

Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 120

Given the admonition for the ecclesia to tithe per the preceding revelation of D&C 119, the Church inevitably receives real estate by way of donation, and therefore must have some policy on how to deal with these holdings.

1 Verily, thus saith the Lord, the time is now come, that it shall be disposed of by a council, composed of the First Presidency of my Church, and of the bishop and his council, and by my high council; and by mine own voice unto them, saith the Lord. Even so. Amen.

v1 When the Church receives real estate as tithe or by donation through consecration, then the collective leadership should agree together on how to manage those properties. Clearly, the intent is to discourage the potential for abuse.

Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 120

This section was first published in *Deseret News*, volume 3, number 10, page 37, dated April 2, 1853. It was published in the *Millennial Star*, volume 16, number 12, page 183, dated March 25, 1854. It was first printed in the *Doctrine and Covenants* in 1876, page 383.

Excerpt from History of the Church

The three revelations which I received January 12, 1838, the day I left Kirtland, were read in the public congregation at Far West; and the same day I inquired of the Lord, "O Lord! Show unto thy servant how much thou requirest of the properties of thy people for a tithing," and received the following answer, which was also read in public:

[...]

Thursday, 26.—The First Presidency, High Council, and Bishop's court assembled at Far West to dispose of the public properties of the Church in the hands of the Bishop, many of the brethren having consecrated their surplus property according to the revelations.

It was agreed that the First Presidency should keep all their properties that they could dispose of to advantage, for their support, and the remainder be put into the hands of the Bishop or Bishops, according to the commandments.

Moved, seconded, and carried unanimously:

"First—That the First Presidency shall have their expenses defrayed in going to, and returning from Adam-ondi-Ahman; equally by the Bishop of each place.

"Second—That all the traveling expenses of the First Presidency shall be defrayed.

"Third—That the Bishop be authorized to pay orders coming from the east, inasmuch as they will consecrate liberally, but this is to be done under the inspection of the First Presidency.

"Fourth—That the First Presidency shall have the prerogative to direct the Bishop as to whose orders shall or may be paid by him in this place, or in his jurisdiction.

"Fifth—That the Bishop of Zion receive all consecrations from those living east, west, and south, who are not in the jurisdiction of a Bishop of any other stake.

"Sixth—That we use our influence to put a stop to the selling of liquors in the city Far West, or in our midst, that our streets may not be filled with drunkenness; and that we use our influence to bring down the price of provisions.

"Seventh—That Brother William W. Phelps be requested to draw up a petition to locate the county seat at Far West."

(Joseph Smith, Jr., History of the Church, volume 3, chapter 5, pages 44-48)

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