

Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 45

The bulk of the text in this section deals with apocalyptic themes, but the primary message is something else entirely. The key point is the Saints should listen to the Lord (v. 1-9) not to men. And, they should focus on the more important task at hand, which is to establish a present day Zion (v. 11-14, 62-71) by doing what the Lord has told them. They should leave the sensationalistic rhetoric of the Second Coming alone, and focus on what is within their power right now. Because, if they do, they can establish a New Jerusalem and live in peace and safety with the Lord protecting them from the evil around them.

Given the historical context of substantial negative press concerning apocalyptic themes, the early church appears to have been distracted from the weightier matters of what they should presently be doing.

The apocalyptic material is largely a reactionary statement of both ancient and contemporary predictions. Many of these predictions are well-documented in the Bible, and were being fulfilled in the eyes of the people. Additional material yet to be fulfilled is included for upcoming generations as well. Thus, this is a section of the canon presently being fulfilled, and continuing to be fulfilled, in the eyes of the Gentile nations, who were and are presently mocking the Church.

Based upon subject, the text can be arranged as follows:

- Introduction - Listen to Me, triple superlative (v. 1-9)
 - Listen to your Creator and Destroyer (v. 1-2)
 - Listen to you Advocate and Intercessor (v. 3-5)
 - Listen to the God of Israel and Gentiles (v. 6-9)
- Promises made to Israel and Gentiles (v. 10-59)
 - Promises made to Zion of Enoch (v. 11b-14)
 - Fulfillment of promises made to Israel (v. 16e-59)
 - Events leading up to Day of Lord (v. 16e-33)
 - Summary of v. 18-33 - promises made (v. 16e-17)
 - Scattering of Israel completed (v. 18-25)
 - Time of Gentiles (v. 26-30)
 - Assorted signs of the times (v. 31-33)
 - Segue (v. 34)
 - The Day of the Lord (v. 35-59)
 - Summary of v. 36-59 - promises fulfilled (v. 35)
 - Signs for those who fear Lord, not cut off (v. 36-44)
 - Rapture and 2nd phase of 1st Resurrection (v. 45-46)
 - Arm of Lord falls on nations, cut off (v. 47-50)
 - Jews redeemed (v. 51-53)
 - Wicked & just sorted before Millennium (v. 54-59)

Learn more by translating (v. 60-61)
Offering of New Jerusalem, a modern Zion (v. 62-71)
Closing statement (v. 72-75)
Keep these things from going forth (v. 72-73)
The terror of the Lord upon the nations (v. 74-75)

1 Hearken, O ye people of my church, to whom the kingdom has been given; hearken ye and give ear to him who laid the foundation of the earth, who made the heavens and all the hosts thereof, and by whom all things were made which live, and move, and have a being. 2 And again I say, hearken unto my voice, lest death shall overtake you; in an hour when ye think not the summer shall be past, and the harvest ended, and your souls not saved.

3 Listen to him who is the advocate with the Father, who is pleading your cause before him-- 4 Saying: Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified; 5 Wherefore, Father, spare these my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life.

6 Hearken, O ye people of my church, and ye elders listen together, and hear my voice while it is called today, and harden not your hearts; 7 For verily I say unto you that I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the light and the life of the world--a light that shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not. 8 I came unto mine own, and mine own received me not; but unto as many as received me gave I power to do many miracles, and to become the sons of God; and even unto them that believed on my name gave I power to obtain eternal life. 9 And even so I have sent mine everlasting covenant into the world, to be a light to the world, and to be a standard for my people, and for the Gentiles to seek to it, and to be a messenger before my face to prepare the way before me.

v1-9 Introduction. The "hearken unto me" triple repeat in these verses forms a superlative. Note the emphasis on the Lord telling the ecclesia to listen to him, and not anyone else.

v1-2 Listen to your Creator and Destroyer. In v. 1 the creation is recounted and summarized with the last phrase indicating the Lord created all living things. Then v. 2 warns them to listen or die. The common harvest image is employed. These two verses form a contrast of imagery as opposed to a rigorous textual structure. You have v. 1 with this imagery of creation and verdant life opposed to v. 2's senescence of autumn and the harvest of dead plants.

v3-5 Listen to your Advocate and Intercessor. The Lord casts Himself in the role of one pleading before the Father on behalf of His people. These verses portray an image of condescension contrasting that of v. 1-2, the all-powerful Creator and Destroyer.

v6-9 Listen to the God of Israel and Gentiles. These verses portray the Lord as the universal God of all mankind. Verses 7-8 portray Him as an all-encompassing light, granting sonship to all who believe. Verse 9 is a paraphrase of Isaiah and Malachi (cp. Isa. 42:6, Isa. 49:6, Isa. 51:4-5, Mal. 3:1), which does not explicitly reference Israel. Rather it references the more ambiguous and inclusive "everlasting covenant", which goes to the Gentiles.

10 Wherefore, come ye unto it, and with him that cometh I will reason as with men in days of old, and I will show unto you my strong reasoning. 11 Wherefore, hearken ye together and let me show unto you even my wisdom...15 Wherefore, hearken and I will reason with you, and I will speak unto you and prophesy, as unto men in days of old. 16 And I will show it plainly as I showed it unto my disciples as I stood before them in the flesh, and spake unto them, saying: As ye have asked of me concerning the signs of my coming,

v10-59 The everlasting covenant goes to Israel and Gentiles. Where v. 9 implicitly refers to Israel, now it is explicit. Verses 10-59 then expand on v. 9 in considerable detail.

v10-16d Introduction to quoted material. The Lord invites contemporary readers to hear the same sermon and reasoning provided to ancient disciples.

--the wisdom of him whom ye say is the God of Enoch, and his brethren, 12 Who were separated from the earth, and were received unto myself--a city reserved until a day of righteousness shall come--a day which was sought for by all holy men, and they found it not because of wickedness and abominations; 13 And confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth; 14 But obtained a promise that they should find it and see it in their flesh.

v11b-14 Parenthesis on Zion of Enoch. This parenthesis is a rather curious insertion. It doesn't directly deal with the Israel/Gentiles issues, and is not set up or explained in the text at all. It simply appears, and then disappears.

The first connection is the reference to Zion, which is later discussed in v. 62-71. Just as the Lord lifted up the ancient Enoch and his brothers, who established Zion despite being surrounded by the wicked (v. 11b-12b), so should the contemporary church establish Zion, despite the wicked who surround them. But, the sad reality is many holy men have sought to establish Zion and failed because of overwhelming wickedness (v. 12b-13). However, those holy men received a promise that they would see it at the Last Day (v. 14).

The second connection in this section of text is the

"promise that they should find it and see it in their flesh". The matter of promises is then revisited in v. 16 and v. 35, but in the context of Israel. In v. 14 the promise is made to pre-Israelites. The Lord is making it clear the issue isn't whether they are Israelite or not, but whether they are righteous or not. This group of holy people obtained a promise that they would see a day of righteousness in their flesh, which is something all righteous people desire. The Lord then offers that same promise to the present-day ecclesia in v. 62-71, which they and we have failed to do.

As such, the text of v. 11b-14 and v. 62-71 serve to frame the relationship of Israelite and Gentiles discussed in v. 16-59, which was introduced in v. 9.

It is interesting to note v. 12 indicates the Millennium is part of a fulfillment of a covenant made to Enoch and the other "holy men", whoever they were.

in the day when I shall come in my glory in the clouds of heaven, to fulfil the promises that I have made unto your fathers, 17 For as ye have looked upon the long absence of your spirits from your bodies to be a bondage, I will show unto you how the day of redemption shall come, and also the restoration of the scattered Israel.

18 And now ye behold this temple which is in Jerusalem, which ye call the house of God, and your enemies say that this house shall never fall. 19 But, verily I say unto you, that desolation shall come upon this generation as a thief in the night, and this people shall be destroyed and scattered among all nations. 20 And this temple which ye now see shall be thrown down that there shall not be left one stone upon another. 21 And it shall come to pass, that this generation of Jews shall not pass away until every desolation which I have told you concerning them shall come to pass. 22 Ye say that ye know that the end of the world cometh; ye say also that ye know that the heavens and the earth shall pass away; 23 And in this ye say truly, for so it is; but these things which I have told you shall not pass away until all shall be fulfilled. 24 And this I have told you concerning Jerusalem; and when that day shall come, shall a remnant be scattered among all nations; 25 But they shall be gathered again; but they shall remain until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

26 And in that day shall be heard of wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men's hearts shall fail them, and they shall say that Christ delayeth his coming until the end of the earth. 27 And the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound. 28 And when the times of the Gentiles is come in, a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fulness of my gospel; 29 But they receive it not; for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me because of the precepts of men. 30 And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

31 And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land. 32 But my disciples

shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die. 33 And there shall be earthquakes also in divers places, and many desolations; yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they will take up the sword, one against another, and they will kill one another.

v16e-59 This section of text is a set of quotes which the Lord delivered during his mortal ministry to his disciples.

v16e-33 Various events leading up to Day of Lord. These events are well documented in the Bible.

v16e-17 A summary of v. 18-33, explaining why the Lord told the disciples these things. Especially note Jesus states he is doing all these things "to fulfil the promises...unto your fathers", cp. v. 14, 35. All of these events are geared towards the fulfillment of various covenants made to Abraham, Enoch, etc.

v17 The disciples considered the long period of time between death and resurrection as a form of bondage (~2000 years for Jesus' contemporaries). Resurrection issues are addressed in v. 45-46, also cp. D&C 138:50.

v18-25 Scattering of Israel completed. All events discussed in these verses are referring to the historical Jews at ancient Jerusalem. They would still be future to Jesus' contemporaries, but are historical to modern readers.

v25 As indicated by v. 24, the Jews will be scattered among all nations, and will be gathered. However, they will remain scattered until the "times of the Gentiles" is fulfilled, cp. Luke 21:24, JST Luke 21:32, 3 Ne. 20:25-29.

"gathered again", i.e., the second time, cp. 2 Ne. 6:14, Jacob 6:2, D&C 137:6.

v26-30 The time of Gentiles. When interpreting this text, one must be careful as "fullness" and "fulfil" sound alike, but mean different things. The "fullness" has reference to the fullness of the gospel being delivered to the Gentiles, or the beginning of the times of the Gentiles. The fulfillment is at the end of the times of the Gentiles.

The text is arranged so v. 28-29 are a parenthesis. Verses 25-27 and 30-33 are in the time period of the fulfillment (i.e.,

the end) of the times of the Gentiles. Verses 28-29 is in the time period of the coming in (i.e., the beginning) of the Gentiles. Verse 27 is the result of v. 28-29, so v. 28-29 is an explanatory parenthesis on why v. 27 has occurred. Verse 30 then picks up chronologically from v. 27 and announces the fulfillment, or end, of the times of the Gentiles.

v26 "in that day", i.e., the last days, cp. JS-Matt 1:27.

v27 "love...wax cold", cp. JS-Matt. 1:10, 30.

"iniquity shall abound", cp. 3 Ne. 20:28.

v28 "times of the Gentiles is come in", cp. Romans 11:25-32, JS-Hist. 1:41. This time was predicted for Ephraim in Gen. 48:19.

"light shall break forth", cp. v 9.

"the fullness of my gospel", cp. 1 Ne. 15:13-18, 3 Ne. 16:4.

v30-31 In the generation the events of v. 26 occur shall the events of v. 31 occur. The upward limit of a contemporary generation is ~100 years, cf. 4 Ne. 1:22. The opening two lines of v. 31 forward a literal interpretation on the "generation", rather than a figurative one as it references "men...in that generation, that shall not pass until...." The "pass[ing]" has reference to physical death, cf. 4 Ne. 1:22, D&C 84:5, JS-Matt. 1:35.

v31-33 Various signs of the times.

v31 "an overflowing scourge...a desolating sickness", it is difficult to know if this statement is referring twice to the same event or two different events. Isaiah 28:15 refers to an "overflowing scourge" that is presumably Assyria/Babylon, and Isa. 9-10 use various images presenting the king of Assyria as a tool of destruction in the Lord's hand. However, that is typically seen as referring to events in the Middle East when eschatologically interpreted. Revelation 9 has both wars and plagues occurring in the seventh seal, so it is safe to assume the phrase refers to two different events.

For additional references to "overflowing scourge" cp. D&C 5:19, D&C 97:23, also the TG "scourge" entry.

For additional reference to "desolating sickness", cp. Zech. 14:12, D&C 29:19, D&C 84:96-97, D&C 87:67.

v32 "my disciples", i.e., those that do Jesus' will, cp. John 15:1-15. Later equated with "Christians", cp. Acts 11:26.

"shall stand in holy places", cp. D&C 27:15, D&C 101:22.

34 And now, when I the Lord had spoken these words unto my disciples, they were troubled.

v34 A non-quote portion of text forms a transition between the sections. The text itself indicates the disciples were not happy about the bad news they had just received.

35 And I said unto them: Be not troubled, for, when all these things shall come to pass, ye may know that the promises which have been made unto you shall be fulfilled.

36 And when the light shall begin to break forth, it shall be with them like unto a parable which I will show you-- 37 Ye look and behold the figtrees, and ye see them with your eyes, and ye say when they begin to shoot forth, and their leaves are yet tender, that summer is now nigh at hand; 38 Even so it shall be in that day when they shall see all these things, then shall they know that the hour is nigh. 39 And it shall come to pass that he that feareth me shall be looking forth for the great day of the Lord to come, even for the signs of the coming of the Son of Man. 40 And they shall see signs and wonders, for they shall be shown forth in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath. 41 And they shall behold blood, and fire, and vapors of smoke. 42 And before the day of the Lord shall come, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon be turned into blood, and the stars fall from heaven. 43 And the remnant shall be gathered unto this place; 44 And then they shall look for me, and, behold, I will come; and they shall see me in the clouds of heaven, clothed with power and great glory; with all the holy angels; and he that watches not for me shall be cut off.

45 But before the arm of the Lord shall fall, an angel shall sound his trump, and the saints that have slept shall come forth to meet me in the cloud. 46 Wherefore, if ye have slept in peace blessed are you; for as you now behold me and know that I am, even so shall ye come unto me and your souls shall live, and your redemption shall be perfected; and the saints shall come forth from the four quarters of the earth.

47 Then shall the arm of the Lord fall upon the nations. 48 And then shall the Lord set his foot upon this mount, and it shall cleave in twain, and the earth shall tremble, and reel to and fro, and the heavens also shall shake. 49 And the Lord shall utter his voice, and all the ends of the earth shall hear it; and the nations of the earth shall mourn, and they that have laughed shall see their folly. 50 And calamity shall cover the mocker, and the scorner shall be consumed; and they that have watched for iniquity shall be hewn down and cast into the fire.

51 And then shall the Jews look upon me and say: What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet? 52 Then shall they know that I am the Lord; for I will say unto them: These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God. 53 And then shall they weep because of their iniquities; then shall they lament because they persecuted their king.

54 And then shall the heathen nations be redeemed, and they that knew no law shall have part in the first resurrection; and it shall be tolerable for them. 55 And Satan shall be bound, that he shall have no place in the hearts of the children of men. 56 And at that day, when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins. 57 For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived--verily I say unto you, they shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day. 58 And the earth shall be given unto them for an inheritance; and they shall multiply and wax strong, and their children shall grow up without sin unto salvation. 59 For the Lord shall be in their midst, and his glory shall be upon them, and he will be their king and their lawgiver.

v35-59 The Day of the Lord. The Lord tells the disciples not to get upset because when they see these events described in v. 18-33, then they will know the ultimate fulfillment of all the covenants is imminent.

v35 A summary of v. 36-59, the promises made to fathers are fulfilled, cp. v. 14, 16.

v36-44 These signs are for those who fear Lord, if they watch for them and are faithful they will not be cut off.

v36 "when the light shall begin to break forth", cp. v. 28.

v40-55 These verses presents a series of events that appear to be rapidly successive, occurring over a relatively short period of time. Exactly how long is impossible to say. In the case with the Nephites, almost a full year elapsed between the destruction and the appearance of the resurrected Jesus, cf. 3 Ne. 8:5, 3 Ne. 10:18. Although the various events detailed here could easily be accomplished in a single day. Also note the various events detailed here are placed in a specific chronological order.

v43 "And the remnant [of Judah] shall be gathered unto this place [i.e., Jerusalem]", cp. v. 24-25.

v44 The Second Advent. Compare 2 Ne. 6:8-14, 2 Ne. 25:15-17.

v45-46 The second phase of First Resurrection, or the resurrection of all of the righteous dead that died after Jesus, cp. Matt. 24:31 (JS-Matt. 1:37), 1 Thes. 4:16-17, D&C 88:96, D&C 101:31, D&C 109:75.

v47-50 The arm of Lord falls on the wicked nations of the earth and they are cut off. The people referred to in the last line of v. 44 are punished. In some cases the Lord uses vicarious "arms" to do His work, but this text suggests the Lord Himself taking over in the first-person to destroy His enemies, which is a common apocalyptic theme, cp. Isa. 34, Isa. 63, Rev. 19.

v48 Compare Zech. 14:4, D&C 133:56.

v51-53 The Jews, or natural Israel, redeemed. Given this prediction it is safe to assume there is no point in actively proselyting Jews. This may in part explain why the Church agreed to the Israeli policy of no missionaries in the state of Israel.

v52-53 Compare Isa. 25:9, 2 Ne. 6:13, 2 Ne. 25:16.

v54-59 The wicked and just are sorted in preparation for Millennium. This section of text can be arranged in a synthetical parallelism, as follows:

- A - (v. 54) Heathen nations, those without Law redeemed
- B - (v. 55) Satan bound
- C - (v. 56) Bridegroom joins the wise virgins
- A - (v. 57) The wise who receive the truth abide the Day
- B - (v. 58) Children grow up without sin
- C - (v. 59) Lord in their midst, their lawgiver.

60 And now, behold, I say unto you, it shall not be given unto you to know any further concerning this chapter, until the New Testament be translated, and in it all these things shall be made known; 61 Wherefore I give unto you that ye may now translate it, that ye may be prepared for the things to come.

62 For verily I say unto you, that great things await you; 63 Ye hear of wars in foreign lands; but, behold, I say unto you, they are nigh, even at your doors, and not many years hence ye shall hear of wars in your own lands. 64 Wherefore I, the Lord, have said, gather ye out from the eastern lands, assemble ye yourselves together ye elders of my church; go ye forth into the western countries, call upon the inhabitants to repent, and inasmuch as they do repent, build up churches unto me. 65 And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you. 66 And it shall be called the

New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God; 67 And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion. 68 And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety. 69 And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another. 70 And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand. 71 And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy.

72 And now I say unto you, keep these things from going abroad unto the world until it is expedient in me, that ye may accomplish this work in the eyes of the people, and in the eyes of your enemies, that they may not know your works until ye have accomplished the thing which I have commanded you; 73 That when they shall know it, that they may consider these things.

74 For when the Lord shall appear he shall be terrible unto them, that fear may seize upon them, and they shall stand afar off and tremble. 75 And all nations shall be afraid because of the terror of the Lord, and the power of his might. Even so. Amen.

v60-75 Assorted closing statements, which are not directly related to the preceding block of apocalyptic text.

v60-61 Smith will learn more by "translating" the Bible, but for now no more will be revealed.

v62-71 Prediction of New Jerusalem. These verses follow the general tenor of D&C 38:13-14 and D&C 42:64, except now the requirement to build New Jerusalem is made explicit. The previously implicit references to establish Zion are also made explicit in v. 67.

As New Jerusalem was not built by them at that time, the question is "Is this command relevant to us now?" D&C 90:37 and D&C 101:17 would argue that New Jerusalem will ultimately be built regardless. The failure to establish the Zion/New Jerusalem at Independence was primarily a result of their failure to abide the United Order. One should note the later verses, especially v. 68-70, still have potential for fulfillment in the events leading up to the Day of the Lord.

The failure to fulfill this prediction is occasionally used by those unfavorably disposed towards the Church to say that Smith was a false prophet and so on. In response to them, see D&C 56:4, D&C 58:30-33. That people fail to do what the Lord commands happens every day as people violate the Ten Commandments. Are the Lord and His prophets made false by the

failure of the ecclesia to do what He commands?

v72-73 Keep these things from going forth so your enemies won't be able to plan ahead, cp. 42:56-57. There is no reason to apprise your enemies of your plans, so they can actively thwart you. Once they are fulfilled your enemies will have something to think about.

v74-75 The terror of the Lord shall come upon the nations. These two verses paraphrase material from Isaiah and present it as the same event as that described in v. 35-59. See Isa. 13:8, Isa. 17:13, Isa. 64:2, D&C 34:8.

Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 45

The first quotation is Smith's brief recollection of the events prompting the revelation. The second is Whitmer's similarly brief recollection, with an additional comment preceding it. The third excerpt is from the Painesville Telegraph. The latter half of the Telegraph excerpt is probably that which Smith refers to, the first half is probably what Whitmer was referring to in his comment about the incorrect tradition had among some early saints. The third excerpt below indicates the content of the revelation was influenced by Smith's translation of the Bible, which was occurring at the time. The fourth is a comprehensive review of the various hostile newspaper articles Smith refers to in his recollection.

With respect to the excerpt from the Telegraph, the "Mormonism in China" piece merits some comment. The article appears to be intended as satire where some dubious revelation sweeping through China by implicit threat is likened to "Mormonism". The implication being the Mormons are using sensational apocalyptic threats of destruction, similar to those employed in China, to promise deliverance by propagating the revelation. The Book of Mormon being likened to the "revelation" and those foolishly propagating it under the guise of being delivered from the imminent destruction being the early saints.

That the early saints had a rather apocalyptic view of their times and considered the Second Advent to be imminent is plainly manifest in the historical record. History indicates they also had a rather uncompromising view towards acceptance or rejection of their message, which could probably be said of most organized religions of the time. So, the "Mormonism in China" satire drew on some element of fact, and then lampooned it by effectively comparing it to what we would call a "chain letter" today.

The connection Smith makes between the "Mormonism in China" article and the apparent prediction of an earthquake by a member girl (cf. footnote on History of the Church, volume 1, page 158), is not clear. Whether they were merely contemporaneous, or the prediction and subsequent commotion surrounding its apparent fulfilment (e.g., the prediction and fulfilment was well known enough to have resulted in the conversion of at least one person, Simmonds Ryder) gave rise to the article is left unexplained, although Smith's brief comments suggest the latter.

This section was first published in the Evening and Morning Star, volume 1, number 1, page 2 in June, 1832. It was then published in the Book of Commandments in 1833, pages 103-111. It was published in the Kirtland edition Doctrine and Covenants in 1835, pages 128-132. It was published in the Millennial Star, volume 1, number 8, pages 202-205, dated December, 1840. It was published in Times and Seasons, volume 5, number 1, pages 385-387, dated January 1, 1844.

Excerpt from History of the Church

At this age of the Church [i.e., early in the spring of 1831] many false reports, lies, and foolish stories, were published in the newspapers, and circulated in every direction, to prevent people from investigating the work, or embracing the faith. A great earthquake in China, which destroyed from one to two thousand inhabitants, was burlesqued in some papers, as "'Mormonism' in China." But to the joy of the Saints who had to struggle against everything that prejudice and wickedness could invent, I received the following:

[text of D&C 45 quoted]

(Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Vol. 1, pages 158-159)

Excerpt from Book of John Whitmer

About this time some were sick of various diseases, and were healed by the power which was in them through Jesus Christ. There was a tradition among some of the disciples, that those who obeyed the covenant in the last days, would never die: but by experience, they have learned to the contrary.

In those days the Lord blessed his disciples greatly, and he gave revelation after revelation, which contained doctrine, instructions, and prophecies: The word of the Lord came to the seer as follows:

[text of D&C 45 quoted]

(John Whitmer, Book of John Whitmer, chapter 3, paragraphs 7-8)

Excerpt from the Painesville Telegraph

Fanaticism.-- Died, in Kirtland on Tuesday night last, Mr. Warner Doty, aged about 29 years. The deceased was one of those who had embraced the imposition of Jo Smith, and was a victim to the delusion of Mormonism. He was duly commissioned after their

manner, to preach, and was one of the most active and zealous in the cause. So fully did he believe in the divinity of Smith, that he had been made to have full faith that he should live a thousand years -- this he confessed to a near relative some four weeks before his decease. Five days before he expired, he was suddenly attacked with an inflammation in the bowels, which afterwards assumed a typhoid appearance. He was immediately removed to the residence of his parents, who had no faith in the Mormon remedies for the cure of diseases. -- No persuasion could induce the young man to have a physician called, so strong was he impressed with the supernatural powers of Smith. -- Several of the Mormonites soon assembled around the sick man, where they continued to encourage him to persevere, and strengthen his delusion, telling him that he was getting better and soon would be well, till they saw he was about to expire, when they all fled from the house, without offering to assist in the last sad solemnities of the dead. Smith was sent for soon after he was taken sick, and proceeded towards the house of Doty, to heal him, but (as Smith said) he received a command not to go to Doty's and "cast his pearl before swine." He however visited the sick man a day or two after, and said he would get well, and protested against calling a physician. He held his hand upon the head of Doty for 10 or 15 minutes, but with what object is not known. A few hours before the young man expired, Dr. Brainard was sent for, much against the will of the worshippers of Smith, by the interference of other friends. The Doctor immediately pronounced his disease past remedy, and told the mormon doctors that their superstitions had probably been the means of the young man's death, or something of like import. When the young man discovered that death was nigh, his faith in Smith's pretensions seemed to forsake him. He said "What a wonderful mistake I have made," and called all his friends to take his leave. Addressing himself to an old man of the Mormon faith, he said "you are a friend to every body -- I must shake hands with you -- this is a lesson that I have learnt by actual experience, by which you ought to profit, but with me it is too late." The Mormonites will probably contradict many of these statements, as they have many positive facts heretofore; but we have our information from a relative of the deceased, who was present during the last 18 hours of his life, and whose intelligence and veracity will not suffer in comparison with the whole of those deluded people who have adapted Jo Smith as their spiritual leader.

MORMONISM IN CHINA.
From the Journal of Commerce.

CHINA. We have received from a gentleman in the ship Alert, 141 days from Canton, a file of the Canton Register from the beginning of January, 1830, to the 18th October.

Canton, July 17. -- A sort of revelation from the gods is now being published by writing, and word of mouth, in every direction, disclosing that this year in the 8th, 9th, and 10th months, a great pestilence will prevail and cause the death of persons innumerable. The first intimation of the approaching judgments was made by the deified astronomer Chang-Teen-Sze, to Tung Talsouyah, of Hoo-pih province, on his way from Pekin, while in Knangyuea district. There will be an abundant harvest this year, but human beings will suffer greatly. The virtuous shall be spared, but the wicked will find it impossible to escape. Those who will not believe shall see.

The ground will be covered with dead bodies. At the third watch when the cocks crow, and dogs bark, a malignant god will go forth to slay by the pestilence. Those who hear their names called must be careful not to answer. Those who devoutly fast at the new and full moon shall escape the pestilence. And each individual who writes a copy of the revelation, and publishes it, shall escape. He who writes and publishes ten copies shall save a whole family. Great calamities will fall on him who writes a copy and conceals. Those who cannot write, will by communicating the revelation verbally obtain the same immunities as those who write and publish.

(Eber D. Howe, The Painesville Telegraph, Number 42, Vol. II, Tuesday, April 5, 1831)

Excerpt from The Doctrine & Covenants: Our Modern Scripture

When the Church was almost a year old, the spreading of the gospel message was hampered greatly by many false stories which aroused prejudice against the Latter-day Saints. For example,

many newspapers in the area carried the story of a Mormon girl predicting an earthquake in China which caused great destruction just six weeks later. These papers labeled the loss of thousands of lives in that disaster as being "'Mormonism' in China." (HC, 1:58). This section contains a valid revelation from the Lord describing that which is to come.

The revelation is an outstanding example of the benefits flowing from Joseph Smith's "new translation" of the Bible. During the spring of 1831 the Prophet was working on his inspired revision of Matthew, including chapter 24 in which the Savior instructed his disciples concerning the last days. Beginning in verse 16 of section 45 the Lord repeated and amplified many of these teachings and applied them to the circumstances of his Latter-day Saints. Hence "this place" (verse 43) refers to the Holy Land, and "this mount" (verse 48) designates the Mount of Olives. The Lord promised that more concerning "this chapter" (verse 60) would be made known through the Prophet's "translation" of the New Testament; the inspired revision of Matthew 24 is now found in the Pearl of Great Price. (Richard O. Cowan, *The Doctrine & Covenants: Our Modern Scripture*, pages 78-79)

Excerpt from The Heavens Resound

As Joseph Smith and his followers arrived in the Western Reserve and started to establish the Church's headquarters there, many non-Mormons began to respond negatively and even aggressively to the growth of this new faith. Newspaper articles generally misrepresented the history, beliefs, ambitions, and goals of the Saints, as reporters often confused improper beliefs and conduct with orthodox doctrines and behavior.

Alarmed by the spirited anti-Mormon campaign, Joseph Smith recorded in his history that in the spring of 1831, "many false reports, lies, and foolish stories, were published in the' newspapers, and circulated in every direction, to prevent people from investigating the work, or embracing the faith." (HC 1:158)

Reports on the Church printed in the Ohio papers before the first missionaries arrived in the Western Reserve were more favorable and unbiased than those published during the 1830s, the period of the gathering in the state. Initially the religion was more a topic of curiosity than of scorn. But after the missionaries baptized some 130 converts in Kirtland and vicinity, the number of articles relating to the Church multiplied rapidly (in fact, more articles appeared in Ohio

papers between November 1830 and December 1831 than during any other period), and most of them contained derogatory statements about the Latter-day Saints, setting the tone for a propaganda offensive that continued for a number of years.

The editor who, more than any other, planted the seeds for Mormon persecution in Geauga County was Eber D. Howe, who was born in Saratoga County, New York, in 1798. Following the War of 1812, Howe was apprenticed to the publisher of the Buffalo Gazette. He later moved to Cleveland, Ohio, and helped establish the Cleveland Herald in 1818. In 1822 he moved to Painesville, where he rounded the Painesville Telegraph. He was editor of that paper (sometimes working alone, sometimes with the help of a partner) until January 1835. (E. D. Howe, *Autobiography and Recollections of a Pioneer Printer*, pp. 1, 4, 21, 46; *History of Geauga and Lake Counties, Ohio*, pp. 29, 223-24)

During the years that E.D. Howe was editor of the Telegraph, more disparaging articles on Mormonism appeared in that publication than in any other Ohio newspaper. He personally wrote only a few of the articles, but he also accepted for publication many critical accounts (with truth and error garbled together) about the restored Church. Some of the articles were reproduced in other Ohio publications. (See Milton V. Backman, Jr., "Contemporary Accounts of the Latter-day Saints and Their Leaders Appearing in Early Ohio Newspapers.")

Latter-day Saints were not the only targets of Howe's denunciations. He also brought his profusely slanderous language to bear against the Masons and members of various dissident or unorthodox religious societies. He opposed all secret societies in which men "swear to extricate each other...whether right or wrong." (Painesville Telegraph, January 5, 1830, p. 2) He characterized members of one group as "deluded fanatics," "monsters," "demons," "serpents," "horned beasts," "kidnappers," "arsonists" and "murderers." (Painesville Telegraph, December 27, 1831, p. 3)

Adopting the same approach, Howe and many other journalists of Ohio used discrediting terms to describe the rise of Mormonism. They referred to members of the restored Church as "fanatics," "a gang of deluded mortals," "deluded beings," the "dregs of this community," "profound believers in witchcraft, ghosts, goblins," and "inferior satellites." (Painesville Telegraph, March 22, 1831, p. 2; March 29, 1831, p. 2; August 9, 1832, p. 1; Ohio Repository (Canton), August 30, 1833, p. 2; September 1, 1836, p. 2) Seldom was Joseph Smith called by his full name or even referred to as Joseph; instead, he was

disparagingly called "Jo," "Joe," or "Joey." (Painesville Telegraph, March 8, 1831, p. 3; March 22, 1831, p. 2; May 9, 1834, p. 3; November 20, 1835, p. 3) The papers of Ohio branded the Book of Mormon as the "golden bible"; Joseph Smith's family as a "gang of money diggers"; (Painesville Telegraph, March 22, 1831, p. 2; March 29, 1831, p. 2) witnesses to the Book of Mormon as "pious reprobates"; (Painesville Telegraph, March 29, 1831, p. 2) and the revelations recorded by Joseph Smith as "volumes of...trash. (Painesville Telegraph, September 13, 1831, p. 1)

While engaged in this relentless attack on the Latter-day Saints, critics not only concocted the term "Mormonites," but they also formulated a derogatory definition of the word "Mormon." Quoting from a letter of "Obadiah Dogberry" (an alias of Abner Cole) in the Palmyra Reflector, the Painesville Telegraph repeated Dogberry's alleged discovery that the word "Mormon" came from the Greek word "mormoo." According to Bailey's Dictionary, "mormoo" meant "bugbear, hobgoblin, raw head, and bloody bones." Commenting on this definition, Howe announced that the Book of Mormon was "a fiction of hobgoblins and bugbears." (Painesville Telegraph, March 1, 1831, p. 3; Francis W. Kirkham, A New Witness for Christ in America 2:89-96) To correct this absurd definition of "Mormon," Joseph Smith announced that the word had not been derived from the Greek word "mormoo," but was a word that meant, literally, "more good." (Joseph Smith, "To the Editor," Times and Seasons 4 (May 15, 1843): 194)

Numerous accounts of the rise of Mormonism appeared in the 1830s in Ohio newspapers. After publication of the Book of Mormon, several editors published descriptions of it, often accompanied by various conflicting accounts of the rise of the Church.

The author of an article entitled "The Golden Bible" in the November 25, 1830, issue of the Cleveland Herald (subsequently reprinted in the Ashtabula Journal and in the Western Reserve Chronicle) admitted that he had not read the book but had "perused it sufficiently to be convinced" that it was "one of the veriest impositions" of that age. The purpose of the publication, this writer concluded, was financial gain. Joseph Smith had sent forth his "twelve Apostles" to sell the book. All this was "new proof that all fools are not dead, and knavery in any garb may yet find votaries [adherents]." (Cleveland Herald, November 25, 1830, p. 3; Ashtabul Journal, December 4, 1830, p. 2; Western Reserve Chronicle (Warren, Ohio), December 9, 1830,

p. 1)

In another article circulated in the Western Reserve in the spring of 1831, Alexander Campbell stated that the Book of Mormon was a composite of "every error and almost every truth discussed in New York for the last ten years. He [Joseph Smith] decides all the great controversies: infant baptism, ordination, the trinity, regeneration, repentance, justification, the fall of man, the atonement, transubstantiation, fasting, penance, church government, religious experience, the call of the ministry, the general resurrection, eternal punishment, who may baptize, and even the question of free masonry, republican government, and the rights of men. All these topics are repeatedly alluded to." (Painesville Telegraph, March 15, 1831, p. 1)

Many non-Mormon historians even in the twentieth century continue to publish this excerpt from Campbell's analysis. They have evidently failed to make a serious study of the Book of Mormon or even of religious history in general. They seem not to recognize that during the apostolic era, the Middle Ages, the era of the Reformation, and the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, men debated most of the subjects enumerated by Campbell. Consequently, it is not surprising that these topics were also discussed in New York and other parts of America at the time of the publication of the Book of Mormon. In other words, even if Joseph Smith had written the kind of book that Campbell described, it would have been no indication that the book was a product of the controversial subjects "discussed in New York for the past ten years" (1820-1830). Moreover, those who have studied the book recognize that it does not contain precise answers to many of the topics mentioned by Campbell, such as the pattern of church government, free masonry, republican government, and how one receives authority (including the call to the ministry).

One of the first descriptions of the origins of the Church appeared in the Painesville Telegraph on September 22, 1829. This article, which had been originally printed in the Palmyra Freeman, alleged that Joseph Smith was visited by "the spirit of the Almighty," who informed him that an ancient record lay buried in a hill located in the town where he lived. The record had been secured and translated and was being published in Palmyra. (Painesville Telegraph, September 22, 1829, p. 3; American Friend and Marietta Gazette, January 15, 1831, p. 4) The Ohio Star in Ravenna, Ohio, reported on December 9, 1830, that Joseph Smith claimed to have been visited three times in a

dream by the "spirit of the Almighty," which eventually led to the coming forth of the "Golden Bible." (Ohio Star, December 9, 1830, p. 2)

Another account of the origin of Mormonism that was originally published in the Palmyra Reflector and was republished in Ohio in the spring of 1831 connected the birth of the restored Church with a man named Walters. According to this story, Walters was a convicted criminal and "vagabond fortuneteller" who became a close associate of Joseph Smith. Walters, the report continued, was the instrument who persuaded the Smith family to pretend visitations and to bring forth a new book. The tale reached a crescendo with a description of the religious exercises initiated by Walters and observed by his followers, which included the Smith family. After gathering his disciples, the story read, Walters and his "money-digging impostors" carried out a ritual sacrifice of a rooster to a "foul spirit" who was supposedly the "guardian of hidden wealth." (Painesville Telegraph, March 8, 1831, p. 3)

Not only did Ohio journalists of the early 1830s publish diverse and false accounts of the origin of Mormonism; they also ascribed to Mormonism various instances of unusual behavior that transpired in different parts of the world. The Painesville Telegraph, for example, published in 1831 a report that had appeared in the New York Journal of Commerce. It had no connection with the restored Church, yet was entitled "Mormonism in China." This account, which elicited complaints from Joseph Smith, (HC 1:158) asserted that "a sort of revelation from the gods" had been published in China, disclosing that during the year a great pestilence would erupt. The virtuous, this bulletin added, would be spared, but the wicked would not escape; and the ground would be covered with the bodies of those stricken by the epidemic. (Painesville Telegraph, April 5, 1831, p. 3) (Milton V. Backman, The Heavens Resound, chapter 4)

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