

Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 108

1 VERILY thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Lyman: Your sins are forgiven you, because you have obeyed my voice in coming up hither this morning to receive counsel of him whom I have appointed. 2 Therefore, let your soul be at rest concerning your spiritual standing, and resist no more my voice. 3 And arise up and be more careful henceforth in observing your vows, which you have made and do make, and you shall be blessed with exceeding great blessings.

v1-3 Admonition to Lyman Sherman. Verses 1-2 inform Sherman his sins are forgiven and he is on the right track. Verse 3 encourages him to pay closer attention to the covenants he has made, and if he does so he will be richly blessed.

4 wait patiently until the solemn assembly shall be called of my servants, then you shall be remembered with the first of mine elders, and receive right by ordination with the rest of mine elders whom I have chosen. 5 Behold, this is the promise of the Father unto you if you continue faithful. 6 And it shall be fulfilled upon you in that day that you shall have right to preach my gospel wheresoever I shall send you, from henceforth from that time.

v4-6 Sherman is informed he is to be endowed with the first elders of the Church as long as he remains faithful. One would assume the physical endowment was granted, but the spiritual endowment, which the physical ordinance is a type of, is what is being referred to as being conditionally granted upon his faithfulness.

7 Therefore, strengthen your brethren in all your conversation, in all your prayers, in all your exhortations, and in all your doings. 8 And behold, and lo, I am with you to bless you and deliver you forever. Amen.

v7-8 Standard closing exhortation (v. 7) and statement of support (v. 8).

Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 108

This section was first published in the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, pages 359-360. It was not published in any Church periodicals.

Excerpts from History of the Church

On the 28th of February, the Church in council assembled, commenced selecting certain individuals to be Seventies, from the number of those who went up to Zion with me in the camp; and the following are the names of those who were ordained and blessed at that time, to begin the organization of the first quorum of Seventies, according to the visions and revelations which I have received. The Seventies are to constitute traveling quorums, to go into all the earth, whithersoever the Twelve Apostles shall call them. (Joseph Smith, History of the Church, volume 2, pages 201-202)

Commenced again studying the Hebrew language, in company with Brothers Parrish and Williams. In the meantime, Brother Lyman Sherman came in, and requested to have the word of the Lord through me; "for," said he, "I have been wrought upon to make known to you my feelings and desires, and was promised that I should have a revelation which should make known my duty."

[text of D&C 108 quoted]

(Joseph Smith, History of the Church, volume 2, page 345)

Excerpt from LDS Biographical Encyclopedia

Sherman, Lyman, one of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies from 1835 to 1837, embraced the gospel at an early day and was ordained a High Priest. He also made the famous trip from Ohio to Missouri as a member of Zion's Camp; and after his return to Ohio, he was ordained a Seventy, Feb. 28, 1835, at Kirtland, under the hands of Joseph the Prophet and others. When the first quorum of Seventy was organized, soon afterwards, he was chosen as one of its seven presidents. In December, 1835, he came to Joseph the Prophet and requested to have the word of the Lord through him; "for," said he, "I have been wrought upon to make known to you my feelings and desires, and was promised that I should have a revelation which should make known my duty." In answer to [p.191] his request a revelation was given (Doc. and

Cov., Sec. 108), in which he was commanded "to be more careful henceforth" in observing his vows. Being numbered among those who had previously been ordained High Priests, he was released from his position as a president of Seventies April 6, 1837, and identified himself with the High Priests. Josiah Butterfield was chosen as his successor, Oct. 1, 1837, Elder Sherman was chosen a High Councilor at Kirtland, in place of Jared Carter who had removed to Missouri. (LDS Biographical Encyclopedia, entry for Lyman Sherman, pages 190-191)

Excerpt from Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith

The day after Christmas in 1835, Lyman Sherman approached the Prophet Joseph Smith and said, "I have been wrought upon to make known to you my feelings and desires, and was promised that I should have a revelation which should make known my duty." The Lord's promise was fulfilled to Sherman, for Joseph Smith received a revelation for him that very hour. The revelation informed Sherman that he would receive an ordination in conjunction with the "first of mine elders," a term which referred to a chosen few who were to receive an "endowment." The Kirtland endowment was to consist of a rich outpouring of God's spirit upon the faithful elders. Preparation for the "endowment" occupied much of the Church leaders' time during the early months of 1836. Brethren who had been selected to participate in this important event met regularly in the Kirtland Temple during January and February 1836. This preparation, intended to sanctify the brethren, involved the following:

1. Confessing the sins and asking forgiveness,
2. Covenanting to be faithful to God,
3. Having one's body washed and bathed with cinnamon-perfumed whiskey,
4. Washing one's own body with pure water and perfume,
5. Having one's head anointed with holy oil,
6. Having the anointing blessing sealed with uplifted hands (the sealing blessing consisting of three parts: solemn prayer, a sealing prayer, and the hosanna shout), and
7. Washing of faces and feet and partaking of the Lord's Supper.

(Lyndon W. Cook, The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith).

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