

Appendix 3: Discourse, circa 4 July 1838

Source Note



Discourse, ca. 4 July 1838. Featured version printed [ca. Aug. 1838] as Oration Delivered by Mr. S. Rigdon on the 4th of July, 1838, at Far West, Caldwell County, Missouri, Far West, MO: Journal Office, 1838; eleven pages; CHL.

Three bifolia measuring $7\frac{3}{4} \times 4\frac{7}{8}$ inches (20 × 12 cm). At some point in time, the sheets were sewn together, leaving two needle holes along the fold; later, the sheets were resewn, leaving three holes. The pamphlet was later folded twice, possibly for carrying.

It is unknown when the featured copy of the published oration came into the possession of the Church History Library.

Historical Introduction



On 4 July 1838, [Sidney Rigdon](#) delivered a lengthy discourse—which was possibly prepared with help from JS—celebrating the anniversary of [American](#) independence, pledging allegiance to the nation, and asserting the right of the Latter-day Saints to defend themselves from persecution. The discourse was not an extemporaneous speech but a carefully prepared declaration responding to the developing circumstances in which the Saints found themselves. The “oration” delivered by Rigdon was the outgrowth of three related developments among the Latter-day Saints in 1838: a new resolve to resist adversaries and fend off legal harassment; a renewed effort to develop [Far West](#), Missouri, as a gathering center; and an assertion of the Saints’ rights to expand into neighboring counties unmolested.

The new resolve to fend off legal harassment grew out of the circumstance of the church community in [Kirtland](#), Ohio, in 1837, when it was severely challenged by economic difficulties, internal dissent, and considerable opposition from local antagonists, including legal harassment. As [Eber D. Howe](#), editor of the newspaper in nearby [Painesville](#), Ohio, later recounted: “Many of our citizens thought it advisable to take all the legal means within their reach to counteract the progress of so dangerous an enemy in their midst, and many law suits ensued.”¹ Dozens of lawsuits were commenced in 1837 naming JS, [Rigdon](#), and other church leaders as defendants.² This legal persecution contributed to the circumstances under which JS abandoned [Kirtland](#) in January 1838 and relocated to [Far West](#), with loyal church members to follow. Upon arriving in [Missouri](#), JS composed a church “motto” that condemned all such “vexatious lawsuits.”³ However, these “vexatious” or petty and malicious lawsuits continued after the relocation to Missouri, as disaffected Mormons there initiated legal proceedings against JS and others and encouraged lawsuits for debt among the Saints generally.⁴ At the November 1838 hearing that followed the conflicts between the Saints and their Missouri neighbors, [John Corrill](#) testified that in April 1838 JS and Rigdon “appeared to be vexed on account of troubles & law suits they had had.” Corrill, who had disaffected by the time he made his statement, recounted that the two men said “that they would suffer vexatious law suits no longer, & that they would resist even an officer in the discharge of his duty.” In addition, [Caldwell County](#) Circuit Court clerk and dissident Mormon [John Cleminson](#) testified at the hearing that JS had instructed him not to issue writs against church leaders in suits that appeared to be “vexatious.”⁵ While their biases and the specific details of their memory may be questioned, they do affirm the sentiment expressed in the church motto JS composed upon arriving in [Far West](#).

The second development resulted from the abandonment of [Kirtland](#). Upon arriving in [Far West](#), JS and other church leaders refocused their efforts on developing the settlement as a new headquarters for the church. In late April 1838, they passed resolutions to construct new church buildings and to reestablish the church press and newspaper.⁶ JS also dictated a [revelation](#) that designated [Far West](#) a city of [Zion](#) with a [house of the Lord](#), also known as a temple. The revelation directed that the Saints begin laying the foundation for the sacred edifice on 4 July. The revelation closed by announcing that JS would also direct Mormon settlement in “the regions round about.”⁷

The third development stemmed from anti-Mormon opposition to Mormon settlements outside of [Caldwell County](#). Earlier, following the forced removals of the Saints from [Jackson](#) and [Clay](#) counties in the mid-1830s, the [Missouri](#) legislature created [Caldwell County](#) with the intention that it could be safely settled by the Saints. Many anti-Mormons assumed that Mormon settlement would be confined to [Caldwell County](#), although there is no contemporaneous evidence that church leaders agreed to any such arrangement. In June 1838, church members launched settlement projects in [Adam-ondi-Ahman](#) in [Davies County](#) to the north of [Caldwell County](#) and in [De Witt](#) in [Carroll County](#) to the southeast.⁸ Both settlements grew rapidly. During the previous year, JS had received information regarding ongoing opposition to the Saints settling in adjoining counties.⁹ Perhaps anticipating hostility to these settlements, he reportedly delivered a discourse in late June in which he declared that “if the people would let him alone he would conquer them by the sword of the Spirit, but if they would not he would beat the plow shears into swords & their pruning hooks into spears & conquer them.”¹⁰ At about the time of this speech, Mormon men in [Caldwell County](#) founded the Society of the Daughter of Zion (later known as the [Danites](#)), a vigilante group intent on defending the church from external opposition.¹¹

It was within the broad context of these three developments that the church planned its first formally sponsored Independence Day celebration. By the 1830s, many American communities commemorated independence from the British empire with festivities on 4 July. At these events, ministers, politicians, and other local leaders gave speeches that were frequently prepared in advance and then published. ¹² A “committee of arrangements” was appointed to prepare for the 1838 Independence Day celebration in [Far West](#). The committee appointed JS “president of the day”; [Hyrum Smith](#), JS’s second counselor in the First Presidency, was appointed “vice president”; and [Sidney Rigdon](#), JS’s first counselor in the First Presidency, was named “orator” and invited to give the speech. ¹³

Mormon preachers in the 1830s did not normally prepare their sermons beforehand, preferring instead to rely on the Holy Ghost to direct their preaching. ¹⁴ However, the text of the Independence Day oration was reportedly prepared in advance.

[Ebenezer Robinson](#), the church’s printer, recounted decades later that the oration “was a carefully prepared document, previously written, and well understood by the First Presidency.” ¹⁵ Although it seems that Robinson meant that the document was prepared in advance and that its contents were understood by the entire First Presidency prior to Rigdon’s delivery, it is possible that Robinson also meant to imply that members of the First Presidency worked together in preparing the document. Rigdon, who was considered a learned and skilled orator, likely composed much or all of the text that he would deliver, but JS or Hyrum Smith may have collaborated in its composition, as the First Presidency had done in the past. ¹⁶ It is also possible that JS provided general direction or advice on its content prior to its composition. Ultimately, it is unknown whether the oration was prepared by Rigdon on his own, by the First Presidency generally, or in another way.

The prepared oration was lengthy, amounting to over ten pages when printed. The opening section pledges allegiance to the nation and expresses deep patriotic sentiment. It rehearses the birth of the nation, venerates the founding fathers, and extols the political principles enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the [United States](#), especially freedom of religion. It also recounts the history of persecutions endured by the Saints and the violations of their constitutional rights. The subject then shifts to the purpose and function of the [temple](#) they planned to build as a place of both religious and secular education. The secular education obtained therein would contribute to the national project of producing a literate citizenry that, through informed voting, could preserve American freedom. The conclusion of the speech returns to the violations of American freedom suffered by the Saints. Invoking the right to defend themselves, the oration declares the firm resolve of the Saints to resist any future physical threats or vexatious lawsuits. It threatened any mob who attacked them that they would fight back with deadly force and wage a “war of extermination.” This phrase was commonly used in the nineteenth century to describe intractable conflicts such as the violent struggles between European American settlers and Native American peoples. ¹⁷ While adamant and somewhat threatening in tone, the oration clarifies that the Saints would never be the aggressors and would never violate the rights of others.

The discourse apparently drew on an 1833 JS [revelation](#) that provided guidance for how the Saints were to respond to future mob violence. If any man were to “smite” or otherwise attack them, the Saints were to “bear it patiently.” However, following an opponent’s third offense, the revelation instructed that the Saints were to “warn him in my [God’s] name that he come no more upon you.” If the antagonist persisted, the Saints were informed: “thine enemy is in thine hands and if thou reward him according to his works thou art Justified.” ¹⁸ Similarly, the 1838 Independence Day oration featured here recounted how the Saints were “wearied of being smitten” and that they had endured this abuse “with patience.” The sermon further stated: “we warn all men in the name of Jesus Christ, to come on us no more,” proceeding then to declare that persecution would provoke a “war of extermination.” The close parallels between the two texts strongly suggest that the oration was deliberately formulated to comply with the requirements of the 1833 revelation. As First Presidency scribe [George W. Robinson](#) wrote in JS’s journal, the discourse represented the church’s “declaration of Independence from all mobs and persecutions which have been inflicted upon us time after time untill we could bear it no longer.” ¹⁹ Hereafter, all enemies had been duly warned and the Saints were justified in fighting back.

[Rigdon](#) delivered the oration to a large audience. Recounting the events of the day in JS’s journal, [George W. Robinson](#) estimated that there had been “several thousands of spectators” who gathered for the celebration, which was held at the public square in the center of [Far West](#). JS presided over the celebration. ²⁰ [Ebenezer Robinson](#) recalled that “a stand was erected for the officers and orator of the day, large enough also to seat several distinguished visitors.” ²¹ This stand was erected on the north side of the public square. It was likely situated near the [temple site](#), in the northeast corner of the public square, where the presidency would oversee the ceremonial laying of the temple cornerstones. The celebration began at ten o’clock in the morning with a parade in which both the [Caldwell County](#) regiment of the state militia and the Danite society marched, as well as several church leaders and the temple architects. After the procession formed around the temple excavation, JS offered a prayer and the band played a number. Various church officers then participated in the ceremonial laying of the cornerstones for the temple that the Saints planned to build in their burgeoning community—a symbol that they intended to build a religiously oriented city and that they were building to stay. The procession of military and civilian officers then formed again around the stand, where the festivities culminated with Rigdon’s delivery of the oration. According to [George W. Robinson](#), Rigdon delivered the discourse

“under the hoisted flagg representing the Liberty and independence of these [United States of America](#).”²² Following Rigdon’s emphatic conclusion that the Saints would no longer withstand persecution without fighting back, the assembled crowd responded with “a shout of hosanna.” The First Presidency then descended from the stand and “marched to the south side of the public square,” where the assembled troops “passed in review before them.” This demonstration of military preparedness brought the celebration to a close.²³

Efforts were soon made to publish the oration, perhaps as an attempt to further comply with the 1833 [revelation](#)’s injunction to warn the Saints’ opponents not to attack them. The text of the sermon was shared with attorney and newspaper editor Peter H. Burnett of [Liberty](#), Missouri, who printed it in his paper, the *Far West*.²⁴ Copies of this newspaper version of the oration are apparently not extant. The discourse was also published in pamphlet form by the church printing office in [Far West](#).²⁵ Although the manuscript of the oration is not extant, church printer [Ebenezer Robinson](#) occasionally supplied clarifying information in brackets in the printed text, indicating that he was attempting to accurately reproduce the text of the manuscript he had been given. At the same time, however, Robinson introduced a few minor typographical errors. The [August 1838 issue](#) of the *Elders’ Journal* included an [editorial](#) by JS in which he encouraged church members to obtain copies of the pamphlet for its history of the church’s persecution and its expression of their “fixed determinations” that they would not “be mobed any more without taking vengeance.”²⁶ Although the sermon struck a defensive posture and was intended as a declaration of freedom from further persecution, anti-Mormon vigilantes and [Missouri](#) newspapers regularly cited it in subsequent months as evidence that the Saints meant to defy the law and wage war against other Missouri citizens.²⁷ For both the Latter-day Saints and their opponents in Missouri, the oration set the tone for the conflict that followed.

Footnotes

[1] Howe, *Autobiography and Recollections*, 45; see also Adams, “Grandison Newell’s Obsession,” 159–188.

Comprehensive Works Cited

Howe, Eber D. *Autobiography and Recollections of a Pioneer Printer: Together with Sketches of the War of 1812 on the Niagara Frontier*. Painesville, OH: Telegraph Steam Printing House, 1878.

Adams, Dale W. “Grandison Newell’s Obsession.” *Journal of Mormon History* 30 (Spring 2004): 159–188.

[2] See Madsen, “Tabulating the Impact of Litigation on the Kirtland Economy,” 227–246.

Comprehensive Works Cited

Madsen, Gordon A. “Tabulating the Impact of Litigation on the Kirtland Economy.” In *Sustaining the Law: Joseph Smith’s Legal Encounters*, edited by Gordon A. Madsen, Jeffrey N. Walker, and John W. Welch, 227–246. Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 2014.

[3] See [Motto, ca. 16 or 17 Mar. 1838](#). An influential nineteenth-century law dictionary defined a “vexatious suit” as “one which has been instituted maliciously, and without probable cause, whereby a damage has ensued to the defendant.” (“Vexatious Suit,” in Bouvier, *Law Dictionary*, 2:472.)

Comprehensive Works Cited

Bouvier, John. *A Law Dictionary, Adapted to the Constitution and Laws of the United States of America, and of the Several States of the American Union; With References to the Civil and Other Systems of Foreign Law*. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Deacon and Peterson, 1854.

[4] See [Letter to Oliver Cowdery and Others, ca. 17 June 1838](#).

[5] John Corrill, [Testimony, Richmond, MO, Nov. 1838, p. \[31\]](#); John Cleminson, [Testimony, Richmond, MO, Nov. 1838, pp. \[51\]–\[52\]](#), Transcript of Proceedings, 12–29 Nov. 1838 [State of Missouri vs. JS et al. for Treason and Other Crimes]; see also [Motto, ca. 16 or 17 Mar. 1838](#).

[6] Minutes, 21 Apr. 1838, in *JSP*, D6:110–111.

[7] Revelation, 26 Apr. 1838 [D&C 115:6–12, 18].

[8] LeSueur, “Missouri’s Failed Compromise,” 113–144.

Comprehensive Works Cited

LeSueur, Stephen C. “Missouri’s Failed Compromise: The Creation of Caldwell County for the Mormons.” *Journal of Mormon History* 31, no. 3 (Fall 2005): 113–144.

[9] See Letter from William W. Phelps, 7 July 1837; and Letter from David Thomas, 31 Mar. 1838; see also “A History, of the Persecution,” *Times and Seasons*, Mar. 1840, 1:65–66.

Comprehensive Works Cited

Times and Seasons. Commerce/Nauvoo, IL. Nov. 1839–Feb. 1846.

[10] Abner Scovil, Testimony, Richmond, MO, Nov. 1838, p. [50], Transcript of Proceedings, 12–29 Nov. 1838 [State of Missouri vs. JS et al. for Treason and Other Crimes]. In the wake of the 1838 conflict, JS expressed similar sentiments in a March 1839 letter: “If the inhabitation of the state of Missouri had let the saints alone and had been as deserable of peace as they ware there would have been nothing but peace and quiatude in this State unto this day.” (Letter to the Church and Edward Partridge, 20 Mar. 1839.)

[11] See Historical Introduction to Constitution of the Society of the Daughter of Zion, ca. Late June 1838; see also Historical Introduction to Letter to Oliver Cowdery and Others, ca. 17 June 1838.

[12] See Hay, “Providence and the American Past,” 79–101; Maier, *American Scripture*, chap. 4; and Criblez, *Parading Patriotism*.

Comprehensive Works Cited

Hay, Robert P. “Providence and the American Past.” *Indiana Magazine of History* 65, no. 2 (June 1969): 79–101.

Maier, Pauline. *American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997.

Criblez, Adam. *Parading Patriotism: Independence Day Celebrations in the Urban Midwest, 1826–1876*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois Press, 2013.

[13] Celebration of the 4th of July, Aug. 1838.

[14] See Revelation, Feb. 1831–A [D&C 43:15]; and Revelation, 22–23 Sept. 1832 [D&C 84:85]; see also Jackson, “Oratory of the Great Basin Prophets,” 489–520.

Comprehensive Works Cited

Jackson, Brian. “As a Musician Would His Violin’: The Oratory of the Great Basin Prophets.” In *A New History of the Sermon: The Nineteenth Century*, edited by Robert H. Ellison, 489–520. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2010.

[15] Ebenezer Robinson, “Items of Personal History of the Editor,” *Return*, Nov. 1889, 170; see also William W. Phelps, Testimony, Richmond, MO, Nov. 1838, p. [88], Transcript of Proceedings, 12–29 Nov. 1838 [State of Missouri vs. JS et al. for Treason and Other Crimes].

Comprehensive Works Cited

The Return. Davis City, IA, 1889–1891; Richmond, MO, 1892–1893; Davis City, 1895–1896; Denver, 1898; Independence, MO, 1899–1900.

[16] See, for example, Vision, 16 Feb. 1832 [D&C 76]; and Letter to Church Leaders in Jackson Co., MO, 25 June 1833.

[17] Kiernan, *Blood and Soil*, chap. 8.

Comprehensive Works Cited

Kiernan, Ben. *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007.

[18] Revelation, 6 Aug. 1833 [D&C 98:22–31].

[19] JS, Journal, 4 July 1838.

[20] JS, Journal, 4 July 1838; Celebration of the 4th of July, Aug. 1838.

[21] Ebenezer Robinson, “Items of Personal History of the Editor,” *Return*, Oct. 1889, 148. The contemporaneous report of the celebration published in the church newspaper also spoke of “the stand, where the oration was to be delivered.” (Celebration of the 4th of July, Aug. 1838.)

Comprehensive Works Cited

The Return. Davis City, IA, 1889–1891; Richmond, MO, 1892–1893; Davis City, 1895–1896; Denver, 1898; Independence, MO, 1899–1900.

[22] JS, Journal, 4 and 27 July 1838; Celebration of the 4th of July, Aug. 1838.

[23] Celebration of the 4th of July, Aug. 1838.

[24] JS, Journal, 1–3 Aug. 1838; Ebenezer Robinson, “Items of Personal History of the Editor,” *Return*, Nov. 1889, 171; Burnett, *Recollections and Opinions*, 53.

Comprehensive Works Cited

The Return. Davis City, IA, 1889–1891; Richmond, MO, 1892–1893; Davis City, 1895–1896; Denver, 1898; Independence, MO, 1899–1900.

Burnett, Peter H. *Recollections and Opinions of an Old Pioneer*. New York: D. Appleton, 1880.

[25] Ebenezer Robinson, “Items of Personal History of the Editor,” *Return*, Nov. 1889, 171. The pamphlet’s title page named the “Journal Office” as the publisher. This was the church printing office that published the *Elders’ Journal*, the official church newspaper edited by JS.

Comprehensive Works Cited

The Return. Davis City, IA, 1889–1891; Richmond, MO, 1892–1893; Davis City, 1895–1896; Denver, 1898; Independence, MO, 1899–1900.

[26] *Elders’ Journal*, Aug. 1838, 54.

[27] On 12 September 1838, anti-Mormons in Daviess County and Livingston County stated in a letter to Missouri governor Lilburn W. Boggs that “for several weeks past the Mormons have been making formidable preparation for a civil war—and one which they are pleased to call a war of extermination,” doubtless a reference to the 4 July 1838 oration. The editor of the *Western Star*, a newspaper based in Liberty, Missouri, asserted on 14 September that the 4 July speech contained “the essence of, if not treason itself” and that Rigdon’s declaration that vexatious lawsuits would not be tolerated was “a manifestation of a disposition to prevent the force of law.” (“Citizens of Daviess and Livingston Counties,” Daviess Co., MO, to Lilburn W. Boggs, 12 Sept. 1838, copy, Mormon War Papers, MSA; “The Mormons,” *Missouri Argus* [St. Louis], 27 Sept. 1838, [1].)

Comprehensive Works Cited

Mormon War Papers, 1838–1841. MSA.

Missouri Argus. St. Louis. 1835–1841.

Document Transcript

ORATION
DELIVERED

BY MR. S[idney] RIGDON,

ON
THE 4th OF JULY,
1838.

AT FAR WEST, CALDWELL COUNTY, MISSOURI.

Better far sleep with the dead, than be oppressed among the living.

FAR WEST:

PRINTED AT THE JOURNAL OFFICE.
1838 [p. [1]]

[page [2] blank] [p. [2]]

ORATION.

Friends and Fellow Citizens;

By your request, I am called upon to address you this day, under circumstances novel to myself, and I presume as much so to the most of you; for however frequently we may have met with our fellow-citizens, in times past, in the places of our nativity, or of our choice, to mingle our feelings with theirs, and unite with them in grateful acknowledgments to our Divine Benefactor, on the anniversary of our national existance; but not before, have we been assembled by reason of our holy religion; for which cause alone, a very large majority of us is here this day. But though our residence here, is far from the sepulchres of our fathers, and from the land of our nativity and former choice; and our association here, as novel, and as strange to ourselves, as it could be, to any portion of our fellow-men; still, we hail the return of the birth day of our liberties, with no less feelings of joy and gratitude: nor no less desire, for the prosperity and continuance, of the fabric of our national government, inspires our breasts this day, than when met in the mixed assemblies of all religions, as in times past, in the lands of our nativity.

Nor indeed could it otherwise be; from our infancy, we have been traditionated to believe ours, to be the best government in the world. Our fathers, our neighbors, and our associates in life, have extalld its excellence to the highest pinnacle of fame in our ears, even before we were capable of judging of its merits for ourselves, or were able to form an estimate of its worth. As we advanced in life, we heard nothing else from our statesmen and heroes, but the perfection and excellence of our political institutions, and the superiority of our government, over all the governments of the world; whether they existed in former or latter time. It is the government under which we were born and educated, or else we exchanged another for it, with whose form we were not satisfied, and in our hearts gave this the preference, and sought by removal to enjoy its benefits.

We have been taught from our cradles, to reverence the fathers of the Revolution, and venerate the very urns which contain the ashes of those who sleep; and every feeling of our hearts responds in perfect unison to the precept. Our country and its institutions, are written on the tablet of our hearts, ¹ as with the blood of the heroes who offered their lives in sacrifice, to redeem us from oppression. On its towers the flag of freedom waves, and invites the [p. [3]] oppressed to enter, and find an asylum. Under the safeguard of its constitution, the tyrant's grasp is unfastened, and equal rights and privileges flow to every part of the grand whole. Protected by its laws and defended by its powers, the oppressed and persecuted saint can worship under his own vine, and under his own figtree, and none can molest or make afraid. ² We have always contemplated it, and do now, as the only true fabric of freedom, and bullwork of liberty, in the world.

Its very existance, has taught the civilized world, lessons of freedom, far surpassing those of a Pitt, ³ a Wilberforce, ⁴ a Canning, ⁵ or a Grey, ⁶ and has cast all their efforts in the shade forever. It has stood, and now stands, as the arbiter of the world,

the judge of the nations, and the rebuker of tyrants.

Throughout the world, it is the standard of freedom, both civil and religious. By its existence, the fears of the superstitious have been removed, and the pretexts of tyrants have been swept away as a refuge of lies,⁷ and the rights of man have been restored, and freedom, both political and religious, have been made to triumph.

Our government is known throughout the civilized world, as the standard of freedom, civil, religious, and political; by it are the acts of all nations tried, and it serves to expose the frauds, the deceptions, and the crafts, of the old world, in attempting to pawn up on the people, monarchy and aristocracy, for republicanism and freedom. So powerful has been its influence, that the hand of the oppressor, even in the old world, has been lightened, tyrants have been made to tremble, and oppressors of mankind, have been filled with fear. Thrones, if they have not been cast down, have been stripped of their terror, and the oppressed subject has been, measurably, delivered from his bondage.

Having been rocked in the cradle of liberty, and educated in the school of freedom, all our prejudices and prepossessions are deeply rooted in favor of the superlative excellence of a government, from which all our privileges and enjoyments have flown. We are wedded to it by the strongest ties; bound to it by cords as strong as death. To preserve it, ought to be our aim in all our pursuits, to maintain its constitution unviolable, its institutions uncorrupted, its laws unviolated, and its order undangered.

There is one thing, in the midst of our political differences, which ought to create feelings of joy and gratitude in every heart, and in the bosom of every wellwisher to mankind; that, all parties, in politics, express the strongest desire to preserve both the union and the constitution unimpaired and unbroken, and only differ about the means to accomplish this object; so desirable, as expressed by all parties. And while this, indeed, is the object of parties in this republic, there is nothing to fear. The prospects for the future, will be as flattering as the past. [p. 4]

In celebrating this, the anniversary of our independence, all party distinctions should be forgotten, all religious differences should be laid aside. We are members of one common republic, equally dependent on a faithful execution of its laws for our protection, in the enjoyment of our civil, political, and religious privileges. All have a common interest in the preservation of the Union, and in the defence and support of the constitution. Northern, southern, and western interests, ought to be forgotten, or lost for the time being, in the more noble desire to preserve the nation, as one whole; for on this depends the security of all local and sectional interest; for if we cannot preserve them by supporting the Union, we cannot by rending it in pieces. In the former there is hope, in the latter fear. In one peace, in the other war.⁸

In times of peace, it ought to be our aim and our object, to strengthen the bonds of the Union by cultivating peace and goodwill among ourselves. And in times of war, to meet our foes sword in hand, and defend our rights, at the expense of life. For what is life when freedom has fled? It is a name, a bubble; better far sleep with the dead, than be oppressed among the living.

All attempts, on the part of religious aspirants, to unite church and state, ought to be repelled with indignation, and every religious society supported in its rights, and in the exercise of its conscientious devotions. The Mohameden,⁹ the Pagan, and the Idolator, not excepted, and be partakers equally, in the benefits of the government. For if the Union is preserved, it will be by endearing the people to it; and this can only be done by securing to all their most sacred rights. The least deviation, from the strictest rule of right, on the part of any portion of the people, or their public servants, will create dissatisfaction, that dissatisfaction will end in strife, strife in war, and war, in the dissolution of the Union.

It is on the virtue of the people, that depends the existence of the government, and not on the wisdom of legislators. Wherefore serveth laws, (it matters not how righteous in themselves,) when the people in violation of them, tear those rights from one another, which they [the laws] were designed to protect? If we preserve the nation from ruin, and the people from war, it will be by

securing to others, what we claim to ourselves, and being as zealous to defend another's rights, as to secure our own. If on this day, the fathers of our nation, pledged their fortunes, their lives, and their sacred honors, ¹⁰ to one another, and to the colonies which they represented, to be *free*, or to loose all earthly inheritance, not life, and honor excepted. So ought we to follow their example, and pledge our fortunes, our lives, and our sacred honors, as their children and successors, in maintaining inviolable, what they obtained by their treasure, and their blood.

With holy feelings, sacred desires, and grateful hearts to our Divine Benefactor, ought we to perform the duties of this day, and [p. 5] enjoy the privileges, which, as saints of the living God, we enjoy in this land of liberty and freedom, where our most sacred rights, even that of worshiping our God according to his will, is secured unto us by law, ¹¹ and our religious rights so identified with the existence of the nation, that to deprive us of them, will be to doom the nation to ruin, and the Union to dissolution.

It is now three score and two years, since the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, caused the proclamation to go forth among the people of the continents, that the people of this nation should be free, and that over them, "kings should not rule, and princes decree authority;" ¹² and all this, preparatory to the great work which he had designed to accomplish in the last days, in the face of all people, in order, that the Son of God, the Savior of the world, should come down from heaven, and reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously; ¹³ according to the testimony of all the holy prophets, since the world began. And it is eight years, two months, and twenty eight days, since this church of the last days was organized, by the revelations of that same Jesus, who is coming to reign before his ancients gloriously: then consisting of six members only. ¹⁴

At its first appearance, excitement began to prevail among the people where it made its appearance, and as it increased in numbers, the excitement increased. The first attack made upon it, by its enemies, was by false representation and foul slander. By this engine it was assailed from every quarter, and by all classes of men, religious and unreligious: misrepresentation followed misrepresentation, falsehood after falsehood, followed each other in rapid succession, until there must have been multitudes of them created in a minute, by those employed in it, or else they could not have gotten so many put in circulation. ¹⁵ This scheme not succeeding, the enemies had recourse to prosecutions, which were multiplied continually, apparently with determination, to destroy every person who united to aid and assist in bringing forth the work of the Lord. ¹⁶ But all this not succeeding, according to the expectations of the persecutors; they united to all this power, that of mobs, driving men, women, and children, from their houses, dragging them out in the dead hours of the night, out of their beds, whipping, tarring and feathering, and otherwise shamefully treating them. ¹⁷

Nor were those means the only ones resorted to in this work of persecution, but being determined to put an end to the church forever; they added to all the rest of the means used, stealing the property of the saints, also burning houses and charging it on their -[the saints]- heads, in order to raise public indignation against them; as also false swearing, and indeed we may add, all other means which the adversary had in his power to use, nothing seems to be left undone, that could be done, by men and demons, in order that the purposes of God might fail; but still the object, so much desired [p. 6] by many, has not as yet been obtained. Under all this fire of persecution, the cause has rolled on with a steady course; the increase has been gradual, but constant, and the church, at this time, numbers many thousands: some in the old world have become obedient to the faith, ¹⁸ multitudes in the *Canadas*, ¹⁹ as well as in most parts of the *United States*. ²⁰

During these scenes of persecution, a number of the saints have lost their lives, ²¹ and others are missing, and it is unknown what has become of them; but the presumption is, that they have been secretly murdered.

No country, of which we have any knowledge, has offered so fair an opportunity for determining the great hostility which exists naturally in the human heart against God and against his work, as this one. In other countries, persecutions were carried on under pretext of law; but in this country, where the constitution of the United States, and the constitution of every State of the Union, guarantees unto every person, the rights of conscience, and the liberty of worshiping as he pleases, to witness such scenes of persecution, as those which have followed this church from the beginning, in despite of law, justice, equity, and truth, and at war with the very genius of our republican institutions, and contrary to the spirit and design of our government; surely evinces the depravity of the human heart, and the great hostility there exists in the hearts of the human family, against the work and purposes of God; and most fully confirms the apostle's saying; that, "the carnal mind is enmity against God." 22

But notwithstanding all this violence, we can say as did Paul to the Corinthians: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." 23 We have until this time, endured this great fight of affliction, 24 and kept the faith. 25 If the ancient saints had to endure as seeing him who is invisible 26—so have we. If they had to suffer the contradiction of sinners against themselves 27—so have we. If they had to undergo fears within, and fightings without 28—so have we. If they had to suffer stripes and imprisonments, for their religion's sake—so have we. If they were often in journeyings, in perils of water, in perils among robbers, in perils by their own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness 29—so are we. If they had to commend themselves to God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the [p. 7] left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown yet well known; as lying and, behold, they lived; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things 30—so have we. If they went up through much tribulation, and washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb 31—so have we to go up through as great tribulation; and we trust in so doing, we will also wash our robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb.

One cause of our heavy persecutions, is the influence which those have in the world, whom we have separated from the fellowship of the church for their wickedness; 32 who attempted to gratify their vengeance on us, and also to hide their own shame, by foul slanders and base calumny. We were at one time represented by them, as having all things common: 33 at another, as being enemies to the government: and in other places we were reported to be abolitionists, 34 and indeed any thing, they thought best calculated to stir up the public mind, and to excite popular indignation; and if possible, put an end to the work, by sacrificing some of those who were considered as most active in supporting and defending the cause. But through the mercy of God, we are still in existence, and have the opportunity of joining with you in the privileges of this day.

In assembling on this occasion, our object is, not only to comply with the custom of our nation in celebrating the birth day of our liberties; but also to lay the corner stones of the edifice, about to be built in this place in honor of our God, to whom we ascribe the glory of our national freedom, as well as our eternal salvation; and whose worship we esteem of more consequence, than we do the treasures of Missouri; ready at all times, to offer unto him the sacrifice of our first fruits, 35 and by untiring perseverance, patient industry, and faithful devotion to the cause of our God, rear this building to his name, designed, for the double purpose, of a house of worship and an institution of learning. The first floor will be for sacred devotion, and the two others, for the purpose of

education. The building to be one hundred and ten feet by eighty, with three floors, and not far from thirty feet between the floors: all to be finished, according to the best stile of such buildings in our country. The entire expence, calculated at not far from one hundred thousand dollars: all when finished, to stand as a monument, of the power of union of effort and concert of action.

Next to the worship of our God, we esteem the education of our children and of the rising generation.³⁶ For what is wealth without society, or society without intelligence. And how is intelligence to be obtained?—by education. It is that which forms the youthful mind: it is that alone, which renders society agreeable, and adds [i]nterest³⁷ and importance, to the worship of God. What is religion without intelligence?—and empty sound. Intelligence is the root, [p. 8] from which all true enjoyments flow. Intelligence is religion, and religion is intelligence, if it is any thing. Take intelligence from it, and what is left? a name—a sound without meaning. If a person desires to be truly pious in the sight of God, he must be purely intelligent. Piety without intelligence, is fanaticism, and devotion without understanding, is enthusiasm.

The object of our religion, is to make us more intelligent, than we could be without it, not so much, to make us acquainted with what we do see, as with what we do not see. It is designed to evolve the faculties, to enlighten the understanding, and through this medium, purify the heart. It is calculated to make men better, by making them wiser; more useful, by making them more intelligent; not intelligent on some subjects only, but on all subjects, on which intelligence can be obtained: and when science fails, revelation supplies its place, and unfolds the secrets and mysteries of the unseen world, leads the mind into the knowledge of the future existence of men, makes it acquainted with angels, principalities, and powers, in the eternal world; carries it into heaven and heavenly places, makes it acquainted with God, its Redeemer, and its associates in the eternal mansions; so that when science fails, and philosophy vanishes away, revelation, more extensive in its operations, begins where they [science and philosophy] ends, and feasts the mind with intelligence, pure and holy, from the presence of God.—Tells of eternal mansions, of immortal glories, of everlasting dominions,³⁸ of angelic throngs, of heavenly host,³⁹ of flaming seraphs, of crowns of glory,⁴⁰ of palms of victory, of the saint's eternal triumph through a glorious resurrection,⁴¹ of songs of everlasting joy,⁴² of God the father of all,⁴³ of Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and of the blood of the sprinkling, which speaketh better things, than that of righteous Abel.⁴⁴

It not only acquaints us with these eternal things, but it makes known unto us the future history of man in time, of the purposes of God, which have to be accomplished before the end of all things comes. It warns and forewarns, of the wars, the pestilences, the famines, the earthquakes, and the desolations, which are coming on the earth.⁴⁵ The rising and falling of nations: and also the desolation of the earth itself: the falling of the mountains, the rising of the vallies, the melting of the rocks, the purifying of the elements by fire: of the sun's vailing his face, the moon's turning to blood,⁴⁶ the stars of heaven falling:⁴⁷ of the heavens rolling away as a scroll;⁴⁸ and of Christ's descending from heaven in a cloud, with the shout of the arch angel, and the trump of God.⁴⁹ And of the wicked's fearing and trembling, of their faces gathering blackness,⁵⁰ and of their seeking a refuge under the mountains, and of their calling upon the rocks to hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; "For the great day of his wrath has come, and who shall be able to stand?"⁵¹ [p. 9]

All this mass of important intelligence, together with the final end of all thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers,⁵² and governments, which nothing else but revelation could make known, (for science, with all her powers, could never declare it, neither could philosophy, with her utmost stretch, reach it,) we obtain by our holy religion; for this is her province; it is the theatre where she acts; it is the business we have for her; it is to tell us things which nothing else could tell; it is to fill us with that kind of wisdom, which cometh down from above, and which is alone obtained by revelation, and by the powers which our holy religion confers, and by nothing else. In view then, of what we have already obtained, and of what there is to be obtained, we have

assembled ourselves together in this remote land, to prepare for that which is coming on the earth, 53 and we have this day laid the corner stones of this temple of God, and design, with as little delay as possible, to complete it, and to rear up to the name of our God in this city, “Far West,” a house, which shall be a house of prayer, a house of learning, a house of order, and a house of God; 54 where all the sciences, languages &c., which are taught in our country, in schools of the highest order, shall be taught. And the object is, to have it on a plan accessible to all classes, the poor, as well as the rich, that all persons in our midst, may have an opportunity to educate their children, both male and female, to any extent they please. So that all the talents in our midst, may be called forth, in order that we may avail ourselves, of all the means God puts into our hands, and put it into the power of all, to deliver themselves, from the impositions, and frauds, which are practicing upon the more illiterate part of the community, by those who have had superior advantages, or as far, at least, as learning can go to obtain this object.

One part of the house, shall be set apart for a place of worship, where we shall invoke our God for revelations, when we have gone as far as human learning can carry us, that by revelations, visions &c. we may fill the vacuum still left, after science and philosophy have done all they can do. So that we may have that understanding, and that wisdom which brings salvation, and that knowledge which is unto eternal life.

That whether there are wars, or famines, or pestilences, or earthquakes, or distress of nations, 55 or whatever may come according to the purposes of our God, that we may know it before hand, and be prepared for it, so that none of these things shall overtake us as a thief in the night, and while we are crying peace and safety, sudden destruction come upon us. 56

The Savior of the world himself, while he was here with his disciples, said, that, “As it was in the days of Noah, so should it be at the coming of the Son of man. They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, and giving in marriage, and knew not, till the flood came and swept them all away—So shall it be, at [p. 10] the coming of the Son of man.” 57 And Paul declared to the saints of his day, “That the day of the Lord so cometh, as a thief in the night. That when the people are crying peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape. 58 And that wicked men and seducers, would wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” 59 They will, says Peter, say, “where is the promise of his coming; for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” 60

Such is to be the state of the world, at the most important period in the existence of man’s earthly residence. The description given by Isaiah, is tremendous in the extreme, “Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants 61 thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, 62 so with the priest; as with the servant so with his master, as with the maid so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him; the land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth, and fadeth away; the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth is also defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.” 63

64 The prophet Malachi describing the same scene and the same period of calamity says, “For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and ALL the proud, and ALL that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. 65

The psalmist David, in the majesty of his prophetic power, has left us a warning also when he says, “The mighty God, even the Lord hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,

God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before, him and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above and to the earth (that he may judge his people). Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is Judge himself.”

Having then knowledge of these things, and the voice of God being unto us, to gather together, and make a covenant with our God by sacrifice. We have given heed thereunto, and, are here this day as witnesses for God, that he was not spoken in vain, neither has he said in vain. But the day and the hour of his judgements sleepeth not, neither do they slumber: and whether men believe or do not believe, it alters not the word which God has caused to be spoken, but come it must, and come it will, and that to the astonishment, the confusion, and the dismay, of thousands who believe not, neither will they regard, until overtaken by it as a thief in the night, and sudden destruction come upon them, and there be none to deliver.

Knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord, we warn our fellow men, not only by precept, but example also, by leaving our former homes, to which we were bound by the strongest ties, suffering a sacrifice of the greatest share of [p. 11] our earthly possessions. Many of us, in times past, were rich, but for Jesus' sake, and at the command of our God we have become poor, because he [Christ] became poor for our sakes; so in like manner, we follow his example, and become poor for his sake.

And as Moses left Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king, and refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, having respect to the recompence of reward. So do we, we choose to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoy the flatteries of the world for a season.

It is not because we cannot, if we were so disposed, enjoy both the honors and flatteries of the world, but we have voluntarily offered them in sacrifice, and the riches of the world also, for a more durable substance. Our God has promised us a reward of eternal inheritance, and we have believed his promise, and though we wade through great tribulation, we are in nothing discouraged, for we know he that has promised is faithful. The promise is sure, and the reward [is] certain. It is because of this [that] we have taken the spoiling of our goods. Our cheeks have been given to the smiters, and our heads to those who have plucked off the hair. We have not only when smitten on one cheek turned the other, but we have done it, again and again, until we are wearied of being smitten, and tired of being trampled upon. We have proved the world with kindness, we have suffered their abuse without cause, with patience, and have endured without resentment, until this day, and still their persecutions and violence does not cease. But from this day and this hour, we will suffer it no more.

We take God and all the holy angels to witness this day, that we warn all men in the name of Jesus Christ, to come on us no more forever, for from this hour, we will bear it no more, our rights shall no more be trampled on with impunity. The man or the set of men, who attempts it, does it at the expense of their lives. And that mob that comes on us to disturb us; it shall be between us and them a war of extermination, for we will follow them, till the last drop of their blood is spilled, or else they will have to exterminate us: for we will carry the seat of war to their own houses, and their own families, and one party or the other shall be utterly destroyed. —Remember it then all **MEN**.

We will never be the aggressors, we will infringe on the rights of no people; but shall stand for our own until death. We claim our own rights, and are willing that all others shall enjoy theirs.

No man shall be at liberty to come into our streets, to threaten us with mobs, for if he does, he shall atone for it before he leaves the place, neither shall he be at liberty, to villify and slander any of us, for suffer it we will not in this place.

We therefore, take all men to record this day, that we proclaim our liberty on this day, as did our fathers. And we pledge this day to one another, our fortunes, our lives, and our sacred honors, to be delivered from the persecutions which we have had to endure, for the [a]st nine years, or nearly th[at.] Neither will we indulge any man, or set of men, in instituting vexatious law suits against us, to cheat us out of our just rights, if they attempt it we say wo be unto them.

We this day then proclaim ourselves free, with a purpose and a determination, that never can be broken, “no never! *no never!* NO NEVER.”!!! [p. 12]

Footnotes

[1] See Proverbs 3:3; and 2 Corinthians 3:3.

[2] See Micah 4:4. Rigdon’s quotation of this verse is slightly different from the biblical text, which lacks the word “molest,” although his wording reflects usage common in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. (See George Washington, Philadelphia, PA, to Catharine Macaulay Graham, 19 July 1791, Founders Online, National Archives, founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-08-02-0250 [accessed 9 Jan. 2018]; and “Beauties of Anti-Masonry,” *American Masonick Record* [Albany, NY], 30 May 1829, 137.)

Comprehensive Works Cited

Founders Online. National Archives. [Founders.archives.gov](https://founders.archives.gov).
American Masonick Record and Albany Saturday Magazine. Albany, NY. 1827–1830.

[3] Probably William Pitt the Elder (1708–1778), who served as the prime minister of England in the 1760s. Known as the Great Commoner, he was a major political leader during the Seven Years’ War and was subsequently supportive of American colonial interests prior to the Revolutionary War. Another possibility is William Pitt the Younger (1759–1806), who like his father served as prime minister of England at the turn of the nineteenth century. (Black, *Pitt the Elder*; Turner, *Pitt the Younger*.)

Comprehensive Works Cited

Black, Jeremy. *Pitt the Elder*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
Turner, Michael J. *Pitt the Younger: A Life*. London: Hambledon, 2003.

[4] William Wilberforce (1749–1833) was an English politician, evangelical reformer, and leading abolitionist. (Hague, *William Wilberforce*.)

Comprehensive Works Cited

Hague, William. *William Wilberforce: The Life of the Great Anti-Slave Trade Campaigner*. London: Harper, 2007.

[5] Possibly George Canning (1770–1827), who served in various British political positions, including that of prime minister. (Lee, *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*.)

Comprehensive Works Cited

Lee, Stephen M. *George Canning and Liberal Toryism, 1801–1827*. Woodbridge, England: Boydell and Brewer, 2008.

[6] Probably Charles Grey (1764–1845), the prime minister of [England](#) who oversaw passage of the Reform Act of 1832 and the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1833. (Smith, *Lord Grey*.)

Comprehensive Works Cited

Smith, E. A. *Lord Grey, 1764–1845*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.

[7] See Isaiah 28:17.

[8] In 1830, in his famous debate with Robert Hayne, [Daniel Webster](#) had held that disunion posed a threat to American freedom because it exposed the country to foreign powers. (Belz, *Webster-Hayne Debate*, 143–144.)

Comprehensive Works Cited

Belz, Herman, ed. *The Webster-Hayne Debate on the Nature of the Union: Selected Documents*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2000.

[9] “Mohameden” was a common European designator for adherents of Islam. Although Thomas Jefferson and other American founders advocated the extension of religious liberty to cover Muslims, the idea had not yet obtained widespread acceptance by 1838. (See Beneke, *Beyond Toleration*; and Spellberg, *Thomas Jefferson’s Qur’an*; see also [Letter to Isaac Galland, 22 Mar. 1839](#); and [Letter to Edward Partridge and the Church, ca. 22 Mar. 1839](#).)

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Beneke, Chris. *Beyond Toleration: The Religious Origins of American Pluralism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Spellberg, Denise A. *Thomas Jefferson’s Qur’an: Islam and the Founders*. New York: Knopf, 2013.

[10] This language echoes the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

[11] See U.S. Constitution, amend. 1.

[12] See Proverbs 8:15.

[13] See Isaiah 24:23.

[14] See Historical Introduction to [Revelation, 6 Apr. 1830](#) [D&C 21].

[15] On early anti-Mormonism in the press, see Norton, “Comparative Images.”

Comprehensive Works Cited

Norton, Walter A. “Comparative Images: Mormonism and Contemporary Religions as Seen by Village Newspapermen in Western New York and Northeastern Ohio, 1820–1833.” PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1972.

[16] Prior to 1838, JS was a defendant in dozens of lawsuits that he and other early Latter-day Saints viewed as being motivated by religious prejudice. (See Firmage and Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts*, chaps. 3–4; and Madsen, et al., *Sustaining the Law*, chaps. 4, 7, 9–10.)

Comprehensive Works Cited

Firmage, Edwin Brown, and Richard Collin Mangrum. *Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1890*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988.

Madsen, Gordon A., Jeffrey N. Walker, and John W. Welch, eds. *Sustaining the Law: Joseph Smith's Legal Encounters*. Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 2014.

[17] In March 1832, a mob tarred and feathered JS and Rigdon in Hiram, Ohio. Just over a year later, in July 1833, vigilantes tarred and feathered church members Edward Partridge and Charles Allen in Independence, Missouri. In early November 1833, a mob expelled Latter-day Saints from Jackson County, Missouri. (JS History, vol. A-1, 205–209; Historical Introduction to Letter from John Whitmer, 29 July 1833; and Historical Introduction to Letter from William W. Phelps, 6–7 Nov. 1833.)

Comprehensive Works Cited

JS History / Smith, Joseph, et al. History, 1838–1856. Vols. A-1–F-1 (original), A-2–E-2 (fair copy). Historian's Office, History of the Church, 1839–ca. 1882. CHL. CR 100 102, boxes 1–7. The history for the period after 5 Aug. 1838 was composed after the death of Joseph Smith.

[18] In 1837–1838, apostles Heber C. Kimball and Orson Hyde served a mission in England, the first Latter-day Saints proselytizing outside of North America. During this mission, they baptized over fifteen hundred converts and organized several new branches of the church. (See Historical Introduction to Letter from Heber C. Kimball and Orson Hyde, between 22 and 28 May 1838.)

[19] Church members began preaching in Upper Canada as early as September 1830. By 1838, Latter-day Saint missionaries had baptized more than one thousand converts in Upper and Lower Canada. (Bennett, “Mormonism in Eastern Canada,” 19–34.)

Comprehensive Works Cited

Bennett, Richard E. “‘Plucking Not Planting’: Mormonism in Eastern Canada, 1830–1850.” In *The Mormon Presence in Canada*, edited by Brigham Y. Card, Herbert C. Northcott, John E. Foster, Howard Palmer, George K. Jarvis, 19–34. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1990.

[20] Since 1830, Latter-day Saint missionaries had preached throughout the United States, baptizing thousands of converts and organizing scores of branches beyond the main gathering places in Ohio and Missouri. (See Ellsworth, “History of Mormon Missions.”)

Comprehensive Works Cited

Ellsworth, Samuel George. “A History of Mormon Missions in the United States and Canada, 1830–1860.” PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1951.

[21] Rigdon may have been referring generally to Latter-day Saints who suffered from exposure during these conflicts. Extant evidence suggests that only one Mormon was killed in a direct clash with anti-Mormons prior to July 1838. On 4 November 1833, as church members were being expelled from Jackson County, they and other Missourians exchanged gunfire near the Blue River. Andrew Barber, a Latter-day Saint, was mortally wounded and died the next day. Two Missourians, Thomas Linville and Hugh Breazeale, were also killed in the fight. (See Whitmer, *History*, 44.)

[22] Romans 8:7.

[23] 2 Corinthians 4:8–9.

[24] See Hebrews 10:32.

[25] See 2 Timothy 4:7; and [Revelation, 30 Aug. 1831](#) [D&C 63:50].

[26] See Hebrews 11:27.

[27] See Hebrews 12:3.

[28] See 2 Corinthians 7:5.

[29] See 2 Corinthians 11:26–27.

[30] See 2 Corinthians 6:4–10.

[31] See Revelation 7:14.

[32] On dissension in the early church, see Esplin, “Emergence of Brigham Young,” chaps. 6–7; and Introduction to Part 6: 20 Apr.–14 Sept. 1837, in *JSP*, D5:363–366.

Comprehensive Works Cited

Esplin, Ronald K. “The Emergence of Brigham Young and the Twelve to Mormon Leadership, 1830–1841.” PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1981. Also available as *The Emergence of Brigham Young and the Twelve to Mormon Leadership, 1830–1841*, Dissertations in Latter-day Saint History (Provo, UT: Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History; BYU Studies, 2006).

[33] “All things common” is a phrase in the Bible and the [Book of Mormon](#) that refers to communal arrangements among early Christians. Allegations frequently arose in the 1830s that the church’s financial program constituted a “common stock” organization, in which property was owned jointly. Church members repeatedly denied this claim. (Acts 2:44; 4:32; Book of Mormon, 1830 ed., 514 [4 Nephi 1:3]; JS, Journal, 30 Oct. 1835; JS History, vol. A-1, 93.)

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JS History / Smith, Joseph, et al. History, 1838–1856. Vols. A-1–F-1 (original), A-2–E-2 (fair copy). Historian’s Office, History of the Church, 1839–ca. 1882. CHL. CR 100 102, boxes 1–7. The history for the period after 5 Aug. 1838 was composed after the death of Joseph Smith.

[34] Although many early Latter-day Saints came from northern states, where opposition to slavery was gaining ground, church leaders during the mid-1830s tended to favor the status quo on slavery and to oppose abolitionism. This approach partly stemmed from the July 1833 eruption of violence in [Jackson County](#), Missouri, after vigilantes misunderstood an article in the church newspaper *The Evening and the Morning Star* that addressed the status of free blacks under [Missouri law](#).^a Further complicating the church’s relationship with the institution of slavery, missionaries converted hundreds of individuals—including some slave owners—in Kentucky, Tennessee, and other southern states during the 1830s.^b The [declaration on government and law](#) published in the 1835 edition of the [Doctrine and Covenants](#) contained a clause stating that missionaries should not baptize slaves without their master’s consent.^c In 1836, in response to a lecture by abolitionist John W. Alvord in [Kirtland](#), JS published an editorial in the church periodical *Messenger and Advocate* disavowing abolitionism and citing biblical references in defense of the institution of slavery.^d

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Berrett, LaMar C. “History of the Southern States Mission, 1831–1861.” Master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1960.

Reeve, W. Paul. *Religion of a Different Color: Race and the Mormon Struggle for Whiteness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

(^aLetter from John Whitmer, 29 July 1833.^bBerrett, “History of the Southern States Mission,” 68–123.^cDeclaration on Government and Law, ca. Aug. 1835 [D&C 134].^dLetter to Oliver Cowdery, ca. 9 Apr. 1836; see also Reeve, *Religion of a Different Color*, 122–126.)

[35] See Exodus 22:29; and Deuteronomy 26:2.

[36] In 1831, JS had dictated a revelation directing the church printers to publish schoolbooks for children’s education. ([Revelation, 14 June 1831](#) [D&C 55:4].)

[37] TEXT: The compositor omitted the “i”.

[38] See Daniel 4:34; 7:14.

[39] See Luke 2:13; and [Revelation, 22–23 Sept. 1832](#) [D&C 84:42].

[40] See Proverbs 16:31; Isaiah 28:5; and 1 Peter 5:4.

[41] See [Revelation, 9 Feb. 1831](#) [D&C 42:45].

[42] See Isaiah 35:10; [Old Testament Revision 2](#), p. 24 [Moses 7:53]; and [Revelation, ca. 7 Mar. 1831](#) [D&C 45:71].

[43] See Ephesians 4:6.

[44] See Hebrews 12:24.

[45] See Luke 21:11, 26.

[46] See Joel 2:31; and Acts 2:20.

[47] See Matthew 24:29; Revelation 6:13; and [Revelation, ca. 7 Mar. 1831](#) [D&C 45:42].

[48] See Isaiah 34:4.

[49] See 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

[50] See Joel 2:6; and Nahum 2:10.

[51] See Revelation 6:16–17; and Book of Mormon, 1830 ed., 256 [Alma 12:14].

[52] See Colossians 1:16.

[53] See [Revelation, 26 Apr. 1838](#) [D&C 115:6].

[54] See [Revelation, 27–28 Dec. 1832](#) [D&C 88:119].

[55] See Luke 21:11, 25.

[56] See 1 Thessalonians 5:2–3.

[57] See Matthew 24:37–39.

[58] See 1 Thessalonians 5:2–3.

[59] See 2 Timothy 3:13.

[60] See 2 Peter 3:4.

[61] TEXT: “inh[*page torn*]bitants.” Missing text here and below supplied from a copy of the discourse at BYU.

[62] TEXT: “peop[*page torn*]”

[63] See Isaiah 24:1–6.

[64] TEXT: Starting here, the font size is reduced.

[65] See Malachi 4:1.

[66] TEXT: “th[*page torn*]ave”

[67] See Psalm 50:1–6.

[68] See Book of Mormon, 1830 ed., 513 [3 Nephi 29:3]; see also “[Gathering](#)” in the glossary.

[69] See 1 Thessalonians 5:1–2.

[70] See Psalm 50:22.

[71] See 2 Corinthians 8:9.

[72] See Hebrews 11:24–26.

[73] See Hebrews 10:34.

[74] See Hebrews 9:15.

[75] TEXT: “[*page torn*]”.

[76] TEXT: “[*page torn*]”.

[77] See Hebrews 10:34.

[78] TEXT: “h[*page torn*]”.

[79] See Isaiah 50:6.

[80] See Matthew 5:39.

[81] See [Revelation, 6 Aug. 1833](#) [D&C 98:28–29].

[82] According to Webster’s 1828 dictionary, to “exterminate” literally meant “to drive from within the limits or borders.” The word, however, could also mean “to destroy utterly,” as [Rigdon](#) indicates here. While the literal meaning was becoming obsolete by the 1830s, the second meaning was increasingly pervasive. (“Exterminate,” in *American Dictionary*; Kiernan, *Blood and Soil*, 15.)

Comprehensive Works Cited

An American Dictionary of the English Language: Intended to Exhibit, I. the Origin, Affinities and Primary Signification of English Words, as far as They Have Been Ascertained. . . . Edited by Noah Webster. New York: S. Converse, 1828.

Kiernan, Ben. *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007.

[83] An allusion to the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

[84] TEXT: “l[*page torn*]st”.

[85] TEXT: “th[*page torn*]”.