

Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 102

The means for dealing with difficulties within the Church are established. Unfortunately, what prompted this was problems with members of the ecclesia.

1 THIS day a general council of twenty-four high priests assembled at the house of Joseph Smith, Jun., by revelation, and proceeded to organize the high council of the church of Christ, which was to consist of twelve high priests, and one or three presidents as the case might require. 2 The high council was appointed by revelation for the purpose of settling important difficulties which might arise in the church, which could not be settled by the church or the bishop's council to the satisfaction of the parties.

3 Joseph Smith, Jun., Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams were acknowledged presidents by the voice of the council; and Joseph Smith, Sen., John Smith, Joseph Coe, John Johnson, Martin Harris, John S. Carter, Jared Carter, Oliver Cowdery, Samuel H. Smith, Orson Hyde, Sylvester Smith, and Luke Johnson, high priests, were chosen to be a standing council for the church, by the unanimous voice of the council.

4 The above-named councilors were then asked whether they accepted their appointments, and whether they would act in that office according to the law of heaven, to which they all answered that they accepted their appointments, and would fill their offices according to the grace of God bestowed upon them. 5 The number composing the council, who voted in the name and for the church in appointing the above-named councilors were forty-three, as follows: nine high priests, seventeen elders, four priests, and thirteen members.

v1-5 The high council for settling difficult problems within the church is established. Three presidents and twelve counselors are called.

6 Voted: that the high council cannot have power to act without seven of the above-named councilors, or their regularly appointed successors are present. 7 These seven shall have power to appoint other high priests, whom they may consider worthy and capable to act in the place of absent councilors.

v6-7 It is resolved that a minimum of seven of the council must be convened in order to operate as a quorum. In the absence of a quorum, others may be temporarily assigned to act in their place by those already convened.

8 voted: that whenever any vacancy shall occur by the death,

removal from office for transgression, or removal from the bounds of this church government, of any one of the above-named councilors, it shall be filled by the nomination of the president or presidents, and sanctioned by the voice of a general council of high priests, convened for that purpose, to act in the name of the church.

v8 A permanent vacancy in the council shall be filled by nomination of the presidency and voice of the council, which one would assume implies consensus.

9 The president of the church, who is also the president of the council, is appointed by revelation, and acknowledged in his administration by the voice of the church. 10 And it is according to the dignity of his office that he should preside over the council of the church; and it is his privilege to be assisted by two other presidents, appointed after the same manner that he himself was appointed. 11 And in case of the absence of one or both of those who are appointed to assist him, he has power to preside over the council without an assistant; and in case he himself is absent, the other presidents have power to preside in his stead, both or either of them.

v9-11 The president of the Church is the president of the council, and there are two additional presidents. In their absence the others may fill in, but it appears that at least one of the three is required in order to convene the council. However, when traveling abroad, see v. 24-29.

12 Whenever a high council of the church of Christ is regularly organized, according to the foregoing pattern, it shall be the duty of the twelve councilors to cast lots by numbers, and thereby ascertain who of the twelve shall speak first, commencing with number one and so in succession to number twelve.

13 Whenever this council convenes to act upon any case, the twelve councilors shall consider whether it is a difficult one or not; if it is not, two only of the councilors shall speak upon it, according to the form above written. 14 But if it is thought to be difficult, four shall be appointed; and if more difficult, six; but in no case shall more than six be appointed to speak.

15 The accused, in all cases, has a right to one-half of the council, to prevent insult or injustice. 16 And the councilors appointed to speak before the council are to present the case, after the evidence is examined, in its true light before the council; and every man is to speak according to equity and justice. 17 Those councilors who draw even numbers, that is, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12, are the individuals who are to

stand up in behalf of the accused, and prevent insult and injustice.

18 In all cases the accuser and the accused shall have a privilege of speaking for themselves before the council, after the evidences are heard and the councilors who are appointed to speak on the case have finished their remarks.

19 After the evidences are heard, the councilors, accuser and accused have spoken, the president shall give a decision according to the understanding which he shall have of the case, and call upon the twelve councilors to sanction the same by their vote. 20 But should the remaining councilors, who have not spoken, or any one of them, after hearing the evidences and pleadings impartially, discover an error in the decision of the president, they can manifest it, and the case shall have a re-hearing. 21 And if, after a careful re-hearing, any additional light is shown upon the case, the decision shall be altered accordingly. 22 But in case no additional light is given, the first decision shall stand, the majority of the council having power to determine the same.

v12-22 The manner of the proceedings. Counselors in multiples of two are to represent the two opposing sides, with the number of representatives fairly divided (v. 15). The more difficult the case, the more counselors are assigned with a minimum of two and a maximum of six (v. 14). Those participating are drawn by lot, and those with even lots are to be in behalf of the accused (v. 17). Both the accused and the accuser are allowed to testify (v. 18). After the cases are made the president is to render the final decision with the councilors to sanction it (v. 19). New hearings are permitted pending new evidence or detection of error in the proceedings by any of the councilors, and the decisions are to be altered accordingly (v. 20-22).

23 In case of difficulty respecting doctrine or principle, if there is not a sufficiency written to make the case clear to the minds of the council, the president may inquire and obtain the mind of the Lord by revelation.

v23 In the event there is not enough written, presumably in the Scriptures, to be clear on how the matter should be dealt with the president of the council is obligated to obtain the Lord's will on the matter by revelation.

24 The high priests, when abroad, have power to call and organize a council after the manner of the foregoing, to settle difficulties, when the parties or either of them shall request it. 25 And the said council of high priests shall have power to

appoint one of their own number to preside over such council for the time being. 26 It shall be the duty of said council to transmit, immediately, a copy of their proceedings, with a full statement of the testimony accompanying their decision, to the high council of the seat of the First Presidency of the Church. 27 Should the parties or either of them be dissatisfied with the decision of said council, they may appeal to the high council of the seat of the First Presidency of the Church, and have a re-hearing, which case shall there be conducted, according to the former pattern written, as though no such decision had been made.

28 This council of high priests abroad is only to be called on the most difficult cases of church matters; and no common or ordinary case is to be sufficient to call such council. 29 The traveling or located high priests abroad have power to say whether it is necessary to call such a council or not.

v24-29 When the councilors are traveling abroad they may convene a council of the same manner in the absence of a president, but only for the "most difficult cases" (v. 28). In doing so, they must immediately report their findings to the presidency for review (v. 26). If any of the parties involved are not satisfied with the results, they may appeal to the presidency (v. 27).

One would assume the ease of appeals in this case would make it expedient to only convene councils on matters that were easily concluded, otherwise the whole process would just have to be repeated. Thus, it would discourage the council from acting often without the presidency, particularly in cases where there was sure to be an appeal when both parties are sure to not get what they want.

30 There is a distinction between the high council or traveling high priests abroad, and the traveling high council composed of the twelve apostles, in their decisions. 31 From the decision of the former there can be an appeal; but from the decision of the latter there cannot. 32 The latter can only be called in question by the general authorities of the church in case of transgression.

v30-32 A later addition by Smith inserted to indicate this council was separate from and different than the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

33 Resolved: that the president or presidents of the seat of the First Presidency of the Church shall have power to determine whether any such case, as may be appealed, is justly entitled to

a re-hearing, after examining the appeal and the evidences and statements accompanying it.

v33 The decision to hear an appeal lies with the presidents of the council.

34 The twelve councilors then proceeded to cast lots or ballot, to ascertain who should speak first, and the following was the result, namely: 1, Oliver Cowdery; 2, Joseph Coe; 3, Samuel H. Smith; 4, Luke Johnson; 5, John S. Carter; 6, Sylvester Smith; 7, John Johnson; 8, Orson Hyde; 9, Jared Carter; 10, Joseph Smith, Sen.; 11, John Smith; 12, Martin Harris. After prayer the conference adjourned.

OLIVER COWDERY,
ORSON HYDE,
Clerks

v34 The counselors cast lots for the order of speaking, and the conference adjourned. This casting of lots is apparently different from that described in v. 17.

Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 102

This section was first published in the Kirtland edition Doctrine & Covenants in 1835, pages 95-98. It was published in Times and Seasons, volume 6, number 15, pages 993-994, dated August 15, 1845. It was published in the Millennial Star, volume 15, number 1, pages 13-14, dated January 1, 1853.

Excerpts from History of the Church

At a council of the High Priests and Elders, (Orson Hyde, clerk,) at my house in Kirtland, on the evening of the 12th of February, I remarked that I should endeavor to set before the council the dignity of the office which had been conferred on me by the ministering of the angel of God, by His own voice, and by the voice of this Church; that I had never set before any council in all the order in which it ought to be conducted, which, perhaps, has deprived the councils of some or many blessings.

And I continued and said, no man is capable of judging a matter, in council, unless his own heart is pure; and that we are frequently so filled with prejudice, or have a beam in our own eye, that we are not capable of passing right decisions.

Our acts are recorded, and at a future day they will be laid before us, and if we should fail to judge right and injure our fellow-beings, they may there, perhaps, condemn us; there they are of great consequence, and to me the consequence appears to be of force, beyond anything which I am able to express. Ask yourselves, brethren, how much you have exercised yourselves in prayer since you heard of this council; and if you are now prepared to sit in council upon the soul of your brother.

(Joseph Smith, History of the Church, volume 2, pages 25-26)

On the 18th of January [February] I reviewed and corrected the minutes of the organization of the High Council, and on the 19th of February, the Council assembled according to adjournment, from the 17th, (Oliver Cowdery and Orson Hyde, clerks,) when the revised minutes were presented and read to the Council. I urged the necessity of prayer, that the Spirit might be given, that the things of the Spirit might be judged thereby, because the carnal mind cannot discern the things of God. The minutes were read three times, and unanimously adopted and

received for a form and constitution of the High Council of the Church of Christ hereafter; with this provision, that if the

President should hereafter discover anything lacking in the same, he should be privileged to supply it. (History of the Church, volume 2, page 31)

Excerpt from Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith

Section 102 consists of the final revised and corrected minutes of the organization and rules of procedure for the Kirtland high council. On 12 February 1834 Joseph Smith met with a group of high priests and elders to discuss the function of Church councils. The Prophet instructed those present that no man was capable of judging a matter in council without his own heart was pure.... In ancient days councils were conducted with such strict propriety, that no one was allowed to whisper, be weary, leave the room, or get uneasy in the least, until [a decision had been reached].

Joseph Smith declared that Church councils or courts were to be conducted according to an ancient pattern which had been "shown to him by vision." "Jerusalem was the seat of the Church Council in ancient days," said the Prophet; "the apostle, Peter, was the president of the Council and held the keys of the Kingdom of God on earth." To clarify the matter of guilt, the Prophet added,

It was not the order of heaven in ancient councils to plead for and against the guilty as in our judicial courts (so called) but that every counsellor when he arose to speak, should speak precisely according to evidence and according to the teaching of the Spirit of the Lord, that no counsellor should attempt to screen the guilty when his guilt was manifest.

The formal organization of the Kirtland high council occurred on 17 February 1834, and a companion high council was organized in Clay County, Missouri, on 7 July 1834. The Kirtland high council, and the high council in Clay County, Missouri, held wide judicial and administrative powers. This pattern remained consistent for several years with regard to a high council situated at Church headquarters (i.e., Kirtland, Far West, Nauvoo, and Salt Lake City). Although their authority and jurisdiction would subsequently diminish, members of these early councils (ordained high priests), were clearly recognized as "general authorities." Whether officially or unofficially, these high councils held the status of a "High Council in Zion" and,

as such, were in their respective right and turn, a presiding quorum of the Church. Although these early Church high councils rarely convened to hear criminal cases, Church courts did adjudicate controversies between member and member-matters that today would be settled by civil courts. An important feature of the high council court was that the rights of the accused were protected by at least half of the participating high councilors. (Lyndon W. Cook, Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith)

Excerpt from Doctrine and Covenants Commentary

The Prophet carefully guarded, against error, the report of the meeting in which this Council was organized. On February 18, he reviewed and corrected the minutes, and on the following day he assembled the Council to pass on the revised copy. The members then first engaged in prayer, asking God for the Spirit by which spiritual things are discerned. Then the minutes were read three times and, finally, adopted. It now forms what may be called the Constitution of the High Council of the Church of Christ.

A few days before the organization of this High Council, the Prophet addressed a council of High Priests and Elders on the subject of the proper order in such gatherings. "In ancient days," he said, "councils were conducted with such strict propriety, that no one was allowed to whisper, be weary, leave the room, or get uneasy in the least, until the voice of the Lord, by revelation, or the voice of the Council, by the Spirit, was obtained, which has not been observed in this Church to the present time" (Hist. of the Church, Vol. II., p. 25).

"I remember very well the organization of the High Council at Kirtland as a permanent institution. There had been several councils of twelve High Priests called for special cases, but they organized it permanently on the 17th of February, 1834. On the 19th, the first case that was brought up was that of Elder Curtis Hodge, Sen., who, while speaking in meeting, had gone into a spasm, shouting and screaming in such a manner as caused one of the Elders to rebuke him. Brother Hodge was brought before the Council for so doing. A great deal of instruction was imparted to the people, who were assembled in a room, sixteen feet by eighteen. The decision was that the charges in the declaration had been fairly sustained by good witnesses; that Elder Hodge ought to have confessed when rebuked by Elder Ezra Thayre; also that, if he had the Spirit of the Lord at the meeting where he shouted, he must have abused it and grieved it

away, and all the Council agreed with the decision" (George A. Smith, Jour. of Dis., Vol. XL., p. 7).

A very important Council meeting was held on the 20th of February, 1834. The attention of the Council had been called to the fact that, at a meeting at Springfield, Pa., held by Elders Orson Pratt and Lyman E. Johnson, some of the members of the Church had refused to partake of the Sacrament, because the Elder administering it did not keep the Word of Wisdom. Elder Lyman E. Johnson argued that they were justified in refusing, while Elder Orson Pratt held that Church members ought to receive the emblems from any Elder who retains his office, or license. Six councilors were appointed to speak on the question. When they had finished, the President gave the decision:

"No official member in this Church is worthy to hold an office, after having the Word of Wisdom properly taught him and he, the official member, neglecting to comply with or obey it."

This decision was confirmed by the vote of the Council (History of the Church, Vol. II., p. 34-5). (Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl, Doctrine and Covenants Commentary, page 658)

Excerpt from Kirtland Council Minute Book

12 February 1834 • Wednesday

Thursday Evening, February 12. 1834. This evening the high priests and Elders of the Church in Kirtland at the house of bro. Joseph Smith Jun. in Council for church business. The council was organized, and opened by bro. Joseph Smith Jun in prayer. Bro. Joseph then rose and said: I shall now endeavour to set forth before this council, the dignity of the office which has been conferred upon me by the ministring of the Angel of God, by his own voice and by the voice of this church. I have never set before any council in all the order in which a council ought to be conducted, which, perhaps, has deprived the councils of some, or many blessings.

He said, that no man was capable of judging a matter in council without his own heart was pure; and that we frequently, are so filled with prejudice, or have a beam in our own eye, that we are not capable of passing right descissions, &c.

But to return to the subject of the order; In ancient days councils were conducted with such strict propriety, that no one was allowed to whisper, be weary, leave the room, or get uneasy

in the least, until the voice of the Lord, by revelation, or by the voice of the council by the spirit was obtained: which has not been [\[p. 27\]](#)

observed in this church to the present. It was understood in ancient days, that if one man could stay in council another could, and if the president could spend his time, the members could also. But in our councils, generally, one would be uneasy, another asleep, one praying another not; one's mind on the business of the council and another thinking on something else &c. Our acts are recorded, and at a future day they will be laid before us, and if we should fail to judge right and injure our fellow beings, they may there perhaps condemn us; thus they are of great consequence; and to me the consequence appears to be of force beyond any thing which I am able to express &c. Ask yourselves, brethren, how much you have exercised yourselves in prayer since you heard of this council; and if you are now prepared to sit in judgment upon the soul of your brother.— Bro Joseph then went on to give us a relation of his situation at the time he obtained the record, the persecution he met with &c. He also told us of his transgression, at the time he was translating the Book of Mormon. He also prophesied that he should stand and shine like the sun in the firmament when his enemies and the gainsayers of his testimony should be put down and cut off and their names blotted out from among men. [\[p. 28\]](#)

17 February 1834 • Monday • First of two entries

This day, Feb. 17 1834, a conference of High Priests assembled in Kirtland at the House of bro. Joseph Smith Jun. They proceeded to organize the Presidents church council, consisting of twelve high priests, and this according to the law of God. The names of those who were chosen as counsellors were Joseph Smith Junr. Sidney Rigdon and F[rederick] G. Williams President, Joseph Smith Seign [Sr.], John Smith, Joseph Coe, John Johnson, Martin Harris, John S Carter, Jared Carter, Oliver Cowdery, Saml. H. Smith, Orson Hyde, Sylvester Smith and Luke Johnson, counsellors. Bro. Joseph opened the council by solem prayer. He then arose and called upon the high priests, Elders, priests, teachers and deacons that were present twelve who had not been nominated as counsellors to pass their vote whether they were satisfied with the appointments or nomination of the twelve to compose the church council. It was the unanimous voice of all present that those who had been nominated, as above, should

compose a standing council in Kirtland. It was also voted that when any one <or more> of the standing counsellors were absent, their vacancy should be filled by any high priests whom the majority of the council should nominate or choose,

Providing that no council Shall be held unless seven of the above named counsellors are present, or their successors. The above named counsellors all manifested a willingness to act according to their appointments, the Lord being their helper. Bro Hyrum Smith acted in the place of John Smith. There were nine high priests present and acted in the appointment of the above named counsellors, also seventeen Elders, and four priests with thirteen private members. Bro Joseph then said he would show the order of councils in ancient days (See 27 & 28 pages) as shown to [\[p. 29\]](#)

him by vision. The law and by which to govern the council in the church of Christ. Jerusalem was the seat of the church council in ancient days. The apostle, Peter, was the president of the council in ancient days and held the Keys of the Kingdom of God, <on the earth> was appointed to this office by the voice of the Savior and confirmed <acknowledged> in it by the voice of the Church. He had two men appointed as counsellors with him, and in case Peter was absent, his counsellors could transact business, <or either one of them. The President could also transact business alone.> It was not the order of heaven in ancient councils to plead for and against the guilty as in our judicial courts (so called) but that if every counsellor when he arose to speak, should speak precisely according to evidence and according to the teaching of the spirit of the Lord, that no counsellor should attempt to screen the guilty when his guilt was manifest That the person acused before the high council had a right to one half the member of the council to plead his cause, that is six in order that his case might be fairly presented before the President that a decission might be rendered according to truth and righteousness. If the case was not a very difficult one to investigate, two of the Counsellors only, spoke, one for the accused and one against <on one side and one on the other> according to evidence. If the case was more difficult, according to the judgment of the Council, two were to speak on each side, and if more difficult, three might speak on each side, and three only. Those who spoke in council were chosen by the council and that too by casting lots. Those who were thus chosen to speak, took their regular turn, in

speaking. Bro Joseph said that this organization was an ensample to the high priests in their councils abroad, and a copy of their proceedings be transmitted to the seat of the goverment of the church to be recorded on the general record. In all cases, the accuser and the acused have a perfect right to speak for themselves before the council. The councils abroad, have a right and it is their duty to appoint a president for the time being for themselves. If in case the parties are not satisfied with the decission of the council abroad, they have a right to an appeal to the Bishops court, and from thence to the presidents council which is an end of all strife [\[p. 30\]](#)

The remaining six counsellors who do not speak in council, are to hear patiently the reasoning of the others and correct all errors which they may discover, and after decission is rendered by the president, if these remaining counsellors can throw any farther light upon the subject, so as to correct the decission of the president, they have the liberty so to do, otherwise it stands and the majority of the council must rule. It was then voted by all present that they desired to come under the present order of things which they all considered to be the will of God. Many questions have been asked during the time of the organization of this council and doubtless some errors have been committed, it was, therefore, voted by all present that Bro Joseph should make all necessary corrections by the spirit of inspiration hereafter Oliver Cowdery drew no. one by lot. Joseph Coe drew No 2. Samuel H Smith drew No 3. Luke Johnson drew No 4. John S Carter drew No 5. Sylvester Smith drew No 6. Oliver Cowdery, Samuel H Smith and John S Carter speak for and on the part of the accuser. Joseph Coe, Luke Johnson and Sylvester Smith, speak for and on the part of the accused. The remaining six counsellors are to sit and hear patiently and correct errors if they discover them. The council John Johnson drew No 7. Orson Hyde drew No 8, Jared Carter drew No 9, Joseph Smith Seignr drew No 10, John Smith drew No 11, Martin Harris drew No 12, The council adjourned then, until wednesday at 10 o'clk A.M.—
Orson Hyde Clk

17 February 1834 • Monday • Second of two entries

The above items have been corrected according to the resolution passed <in the same>, and the following is the correction.— [\[p. 31\]](#)

Voted, that whenever any vacancy shall occur by the death, removal from office for transgression, or removal from the bounds of this church government of any one of the above named counsellors, it shall be filled by the nomination of the president, or presidents and sanctioned by the voice of a general Conference <Council of high priests> convened for that purpose to act in the name of the church.

The president of the church, who is also the president of the council, is appointed by the voice of the Saviour, and acknowledged in his administration, by the voice of the church; and it is according to the dignity of his office that he should preside over the high council of the church; and it is his privilege to be assisted by two other presidents, appointed after the same manner that he himself was appointed; and in case of the absence of one or both of those who are appointed to assist him, he has power to preside over the council without an assistant: and in case that he himself is absent, the other presidents have power to preside in his stead, both or either of them.

Whenever a high council of the church of Christ, is regularly organized according to the foregoing pattern, it shall be the duty of the twelve counsellors to cast lots by numbers and thereby ascertain who of the twelve shall speak first, commencing with Number One, and so in succession to number twelve

Whenever this council convenes to act upon any case; in the church, the twelve counsellors shall consider whether it is a difficult one or not; If it is not, two <only> of the counsellors shall speak upon it according to the form above written; but if it is thought to be <a> more difficult, <one> four shall be appointed, and if still more difficult, six: but in no case not over that number shall <shall be more than six be > be appointed to speak. The accused in all cases has a right to one half of the council to prevent insult or injustice; and the counsellors appointed to speak before the council, are to present the case after the evidence is examined, in its true light before the council, and every man is to speak according to equity [\[p. 33\]](#)

and justice.

Those counsellors who draw even numbers, that is, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12, are the individuals who are to stand up in the behalf of the accused and prevent insult or injustice.

In all cases the accuser and the accused shall have a privilege of speaking for themselves before the council, after the evidences are heard, and the counsellors who are appointed to speak on the case, have finished their remarks.

After the evidences are heard; the counsellors, accuser and <the > accused, have spoken, the president shall give a decision according to the understanding which he shall have of the case, and call upon the twelve counsellors to sanction the same by their voices.

But should the remaining counsellors who have not spoken*, or any one of them, after hearing the evidences and pleadings impartially, discover an error in the decision of the president, they can manifest it, and the case shall have a re-hearing; and if after a careful rehearing, any additional light is thrown upon the case, the descision shall be altered accordingly; but in case no additional light is given, the first decision shall stand; the majority of the council haveing power to determine the same.

In cases of difficulty respecting doctrine, or principle; if there is not a sufficiency written to make the case clear to the mind of the council, the president may inquire and obtain the mind of the Lord by revelation.

The high priests, when abroad, have power to call and organize a council after the manner of the foregoing, to settle difficulties when the parties, or either of them shall request it, <and the said council of high priests shall have power to appoint one of their own number to preside over such council> by appointing or chooseing one of their number to preside over the council for the time being.

It shall be the duty of said council to transmit, immediately, a copy of their proceedings, with a full statement of the testimony with <accompanying> their decision, to the high council [\[p. 34\]](#)

at the seat of the government of the church.

Should the parties, or either of them, be dissatisfied with the decision of said council, they may appeal to the high council at the seat of the general government of the church, and have a re-hearing, which case shall there be conducted according to the former pattern written, as though no such descision had been passed <made>.

This council of high priests abroad, is only to be called on the most difficult cases of church matters; and no common or ordinary case is to be sufficient to call such councils. The travelling or located high priests abroad, have the power to say whether it is necessary to call such a council or not.

*The twelve counsellors then proceeded to cast lots or ballot, to ascertain who should speak first, and the following was the result, viz:

Oliver Cowdery	drew No. 1	John Johnson	drew No 7
Joseph Coe—	" "	2 Orson Hyde	" " 8
Saml. H Smith—	" "	3 Jared Carter	" " 9
Luke Johnson—	" "	4 Joseph Smith sen	" " 10
John S Carter—	" "	5 John Smith	" " 11
Sylvester Smith—	" "	6 Martin Harris	" " 12

Council then adjourned to meet on wednesday the 19th. Inst. at 10 Oclk A.M.

Orson Hyde Clk

*Resolved, that the president or presidents at the seat of general church government, shall have power to determine whether any such case as may be appealed, is justly entitled to a re-hearing after examineing the appeal and the evidences and statements accompanying it. [\[p. 35\]](#)

19 February 1834 • Wednesday

Kirtland Feb. 19. 1834.

The council assembled pursuant to adjournment. Joseph Smith Jnr. opened the council by reading the 3rd. Chap of of Joel's prophecy, and prayer. After which he arose before the council, and said, that he had laboured the day before with all the strength and wisdom that he had given him in making the corrections necessary in the last council minutes which he would now read before this council. He asked the council for their

attention, that they might rightly judge upon the truth and propriety of these minutes, as all were equally interested in them &c. He als[o] urged the necessity of prayer, that the spirit might be given, that the things of the spirit might be judged thereby; because the carnal mind cannot discern the things of God &c. He then proceeded to read the minutes and afterwards made some remarks, when it was decided by the members of the council present, that it might be read a second time. Sidney Ridgon then proceeded to read the minutes or constitution of the high council the second time, remarking at the time, that it could not be justly urged to be read at this time, as the hour was passed which was appointed for the council to assemble. An impropriety by some was discovered in the commencement of the minutes, as it says, a council of high priests, and afterwards says, that elders, priests and private members acted in said council. Said objections were corrected, and the minutes read the third time by Oliver Cowd[e]ry. The questions were then asked, whether the present council acknowledged the same, and receive them for a form, or and constitution of the high council of the church of Christ hereafter. The document was received by the unanimous voice of the council, with this provision, that, if the president should hereafter discover any lack in the same he should be privileged to fill it up.

The number present who received the above named document, was twenty six high priests, eighteen elders, three priests, one teacher and fourteen private members, making in all, sixty two After much good instruction, Joseph the president, laid his [hands?] [\[p. 36\]](#)

upon the heads of the two assistant presidents and pronounced a blessing upon them, that they might have wisdom to magnify their office, and power over all the power of the adversary. He also laid his hands upon the twelve counsellors and commanded a blessing to rest upon them, that they might have wisdom and power to counsel in righteousness upon all subjects that might be laid before them. He also prayed that they might be delivered from those evils to which they were most exposed, and that their lives might be prolonged on the earth.

Joseph Smith Sen. then laid his hands upon the head of his son, Joseph, and said: Joseph, I lay my hands upon thy head, and pronounce the blessings of thy progenitors upon thee, that thou mayest hold the keys of the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven

until the coming of the Lord, Amen. He, also, laid his hands upon the head of his son Samuel [Smith] and said. Saml., I lay my hands upon thy head and pronounce the blessing of thy progenitors upon thee, that thou mayest remain a priest of the most high God, and like Samuel of old, hear his voice saying, Samuel, Samuel, Amen.

John Johnson, also, laid his hands upon the head of his son Luke [Johnson] and said, my Father in Heaven, I ask thee to bless this my son according to the blessings of his forefathers, that he may be strengthened in his ministry according to his holy calling, Amen.

The president then gave the assistant presidents a Solem charge to do their duty in righteousness and in the fear of God. He also charged the twelve counsellors in a similar manner, all in the name of Jesus Christ. We then, all raised our hands to heaven in token of the everlasting covenant, and the Lord blessed us with his spirit. He then said the council was organized according to the ancient order, and also according to the mind of the Lord [\[p. 37\]](#)

([Kirtland Council Minute Book](#), pages 27-37, Joseph Smith Papers Project)

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