modern leaders of the restored Church, President Smith saw his uncle Joseph and his father, Hyrum, both killed in Carthage Jail when he was five. Perhaps more than another other sight that day, this one brought him a larger degree of personal joy.

53 **Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff.** His predecessors were all named with the curious except of Lorenzo Snow, though the prophet just before President Smith would certainly fit in the category of “other choice spirits” of the latter days.

54 **the building of the temples and the performance of ordinances.** These latter-day prophets he saw were all instrumental in building temples and moving forward with the salvific work for the dead in our dispensation.

55 **the noble and great ones.** Using the language of Abraham 3:22-23, Smith applied this title to Church presidents from the beginning to his own time.

56 **received their first lessons in the world of the spirits.** All sons and daughters of heavenly Father have to start their education somewhere—even the greatest of those in the pre-mortal life had “first lessons” at some point in their progression.

57 **the faithful elders of this dispensation.** Elders are called to preach the gospel (D&C 53:3), and Joseph F. saw that the elders of the Restoration continued that activity after their own deaths. Their message was the same: repentance and faith in Christ and reliance on his Atonement for salvation.

58 **The dead who repent will be redeemed.** Not perhaps, not even maybe or likely, but for certain—if the dead repent and receive the ordinances performed in their behalf in the temples just talked about, they will be redeemed.

59 **after they have paid the penalty of their transgressions.** Just as in this life, repentance and forgiveness can be painful, struggling experiences, that take time and effort to complete, so in the world of the spirits, repentance is not without pain and forgiveness not without time and commitment.

60 **the vision of the redemption of the dead.** The last verse gave us the title that is commonly applied to this revelation, and also a testimony from the recipient that it is true.

Results

Unknown to anyone in Utah, the same day that this revelation was received, the newly elected German Chancellor, Prince Maximilian of Baden, contacted United States President Woodrow Wilson, seeking negotiations to bring the war to an end. World War I officially concluded five weeks later.

The day following the vision, President Joseph F. Smith surprised General Conference attendees by making a short visit in the Friday morning session, where he briefly spoke. Part of his remarks were:

I have been undergoing a siege of very serious illness for the last five months. Although somewhat weakened in body, my mind is clear with reference to my duty. I will not, I dare not, attempt to enter upon many things that are resting upon my mind this morning, and I shall postpone until some future time, the Lord being willing, my attempt to tell you some of the things that are in my mind, and that dwell in my heart. I have not lived alone this five months. I have dwelt in the spirit of prayer, of supplication, of faith and of determination, and I have had my communication with the Spirit of the Lord continuously.

Immediately following his talk and varying from the program, the organist started playing “We Thank Thee, O God, For a Prophet,” and the congregation arose and sang it with strong emotion.

Though he did not speak of it in Conference, he shared with this close friend, Susa Young Gates, that he wanted to speak of it but was afraid he would be overcome with emotion and not be able to finish, so powerful was the message of this revelation to him.

Ten days following General Conference, Joseph F. dictated this revelation to his son, Joseph Fielding Smith, also a member of the Quorum of the Twelve and future president of the Church. On Thursday, 31 October 1831, it was submitted by him to the First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve, and Church Patriarch at the council meeting in the temple. They voted unanimously to accept it as the word of the Lord and had it published in the *Deseret News* newspaper and the Church magazine, *The Improvement Era*.

On 6 November 1918, Susa Young Gates and her husband, Jacob Gates, close friends of President Smith, visited his home, where he handed Susa a copy of the revelation to read. This was before it was published but after being accepted by Church leaders. Susa rejoiced in the revelation, especially the mention of “Mother Even & her noble daughters engaged in the same holy cause!” An advocate for temple work and family history, she reflected that this revelation would surely give encouragement to those engaged in such efforts.

President Joseph F. Smith passed away just six weeks after receiving this revelation, on Tuesday, 19 November 1918, at the age of 80 years, no doubt to join many others in the world of the spirits in carrying on the Savior’s work there. Ironically, because of the ongoing flu epidemic, public funeral services were not held. Susa Gates published tributes to President Smith in the January 1919 *Relief Society Magazine*, of which she was the editor, along with the full text of his vision. She concluded, “May the people, especially our sisters, rise to the measure of fulness in response to this heavenly manifestation!”¹²

Works Consulted

For text and publication notes:

RB1 – Revelation Book 1, from *JSP*, MRB:8-405.

RB2 – Revelation Book 2, from *JSP*, MRB:407-665.

EMS – *The Evening and the Morning Star*, June 1832-May 1833, from *JSP*, R2:202-299.

NKW – Newel K. Whitney papers (various Dx volumes)

SGN – Sidney Gilbert Notebook (various Dx volumes)

1833 – Book of Commandments, printed in 1833, from *JSP*, R2:13-193.

1835 – Doctrine and Covenants, printed in 1835, from *JSP*, R2:311-635.

1844 – Doctrine and Covenants, printed in 1844, from *JSP*, R2:643-691.

1876 – Doctrine and Covenants, printed in 1876.

¹² George S. Tate, “The Great World of the Spirits of the Dead,” 4-40; Lisa Olsen Tait, “Susa Young Gates and the Vision of the Redemption of the Dead,”; Harper, *Making Sense*, 511-513.

- Allen, James B. and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976.
- Arrington, Leonard J. and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979.
- Backman, Jr., Milton V., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio 1830-1838*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983.
- Black, Susan Easton, *Who's Who in the Doctrine & Covenants*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997.
- Black, Susan Easton and Andrew C. Skinner, eds., *Joseph: Exploring the Life and Ministry of the Prophet*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005.
- Blumell, Lincoln H., Matthew J. Grey, and Andrew H. Hedges, eds., *Approaching Antiquity: Joseph Smith and the Ancient World*. Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 2015.
- Brewster, Hoyt W., Jr., *Doctrine & Covenants Encyclopedia*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988.
- Brigham Young University, *Hearken, O Ye People: Discourses on the Doctrine and Covenants, Sperry Symposium 1984* (Sandy, Utah: Randall Book, 1984).
- Brigham Young University, *Joseph Smith and the Restoration: The 34th Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company and BYU Religious Studies Center, 2005.
- Bushman, Richard Lyman. *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005.
- Cannon, Donald Q., and Lyndon W. Cook, *Far West Record*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1983.
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, "Revelations in Context," <https://history.lds.org/section/revelations>.
- Compton, Todd, *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997.
- Cook, Lyndon W., *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Provo, UT: Seventy's Mission Bookstore, 1981.
- Davidson, Karen Lynn, David J. Whittaker, Mark Ashurst-McGee, and Richard L. Jensen, eds. *Histories, Volume 1: Joseph Smith Histories, 1832–1844*. Vol. 1 of the Histories series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2012. Hereafter *JSP*, H1.
- Davidson, Karen Lynn, Richard L. Jensen, and David J. Whittaker, eds. *Histories, Volume 2: Assigned Histories, 1831–1847*. Vol. 2 of the Histories series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2012. Hereafter *JSP*, H2.
- Derr, Jill Mulvay, Carol Cornwall Madsen, Kate Holbrook, and Matthew J. Grow, eds. *The First Fifty Years of Relief Society: Key Documents in Latter-day Saint Women's History*. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2016.
- Dirkmaat, Gerrit J., Brent M. Rogers, Grant Underwood, Robert J. Woodford, and William G. Hartley, eds. *Documents, Volume 3: February 1833-March 1833*. Volume 3 of the Documents series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by Ronald K. Esplin and Matthew J. Grow. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2014. Hereafter *JSP*, D3.
- Ehat, Andrew F. and Lyndon W. Cook. *The Words of Joseph Smith*. Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980.
- Esplin, Ronald K., Matthew J. Grow; Matthew C. Godfrey, eds., *Joseph Smith's Revelations: A Doctrine and Covenants Study Companion from the Joseph Smith Papers*. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2016 (electronic version only).
- Garr, Arnold K., Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard O. Cowan, eds., *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000.
- Gentry, Leland H., and Todd M. Compton, *Fire and Sword: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri, 1836-39*. Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2011.
- Godfrey, Matthew C., Mark Ashurst-McGee, Grant Underwood, Robert J. Woodford, and William G. Hartley, eds. *Documents, Volume 2: July 1831-January 1833*. Volume 2 of the Documents series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by

- Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2013. Hereafter *JSP*, D2.
- Godfrey, Matthew C., Brenden W. Rensink, Alex D. Smith, Max H Parkin, Alexander L. Baugh, eds. *Documents, Volume 4: April 1834-september 1835*. Volume 4 of the Documents series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2016. Hereafter *JSP*, D4.
- Hales, Brian C., *Joseph Smith's Polygamy*, 3 vols. Draper, UT: Greg Kofford Books, 2013.
- Hales, Brian C. and Laura H. Hales, *Joseph Smith's Polygamy: Toward a Better Understanding*. Draper, UT: Greg Kofford Books, 2015 (Kindle version).
- Harper, Steven C., *Making Sense of the Doctrine & Covenants*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2008.
- Hedges, Andrew H., J. Spencer Fluhman, and Alonzo L. Gaskill, eds. *The Doctrine and Covenants: Revelations in Context, the 37th Annual Brigham Young University Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*. Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2008.
- Hedges, Andrew H., Alex D. Smith, and Richard Lloyd Anderson, eds. *Journals, Volume 2: December 1841-April 1843*. Vol. 2 of the Journals series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2011. Hereafter *JSP*, J2.
- Holzapfel, Richard Neitzel and Kent P. Jackson, eds., *Joseph Smith the Prophet & Seer*. Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2010.
- Jensen, Robin Scott, Robert J. Woodford, and Steven C. Harper, eds. *Manuscript Revelation Books*. Facsimile edition. First volume of the Revelations and Translations series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2009. Hereafter *JSP*, MRB.
- Jensen, Robin Scott, Richard E. Turley, Jr., and Riley M Lorimer, eds. *Revelations and Translations, Volume 2: Published Revelations*. Vol. 2 of the Revelations and Translations series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2011. Hereafter *JSP*, R2.
- Jessee, Dean C., Mark Ashurst-McGee, and Richard L. Jensen, eds. *Journals, Volume 1: 1832-1839*. Vol. 1 of the Journals series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2008. Hereafter *JSP*, J1.
- Jessee, Dean C., *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002.
- Jessee, Dean C., *The Papers of Joseph Smith* (2 vols.). Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989, 1992.
- Leonard, Glen M., *Nauvoo: A Place of Peace, a People of Promise*. Salt Lake City and Provo, UT: Deseret Book and Brigham Young University Press, 2002.
- MacKay, Michael Hubbard, Gerrit J. Dirkmaat, Grant Underwood, Robert J. Woodford, and William G. Hartley, eds. *Documents, Volume 1: July 1828-June 1831*. Volume 1 of the Documents Series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman. Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2013. Hereafter *JSP*, D1.
- Mackley, Jennifer Ann, *Wilford Woodruff's Witness: The Development of Temple Doctrine*. Seattle, WA: High Desert Publishing, 2014.
- Marsh, W. Jeffrey, with Jennifer Johnson and Celeste Pittman, *The Eyewitness History of the Church: Volume 1, The Restoration, 1800-1833*. Springville, UT: CFI, 2005.
- McConkie, Joseph Fielding, Craig J. Ostler, *Revelations of the Restoration*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000.
- Millet, Robert L. and Kent P. Jackson, *Studies in Scripture, Volume 1: The Doctrine and Covenants*. Sandy, UT: Randall Book Company, 1984.
- Newell, Linda King and Valeen tippets Avery, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1984.

- Oaks, Dallin H. and Marvin S. Hill, *Carthage Conspiracy: The Trial of the Accused Assassins of Joseph Smith*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1975.
- Ostler, Craig James, Michael Hubbard MacKay, and Barbara Morgan Gardner, *Foundations of the Restoration: Fulfillment of the Covenant Purposes*. Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 2016.
- Parkin, Max H, "Joseph Smith and the United Firm: The Growth and Decline of the Church's First Master Plan of Business and Finance, Ohio and Missouri, 1832-1834," in *BYU Studies*, 46:3 (2007).
- Proctor, Scot Facer and Maurine Jensen Proctor, eds., *The Revised and Enhanced History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996.
- Robinson, Stephen E., and H. Dean Garrett, *A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants* (4 vols.). Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005.
- Smith, Joseph, *History of the Church*. Edited by B. H. Roberts (7 vols.). Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980. Hereafter HC.
- Staker, Mark Lyman, *Hearken, O Ye People: The Historical Setting of the Joseph Smith's Ohio Revelations*. Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2009.
- Turley, Richard C. and William W. Slaughter, *How We Got the Doctrine and Covenants*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2012.
- Vogel, Dan, ed., *Early Mormon Documents* (5 vols.). Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996-2003.