

General Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 84-88

These sections are generally connected in context, namely the church at Missouri (a.k.a, "Zion" in all of these sections) failing to establish Zion and not building the Temple (cf. D&C 57), or even trying. Section 84 is the Lord explaining to the ecclesia the necessity of the Temple to accomplish the gathering of Israel and establishment of Zion, via the Priesthood. Section 85 is an attempt to deal with the underlying financial problems the church at Missouri was having, and the strain Bishop Partridge was experiencing, with a warning against ark steadiers being cut off. Section 86 is a retelling of a New Testament parable in a contemporary context, with a warning of the necessity of the Priesthood remaining faithful in their mission to the Gentiles and natural Israel, or they will be driven into the wilderness. Section 87 is a warning of the necessity of establishing Zion, a safe haven from the impending wars and destruction to be poured out upon the wicked world. Section 88 is the Lord reiterating the messages of sections 76, 84 and 87 in a single united revelation where the Lord tells the ecclesia to build a Temple in Kirtland (cf. D&C 88:70, 88:119), because He knows a Temple will not get built in Missouri.

What has changed between 84 and 88 is the people being addressed and their condition. In section 84 the Lord is telling the ecclesia at Missouri to transcend their current conditions and ascend into the Temple to receive the blessings of the Patriarchal priesthood, and in section 88 the ecclesia at Kirtland humble themselves in prayer and submit to the Lord, and He tells them to go ahead and build a Temple in Kirtland.

- D&C 84 - Transcend the world, establish Zion, build Temple
- D&C 85 - Warning against Missouri ark steadiers
- D&C 86 - Warning against Missouri chaff
- D&C 87 - Warning against impending wars, need holy places
- D&C 88 - Kirtland humbles selves, told to build Temple

Why didn't the Temple get built in Missouri? By and large, the Missouri Church leadership (e.g., Bishop Edward Partridge, First Counselor Isaac Morley, Second Counselor John Corrill, some others, such as A. Sydney Gilbert) was too caught up in the daily grind of dealing with the influx of immigrants and the growing hostility of the locals. This led to contention between the two sets of leadership, between Ohio and Missouri, centering largely on petty personality conflicts that were carried out via

letter writing (see Historical Material below for additional context).

From a strictly theological point of view, the backstory is entirely one of the ecclesia failing to do what the Lord told them to do, but instead doing what they thought was right.

It started with Lehman Copely in Ohio. Copely, formerly affiliated with the Shakers, had joined the Church and had allowed the [Colesville Branch](#) to take up residence on his land, without turning ownership of the land over to the people or the Church. Copely wished to go back to the Shakers and convert them to the Church. In D&C 49:3-4, the Lord tells Sidney Rigdon and Parley Pratt to teach Copely at least sufficiently so that he could reason with the Shakers to convince them of their errors. However, this is not what was done. Copely attended while Rigdon and Pratt attempted and failed to persuade the Shakers. The result is Copely left the Church and returned to the Shakers. Upon doing so, he demanded the members of the Church who were living on his land to leave, and he sued for "damages" (i.e., the improvements they had made in felling trees to clear land, build houses, till fields, and so on). The Colesville Branch was then told to move to Missouri (cf. D&C 54), led by Newel Knight (cf. D&C 56).

The unplanned move of the Colesville Branch caused a significant strain on the Church in Missouri, as they were unprepared to deal with a large group who were effectively impoverished and without means (approximately 60 people from nine different families). The Church at Missouri turned its attention to the purchase of land, and the increasing hostility from the locals. The leadership at Missouri, wanted a freer hand in making local decisions, and the leadership at Ohio wanted more oversight. The two parties descended into petty arguments via letter writing, with Smith traveling to visit and assuage hard feelings between the two parties, but largely failing. The result is there was no effort to build the Temple, despite the Lord and Smith encouraging the Missouri leadership to focus on that. Reading Corrill's history, excerpted below, it is plain he faults Smith for sending too many people down to Missouri too quickly.

The leadership at Ohio sought and received revelation and inspired guidance, hence D&C 88. The leadership at Missouri does not appear to have either sought or receive inspiration or revelation.

Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 84

Theology

Section 84 is addressing two main points brought up in the introductory verses: 1) the restoration of the Lord's people, namely scattered natural Israel, and 2) the gathering of His saints, the nations adopted into Israel into the Temple in Zion. Part 2 is addressed in v. 4-61, and details what is necessary for people to become a son of Moses or a son of Aaron by adoption through the Priesthood. Part 1 is then addressed when these restored or adopted sons of Moses and Aaron are called and commissioned to go out and preach to all nations.

The relationship between the Gentiles, or non-Israelite nations, and Israel is a subject of discussion in the Old Testament (cf. Isaiah 49), New Testament (cf. Matt. 15:21-28, Romans 11) and Book of Mormon (cf. 1 Ne. 22, Jacob 5). Since the Lord made a lineage-based covenant with Abraham (cf. Gen. 22:15-18), how would the Lord bring non-Abrahamic peoples into the plan of salvation? By adoption into Abraham's lineage, and participating in the same or similar covenants he made.

The Lord makes it clear the Temple is necessary to accomplishing these two overarching theological goals. Today, we understand clearly that the Temple is essential for the endowment of the living and for vicarious ordinance work. Here, the Lord is explaining that necessity to an early Church who is no rush to build a Temple.

Historical Context

In discussing this section, it is common to focus on the verses specifically addressing the Priesthood, and largely ignore the rest of the text. Doing so removes the Priesthood discussion from the larger context of the revelation, which is the restoration of scattered Israel and the gathering of the Lord's Saints into New Jerusalem and the Temple at Independence, Missouri.

Keeping the Priesthood discussion within the historical context of the text is necessary to understanding this section. The historical context is the Saints living at Missouri have done literally nothing to start building the Temple, and very little to establish New Jerusalem (cf. D&C 57). There had been problems with the leadership in specific, and the membership in

general in Missouri (cf. v. 56-59, 76, D&C 82:1-7). The result is the Lord calls them to repentance and lets them know what the larger eternal plan is, and what their part is supposed to be.

Unfortunately, the Saints at Missouri do not repent, and a few months later the Lord tells the Saints at Kirtland to build a Temple instead (cf. D&C 88:119), and the command to build a Temple in Missouri is subsequently rescinded (cf. D&C 101, D&C 124:51).

The Lord is telling the ecclesia they must be faithful and build a Temple so they can fully participate in the ordinances of the Priesthood, specifically the Patriarchal Order of the Priesthood, which they presently do not have access to. They presently are practicing the Melchizedek and Aaronic Orders, and the Lord is implicitly warning them they could be limited to only the Aaronic order, the lowest order of solely physical acts. The suggestion is if they do not correct themselves, they will be reduced to the Aaronic Order, the same as was ancient Israel as a result of their rebellions. Just as Moses and the Melchizedek order was taken away from Israel, so too can it be taken away from the contemporary Church.

In this section, the Lord is very much encouraging them to aspire to the Patriarchal Order by building the Temple, while warning them of the Aaronic Order if they do not.

Structure

The text of this section is complicated, as it contains a number of parenthetical statements, some with sub-parentheses. Where some of the parenthesis start and end is obscure. An arrangement based on subject follows:

Introduction (v. 1-3)

 The word of the Lord concerning His church
 established for the restoration of His people

The gathering of His saints (v. 4-61)

 An acceptable offering (v. 4-42)

 Parenthesis on the Holy Priesthood (v. 6b-30)

 Moses' Priesthood (v. 6b-16)

 Aaron's Priesthood (v. 18-27c)

 Removal of greater Priesthood (v.19-25)

 Overthrow of Aaronic Priesthood (v. 27d-28)

 Offices of respective Priesthoods (v. 29-30)

 Heed the words of life (v. 43-61)

 Parenthesis on vanity and condemnation (v. 55-59)

Bringing forth fruit (v. 58a)

- The restoration of His people (v. 62-120)
 - A - Calling and commission (v. 62-76)
 - B - No scrip or purse (v. 77-86)
 - A - Reprove and warn (v. 87-102)
 - B - Cast it unto the poor (v. 103-105)
 - A - When thou converted, strengthen brethren (v. 106-111)
 - B - Whitney to administer unto the poor (v. 112-113)
 - A - Whitney to preach (v. 114-116)
 - Summary of v. 62-116, authority statement (v. 117-120)

The text is also [highly structured](#), employing a series of different structural forms, including inverted parallelism, crescendo and decrescendo climax lists and complimentary pairs. A careful review is recommended, as it helps convey the intended message of the text.

Most notably, this section employs an unusual number of crescendo (cf. v. 7-16, 26-28, 34, 36-38, 43-48, 64-73, 78-85, 86-102, 106-110, 117-120) and decrescendo climax lists (cf. v. 23-25, 49-57, 74-76). Note all of the decrescendo climaxes are paired with a complimentary crescendo climax. The rhetorical value of this device is it emphasizes to the reader they have a choice to transcend, rise above the wicked world and succeed, or descend into the miserable groaning world and fail. The Lord is encouraging the ecclesia to transcend into a heavenly Zion, and warning them against falling back into the wicked world.

In the commentary below, the parenthetical comments are broken out separately from the surrounding text and addressed on their own. For example, the subject of v. 6a is interrupted by a series of complicated parentheses and is picked up again in v. 31. As such, the text for v. 4-6a and v. 31-42 are addressed together with the intervening material addressed separately.

1 A revelation of Jesus Christ unto his servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and six elders, as they united their hearts and lifted their voices on high. 2 Yea, the word of the Lord concerning his church, established in the last days for the restoration of his people, as he has spoken by the mouth of his prophets, and for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be the city of New Jerusalem. 3 which city shall be built, beginning at the temple lot, which is appointed by the finger of the Lord, in the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, and dedicated by the hand of Joseph Smith, Jun., and others with whom the Lord was well pleased.

v1-3 Introduction. Verse 2 spells out very plainly that the purpose of the Church in the latter-days is to restore scattered Israel (cp. Isa. 11:11, D&C 14:10, D&C 45:24-25), as well as establish the New Jerusalem.

v4-61 The gathering of His saints to New Jerusalem. The general theme here is the disbursement of the Priesthood to the nations, and the Temple being a gathering point for them.

4 Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation. 5 For verily this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house. 6 And the sons of Moses, ... 31 Therefore, as I said concerning the sons of Moses--for the sons of Moses and also the sons of Aaron shall offer an acceptable offering and sacrifice in the house of the Lord, which house shall be built unto the Lord in this generation, upon the consecrated spot as I have appointed-- 32 And the sons of Moses and of Aaron shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, upon Mount Zion in the Lord's house, whose sons are ye; and also many whom I have called and sent forth to build up my church. 33 For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies. 34 They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God. 35 And also all they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord; 36 For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me; 37 And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father; 38 And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him. 39 And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood. 40 Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved. 41 But whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and altogether turneth therefrom, shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come. 42 And wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood which ye have received, which I now confirm upon you who are present this day, by mine own voice out of the heavens; and even I have given the heavenly hosts and mine angels charge concerning you.

v4-42 An acceptable offering. Verses 4-5 state the Temple shall be built in Missouri by that generation. It then starts

on the theme of the sons of Moses in v. 6, and goes into a series of nested parenthesis. The theme of the sons of Moses picks up again in v. 31, and states they will offer an acceptable offering in the Temple. The offering is connected to their receiving the Priesthood and honoring it (v. 33-42), keeping the words of the Lord (v. 43-61) and proselyting (v. 62-116).

The statements in these verses which clearly forward the adoption of Gentiles into the sonship of Moses and Aaron appear to be different from those in D&C 107 where literal descendants of Aaron are explicitly referenced. Here, the predictions of Malachi 3 seem to be at least partially fulfilled by these Gentiles being adopted by ordination. However, D&C 107 clearly pushes for a literal fulfilment of Mal. 3.

v4 "shall be reared in this generation", this command is revoked in D&C 101 and D&C 124:51.

v5 "pass away", cp. D&C 45:31, 4 Ne. 1:22, JS-Matt. 1:35.

6b according to the Holy Priesthood ... 17 which priesthood continueth in the church of God in all generations, and is without beginning of days or end of years.

v6b-30 Parenthesis on the Holy Priesthood.

6b ... which he received under the hand of his father-in-law, Jethro; 7 And Jethro received it under the hand of Caleb; 8 And Caleb received it under the hand of Elihu; 9 And Elihu under the hand of Jeremy; 10 And Jeremy under the hand of Gad; 11 And Gad under the hand of Esaias; 12 And Esaias received it under the hand of God. 13 Esaias also lived in the days of Abraham, and was blessed of him-- 14 which Abraham received the priesthood from Melchizedek, who received it through the lineage of his fathers, even till Noah; 15 And from Noah till Enoch, through the lineage of their fathers; 16 And from Enoch to Abel, who was slain by the conspiracy of his brother, who received the priesthood by the commandments of God, by the hand of his father Adam, who was the first man--

v6b-16 Sub-parenthesis on Moses' Priesthood. This is a typical genealogy indicating the line of authority. Of note are that Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, was not an Israelite but was a Midianite (v. 6). Thus, people outside of Israel at that time had the Priesthood, which breaks the standard view that the Lord

was only dealing with Israel at the time.

As to who this "Esaias" person is, one must wonder if it is the same as Elias referenced in D&C 27:7 as they are both associated with the Abrahamic dispensation. One would assume v. 12 means Abraham was commanded of God to ordain Esaias (as is the case between Adam and Abel in v. 16), as otherwise the authority line wouldn't make much sense.

18 And the Lord confirmed a priesthood also upon Aaron and his seed, throughout all their generations, which priesthood also continueth and abideth forever with the priesthood which is after the holiest order of God. ... 26 And the lesser priesthood continued, which priesthood holdeth the key of the ministering of angels and the preparatory gospel; 27 which gospel is the gospel of repentance and of baptism, and the remission of sins, and the law of carnal commandments,

v18-27c Sub-parenthesis on Aaron's Priesthood. The Aaronic order is described as ministering in the physical performances and having the right to the ministering of angels.

19 And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. 20 Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. 21 And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; 22 For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live. 23 Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God; 24 But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory. 25 Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also;

v19-25 Sub-sub-parenthesis on removal of greater Priesthood. The Melchizedek Priesthood is presented as the higher order that contains all of the keys necessary to obtain eternal life (v. 19-22). This order was removed from Israel because of their rebellion (v. 23-25).

v22 This verse is confusing. "For without this [i.e., the authority of the higher priesthood per v. 21] no man can see the

face of God [i.e., be in God's favor, in the Semitic mind to have God's face inclined towards you indicates you are in His favor, cp. v. 23, cf. 2 Chron. 7:14] and live [i.e., inherit eternal life, cp. v. 33]. A plainer gloss would be "Without the Melchizedek Priesthood it is impossible to perform the ordinances the Lord requires to inherit the Kingdom of God."

Persons not favorably disposed towards the Church of Jesus Christ occasionally use this verse to say Smith contradicts himself because here he says that you must have the Melchizedek Priesthood to survive an encounter with God, and Smith didn't have it for the First Vision so he should have died. This kind of reading is entirely acontextual and nothing more than polemics.

27d which the Lord in his wrath caused to continue with the house of Aaron among the children of Israel until John, whom God raised up, being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. 28 For he was baptized while he was yet in his childhood, and was ordained by the angel of God at the time he was eight days old unto this power, to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews, and to make straight the way of the Lord before the face of his people, to prepare them for the coming of the Lord, in whose hand is given all power.

v27d-28 Sub-parenthesis on overthrow of Aaronic Priesthood. Here we find out that John Baptist was set apart at eight days old, at his circumcision, by an angel to overthrow the Aaronic order in preparing the way for Jesus' ministry. Curiously enough D&C 68 informs us that those firstborn sons of the literal lineage of Aaron still possess some rights and keys pertaining to this order. So, whatever this overthrowing was by John Baptist it did not utterly wipe out all aspects of the system entirely.

Also note in D&C 13 John Baptist is the one who committed the keys to the lesser order to Smith.

29 And again, the offices of elder and bishop are necessary appendages belonging unto the high priesthood. 30 And again, the offices of teacher and deacon are necessary appendages belonging to the lesser priesthood, which priesthood was confirmed upon Aaron and his sons.

v29-30 Sub-parenthesis on offices of respective Priesthoods. Offices detailed in their respective orders.

v31 These sons of Aaron and Moses (by adoption per v. 33-34) are offering acceptable sacrifices, similar to the statement in D&C 13:1. However, note in D&C 31:1 we have a much more literalistic presentation of "sons of Levi", which would favor a direct lineage interpretation over the current theme of lineage by adoption. This kind of dualistic interpretation on the same passage is common to the LDS cannon as one interpretation is presented for Judah and one for Joseph (for example Jesus' discourse in 3 Ne. where he re-interprets several chapters from Isaiah as applying to Joseph in the New World rather than the contextual Judah in the Old World).

The sacrifices they are offering here are obviously figurative spiritual sacrifices, such as detailed in the rest of section (e.g., keeping the commandments, proselyting, etc.)

v33-34 These verses clearly indicate these persons are becoming sons as a result of embracing the Priesthood and not by birth.

v33 "renewing of their bodies", I take this to be referring to participating in the First Resurrection, as implied in v. 38.

v40-41 The covenant is such that the Father cannot break and neither can anyone else justifiably, in other words, there are no legal loopholes. The only way to break the covenant is by rebelling and violating it. Those who do break it appear to be bound for telestial glory.

43 And I now give unto you a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life. 44 For you shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God. 45 For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ. 46 And the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit. 47 And every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father. 48 And the Father teacheth him of the covenant which he has renewed and confirmed upon you, which is confirmed upon you for your sakes, and not for your sakes only, but for the sake of the whole world. 49 And the whole world lieth in sin, and groaneth under darkness and under the bondage of sin. 50 And by this you may know they are under the bondage of sin, because they come not unto me. 51 For whoso cometh not unto me is under the bondage of

sin. 52 And whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice, and is not of me. 53 And by this you may know the righteous from the wicked, and that the whole world groaneth under sin and darkness even now. 54 And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received-- ... 60 Verily, verily, I say unto you who now hear my words, which are my voice, blessed are ye inasmuch as you receive these things; 61 For I will forgive you of your sins with this commandment--that you remain steadfast in your minds in solemnity and the spirit of prayer, in bearing testimony to all the world of those things which are communicated unto you.

v43-61 Heed the words of life. The section has previously referenced the sons of Moses and Aaron offering sacrifices, I would take these verses to be a description of a type of those sacrifices. These verses are set up in two contrasting blocks where v. 43-48 is the positive exhortation and v. 43-61 is the negative admonition where the ecclesia is called worldly.

Note the so-called Johannine rhetorical style of v. 43-48 of "word...truth...light...spirit". John almost surely picked this up from Jesus during his mortal ministry, as the Lord makes such heavy use of the style post-mortally in the D&C.

v48 "but for the sake of the whole world", the Lord wants people to save themselves, but once they are cleaned up, He wants them to help others as well. This is the purpose of the elect, cp. D&C 29:4, D&C 93:46.

v52 Contrast v. 35-38.

55 which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation. 56 And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all. 57 And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written- ... otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion. 59 For shall the children of the kingdom pollute my holy land? Verily, I say unto you, Nay.

v55-59 Parenthesis on vanity in the ecclesia and subsequent condemnation. The people are told to conform to and abide by the revelation they have received (e.g., D&C 57) in deed and not just word. And they are warned that they will not be permitted

to pollute the holy land, which in itself can be seen as a reason why they were ultimately ejected from Missouri. The Lord threatened them with a covenant curse, that, unfortunately, was ultimately fulfilled.

This is a common pitfall as people would generally prefer revelation to come out that endorses what they want and what they think rather than conforming themselves to what the Lord has already revealed.

58 That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom;

v58a Sub-parenthesis on bringing forth fruit, this is what it is they are to "do" as referenced in the end of v. 57. They are to "bring forth fruit", which I would take to be the subject of v. 62-117.

v62-120 The restoration of His people. This section largely presents material pertaining to proselyting. The text follows a repeating A-B spiritual-physical pattern which emphatically places the spiritual aspects forward while discounting physical issues.

62 Therefore, go ye into all the world; and unto whatsoever place ye cannot go ye shall send, that the testimony may go from you into all the world unto every creature. 63 And as I said unto mine apostles, even so I say unto you, for you are mine apostles, even God's high priests; ye are they whom my Father hath given me; ye are my friends; 64 Therefore, as I said unto mine apostles I say unto you again, that every soul who believeth on your words, and is baptized by water for the remission of sins, shall receive the Holy Ghost. 65 And these signs shall follow them that believe-- 66 In my name they shall do many wonderful works; 67 In my name they shall cast out devils; 68 In my name they shall heal the sick; 69 In my name they shall open the eyes of the blind, and unstop the ears of the deaf; 70 And the tongue of the dumb shall speak; 71 And if any man shall administer poison unto them it shall not hurt them; 72 And the poison of a serpent shall not have power to harm them. 73 But a commandment I give unto them, that they shall not boast themselves of these things, neither speak them before the world; for these things are given unto you for your profit and for salvation. 74 Verily, verily, I say unto you, they who believe not on your words, and are not baptized in water in my name, for the remission of their sins, that they may receive the Holy Ghost, shall be damned, and shall not come into my Father's kingdom where my Father and I am. 75 And this

revelation unto you, and commandment, is in force from this very hour upon all the world, and the gospel is unto all who have not received it. 76 But, verily I say unto all those to whom the kingdom has been given--from you it must be preached unto them, that they shall repent of their former evil works; for they are to be upbraided for their evil hearts of unbelief, and your brethren in Zion for their rebellion against you at the time I sent you.

v62-76 Calling and commission. This is very similar to the various New Testament statements delivered to the ancient disciples.

v73 The various signs detailed previous to this verse are clearly presented as being for the benefit of the missionary, and not for use as a conversion tool or to satisfy sign-seekers, cp. D&C 63:7-12.

v74 The opposite case of that described in v. 64.

v76 The faithful ecclesia is to preach the gospel to all the world, and to correct the members of the ecclesia who are rebellious.

In this specific case of the rebellious brothers in Zion, Orson Hyde and Hyrum Smith were tasked with writing a letter of rebuke to the leadership at Missouri (Joseph Smith, Letterbook, 1829-1835, pages, 20-25; Kirtland Minute Book, January 13, 1833, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.).

77 And again I say unto you, my friends, for from henceforth I shall call you friends, it is expedient that I give unto you this commandment, that ye become even as my friends in days when I was with them, traveling to preach the gospel in my power; 78 For I suffered them not to have purse or scrip, neither two coats. 79 Behold, I send you out to prove the world, and the laborer is worthy of his hire. 80 And any man that shall go and preach this gospel of the kingdom, and fail not to continue faithful in all things, shall not be weary in mind, neither darkened, neither in body, limb, nor joint; and a hair of his head shall not fall to the ground unnoticed. And they shall not go hungry, neither athirst. 81 Therefore, take ye no thought for the morrow, for what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed. 82 For, consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin; and the kingdoms of the world, in all their glory, are not arrayed like one of these. 83 For your Father, who is in heaven,

knoweth that you have need of all these things. 84 Therefore, let the morrow take thought for the things of itself. 85 Neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say; but treasure up in your minds continually the words of life, and it shall be given you in the very hour that portion that shall be meted unto every man. 86 Therefore, let no man among you, for this commandment is unto all the faithful who are called of God in the church unto the ministry, from this hour take purse or scrip, that goeth forth to proclaim this gospel of the kingdom.

v77-86 No scrip or purse. Another set of statements very similar to those delivered to ancient disciples. They're told to not worry about these physical things, and just concentrate on the ministry.

87 Behold, I send you out to reprove the world of all their unrighteous deeds, and to teach them of a judgment which is to come. 88 And whoso receiveth you, there I will be also, for I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up. 89 whoso receiveth you receiveth me; and the same will feed you, and clothe you, and give you money. 90 And he who feeds you, or clothes you, or gives you money, shall in nowise lose his reward. 91 And he that doeth not these things is not my disciple; by this you may know my disciples. 92 He that receiveth you not, go away from him alone by yourselves, and cleanse your feet even with water, pure water, whether in heat or in cold, and bear testimony of it unto your Father which is in heaven, and return not again unto that man. 93 And in whatsoever village or city ye enter, do likewise. 94 Nevertheless, search diligently and spare not; and wo unto that house, or that village or city that rejecteth you, or your words, or your testimony concerning me. 95 Wo, I say again, unto that house, or that village or city that rejecteth you, or your words, or your testimony of me; 96 For I, the Almighty, have laid my hands upon the nations, to scourge them for their wickedness. 97 And plagues shall go forth, and they shall not be taken from the earth until I have completed my work, which shall be cut short in righteousness-- 98 until all shall know me, who remain, even from the least unto the greatest, and shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and shall see eye to eye, and shall lift up their voice, and with the voice together sing this new song, saying:

99 The Lord hath brought again Zion;
The Lord hath redeemed his people, Israel,
According to the election of grace,
which was brought to pass by the faith
And covenant of their fathers.
100 The Lord hath redeemed his people;

And Satan is bound and time is no longer.
The Lord hath gathered all things in one.
The Lord hath brought down Zion from above.
The Lord hath brought up Zion from beneath.
101 The earth hath travailed and brought forth her
strength;
And truth is established in her bowels;
And the heavens have smiled upon her;
And she is clothed with the glory of her God;
For he stands in the midst of his people.
102 Glory, and honor, and power, and might,
Be ascribed to our God; for he is full of mercy,
Justice, grace and truth, and peace,
Forever and ever, Amen.

v87-102 Reprove and warn. The missionaries are to warn the people of the earth of the impending doom of Judgement, cp. D&C 29:7-10.

v88 Compare v. 42, Ps. 91:11-13.

v92 The opposite case of that described in v. 88. On the cleansing of the feet, cp. D&C 60:15.

v96-98 Judgements will be poured out such that the wicked and rebellious will be purged from the earth and only the more righteous will remain.

v97 "cut short in righteousness", this phrase is a paraphrase of Romans 9:28. See comments on D&C 52:11.

v98-102 With the elimination of the wicked from the earth, at the advent of the Millennium the righteous will sing a new song, cp. Isa. 42:10, Rev. 14:1-3, D&C 133:56-57.

103 And again, verily, verily, I say unto you, it is expedient that every man who goes forth to proclaim mine everlasting gospel, that inasmuch as they have families, and receive money by gift, that they should send it unto them or make use of it for their benefit, as the Lord shall direct them, for thus it seemeth me good. 104 And let all those who have not families, who receive money, send it up unto the bishop in Zion, or unto the bishop in Ohio, that it may be consecrated for the bringing forth of the revelations and the printing thereof, and for establishing Zion. 105 And if any man shall give unto any of you a coat, or a suit, take the old and cast it unto the poor, and go on your way rejoicing.

v103-105 Cast your excess unto the poor. Again discounting the physical aspects of the ministry.

106 And if any man among you be strong in the spirit, let him take with him him that is weak, that he may be edified in all meekness, that he may become strong also. 107 Therefore, take with you those who are ordained unto the lesser priesthood, and send them before you to make appointments, and to prepare the way, and to fill appointments that you yourselves are not able to fill. 108 Behold, this is the way that mine apostles, in ancient days, built up my church unto me. 109 Therefore, let every man stand in his own office, and labor in his own calling; and let not the head say unto the feet it hath no need of the feet; for without the feet how shall the body be able to stand? 110 Also the body hath need of every member, that all may be edified together, that the system may be kept perfect. 111 And behold, the high priests should travel, and also the elders, and also the lesser priests; but the deacons and teachers should be appointed to watch over the church, to be standing ministers unto the church.

v106-111 When you are converted, strengthen your brethren. In the ministry they are to support and strengthen on another.

112 And the bishop, Newel K. Whitney, also should travel round about and among all the churches, searching after the poor to administer to their wants by humbling the rich and the proud. 113 He should also employ an agent to take charge and to do his secular business as he shall direct.

114 Nevertheless, let the bishop go unto the city of New York, also to the city of Albany, and also to the city of Boston, and warn the people of those cities with the sound of the gospel, with a loud voice, of the desolation and utter abolishment which await them if they do reject these things. 115 For if they do reject these things the hour of their judgment is nigh, and their house shall be left unto them desolate. 116 Let him trust in me and he shall not be confounded; and a hair of his head shall not fall to the ground unnoticed.

v112-116 Whitney as an example application.

v112-113 Whitney's physical concerns should be to administer unto the poor, and pass off other secular business to another.

v112 "humbling the rich and the proud", cp. D&C 104:16.

v114-116 Whitney is to preach. While he does have to

administer to the needs of the poor, he should still be making effort to preach.

117 And verily I say unto you, the rest of my servants, go ye forth as your circumstances shall permit, in your several callings, unto the great and notable cities and villages, reproving the world in righteousness of all their unrighteous and ungodly deeds, setting forth clearly and understandingly the desolation of abomination in the last days. 118 For, with you saith the Lord Almighty, I will rend their kingdoms; I will not only shake the earth, but the starry heavens shall tremble.

v117-118 Summary of v. 62-116, focusing on Judgement themes.

119 For I, the Lord, have put forth my hand to exert the powers of heaven; ye cannot see it now, yet a little while and ye shall see it, and know that I am, and that I will come and reign with my people. 120 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. Amen.

v119-120 Closing authority statement.

Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 84

Unfortunately, there is relatively little known about what prompted this revelation. Smith comments that he "inquired of the Lord" at a time when a number of elders had returned to Kirtland from missionary labors prompted by D&C 76. What prompted the enquiry and what the precise nature of the enquiry was we can only surmise from subjects commented on in the text itself.

Below are Joseph's comments on receiving the revelation, then four historical overviews shedding light on the events surrounding the revelation, and a newspaper article discussing the religious career of [John Corrill](#), likely one of the Bishopric at Independence, Missouri being called to repentance in this section. It is then followed by a text written by Corrill himself about his experiences in Missouri and Kirtland.

For a lengthy discussion over the conflict between the leadership at Ohio and Missouri, see Matthew C. Godfrey's ["Seeking after Monarchal Power and Authority": Joseph Smith and Leadership in the Church of Christ, 1831-1832.](#)

This section was first published in the Kirtland edition Doctrine and Covenants in 1835, pages 89-95. It was published in the Millennial Star, volume 1, number 4, pages 77-81, dated August, 1840. It was published in the Times and Seasons, volume 5, number 18, pages 657-660, dated October 1, 1844.

Excerpt from History of the Church

The Elders during the month of September began to return from their missions to the Eastern States, and present the histories of their several stewardships in the Lord's vineyard; and while together in these seasons of joy, I inquired of the Lord, and received on the 22nd and 23rd of September, the following revelation on Priesthood:

[text of D&C 84 quoted]

I continued the translation of the Bible and ministering to the Church, through the fall, excepting a hurried journey to Albany, New York and Boston, in company with Bishop Whitney, from which I returned on the 6th of November, immediately after the birth of my son Joseph Smith, the third. About the 8th of November I received a visit from Elders Joseph Young, Brigham Young, and Heber C. Kimball of Mendon, Monroe county, New York.

They spent four or five days at Kirtland during which we

had many interesting moments. At one of our interviews, Brother Brigham Young and John P. Greene spoke in tongues, which was the first time I had heard this gift among the brethren; others also spoke, and I received the gift myself. (Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Vol. 1, pages 286-297)

Excerpt from The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith

Section 84 is a revelation of major doctrinal importance; parts of it may well have been received in conjunction with the inspired translation of the Bible. The revelation appears to be a composite of several somewhat interrelated ideas that were recorded in their present form on at least two different days (i.e., 22-23 September 1832). It is difficult to determine which verses were received on which day, but some evidence suggests that verses 1-41 constitute parts of the revelation received on 22 September, and that verses 42-120 were received on 23 September. Whereas verse 1 indicates that the revelation was received in the presence of six elders (undoubtedly high priests), an unpublished note (dated 23 September 1832) that appears in the "Kirtland Revelation Book" after verse 42 affirms that that verse (42) was specifically intended for ten high priests, then present. It is also worthy of note that there is a change of tense in verse 42 from the third to the first person.

Verses 1-5 concern themselves with the building of the New Jerusalem in Jackson County, Missouri (particularly the construction of a temple). This divine injunction was rescinded in 1841. (See D&C 124:49 and 51.) Verse 76 directed that the "brethren in Zion" be upbraided for their "rebellion against you at the time I sent you." This alludes to the Prophet's trip to Jackson County, Missouri, in the spring of 1832 (see Historical Note for section 82). In accordance with this verse, a council of High Priests appointed Orson Hyde and Hyrum Smith to draft a letter to be sent to Missouri Church leaders. The letter, dated 14 January 1833, accuses the Missouri leaders of harboring a rebellious spirit and threatening insinuations against Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon and Newel K. Whitney. The summary of the epistle was: "Repent, repent, or Zion must suffer." ...

Pursuant to the instructions in verse 114, Joseph Smith and Newel K. Whitney traveled to Albany, New York, and Boston in the fall of 1832. These two men left Kirtland in the latter part of September and arrived in New York City before 13 October 1832. Much of their time in the East was spent transacting business, but Newel K. Whitney later stated that the trip "was taken to

fulfill the Revelation." (Lyndon W. Cook, The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pages 176-177)

Excerpt from Doctrine and Covenants Contexts

In section 57 the Lord identified the site for his temple in Zion. That was the first reference to a specific latter-day temple in the Doctrine and Covenants. There is not another one until section 84, which tells the Saints to build the temple and forges the gospel links between their missionary work, the gathering of scattered Israel, the fulfillment of ancient prophecies, and the building of New Jerusalem, crowned with its holy temple.

Joseph's history designates section 84 as a "Revelation... On Priesthood." That is worth considering. It could be described as a revelation on temple ordinances, covenants, the gathering of Israel, missionary work, the law of consecration, and the imminent coming of the Savior to "reign with my people" in Zion, as He says in closing (D&C 84:119). So why "priesthood?" What was Joseph seeing? What difference will it make to our understanding when we see it too?

The answer may be in a long digression between verses 7 and 31. It seems, at first, to be a tangent from the point of the revelation, which began with a prophecy about building the temple. It turns out, however, that the digression becomes an explanation of priesthood and the relationship between priesthood, ordinances, and the endowment of power we need to transcend the Fall and regain God's presence. In short, priesthood validates the ordinances to be performed in the prophesied temple.

Moses understood this principle, the revelation says, and tried to teach it plainly, but the Israelites of his day did not generally want the endowment of priesthood power. They could not, therefore, endure God's presence. Angry, God gave them less priesthood than he had to offer but as much as they were willing to receive. Joseph later taught about this strange human tendency to "set up stakes and say thus far will we go and no farther." By contrast, Moses and Joseph were like Peter and the others who, Joseph said, received "the fullness of priesthood or the law of God" when the Savior was transfigured before them.

I remember a Sunday School class discussion in which the consensus was that God does not get angry. It was an example of wresting the scriptures, which testify in section 84 and elsewhere that the Lord's "anger was kindled against them," and justifiably so. They rejected him, his plan, his sacrifice, his redeeming love, his fullness. The misguided class was trying to articulate truth about God's character. It was a little like the process by which the creeds of Christianity eventually determined that God had no passions or emotions like anger. Section 84 does a better job. The Lord is justifiably angry, it says. There is nothing wrong with justified anger. The problem is the choice to express it badly. God does not express his anger the way a fallen mortal might. Section 84 says that when God is angry at his children for rejecting his blessings, he responds by offering as much as they are presently willing to receive, preparatory to their receiving more (D&C 84:23-26).

Having concluded his digression, the Lord returns to his main theme, namely, how priesthood holders will serve in the temple to be built on the consecrated spot in Independence, Missouri. Saints who are full of priesthood power—figurative descendants of Moses and Aaron—will be filled with the Lord's glory in the temple. One would think this revelation would provide the Saints enough incentive to begin building a temple on the dedicated site in Independence, Missouri—Zion. They did not, however. There are several complicated reasons why, and later revelations will cover these.

The Saints obeyed section 84 in other specific ways. A council of high priests assigned Orson Hyde and Hyrum Smith to write a rebuke of the Church leaders in Missouri, as verse 76 commanded. As instructed in verses 112-114, Bishop Whitney and Joseph Smith left Kirtland "to fulfill the Revelation," making important contacts in New York City, visiting Albany, and prophesying in Boston. The gospel continues to be preached to "all who have not received it" (D&C 84:75). Many people have made the covenant to receive, obtain, and magnify the priesthood as outlined in section 84. Many people have obeyed the law of consecration as instructed in verses 103-110.

Perhaps the most important result of section 84 is that it raised Joseph's consciousness of the fundamental importance of priesthood and, inseparably, the temple. He had listened attentively all night at age seventeen while Moroni explained the imperative need to obtain restored priesthood in order to

seal the human family together before the Savior's coming, but the doctrine of the priesthood distilled on Joseph like dew from heaven (D&C 121:45). Considerable dew condensed during the night nine years later, when section 84 explained the priesthood's past and projected its future use in temples. (Steven C. Harper, 2021, [Doctrine and Covenants Context](#))

Excerpt from Doctrine and Covenants Minute

While we know the exact date, relative location, and close wording of the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood, we have very little information about the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood. Doctrine and Covenants 84 is a landmark in our understanding of priesthood in general, but especially of the powers and promises associated with the Melchizedek Priesthood. This revelation came at the end of several months of great challenges for Joseph Smith. A mob attacked Joseph and Sidney Rigdon at the John Johnson Farm on March 24, 1832. The beating was painful for both men, but it especially affected Sidney, whose head was badly lacerated as they dragged him across the frozen ground. Joseph seemed to recover more quickly, while Sidney was confined to bed for several days. Joseph visited Sidney a few days after the attack and later remembered, "I went to see Elder Rigdon, and found him crazy, and his head highly inflamed, for they had dragged him by his heels, and those, too, so high from the earth he could not raise his head from the rough frozen surface."

Sidney recovered sufficiently to travel to Missouri in the spring of 1832 with Joseph Smith and other Church leaders. Their conversations with the Church leaders in Missouri were difficult, but Joseph managed to bring some harmony to the discussions before he left. On the way home, another hardship struck the travelers when the horses pulling their stagecoach had a runaway. Bishop Newel K. Whitney attempted to jump from the coach but caught his foot in the wheel and broke his leg in several places. Bishop Whitney was unable to travel, so Joseph elected to stay with him while the rest of the party journeyed home to Kirtland.

Joseph spent a stressful four weeks at an inn in Greenville, Indiana, while Bishop Whitney recovered. He wrote in a letter to Emma Smith,

My Situation is a very unpleasant one although I will endeavor to be contented. The Lord assisting me I have

visited a grove which is just back of the town almost every day where I can be secluded from the eyes of any mortal and there give vent to all the feelings of my heart. In meditation and prayer I have called to mind all the past moments of my life and am left to mourn and Shed tears of sorrow for my folly in suffering the adversary of my Soul to have so much power over me as he has had in times past.

However, in the midst of his trials Joseph also remembered the goodness of God in his life. "But God is merciful and has forgiven my sins," he wrote to Emma. "I rejoice that he sendeth forth the Comforter to as many as believe and humbleth themselves before him."

On one occasion Joseph believed he had been poisoned. "I rose from the dinner-table, I walked directly to the door and commenced vomiting most profusely," he later wrote. "I raised large quantities of blood and poisonous matter, and so great were the muscular contortions of my system that my jaw was dislocated in a few moments." Joseph later recovered through a priesthood blessing, and he and Bishop Whitney left the inn the following day. By the time they returned to Kirtland they had been gone nearly three months.

More trouble greeted Joseph when he arrived home. A letter from John Corrill, a counselor to Bishop Edward Partridge in Missouri, raised some points of conflict and animosity toward Joseph Smith and other Church leaders in Kirtland. Shortly after hearing these accusations, Sidney Rigdon suffered an episode where he became frantic and declared in public that "the keys are rent from this people." Joseph was forced to travel to Kirtland from where he was staying in Hiram, Ohio, to remedy the situation. For a time, he was forced to remove Sidney from the First Presidency and revoke his priesthood.

During these challenging months, Joseph Smith began to reflect on his experiences and record his history for the first time. He wrote an account of the First Vision and documented the appearance of angels who had given him his authority to minister. In this history, he suggested that he had received two different kinds of authority, noting that "the ministering of Angels" gave him an authority that allowed him "to administer the letter of the Gospel." He also wrote of receiving "the high Priesthood after the holy order of the son of the living God,"

giving him "power and ordinance from on high to preach the Gospel in the administration and demonstration of the spirit."

Writing this history and enduring the tumultuous events surrounding the government of the Church were likely factors in the Prophet seeking further guidance on the nature of the priesthood. The revelation in section 84 traced the lineage of the two orders of the priesthood and explained the blessings associated with each. In a later history, Joseph Smith designated this revelation as simply "On Priesthood" and gave the following context for it: "The elders began to return from their Missions to the eastern states, and present the histories of their several stewardships in the Lord's vineyard; and while together in these seasons of joy, I inquired of the Lord and received the following: [D&C 84]."

The Prophet received the revelation over two days, the 22nd and 23rd of September, 1832. Evidence from the earliest copies of the revelation suggests that the revelation was received in two parts. We do not know exactly where the first part ends and the second part begins; however, several of the early scribes of the revelation, including Frederick G. Williams and John Whitmer, left a break after the phrase "for he is full of mercy, justice, grace and truth, and peace, forever and ever, Amen" (D&C 84:102). This break suggests that Doctrine and Covenants 84:103-120 were received on September 23rd. (Casey Paul Griffiths, [Doctrine and Covenants Minute](#))

Excerpt from Joseph Smith Papers Historical Introduction, D&C 84

After JS relocated from Hiram to Kirtland, Ohio, on 12 September 1832, elders who had returned from preaching in the eastern United States came to JS to report on their proselytizing. While JS and these elders were "together in these seasons of joy," a later history recounts, JS "inquired of the Lord and received" a revelation dated 22 and 23 September 1832. The beginning of the revelation identified its audience as JS and six elders, but partway through the revelation, the audience shifted to "Eleven high Priests save one." Because JS was living in Newel K. Whitney's white store, the revelation was probably dictated in either the store's upstairs "translating room" or the upstairs "council room," places where JS frequently worked.

The revelation was dictated over the course of two days, most likely beginning the evening of 22 September and continuing

into the early morning hours of 23 September. Textual evidence indicates a pause in the dictation at some point on 23 September. The three existing manuscript copies of the revelation (one in the handwriting of Frederick G. Williams, another by Williams and JS, and one by John Whitmer) all contain a clear break between the phrase "for he is full of mercy Justice grace and truth and peace for ever and ever Amen" and the phrase "And again verily verily I say unto you it is expedient...", marking an interruption in the dictation. Whitmer's copy even adds "Received on the 23 day of September 1832" between those two lines. However, the three manuscripts also include "viz 23d. day of September AD 1832" as a notation several pages before this break, indicating that material presented before the interruption was also dictated on 23 September. It may be that the dictation went into the early morning hours of 23 September, halted for a period of time, and then recommenced later that day.

The index of Revelation Book 2, one of the volumes in which this revelation was recorded, designated the revelation as one "explaining the two priest hoods and commissioning the Apostles to preach the gospel." An understanding of priesthood was still developing among followers of JS, especially in terms of its connection to different offices in the church. The Book of Mormon indicated that authority from God was necessary to perform certain ordinances, such as baptism and conferring the gift of the Holy Ghost, which led JS and Oliver Cowdery to petition God for such authority as they worked together in translating that record. Later accounts indicate that in May 1829 and sometime thereafter, they received angelic visitations that provided them first with the authority to baptize and later with the authority to officiate in other ordinances. However, extant records up to June 1831 did not call such authority "priesthood"; that term—while appearing in both the Book of Mormon and in JS's Bible revision—did not appear in any other contemporary documents until the minutes of a June 1831 conference, which noted that several individuals "were ordained to the high Priesthood." Moreover, the "Articles and Covenants" of the church explained the different duties of apostles, elders, priests, teachers, and deacons but did not explicitly associate these offices with the priesthood.

By late 1831, the high priesthood was understood to refer to both the office of high priest and to a broader authority.

The office, according to an 11 November 1831 revelation, was superior to other offices in the church, just as the authority seemed to be the highest authority. This revelation stated that after the offices of deacon, teacher, priest, and elder came "the high Priest hood which is the greatest of all." A history JS began writing around summer 1832 suggests that he had received two separate powers with different responsibilities. In that history, JS noted that "the ministering of angels" gave him an authority that allowed him "to administer the letter of the Gospel." He also recorded receiving "the high Priesthood after the holy order of the son of the living God," which gave him "power and ordinance from on high to preach the Gospel in the administration and demonstration of the spirit."

This 22-23 September revelation similarly delineated the existence of two priesthoods: a greater priesthood that contains keys to the mysteries of the kingdom and to the knowledge of God, and a lesser priesthood holding the keys of the ministering of angels and of the gospel of repentance and baptism. The revelation traced the lineage of the two priesthoods, noting that the greater priesthood was held by Moses, who received it from a line of individuals (including Melchizedek) who had ultimately received it from God. Aaron, meanwhile, held the lesser priesthood, which was passed to his descendants until it reached John the Baptist. Both priesthoods, the revelation posited, are eternal, and men in the Church of Christ could become the "sons of Moses" and the "sons of Aaron" by receiving these priesthoods and "magnifying there calling." Doing so would enable these "sons" to enter the temple that the Saints would construct in Missouri, allowing them to receive God's glory that would fill the temple. Some of this information seems a culmination of ideas first expressed in JS's revisions to passages in Hebrews, Genesis, and Exodus, which were completed in the six months leading up to September. The revelation also explained how the different offices in the church are connected to the two priesthoods. The offices of elder and bishop, it states, are "appendages" to the high priesthood, or to the office of high priest; the offices of teacher and deacon, meanwhile, are appendages to the lesser priesthood, or to the office of priest. High priests, elders, and priests, the revelation continued, have an obligation to travel to proclaim the gospel, while teachers and deacons are responsible for watching over the church in local congregations.

After providing a detailed explanation of the greater and lesser priesthoods, their offices, and their duties, the revelation emphasized the necessity of preaching to the world and provided an extensive discussion of many aspects of missionary work. Revelations from 1830, 1831, and 1832 called specific individuals on missions, but few revelations gave general procedural instructions about missionary work. This 22-23 September revelation, however, provided direction on who should serve missions, how they should serve, how they should receive sustenance while serving, what they should proclaim, and what would happen to those who did not accept their message. These instructions parallel New Testament accounts of the resurrected Jesus Christ's directions to the eleven apostles before his ascension into heaven. As in those accounts, Christ tells the high priests in this revelation that they have a responsibility to preach to all nations and to baptize those who believe. Signs will follow the believers, the revelation continues, and the Lord will go before them, just as Christ promised the ancient apostles that he would be with them always, "even unto the end of the world." The revelation specifically refers to "Eleven high Priests save one" (perhaps a reference to the eleven apostles to whom Christ spoke in the New Testament) and calls these high priests "apostles" and "friends" of Jesus Christ. Although many had preached the gospel before this time, this revelation seemed to launch a more urgent and comprehensive missionary campaign, even including in its preaching assignments individuals such as Bishop Newel K. Whitney, who generally oversaw temporal, not spiritual, concerns.

Frederick G. Williams, who was serving as JS's scribe, probably recorded the revelation as JS dictated it. Williams also inscribed a copy of this revelation that was given to Whitney, stating that he was transcribing it "for N K, Whitney and Joseph the Seer." Whitney and JS traveled together in New York and other states in October 1832, and the copy was likely made for the two men to carry with them on that trip. Williams and JS also made a copy of the revelation in Revelation Book 2, probably soon after the revelation was dictated. Parts of the revelation—including a "new song" on millennial themes, a condemnation of the church for neglecting the Book of Mormon, and the explanation of appendages to the greater and lesser priesthoods—were discussed in early 1833 issues of the church's periodical *The Evening and the Morning Star*. A conference of high priests also wrote a letter in January 1833 calling church

members in Missouri to repentance in conformance with instructions given in the revelation. Since at least six elders and ten high priests heard portions of the revelation while it was dictated, it is probable that information in it was also spread through word of mouth. (Joseph Smith Papers, [Historical Introduction](#))

Excerpt from John Corrill an example of the older Christian Primitivist converts to Mormonism

The early years of the Mormon Church are distinct for its young converts, with 20-something apostles embracing the progressive, radical-for-its-time distinctions between Joseph Smith's Mormonism and the traditional Protestant Christianity. However, there was another type of early LDS convert; an older generation who embraced Christian primitivism, which encompassed a desire to return to strict Biblical principles, disdained "priestcraft," and had a libertarian streak, mixed with republican ideals, that opposed a centralized church leadership dictating to local church groups. Most importantly, this type of convert would never place a prophet's opinion over his own personal beliefs.

Given the direction the Mormon Church took over its 14-plus years with Smith solely at its helm, it's not surprising that a substantial number of the older-generation converts did not stick with Mormonism. Perhaps the best example of this type of early Mormon convert who enjoyed prominence in the young church but later abandoned it is John Corrill, who is mentioned a couple of times in the Doctrine of Covenants. In the book "Differing Visions: Dissenters in Mormon History," University of Illinois Press, 1994, historian Kenneth H. Winn provides an interesting recap of Corrill's life and tenure in Mormonism. A Christian primitivist, Corrill, who turned 36 in 1831, initially investigated Mormonism with a determination to expose its follies. However, Corrill, who admired the primitivist teachings of Alexander Campbell, was shocked when he heard Sidney Rigdon, a former Campbell advocate he admired, pitching Mormonism enthusiastically.

As Winn notes, Corrill, a Massachusetts native, read The Book of Mormon and decided he could not declare it a fraud. Also, Mormonism appealed to specific primitivists such as Corrill in that it contained a certainty of belief that they sought, whether with the Book of Mormon or a yearning for "a

prophet who could speak for God." He, as well as his wife and family, joined the church in 1831 in Ohio.

Soon after his baptism, Corrill, after serving a mission, was sent to Missouri to help develop the church's growth there. He served under Bishop Edward Partridge. It was here that Corrill first clashed with Smith's leadership. Both he and Partridge favored a more local control than Smith wanted, and both were criticized by the Mormon prophet. Also, Corrill foresaw the problems that would develop with mass migration of poor Mormon converts to land long dominated by non-Mormon Missourians. The combination of religious bigotry among Missourians as well as unwise boasting by saints of establishing a religious and political kingdom led to violence and conflicts that the Mormons would always lose over the years.

Despite the conflict with church leadership, Corrill mended his problems with Smith and according to Winn, had a very strong ecclesiastical relationship with the young prophet through the mid-1830s. In 1836, Winn notes, Corrill was appointed by Joseph Smith to head the completion of the Kirtland Temple. Corrill also developed a reputation of being the Mormon leader who was best able to negotiate with anti-Mormon elements in Missouri. By 1837, Corrill was a leading Mormon settler in Far West, Missouri, "selected...as the church's agent and as the 'Keeper of the Lord's Storehouse,'" writes Winn.

But that was the peak that preceded the fall of Corrill's tenure in the church. As tranquil as events in Far West were, an ill-fated banking endeavor in Kirtland by Smith and other church leaders was leading to apostasy and tense disputes between church leaders and native Missourians. Corrill, Winn writes, regarded the Kirtland monetary failure with "revulsion." He saw the lust for wealth, and the subsequent fall, as evidence of "suffered pride." Yet he was as critical of Smith's dissenters as he was of the banking effort. Also, Corrill still believed that the overall church, with auxiliaries serving as checks and balances, could reform itself and maintain the better relations between Mormons and non-Mormons that still existed in Far West.

That was not to be. The turmoil of Kirtland followed the church to Far West. To cut to the chase, a speech by Rigdon, called the "Salt Sermon," appalled Corrill. In it, Rigdon, comparing apostates to salt having lost its savor, argued that

they could be "trodden under the foot of men." In short, Rigdon said that the dissenters "deserved ill treatment."

Corrill warned the dissenters that their safety was in danger. Later, the Danites, a Mormon vigilante group, was organized. The militant group frightened Corrill, who began to work against it in secret. As Winn explains, "The crisis that began in Kirtland and eventually swept Corrill up in Missouri marked a major turning point in early Mormon history, pitting the theocratically minded devotees of the prophet, who regarded opposition to the church leadership as opposition to God, against more libertarian minded dissenters, who rejected the First Presidency's claim over their temporal affairs and the authoritarian demand for blind obedience."

Corrill saw the Danites and Ridgon's call for conflict in direct opposition to the Biblical belief that God is responsible for divine retribution. From this point on, 1838, Corrill was basically in wait to be excommunicated, no longer trusted by the Smith/Ridgon leadership of the church. Nevertheless, church leaders acknowledged Corrill's reputation for honesty by electing him – with the Danites' support – to the Missouri legislature. The final break between Smith and Corrill was over the church leadership's call for a communal structure, which included church leaders being paid for work other than preaching. The communal structure was, Winn notes, allegedly voluntary, although pressure was exercised on members to contribute. "In any event," Winn writes, "Corrill deeply disapproved of the revelation and readily shared his opinion with others."

Despite his church status, Corrill worked without success in the Missouri legislature to push Mormon interests and even donated \$2,000 of his own money to help the beleaguered saints. By the time his term ended, most of his constituency had fled the area. Ridgon's rhetoric, and the Danites' actions, had led to militias overwhelming the church and Smith, Rigdon and others being jailed. Corrill, now without a church and due to be excommunicated in early 1839, left his religion. He wrote a book, "[A Brief History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#)" in late 1839. It is an interesting read for its historical value. At the time though, it sold poorly and Corrill spent the last few years of his life in poverty. He died in 1842, leaving an estate of only \$265.86. As Winn writes, "His

integrity and basic decency were overshadowed by charges that he had betrayed the prophet and the church."

Corrill did offer testimony against Smith to Missouri court hostile to the Mormons. Richard Lyman Bushman, in his 2005 biography of Joseph Smith, also describes Corrill as a "the steady, clear-headed Missouri leader" who conflicted over how much free will he had to surrender to stay a faithful Mormon, and witnessing defeat after defeat, finally decided he had been deceived. (Doug Gibson, [John Corrill an example of the older Primitivist converts to Mormonism](#), Standard-Examiner, article published June 3, 2014)

Excerpt from A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints

[...] In a few days, however, a commandment was received for the elders to go to Missouri, two by two; no two were to travel in the track of the others, and they were to preach the gospel by the way. After a little delay we started. Smith, Rigdon, and six or eight others came in company. They continued their journey until they arrived in Jackson County, where they found Oliver Cowdery and his companions, Smith pointed out the spot for the temple, received some revelation concerning the purchasing of land and settling the church in that place, appointed some persons to remain there, held one or two conferences, and then returned with part of his company to Kirtland; Cowdery went back with him.

The church immediately began to gather in Jackson County, and on this subject they became quite enthusiastic. They had been commanded not to go up in haste, nor by flight, but to have all things prepared before them. Money was to be sent up to the bishop, and as fast as lands were purchased, and preparations made, the bishop was to let it be known, that the church might be gathered in. But this regulation was not attended to, for the church got crazy to go up to Zion, as it was then called. The rich were afraid to send up their money to purchase lands, and the poor crowded up in numbers, without having any places provided, contrary to the advice of the bishop and others, until the old citizens began to be highly displeased. They saw their county filling up with emigrants, principally poor. They disliked their religion, and saw also, that if let alone, they would in a short time become a majority, and, of course, rule the country. The church kept increasing, and the old citizens

became more and more dissatisfied, and from time to time offered to sell their farms and possessions, but the Mormons, though desirous, were too poor to purchase them.

The feelings of the people became greatly exasperated, in consequence of the many falsehoods and evil reports that were in constant circulation against the church.

Thus matters grew worse and worse, until the people arose in their fury. On the 20th day of July, 1833, the citizens met at the Court-house, in Independence, and appointed a committee, who called upon six or seven of the leading Mormons, and required them to shut up all their work-shops, their store, and their printing-office, and agree to leave the county. The Mormons required time to give them an answer, but they would grant only fifteen minutes. The Mormons then refused to comply with their proposals, and the committee then returned to the Court-house, where the people were assembled, and related to them the answer of the Mormons. They then took a vote to demolish the printing-office, which they did immediately, and tarred and feathered the bishop and two or three others, and appointed the 23d to meet again and carry on the work of destruction. The day arrived and the people met, several hundred in number, and plainly manifested a full determination to carry on the work of destruction; some four or five of the leading Mormons offered their lives if they would spare the church, but they answered "no, every man should answer for his own life, or leave the county."

The Mormons agreed to leave, and this appeased their wrath for that time. A part was to leave in January, and a part in the Spring. This agreement having been made in duress, the Mormons considered it illegal, and not binding, and supposed that the Governor, or authorities, would protect them, if applied to, and not suffer them to be driven off in that manner.

Here, let me remark, that up to this time the Mormons had not so much as lifted a finger, even in their own defense, so tenacious were they for the precepts of the gospel, -- "turn the other cheek."

Between two and three months passed off in peace, when towards the last of October, a petition was drawn up and circulated in the church, praying the Governor for protection; but he said we must appeal to the civil law for redress. This we tried, but found it of no use, for as soon as the people found

out that we had petitioned the Governor for protection, and that we were about to appeal to the law for redress, they became very angry, and again commenced hostilities.

The Mormons then began to prepare for self-defense, but were badly armed. The citizens would collect together, and by night commit depredations on the Mormons, by pulling down their houses, whipping the men, &c., until some time about the fourth of November, 1833, a conflict took place, in which three or four persons were killed, and others wounded. This took place above Blue, eight or nine miles from independence, and the news reached Independence a little after dark; at which time six or eight of the Mormons were undergoing a sham trial, under a pretense of law; but this news produced such confusion in the Court-house, and the people became so angry, that the court was obliged to shut up the prisoners in the gaol, to keep them from being murdered. The people continued to gather from different parts of the country, and such was the wrath and determination manifested, that before light the next morning, the Mormon leaders agreed for themselves and the church, to leave the county. Lyman Wight, who lived above Blue, eight or ten miles distant, on hearing that several Mormons were in gaol without just cause, and supposing they intended to take their lives, gathered up about one hundred and fifty men, partly armed, and marched to Independence; but on learning that the Mormons had agreed to leave the county, they conceded to the same, and gave up their arms, -- fifty-two guns, a pistol and a sword, -- which Col. Pitcher and others faithfully agreed to deliver up, as soon as they had left the county; but this they afterwards refused to do, although required to do so, by a written order from the Governor, and the Mormons have never received the guns nor an equivalent for them to this day.

The Mormons all left Jackson County in the course of three or four weeks. Some went to Van Buren County; some to the eastward; but the major part went to Clay County, where they were received in a hospitable manner. They were not suffered to return to Jackson County, even to settle up their business.

During all these sufferings the Mormons were accused of many crimes. This, of course, was necessary for an excuse; but the people of Jackson well knew, that up to that time, the Mormons had not been guilty of crime, nor done any thing whereby they could criminate them by the law; and, in my opinion, the

stories originated in hatred towards the Mormon religion, and the fear entertained of their overrunning and ruling the county.

The people of Clay gave the Mormons employment, and paid them good wages; and by their industry they made themselves comfortable, with the exception of some families that found it difficult to get shelter. The number driven out was about twelve hundred.

Some time in the winter of '33 and 4, the Governor ordered the criminal acts of the people to be complained of, and laid before the grand jury of Jackson County. For this purpose, he ordered Captain Atchinson, with his company of Liberty Blues, to guard the witnesses over to the trial, which he did, much to the satisfaction of the witnesses. The Governor also requested the Attorney General to go and assist; but, after getting there, and seeing the situation of things, and the spirit of the people, he advised the witnesses to go home, and not try to do any thing about it, for they would be unable to get justice. They took his advice, and returned with the guard.

About this time, Parley P. Pratt and Lyman Wight went to Kirtland, and after seeing Smith, who resided there, and consulting on the subject, they received a revelation to gather up the strength of the Lord's house, and go up to relieve their brethren, who had been driven out of Zion. Accordingly, they gathered up about two hundred and fifty men, who armed themselves, and with Smith at their head, marching to Clay County, where they arrived some time in June 1834. Meanwhile the Mormons in Clay County made preparations to join them, when they should get there, and they generally thought that the Governor, on a petition to that effect, would reinstate those that had been driven out from their lands, (for they had not sold them) and then their brethren that came up in the camp would enable them to keep possession of their lands. But after arriving in Clay County a council was held, in which it was concluded to give up the expedition at that time.

The cholera broke out among them, and they immediately dispersed, the most of them returning home again, in a short time.

With the exception of some little threatening, the Church lived in peace, until the summer of 1836; and, notwithstanding all these difficulties, it continued to gather in Clay County;

and in the adjacent counties, the members hoping that they would get back to Jackson County.

The Church also kept gathering at Kirtland. They laid out a town, appointed certain lots for various purposes, one of which was to build the house of the Lord upon, for the building of which they had received a revelation. This building they commenced, if I recollect rightly, in 1833, in poverty, and without means to do it. In 1834 they completed the work, and in 1835 and 1836 they nearly finished it. The cost was nearly \$40,000. A committee was appointed to gather donations. They travelled among the churches and collected a considerable amount, but not sufficient, so that in the end they found themselves 13 or \$14,000 in debt. This house was 80 feet by 60; and 57 feet high to the top of the wall. It was divided into two stories, each twenty-two feet high, and arched over head. Ten feet was cut off from the front end by a partition and used as an entrance, and it also, contained the stairs. This left the main room 55 by 65 feet in the clear, both below and above. In each of these rooms were built two pulpits, one in each end.

Each pulpit consisted of four different apartments; the fourth standing on a platform raised a suitable height above the floor; the third stood directly behind and elevated a little above the fourth; the second in rear of and elevated above the third; and so was the first above the second. Each of these apartments was just large enough, and rightly calculated to receive three persons, and the breastwork in front of each of these three last mentioned, was constituted of three semi-circles, joining each other, and finished in good style. The fourth, or lower one, was straight in front, and had a table-leaf attached to it, that could be raised at pleasure, for the convenience of administering the sacrament, etc. These pulpits were alike in each end of the house, and one was for the use of the Melchizedek, or high priesthood, and the other for the Aaronic, or lesser priesthood. The first, or higher apartment, was occupied by the First Presidency over all the Church; the second apartment, by the president of the high priests, and his two counsellors; the third by three of the high priests; and the fourth by the president of the elders, and his two counsellors. The highest apartment of the other pulpit was occupied by the Bishop of the Church and his two counsellors; the next by the president of the priests and his two counsellors; the third by the president of the teachers and his two counsellors; and the fourth by the president of the deacons

and his two counsellors. Each of these apartments had curtains hanging from the ceiling, overhead, down to the top of the pulpit, which could be rolled up or dropped down at pleasure; and, when dropped down, would completely exclude those within the apartment from the sight of all others. The room itself was finished with slips and seats, so calculated that, by slipping the seats a little, the congregation could change their faces towards either pulpit they choose, for in some cases the high priesthood would administer, and in other cases the lesser would. The room was also divided into four apartments, by means of curtains hanging from the ceiling, overhead, down to the floor, which could be rolled up at pleasure, so that the room could be used all in one, or divided into four rooms, and used for different purposes. Thus the house was constructed to suit and accommodate the different orders of priesthood and worship peculiar to the Church. The first story, or lower room, was dedicated for divine worship alone. The second story was finished similar in form to the first, but was designed, wholly, for instruction, and supplied with tables instead of slips. In the roof were finished five rooms for the convenience of schools, and for the different quorums of the Church to meet in etc.

In the winter of 1834 and 1835, all the principal elders in Upper Missouri went to Kirtland. Some of them spent the summer there, while others travelled and preached in the eastern states, and some went to the South. I was appointed to take charge of the finishing of the Lord's house.

In the fall, and early part of the winter of 1835, the elders gathered in to Kirtland, to the number, I should think, of three or four hundred, who remained there through the winter. Schools were instituted for the use of the elders and others. Some studied grammar and other branches: they also employed the celebrated Hebrew teacher, Mr. Seixas, who gave them much insight, in a short time, into that language. They had been previously commanded to seek learning and study the best books, and get a knowledge of countries, kingdoms, languages, etc., which inspired them with an extravagant thirst after knowledge. Several months previous to this they had been commanded to prepare themselves for a solemn assembly, as may be seen by referring to the Book of Covenants.

At length the time arrived for this assembly to meet, previous to which, Smith exhorted the elders to solemnize their

minds, by casting away every evil from them in thought, word, or deed, and let their hearts become sanctified, because they need not expect a blessing from God without being duly prepared for it; for the Holy Ghost would not dwell in unholy temples. This meeting took place in March 1836, a little previous to which the house of the Lord had been dedicated. As well as I can remember, the solemn assembly was conducted nearly as follows. The ceremony was first performed upon the First Presidency, together with the bishops and their counselors; after which the elders in their turn attended to the ceremony, and it was alike upon all occasions. They were to purify their bodies by washing them entirely with pure water, after which they were to wash each other's feet, and anoint each other with oil, pronouncing mutual blessings during the performance. The sacrament was then administered, in which they partook of the bread and wine freely, and a report went abroad that some of them got drunk: as to that every man must answer for himself. A similar report, the reader will recollect, went out concerning the disciples, at Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost. This was followed by a marvelous spirit of prophecy. Every man's mouth was full of prophesying, and for a number of days or weeks their time was spent in visiting from house to house, making feasts, prophesying, and pronouncing blessings on each other, to that degree, that from the external appearance, one would have supposed that the last days had truly come, in which the spirit of the Lord was poured out upon all flesh, as far as the Church was concerned, for their sons and their daughters were full of prophesying. In this prophesying great blessings were pronounced upon the faithful, and also great curses upon the ungodly. Long before this, a committee had been appointed, to collect and compile the articles, covenants, and discipline of the church. This had been done, presented to, and adopted by the Church, and published to the world.

As a preparation, also, to the solemn assembly, all the constituted authorities, or quorums, were filled out in point of numbers, and presented to the Church, each one in its proper place, and acknowledged of the Church as the proper authorities by which the Church should be governed, according to the articles and covenants. These authorities, or different quorums, had been organized and established, one after another, by Smith himself, as the Church increased, and their different powers plainly set forth in the book of Doctrine and Covenants. But, for the satisfaction for those who have not access to that book,

I will here give a general account of them. (John Corrill, 1839, A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints, chapters 10-12, pages 18-23, available [here](#) and [here](#))

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