

Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 135

1 TO seal the testimony of this book and the Book of Mormon, we announce the martyrdom of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and Hyrum Smith the Patriarch. They were shot in Carthage jail, on the 27th of June, 1844, about five o'clock p.m., by an armed mob--painted black--of from 150 to 200 persons. Hyrum was shot first and fell calmly, exclaiming: I am a dead man! Joseph leaped from the window, and was shot dead in the attempt, exclaiming: O Lord my God! They were both shot after they were dead, in a brutal manner, and both received four balls. 2 John Taylor and Willard Richards, two of the Twelve, were the only persons in the room at the time; the former was wounded in a savage manner with four balls, but has since recovered; the latter, through the providence of God, escaped, without even a hole in his robe.

v1-2 John Taylor announces the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, the force of which martyrdom seals their testimony of the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants (v. 1). The author then indicates that he himself and Willard Richards were present to witness the event. The author was wounded, but survived. The other was miraculously spared any injury (v. 2).

v1 "they were both shot after they were dead", the insanity and brutality of the people who committed the murders was such that even after they had killed Joseph and Hyrum they shot the dead bodies again. Clearly, there was nothing of justice in their motives, only murder.

v2 "wounded in a savage manner", the author, John Taylor, is referring to the injuries he himself sustained. The account of his sufferings is mild given position as first-person.

"without even a hole in his robe", this is referring to Richards' Temple garment. Historically, the early Saints referred to their garments as a "robe".

We here state a few facts which came under our personal observation. As early as 1843 a secret order was established in Nauvoo, called the HOLY ORDER, the members of which were of both sexes, in which, we were credibly informed, scenes were enacted representing the garden of Eden, and that the members of that order were provided with a peculiar under garment called a robe.... It was claimed that while they wore this "robe" no harm could befall them....

It was stated that Willard Richards was the only one of the four who had on his "robe" at the time, therefore the statement that he escaped through the

promise of God, "without a hole in his robe". (Ebenezer Robinson, Return, Vol. 2 (April 1890): 252)

According to historical accounts, Joseph, Hyrum, and John Taylor removed their "robe" before being taken into custody because they felt sure of the outcome and did not want the "robes" to fall into the hands of the enemy:

The prophet Joseph Smith pulled off his garments just before starting to Carthage to be slain and he advised Hyrum and John Taylor to do the same, which they did; and Brother Taylor told Brother Willard Richards what they had done and advised him to take off his also, but Brother Richards said that he would not take off his, and did not; said he was not harmed.

Joseph said before taking his garment off, that he was going to be killed.... "was going as a lamb to the slaughter" and he did not want his garments to be exposed to the sneers and jeers of his enemies.

These facts all came from President John Taylor's lips after he was president of the Church.

Elder John Morgan had told them to me as stated to him by Brother Taylor. Sister Lucy B. Young said that Brother John Taylor told her in answer to direct questions, the same, all except with regard to Willard Richards. (Oliver B. Huntington diary, 22 April 1877, Special Collections, Lee Library)

3 Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it. In the short space of twenty years, he has brought forth the Book of Mormon, which he translated by the gift and power of God, and has been the means of publishing it on two continents; has sent the fulness of the everlasting gospel, which it contained, to the four quarters of the earth; has brought forth the revelations and commandments which compose this book of Doctrine and Covenants, and many other wise documents and instructions for the benefit of the children of men; gathered many thousands of the Latter-day Saints, founded a great city, and left a fame and name that cannot be slain. He lived great, and he died great in the eyes of God and his people; and like most of the Lord's anointed in ancient time, has sealed his mission and his works with his own blood; and so has his brother Hyrum. In life they were not divided, and in death they were not separated!

v3 Taylor summarizes Joseph's accomplishments and indicates he died as a martyr just as many of the Lord's chosen die. While Joseph is dead, his accomplishments and the foundation he set

will live well beyond him.

4 When Joseph went to Carthage to deliver himself up to the pretended requirements of the law, two or three days previous to his assassination, he said: "I am going like a lamb to the slaughter; but I am calm as a summer's morning; I have a conscience void of offense towards God, and towards all men. I SHALL DIE INNOCENT, AND IT SHALL YET BE SAID OF ME--HE WAS MURDERED IN COLD BLOOD."--The same morning, after Hyrum had made ready to go--shall it be said to the slaughter? yes, for so it was--he read the following paragraph, near the close of the twelfth chapter of Ether, in the Book of Mormon, and turned down the leaf upon it: 5 And it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord that he would give unto the Gentiles grace, that they might have charity. And it came to pass that the Lord said unto me: If they have not charity it mattereth not unto thee, thou hast been faithful; wherefore thy garments shall be made clean. And because thou hast seen thy weakness, thou shalt be made strong, even unto the sitting down in the place which I have prepared in the mansions of my Father. And now I...bid farewell unto the Gentiles; yea, and also unto my brethren whom I love, until we shall meet before the judgment-seat of Christ, where all men shall know that my garments are not spotted with your blood. The testators are now dead, and their testament is in force.

v4-5 Joseph and Hyrum realized they would be murdered and were reconciled to that fate (v. 4). Yet, Joseph felt, as did the ancient Moroni, to pray for those who were rejecting him. He realized it was futile to do so and he would see them again at the Judgement (v. 5).

v5 Joseph quotes a passage written by Moroni appearing in Ether 12:36-41. There Moroni is asking the Lord to work with the Gentiles so they will have grace and charity when they receive the record he and his father have written, so they will not reject it. But, the Lord declines to make any promises. Instead, the Lord tells Moroni he has done his job so his hands are clean.

The martyrdom of Joseph is thus the fulfilment of the Gentile rejection of Mormon and Moroni's record. Here is the prophet who brought the Gentiles the record, and they reject the record and kill him for it. Joseph has preached to the Gentiles and tried to get them to accept the Book of Mormon, but they generally had no grace and no charity so they reject it.

"my garments are not spotted with your blood", a prophet's responsibility is to warn people to repent and reconcile themselves to the Lord, cf. Ezek. 33. If they fail to do so then the Lord holds the prophet liable. However, it is plain Joseph

has done his duty and warned the people, so their blood will be on their own hands.

Reading the text ironically one could also see this as Joseph saying "My blood is on your hands because you have murdered me", which is the subject of v. 7.

6 Hyrum Smith was forty-four years old in February, 1844, and Joseph Smith was thirty-eight in December, 1843; and henceforward their names will be classed among the martyrs of religion; and the reader in every nation will be reminded that the Book of Mormon, and this book of Doctrine and Covenants of the church, cost the best blood of the nineteenth century to bring them forth for the salvation of a ruined world; and that if the fire can scathe a green tree for the glory of God, how easy it will burn up the dry trees to purify the vineyard of corruption. They lived for glory; they died for glory; and glory is their eternal reward. From age to age shall their names go down to posterity as gems for the sanctified. 7 They were innocent of any crime, as they had often been proved before, and were only confined in jail by the conspiracy of traitors and wicked men; and their innocent blood on the floor of Carthage jail is a broad seal affixed to "Mormonism" that cannot be rejected by any court on earth, and their innocent blood on the escutcheon of the State of Illinois, with the broken faith of the State as pledged by the governor, is a witness to the truth of the everlasting gospel that all the world cannot impeach; and their innocent blood on the banner of liberty, and on the magna charta of the United States, is an ambassador for the religion of Jesus Christ, that will touch the hearts of honest men among all nations; and their innocent blood, with the innocent blood of all the martyrs under the altar that John saw, will cry unto the Lord of Hosts till he avenges that blood on the earth. Amen.

v6-7 Taylor closes his comments by contrasting the innocence and integrity of Joseph and Hyrum (v. 6) with the treacherousness and wickedness of those that persecuted and murdered them (v. 7).

v6 "if the fire can scathe a green tree for the glory of God, how easy it will burn up the dry trees to purify the vineyard of corruption", Taylor is saying that Joseph and Hyrum were "green trees" and yet they were scorched for the glory of God. If so, then how great and terrible will be the scorching of those who are sinners and murderers? Taylor's point is that Joseph and Hyrum were innocent and died for the glory of God, what then will happen to those who are not innocent? The implicit answer is they will suffer destruction in both this world and that to come.

"gems for the sanctified", just as invaluable artifacts are handed down from generation to generation, so will be Joseph's and Hyrum's legacy be. Their legacy is the gospel of salvation,

the gospel that sanctifies.

v7 "innocent blood", this phrase is repeated five times in the verse. Taylor places such emphasis on this because Joseph and Hyrum's blood is on their hands. As in the end of v. 5, the Lord tells His faithful servant that their hands are clean of that generation's blood, instead this generation has the Prophet's blood on their hands.

"the altar that John saw", cf. Rev. 6:9-11 and also cp. Rev. 17:5-6.

Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 135

The text of this section was written by John Taylor, a first-hand witness who survived being shot four times during the described melee:

I have understood that this splendid account of the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith was written by President John Taylor, known as the "Champion of Liberty" who received four shots in his body and who lived carrying some of those bullets to his grave, and who, years after the martyrdom, stood before the people in this stand as the President, Prophet, Seer and Revelator of the Church of Jesus Christ. (Heber J. Grant, Conference Report, October 1933, page 7)

In the introduction to volume six of History of the Church, B. H. Roberts lists key factors in the popular shift against the Mormons in Illinois, a distillation of which follows:

Jealousy at Nauvoo's prosperity from rival neighboring towns which waned as a result of Nauvoo growth,

political contentions between the citizens of Nauvoo and her neighbors, the subserviency and betrayal of various politicians and lawyers,

mischief arising from false legal and political counsel applied within Nauvoo,

persisting legal harassment from the state of Missouri,

the apostasy of prominent Church members, which ultimately manifested itself in the publication of the Nauvoo Expositor, and

the appeal to mob justice.

With respect to this last point Roberts comments:

The uproar that followed the destruction of the Expositor press, put all reason at defiance. At Warsaw a mass meeting was held which issued a statement, in connection with the resolutions it passed, that "A mob at Nauvoo, under a city ordinance, has violated the highest privilege in government; and to seek redress in the ordinary way would be utterly ineffectual Resolved, that we hold ourselves at all times in readiness to

co-operate with our fellow citizens in this state, Missouri, and Iowa, to exterminate, utterly exterminate the wicked and abominable Mormon leaders, the authors of our troubles. The time, in our opinion, has arrived when the adherents of Smith as a body should be driven from the surrounding settlements into Nauvoo. That the Prophet and his miscreant adherents should then be demanded at their hands; and, if not surrendered, a war of extermination should be waged to the entire destruction, if necessary for our protection, of his adherents. And we hereby recommend this resolution to the consideration of the several townships, to the mass convention to be held at Carthage."

The Carthage meeting held a few days later embodied the above in their resolutions, as did other mass meetings held at various places. The Warsaw Signal in its impression of June 12th, passionately said:

"We have only to state that this [i. e. The destruction of the Expositor press] is sufficient! War and extermination is inevitable! CITIZENS ARISE, ONE and ALL!!! Can you stand by, and suffer such INFERNAL DEVILS! to ROB men of their property rights, without avenging them? We have no time to comment: every man will make his own. LET IT BE MADE WITH POWDER and BALL!!!"

(Joseph Smith, History of the Church, volume 6, page xxxix)

Clearly such an inflammatory appeal set the stage for (if not merely expressing an already existing sentiment among the people) the massacre at Carthage jail.

The first excerpt is a brief historical commentary detailing the events resulting in the text of section 135. Second are selections from History of the Church expressing Joseph's thoughts on traitors, the impending confrontation, and his initial attempt to flee but then change of mind which led to his murder. Third is a detailed historical account of the events at Carthage regarding Joseph and Hyrum's martyrdom. Fourth is a lengthy excerpt from the Nauvoo Expositor shedding light on why the paper was found so offensive. The fifth excerpt is from Parley P. Pratt's autobiography and tells of his experiences after the murder of Joseph and Hyrum, and the sixth is Orson Hyde's comments on the event.

Excerpt from Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith

It was the destruction of the Nauvoo Expositor, a paper aimed at traducing the character of Joseph Smith, that triggered the events resulting in the Prophet's death in Carthage, Illinois. Mormon apostates in Nauvoo, smarting over the loss of their printing establishment and bent on ridding the country of the Mormon prophet, brought legal complaints against Joseph Smith and others in June 1844. Initially the Prophet was impressed to leave the United States for the West, but accusations of desertion by a few close associates motivated him to stay and stand trial. Opposing forces, conspiring with law-enforcement officers, took advantage of this last arrest. Gathering at Carthage, Illinois, where Joseph Smith had been illegally detained, a mob forced their way into the jail and, at 5:16 P.M., murdered the Prophet and his brother Hyrum. (Lyndon W. Cook, Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith, page 297)

Excerpts from History of the Church

Address of the Mayor to the Nauvoo Police.

It is expected that a part will be on duty while others rest. It might be expected that thieves had crept into the Church for the purpose of concealing their wickedness under the garb of sanctity.

It is an abominable thing to set a thief to catch a thief; and I would look with the utmost contempt upon men who do this as guilty of a mean or cowardly act.

Some city councils have taken thieves out of their prisons, and employed them as policemen, under the old and foolish adage—"Set a rogue to catch a rogue," which is decidedly wrong, and is corrupt in policy.

You will act under the direction of Jonathan Dunham—we will call him High Policeman. In reality he is the captain of the police: but as men are apt to be frightened at a military title, we will use a civil title, as these policemen are all civil officers of the city.

Captain Dunham is the man to send after a thief. He will not come back, after following him a mile, to ask if he may shoot him, if he resists. Some men have strange ears and changeable hearts: they become transformed from their original purity and integrity, and become altogether different from what they were.

If the bloodthirsty hell-hounds of Missouri continue their persecution, we will be forbearing, until we are compelled to strike; then do it decently and in good order, and break the yoke effectually, so that it cannot be mended. The mob have been so repulsed in their last attempt at kidnapping, they may stand in

fear, at least for a short time.

We will be in peace with all men, so long as they will mind their own business and let us alone. Even "Peace with Missouri" shall be the motto of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, from this time forth, if they will stop their persecution and oppressive warfare against us. Let them alone, for they stink in the nostrils of the Almighty: let them alone. Porter Rockwell has come home clear. A Missouri grand jury could not find a bill against him even in Jackson county; and that proves me clear of the charge of being accessory of shooting Lilburn W. Boggs. Many of our difficulties from the State of Missouri are hurled upon us through the influence of some of our near neighbors.

Governor Ford has boasted of being a law-abiding man. A governor certainly should be law-abiding. It is therefore our best policy to acquaint the Executive, by affidavits, of every violation of our rights, so that when the onset comes, he will be obliged by law to send the militia to our support. Let us keep cool as a cucumber on a frosty morning. Do not be excited. Say nothing about Missouri's oppression. "A soft answer turns away wrath but grievous words stir up anger," therefore we "poor pussy" this generation.

Keep a strict account of the time you serve as policemen. Have the ordinances of the city always in your possession, and study them, sad ferret out all grogshops, gambling-houses, brothels, and disorderly conduct; and if a transgressor resists, cuff his ears. If anyone lifts a weapon or presents a pistol at you, take his life, if need be, to preserve your own; but enforce the ordinances, and preserve the peace of the city, and take care of your own lives. Let no horses be taken away out of the city, or anything else stolen, if you can help it.

Let Missouri alone. Keep out of her territory. Don't go over there on any business whatever. Any of this people would be subject to cruel abuse, if found in that State, in the same manner that Porter Rockwell has been. He was seized in St. Louis while attending to his lawful business, picked up and ironed, and thrown in jail without any form of law, conveyed to Independence in the custody of a ruffian who swore falsely in the hope of getting a reward, kept in irons all the way, lodged in Independence jail without even the form of an inquiry, chained double in a filthy, damp, unventilated dungeon,—chained hand and foot, so that he could not straighten for months, till his body was reduced to a mere skeleton, and he unable to walk when the irons were taken off, and he had to be led,—half fed on the refuse of what dogs would not eat: his case presented to a Jackson county grand jury, and not evidence enough to warrant them in even finding an indictment. After which, the Missouri court, in the plenitude of their justice, transmitted the innocent and unindicted man back to the dungeon, without fire,

provisions, or any other comfort,—hoping by this torture, no doubt, to produce death, or force him to accede to an infamous proposition, “that whether Jo Smith was guilty or innocent, only come out against him, you shall have your liberty, and receive a liberal reward.” After months have passed away, without any shadow of law, the door is opened, and he is told to “slip off privately, or the people will hang you.” Keep out of Missouri, if you don’t want such treatment as this; for the Averys, Rockwell, and many others have been thankful to get away with their lives.

If any man attempts to bribe you in any way whatever, or persuade you to neglect your duty, tell the same to me. Let us have a reformation.

There are speculators in this State who are wanting to sell revolving pistols to us, in order to fight the Missourians, and at the same time inciting the Missourians to fight us. Don’t buy: it would be better to buy ploughshares and raise corn with them.

My life is more in danger from some little dough-head of a fool in this city than from all my numerous and inveterate enemies abroad. I am exposed to far greater danger from traitors among ourselves than from enemies without, although my life has been sought for many years by the civil and military authorities, priests, and people of Missouri; and if I can escape from the ungrateful treachery of assassins, I can live as Caesar might have lived, were it not for a right-hand Brutus. I have had pretended friends betray me. All the enemies upon the face of the earth may roar and exert all their power to bring about my death, but they can accomplish nothing, unless some who are among us and enjoy our society, have been with us in our councils, participated in our confidence, taken us by the hand, called us brother, saluted us with a kiss, join with our enemies, turn our virtues into faults, and, by falsehood and deceit, stir up their wrath and indignation against us, and bring their united vengeance upon our heads. All the hue-and-cry of the chief priests and elders against the Savior, could not bring down the wrath of the Jewish nation upon His head, and thereby cause the crucifixion of the Son of God, until Judas said unto them, “Whomsoever I shall kiss, he is the man; hold him fast.” Judas was one of the Twelve Apostles, even their treasurer, and dined with their Master in the dish, and through his treachery, the crucifixion was brought about; and we have a Judas in our midst. (Joseph Smith, History of the Church, volume 6, pages 150-152)

It is thought by some that our enemies would be satisfied with my destruction; but I tell you that as soon as they have shed my blood they will thirst for the blood of every man in whose heart dwells a single spark of the spirit of the fullness of the Gospel. The opposition of these men is moved by the spirit of the adversary of all righteousness. It is not only to destroy

me, but every man and woman who dares believe the doctrines that God hath inspired me to teach to this generation. (Joseph Smith, History of the Church, volume 6, page 498)

I told Stephen Markham that if I and Hyrum were ever taken again we should be massacred, or I was not a prophet of God. I want Hyrum to live to avenge my blood, but he is determined not to leave me. (Joseph Smith, History of the Church, volume 6, page 546)

Saturday, June 22, 1844.-About 9 p.m. Hyrum came out of the Mansion and gave his hand to Reynolds Cahoon, at the same time saying, "A company of men are seeking to kill my brother Joseph, and the Lord has warned him to flee to the Rocky Mountains to save his life. Good-by, Brother Cahoon, we shall see you again." In a few minutes afterwards Joseph came from his family. His tears were flowing fast. He held a handkerchief to his face, and followed after Brother Hyrum without uttering a word.

Between 9 and 10 p.m. Joseph, Hyrum and Willard, while waiting on the banks of the river for the skiff, sent for William W. Phelps, and instructed him to take their families to Cincinnati by the second steamboat, arriving at Nauvoo; and when he arrived there to commence petitioning the President of the United States and Congress for redress of grievances, and see if they would grant the Church liberty and equal rights. Joseph then said: "Go to our wives, and tell them what we have concluded to do, and learn their feelings on the subject; and tell Emma you will be ready to start by the second steamboat, and she has sufficient money wherewith to pay the expenses. If you ascertain by tomorrow morning that there is anything wrong, come over the river to Montrose, to the house of Captain John Killien, and there you will learn where we are."

About midnight, Joseph, Hyrum and Dr. Richards called for Orrin P. Rockwell at his lodgings, and all went up the river bank until they found Aaron Johnson's boat, which they got into, and started about 2 a. m to cross the Mississippi river. Orrin P. Rockwell rowed the skiff, which was very leaky, so that it kept Joseph, Hyrum and the doctor busy baling out the water with their boots and shoes to prevent it from sinking.

Sunday, 23.-At daybreak arrived on the Iowa side of the river. Sent Orrin P. Rockwell back to Nauvoo with instructions to return the next night with horses for Joseph and Hyrum, pass them over the river in the night secretly, and be ready to start for the Great Basin in the Rocky Mountains.

Joseph, Hyrum and Dr. Richards walked up to Captain John Killien's house, where they arrived at sunrise; but he not being at home, they went from thence to Brother William Jordan's. About

9 a.m. Dr. Bernhisel came over the river to visit Joseph; also Reynolds Cahoon, who made some explanations respecting Governor Ford's letter.

Early in the morning a posse arrived in Nauvoo to arrest Joseph, but as they did not find him, they started back to Carthage immediately, leaving one man of the name of Yates behind them, who said to one of the brethren that Governor Ford designed that if Joseph and Hyrum were not given up, he would send his troops and guard the city until they were found, if it took three years to do it.

At 1 p.m. Emma sent over Orrin P. Rockwell, requesting him to entreat of Joseph to come back. Reynolds Cahoon accompanied him with a letter which Emma had written to the same effect, and she insisted that Cahoon should persuade Joseph to come back and give himself up. When they went over they found Joseph, Hyrum and Willard in a room by themselves, having flour and other provisions on the floor ready for packing.

Reynolds Cahoon informed Joseph what the troops intended to do, and urged upon him to give himself up, inasmuch as the Governor had pledged his faith and the faith of the state to protect him while he underwent a legal and fair trial. Reynolds Cahoon, Lorenzo D. Wasson and Hiram Kimball accused Joseph of cowardice for wishing to leave the people, adding that their property would be destroyed, and they left without house or home. Like the fable, when the wolves came the shepherd ran from the flock, and left the sheep to be devoured. To which Joseph replied, "If my life is of no value to my friends it is of none to myself."

Joseph said to Rockwell, "What shall I do?" Rockwell replied, "You are the oldest and ought to know best; and as you make your bed, I will lie with you." Joseph then turned to Hyrum, who was talking with Cahoon, and said, "Brother Hyrum, you are the oldest, what shall we do?" Hyrum said, "Let us go back and give ourselves up, and see the thing out." After studying a few moments, Joseph said, "If you go back I will go with you, but we shall be butchered." Hyrum said, "No, no; let us go back and put our trust in God, and we shall not be harmed. The Lord is in it. If we live or have to die, we will be reconciled to our fate."

After a short pause, Joseph told Cahoon to request Captain Daniel C. Davis to have his boat ready at half-past five to cross them over the river. (History of the Church, volume 6, pages 547-550)

Excerpt from Life of Joseph Smith

As the governor [Thomas Ford of Illinois] continued his preparations to depart from Carthage to Nauvoo, and as it was

clear that he intended to break his solemn promise by failing to take Joseph with him, Cyrus H. Wheelock, Dan Jones and John P. Greene went in town to him and protested with all possible solemnity against his deed. He professed to reassure them; and then he took with him Captain Dunn, and his company of all the militia the least vindictive against the Prophet; and left as a guard the Carthage Greys of all the mob the most bloodthirsty. These Carthage Greys had but two days before been under arrest for insulting the commanding general; their conduct had shown them to be notoriously hostile to the prisoners; and they had often in the governor's hearing threatened the lives of Joseph and Hyrum. Of the disbanded troops the governor permitted two or three hundred under Colonel Levi Williams, a sectarian preacher and a sworn enemy to Joseph, to remain encamped in the vicinity of Carthage, awaiting the hour when they might safely descend upon the jail....

At Carthage, after the governor left, the external situation was this: The guarding of the jail had been left to General Deming who had the Carthage Greys under his command; but Deming retired during the day for fear of his life, as he saw the determination of the troops to connive at murder. The main body of the company was stationed in the public square, one hundred and fifty yards from the jail, while eight men were detailed, under the command of Sergeant Frank A. Worrell, to guard the prisoners. The disbanded mob militia had come up to Carthage to the number of two hundred, with their faces blackened with powder and mud. The Carthage Greys were informed that the assassin band was ready; and it was then arranged that the guard at the jail should load with blank cartridges and that the mob should attack the prison and meet with some show of resistance.

Within the jail, the brethren, Joseph and Hyrum, John Taylor and Willard Richards, were confined in a room upstairs and were busy, during the day, writing letters, conversing and praying and singing. Between three and four o'clock at the Prophet's request, Apostle Taylor sang this sweet and comforting poem: "A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief."

And when it was done, Joseph asked him to repeat it. He replied that he did not feel like singing. He was oppressed with a sense of coming disaster; but to gratify Hyrum, he sang the hymn again, with much tender feeling.

At four o'clock the guard was changed. A little after five, the jailor came in and said that Stephen Markham had been surrounded by a mob and driven from Carthage. A little later there was a slight rustling at the outer door of the jail, and a cry of surrender, then a discharge of three or four guns. The plot had been carried out: two hundred of the mob came rushing into the jail yard, and the guards fired their pieces over the heads of the assailing party.

Many of the mob rushed up the stairs while others fired through the open windows of the jail into the room where the brethren were confined. The four prisoners sprang against the door, but the murderers burst it partly open and pushed their guns into the room. John Taylor and Willard Richards, each with a cane, tried to knock aside the weapons. A shower of bullets came up the stairway and through the door. Hyrum was in front of the door when a ball struck him in the face, and he fell back saying: "I am a dead man."

As he was falling, another bullet from the outside passed through the swaying form, and two others from the doorway entered his body a moment later. When Hyrum fell, Joseph exclaimed, "Oh, my dear brother Hyrum!" and opening the door a few inches he discharged his pistol into the stairway but two or three barrels missed fire.

When the door could no longer be held, and when he could no longer parry the guns, Elder Taylor sprang toward the window. A bullet from the doorway struck his left thigh. Paralyzed and unable to help himself he fell on the window sill, and felt himself falling out, when by some means which he did not understand at the time he was thrown backward into the room. A bullet fired from the outside struck his watch and the watch saved his life in two ways; it stopped the bullet, which probably would have killed him, and the force of the ball in striking it threw him into the room. The watch stopped at sixteen minutes and twenty-six seconds past 5 o'clock. After he fell into the room three other bullets struck him, spattering his blood like rain upon the walls and floor.

Joseph saw that there was no longer safety in the room; and thinking that he would save the life of Willard Richards if he himself should spring from the room, he turned immediately from the door, dropped his pistol and leaped into the window. Instantly two bullets pierced him from the door, and one entered his right breast from without, and he fell outward into the hands of his murderers exclaiming:

"Oh, Lord, my God!"

When his body struck the ground he rolled instantly upon his face dead. As he lay there, one of the mob, barefooted and bareheaded, wearing no coat, with his trousers rolled above his knees and his shirt sleeves above his elbows, seized the body of the murdered Prophet and set it against the south side of the well curb.

Colonel Levi Williams then ordered four men to shoot Joseph. Standing about eight feet from his body they fired simultaneously. The body slightly cringed as the bullets entered it, and once more Joseph fell upon his face. He had smiled with sweet compassion in his countenance as he gazed upon his murderers in the last moment of his life; and this was the

expression when his face was set in death. (George Q. Cannon, Life of Joseph Smith, pages 517-524)

Excerpt from Nauvoo Expositor

[First and only edition printed June 7, 1844]

PREAMBLE.

It is with the greatest solicitude for the salvation of the Human Family, and of our own souls, that we have this day assembled. Feign would we have slumbered, and "like the Dove that covers and conceals the arrow that is preying upon its vitals," for the sake of avoiding the furious and turbulent storm of persecution which will gather, soon to burst upon our heads, have covered and concealed that which, for a season, has been brooding among the ruins of our peace: but we rely upon the arm of Jehovah, the Supreme Arbiter of the world, to whom we this day, and upon this occasion, appeal for the rectitude of our intentions.

If that God who gave bounds to the mighty deep, and bade the ocean cease--if that God who organized the physical world, and gave infinity to space, be our front guard and our rear ward, it is futile and vain for man to raise his puny arm against us. God will inspire his ministers with courage and with understanding to consummate his purposes, and if it is necessary, he can snatch them from the fiery furnace, or the Lion's den as he did anciently the three Hebrews from the former, and Daniel from the latter.

As for our acquaintance with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, we know, no man or set of men can be more thoroughly acquainted with its rise, its organization, and its history, than we have every reason to believe we are. We all verily believe, and many of us know of a surety, that the religion of the Latter Day Saints, as originally taught by Joseph Smith, which is contained in the Old and New Testaments, Book of Covenants, and Book of Mormon, is verily true; and that the pure principles set forth in those books, are the immutable and eternal principles of Heaven, and speaks a language which, when spoken in truth and virtue, sinks deep into the heart of every honest man.--Its precepts are invigorating, and in every sense of the word, tend to dignify and ennoble man's conceptions of God and his attributes. It speaks a language which is heard amidst the roar of Artillery, as well as in the silence of midnight: it speaks a language understood by the incarcerated spirit, as well as he who is unfettered and free; yet to those who will not see, it is dark, mysterious, and secret as the grave.

We believe that all men, professing to be the ministers of

God, should keep steadily in view, the honor and glory of God, the salvation of souls and the amelioration of man's condition: and among their cardinal virtues ought to be found those of faith, hope, virtue and charity; but with Joseph Smith, and many other official characters in the Church, they are words without any meanings attached--words as ornaments; exotics nurtured for display; virtues which, throwing aside the existence of a God, the peace, happiness, welfare, and good order of society, require that they should be preserved pure, immaculate and uncorroded.

We most solemnly and sincerely declare, God this day being witness of the truth and sincerity of our designs and statements, that happy will it be with those who examine and scan Joseph Smith's pretensions to righteousness; and take counsel of human affairs, and of the experience of times gone by. Do not yield up tranquilly a superiority to that man which the reasonableness of past events, and the laws of our country declare to be pernicious and diabolical. We hope many items of doctrine, as now taught, some of which, however, are taught secretly, and denied openly, (which we know positively is the case,) and others publicly, considerate men will treat with contempt; for we declare them heretical and damnable in their influence, though they find many devotees. How shall he, who has drank of the poisonous draft, teach virtue? In the stead thereof, when the criminal ought to plead guilty to the court, the court is obliged to plead guilty to the criminal. We appeal to humanity and ask, what shall we do? Shall we lie supinely and suffer ourselves to be metamorphosed into beasts by the Syren tongue? We answer that our country and our God require that we should rectify the tree. We have called upon him to repent, and as soon as he shewed fruits meet for repentance, we stood ready to seize him by the hand of fellowship, and throw around him the mantle of protection; for it is the salvation of souls we desire, and not our own aggrandizement.

We are earnestly seeking to explode the vicious principles of Joseph Smith, and those who practice the same abominations and whoredoms; which we verily know are not accordant and consonant with the principles of Jesus Christ and the Apostles; and for that purpose, and with that end in view, with an eye single to the glory of God, we have dared to gird on the armor, and with God at our head, we most solemnly and sincerely declare that the sword of truth shall not depart from the thigh, nor the buckler from the arm, until we can enjoy those glorious privileges which nature's God and our country's laws have guarantied to us--freedom of speech, the liberty of the press, and the right to worship God as seemeth us good.--We are aware, however, that we are hazarding every earthly blessing, particularly property, and probably life itself, in striking this blow at tyranny and oppression: yet notwithstanding, we most solemnly declare that no

man, or set of men combined, shall, with impunity, violate obligations as sacred as many which have been violated, unless reason, justice and virtue have become ashamed and sought the haunts of the grave, though our lives be the forfeiture.

Many of us have sought a reformation in the church, without a public exposition of the enormities of crimes practiced by its leaders, thinking that if they would hearken to counsel, and shew fruit meet for repentance, it would be as acceptable with God, as though they were exposed to public gaze,

"For the private path, the secret acts of men, If noble, far the noblest of their lives" but our petitions were treated with contempt; and in many cases the petitioner spurned from their presence, and particularly by Joseph, who would state that if he had sinned, and was guilty of the charges we would charge him with, he would not make acknowledgment, but would rather be damned; for it would detract from his dignity, and would consequently ruin and prove the overthrow of the Church. We would ask him on the other hand, if the overthrow of the Church was not inevitable, to which he often replies, that we would all go to Hell together, and convert it into a heaven, by casting the Devil out; and says he, Hell is by no means the place this world of fools suppose it to be, but on the contrary, it is quite an agreeable place; to which we would now reply, he can enjoy it if he is determined not to desist from his evil ways; but as for us, and ours, we will serve the Lord our God! It is absurd for men to assert that all is well, while wicked and corrupt men are seeking our destruction, by a perversion of sacred things; for all is not well, while whoredoms and all manner of abominations are practiced under the cloak of religion. Lo! the wolf is in the fold, arrayed in sheep's clothing, and is spreading death and devastation among the saints: and we say to the watchmen standing upon the walls, cry aloud and spare not, for the day of the Lord is at hand -- a day cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate. It is a notorious fact, that many females in foreign climes, and in countries to us unknown, even in the most distant regions of the Eastern hemisphere, have been induced, by the sound of the gospel, to forsake friends, and embark upon a voyage across waters that lie stretched over the greater portion of the globe, as they supposed, to glorify God, that they might thereby stand acquitted in the great day of God Almighty. But what is taught them on their arrival at this place? -- They are visited by some of the Strikers, for we know not what else to call them, and are requested to hold on and be faithful, for there are great blessings awaiting the righteous; and that God has great mysteries in store for those who love the Lord, and cling to brother Joseph. They are also notified that brother Joseph will see them soon, and reveal the mysteries of Heaven to their full understanding, which seldom fails to inspire them with

new confidence in the Prophet, as well as a great anxiety to know what God has laid up in store for them, in return for the great sacrifice of father and mother, of gold and silver, which they gladly left far behind, that they might be gathered into the fold, and numbered among the chosen of God. -- They are visited again, and what is the result? They are requested to meet brother Joseph, or some of the Twelve, at some insulated point, or at some particularly described place on the bank of the Mississippi, or at some room, which wears upon its front -- Positively NO admittance. The harmless, inoffensive, and unsuspecting creatures, are so devoted to the Prophet, and the cause of Jesus Christ, that they do not dream of the deep-laid and fatal scheme which prostrates happiness, and renders death itself desirable, but they meet him, expecting to receive through him a blessing, and learn the will of the Lord concerning them, and what awaits the faithful follower of Joseph, the Apostle and Prophet of God, when in the stead thereof, they are told, after having been sworn in one of the most solemn manners, to never divulge what is revealed to them, with a penalty of death attached, that God Almighty has revealed it to him, that she should be his (Joseph's) Spiritual wife; for it was right anciently, and God will tolerate it again: but we must keep those pleasures and blessings from the world, for until there is a change in the government, we will endanger ourselves by practicing it -- but we can enjoy the blessings of Jacob, David, and others, as well as to be deprived of them, if we do not expose ourselves to the law of the land. She is thunder-struck, faints, recovers, and refuses. The Prophet damns her if she rejects. She thinks of the great sacrifice, and of the many thousand miles she has traveled over sea and land, that she might save her soul from pending ruin, and replies, God's will be done, and not mine. The Prophet and his devotees in this way are gratified. The next step to avoid public exposition from the common course of things, they are sent away for a time, until all is well; after which they return, as from a long visit. Those whom no power or influence could seduce, except that which is wielded by some individual feigning to be a God, must realize the remarks of an able writer, when he says, "if woman's feelings are turned to ministers of sorrow, where shall she look for consolation?" Her lot is to be wooed and won; her heart is like some fortress that has been captured, sacked abandoned, and left desolate. With her, the desire of the heart has failed -- the great charm of existence is at an end; she neglects all the cheerful exercises of life, which gladden the spirits, quicken the pulses, and send the tide of life in healthful currents through the veins. Her rest is broken. The sweet refreshment of sleep is poisoned by melancholy dreams; dry sorrow drinks her blood, until her enfeebled frame sinks under the slightest external injury. Look for her after a little

while, and you find friendship weeping over her untimely grave; and wondering that one who but so recently glowed with all the radiance of health and beauty, should so speedily be brought down to darkness and despair, you will be told of some wintry chill, of some casual indisposition that laid her low! But no one knows of the mental malady that previously sapped her strength, and made her so easy a pray to the spoiler. She is like some tender tree, the pride and beauty of the grove -- graceful in its form, bright in its foliage, but with the worm praying at its heart; we find it withered when it should be most luxuriant. We see it drooping its branches to the earth, and shedding leaf by leaf until wasted and perished away, it falls in the stillness of the forest; and as we muse over the beautiful ruin, we strive in vain to recollect the blast or thunder-bolt that could have smitten it with decay. But no one knows the cause except the foul fiend who perpetrated the diabolical deed. Our hearts have mourned and bled at the wretched and miserable condition of females in this place; many orphans have been the victims of misery and wretchedness, through the influence that has been exerted over them, under the cloak of religion and afterwards, in consequence of that jealous disposition which predominates over the minds of some, have been turned upon a wide world, fatherless and motherless, destitute of friends and fortune; and robbed of that which nothing but death can restore. Men solace themselves by saying the facts slumber in the dark caverns of midnight. But Lo! it is sudden day, and the dark deeds of foul fiends shall be exposed from the house-tops. A departed spirit, once the resident of St. Louis, shall yet cry aloud for vengeance. It is difficult -- perhaps impossible -- to describe the wretchedness of females in this place, without wounding the feelings of the benevolent, or shocking the delicacy of the refined; but the truth shall come to the world. The remedy can never be applied, unless the disease is known. The sympathy, ever anxious to relieve, cannot be felt before the misery is seen. -- The charity that kindles at the tale of woe, can never act with adequate efficiency, till it is made to see the pollution and guilt of men, now buried in the death-shades of heathenism. -- Shall we then, however painful the sight, shrink from the contemplation of their real state? We answer, we will not, if permitted to live. As we have before stated, it is the vicious principles of men we are determined to explode. It is not that we have any private feelings to gratify, or any private pique to settle, that has induced us to be thus plain; for we can respect and love the criminal, if there is any hope of reformation: but there is a point beyond which forbearance ceases to be a virtue. The next important item which presents itself for our consideration, is the attempt at Political power and influence, which we verily believe to be preposterous and absurd. We believe it is inconsistent, and not in accordance with the

Christian religion. We do not believe that God ever raised up a Prophet to Christianize a world by political schemes and intrigue. It is not the way God captivates the heart of the unbeliever; but on the contrary, by preaching truth in its own native simplicity, and in its own original purity, unadorned with anything except its own indigenous beauties. Joseph may plead he has been injured, abused, and his petitions treated with contempt by the general government, and that he only desires an influence of a political character that will warrant him redress of grievances; but we care not -- the faithful followers of Jesus must bear in this age as well as Christ and the Apostles did anciently; although a frowning world may have crushed him to the dust; although un pitying friends may have passed him by; although hope, the great comforter in affliction, may have burst forth and fled from his troubled bosom; yet, in Jesus there is a balsam for every wound, and a cordial to assuage an agonized mind. Among the many items of false doctrine that are taught the Church, is the doctrine of many Gods, one of the most direful in its effects that has characterized the world for many centuries. We know not what to call it other than blasphemy, for it is most unquestionably, speaking of God in an impious and irreverent manner.--It is contended that there are innumerable Gods as much above the God that presides over this universe, as he is above us; and if he varies from the law unto which he is subjected, he, with all his creatures, will be cast down as was Lucifer; thus holding forth a doctrine which is effectually calculated to sap the very foundation of our faith: and now, O Lord! shall we set still and be silent, while thy name is thus blasphemed, and thine honor, power and glory, brought into disrepute. See Isaiah c 43, v 10; 44, 6-8; 45, 5, 6, 21, 22; and book of Covenants, page 26 and 39. In the dark ages of Popery, when bigotry, superstition, and tyranny held universal sway over the empire of reason, there was some semblance of justice in the inquisitorial deliberations, which, however, might have been dictated by prudence, or the fear of consequences: but we are no longer forced to appeal to those states that are now situated under the influence of Popery for examples of injustice, cruelty and oppression -- we can appeal to the acts of the inquisitorial department organized in Nauvoo, by Joseph and his accomplices, for specimens of injustice of the most pernicious and diabolical character that ever stained the pages of the historian. It was in Rome, and about the twelfth century, when Pope Innocent III, ordered father Dominic to excite the Catholic princes and people to extirpate heretics. But it is in this enlightened and intelligent nineteenth century, and in Nauvoo -- a place professing to be the nucleus of the world, that Joseph Smith has established an inquisition, which, if it is suffered to exist, will prove more formidable and terrible to those who are found opposing the iniquities of Joseph and his

associates, than even the Spanish inquisition did to heretics as they termed them. On thursday evening, the 18th of April, there was a council called, unknown to the Church, which tried, condemned, and cut off brothers Wm. Law, Wilson Law, and sister Law, (Wm's. wife,) brother R.D. Foster, and one brother Smith, with whom we are unacquainted; which we contend is contrary to the book of Doctrine and Covenants, for our law condemnest no man until he is heard. We abhor and protest against any council or tribunal in this Church, which will not suffer the accused to stand in its midst and plead their own cause. If an Agrippa would suffer a Paul, whose eloquence surpassed, as it were, the eloquence of men, to stand before him, and plead his own cause, why should Joseph, with others, refuse to hear individuals in their own defense? -- We answer, it is because the court fears the atrocity of its crimes will be exposed to public gaze. We wish the public to thoroughly understand the nature of this court, and judge of the legality of its acts as seemeth them good. On Monday, the 15th of April, brother R.D. Foster had a notice served on him to appear before the High Council on Saturday following, the 20th, and answer to charges preferred against him by Joseph Smith. On Saturday, while Mr. Foster was preparing to take his witnesses, 41 in number, to the council-room, that he might make good his charges against Joseph, president Marks notified him that the trial had been on Thursday evening, before the 15th, and that he was cut off from the Church; and that same council cut off the brother Laws', sister Law, and brother Smith, and all without their knowledge. They were not notified, neither did they dream of any such thing being done, for William Law had sent Joseph and some of the Twelve, special word that he desired an investigation before the Church in General Conference, on the 6th of April. The court, however, was a tribunal possessing no power to try Wm. Law, who was called by special Revelation, to stand as counselor to the President of the Church, (Joseph,) which was twice ratified by General Conferences, assembled at Nauvoo, for Brigham Young, one of the Twelve, presided, whose duty it was not, but the President of the High Council. -- See Book of Doctrine and Covenants, page 87.

Resolved 1st, that we will not encourage the acts of any court in this church, for the trial of any of its members, which will not suffer the accused to be present and plead their own cause; we therefore declare our decided disapprobation to the course pursued last Thursday evening, (the 18th inst,) in the case of William and Wilson Law, and Mrs. William Law, and R.D. Foster, as being unjust and unauthorized by the laws of the Church, and consequently null and void; for our law judgeth no man unless he be heard; and to all those who approbate a course so unwarranted unprecedented and so unjust, we would say beware lest the unjust measure you meet to your brethren, be again

meeted out to you.

Resolved 2nd, Inasmuch as we have for years borne with the individual follies and iniquities of Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, and many other official characters in the Church of Jesus Christ, (conceiving it a duty incumbent upon us so to bear,) and having labored with them repeatedly with all Christian love, meekness and humility, yet to no effect, feel as if forbearance has ceased to be a virtue, and hope of reformation vain; and inasmuch as they have introduced false and damnable doctrines into the Church, such as a plurality of Gods above the God of this universe, and his liability to fall with all his creations; the plurality of wives, for time and eternity, the doctrine of unconditional sealing up to eternal life, against all crimes except that of shedding innocent blood, by a perversion of their priestly authority, and thereby forfeiting the holy priesthood, according to the word of Jesus: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned," St. John, xv. 6. "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God, he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son; if there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed, for he that bideth him God speed is a partaker of his evil deeds;" we therefore are constrained to denounce them as apostates from the pure and holy doctrines of Jesus Christ.

Resolved, 3rd, That we disapprove and discountenance every attempt to unite church and state; and that we further believe the effort now being made by Joseph Smith for political power and influence, is not commendable in the sight of God.

Resolved 4th, That the hostile spirit and conduct manifested by Joseph Smith, and many of his associates towards Missouri, and others inimical to his purposes, are decidedly at variance with the true spirit of Christianity, and should not be encouraged by any people, much less by those professing to be the ministers of the gospel of peace.

Resolved 5th, That while we disapprove malicious persecutions and prosecutions, we hold that all church members are alike amenable to the laws of the land; and that we further discountenance any chicanery to screen them from the just demands of the same.

Resolved 6th, That we consider the religious influence exercised in financial concerns by Joseph Smith, as unjust as it is unwarranted, for the Book of Doctrine and Covenants makes it the duty of the Bishop to take charge of the financial affairs of the Church, and of all temporal matters pertaining to the same.

Resolved 7th, That we discountenance and disapprove the attendance at houses of reveling and dancing; dram-shops and theaters; verily believing they have a tendency to lead from

paths of virtue and holiness, to those of vice and debauchery.

Resolved 8th, That we look upon the pure and holy doctrines set forth in the Scriptures of Divine truth, as being the immutable doctrines of salvation; and he who abideth in them shall be saved, and he who abideth not in them can not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.

Resolved 9th, That we consider the gathering in haste, and by sacrifice, to be contrary to the will of God; and that it has been taught by Joseph Smith and others for the purpose of enabling them to sell property at most exorbitant prices, not regarding the welfare of the Church, but through their covetousness reducing those who had the means to give employment to the poor, to the necessity of seeking labor for themselves; and thus the wealth which is brought into the place is swallowed up by the one great throat, from whence there is no return, which if it had been economically disbursed amongst the whole would have rendered all comfortable.

Resolved 10th, That notwithstanding our extensive acquaintance with the financial affairs of the Church, we do not know of any property which in reality belongs to the Church (Except the Temple) and we therefore consider the injunction laid upon the saints compelling them to purchase property of the Trustee in trust for the Church, is a deception practiced upon them: and that we look upon the sending of special agents abroad to collect funds for the Temple and other purposes as a humbug practiced upon the saints by Joseph and others, to aggrandize themselves, as we do not believe that the monies and property so collected, have been applied as the donors expected, but have been used for speculative purposes, by Joseph, to gull the saints the better on their arrival at Nauvoo, by buying the lands in the vicinity and selling again to them at tenfold advance; and further that we verily believe the appropriations said to have been subscribed by shares for the building of the Nauvoo House to have been used by J. Smith and Lyman Wight, for other purposes, as out of the mass of stock already taken, the building is far from being finished even to the base.

Resolved 11th, That we consider all secret societies, and combinations under penal oaths and obligations, (professing to be organized for religious purposes,) to be anti-Christian, hypocritical and corrupt.

Resolved 12th, That we will not acknowledge any man as king or law-giver to the church; for Christ is our only king and law-giver.

Resolved 13th, That we call upon the honest in heart, in the Church, and throughout the world, to vindicate the pure doctrines of Jesus Christ, whether set forth in the Bible, Book of Mormon, or Book of Covenants; and we hereby withdraw the hand of fellowship, from all those who practice or teach doctrines

contrary to the above, until they cease so to do, and show works meet for repentance.

Resolved 14th, That we hereby notify all those holding licences to preach the gospel, who know they are guilty of teaching the doctrine of other Gods above the God of this creation; the plurality of wives; the unconditional sealing up against all crimes, save that of shedding innocent blood; the spoiling of the gentiles, and all other doctrines, (so called) which are contrary to the laws of God, or to the laws of our country, to cease preaching, and to come and make satisfaction, and have their licences renewed.

Resolved 15th, That in all our controversies in defense of truth and righteousness, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God, to the pulling down of the strong holds of Satan; that our strifes are not against flesh, blood, nor bones; but against principalities and power against spiritual wickedness in high places and therefore we will not use carnal weapons save in our own defense.

Excerpt from Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt

While on this mission [to the Eastern States], on the 27th of June, 1844, a mob murdered the Prophet Joseph Smith, and his brother Hyrum, in a jail at Carthage, Illinois, while Governor Ford had pledged the faith of the State for their protection.

A day or two previous to this circumstance I had been constrained by the spirit to start prematurely for home without knowing why or wherefore; and on the same afternoon I was passing on a canal boat near Utica, New York, on my way to Nauvoo. My brother, William Pratt, being then on a mission in the same State (New York), happened providentially, to take passage on the same boat. As we conversed together on the deck, a strange and solemn awe came over me, as if the powers of hell were let loose. I was so overwhelmed with sorrow I could hardly speak; and after pacing the deck for some time in silence, I turned to my brother William and exclaimed "Brother William, this is a dark hour; the powers of darkness seem to triumph, and the spirit of murder is abroad in the land; and it controls the hearts of the American people, and a vast majority of them sanction the killing of the innocent. My brother, let us keep silence and not open our mouths. If you have any pamphlets or books on the fulness of the gospel lock them up; show them not, neither open your mouth to the people; let us observe an entire and solemn silence, for this is a dark day, and the hour of triumph for the powers of darkness. O, how sensible I am of the spirit of murder which seems to pervade the whole land." This was June 27, 1844, in the afternoon, and as near as I can judge, it was the same hour that the Carthage mob were shedding the blood of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and John

Taylor, near one thousand miles distant....

The steamer touched at a landing in Wisconsin, some fifty or sixty miles from Chicago, and here some new passengers came on board and brought the news of the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. Great excitement prevailed on board, there being a general spirit of exultation and triumph at this glorious news, as it was called, much the same as is generally shown on the first receipt of the news of a great national victory in time of war. (Parley Parker Pratt, Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, pages 330-31)

Excerpt from Scrapbook of Mormon Literature

Twenty-seventh of June, 1844. Eventful period in the calendar of the nineteenth century! That awful night! I remember it well: I shall never forget it! A solemn thrill a melancholy awe comes o'er my spirit! The memorable scene is fresh before me! It requires no art of the pencil, no retrospection of history, to portray it. The impression of the Almighty Spirit on that occasion will run parallel with eternity! The scene was not portrayed by earthquake, or thunderings, and lightnings, and tempests; but the majesty and sovereignty of Jehovah was felt far more impressively in the still, small voice of that significant hour, than the roaring of many waters, or the artillery of many thunders, when the spirit of Joseph was driven back into the bosom of God, by an ungrateful and bloodthirsty world. There was an unspeakable something, a portentous significance on the firmament and among the inhabitants of the earth. Multitudes felt the whisperings of woe and grief, and the forebodings of tribulation and sorrow that they will never forget, though the tongue of man can never utter it. The Saints of God, whether near the scene of blood, or even a thousand miles distant, felt at the very moment the Prophet lay in royal gore, that an awful deed was perpetrated. O the repulsive chill! the melancholy vibrations of the very air, as the prince of darkness receded in hopeful triumph from the scene of slaughter! That night could not the Saints sleep, though uninformed by man of what had passed with the Seer and Patriarch, and far remote from the scene; yet to them sleep refused a visitation the eyelids refused to close the hearts of many sighed deeply in secret and inquired, "Why am I thus?"

One of the Twelve Apostles, while traveling a hundred miles from the scene of assassination, and totally ignorant of what was done, was so unaccountably sad, and filled with such unspeakable anguish of heart without knowing the cause, that he was constrained to turn aside from the road and give utterance to his feelings in tears and supplications to God. Another Apostle, twelve hundred miles distant, while standing in Faneuil Hall, Boston, Massachusetts, with many others, was similarly affected,

and was obliged to turn aside to hide the big tears that gushed thick and long from his eyes. Another, President of the High Priests, while in the distant state of Kentucky, in the solitude of midnight, being marvelously disquieted, God condescended to show him, in a vision, the mangled bodies of the two murdered worthies, all dripping in purple gore, who said to him, "We are murdered by a faithless state and cruel mob."

Shall I attempt to describe the scene at Nauvoo on the memorable evening? If I could, surely you would weep, whatever may be your faith or skepticism, if the feelings of humanity are lodged in your bosom; all prejudice and mirth would slumber, till the eye of pity had bedewed the bier, and the heart had found relief in lamentation. (Orson Hyde, Scrapbook of Mormon Literature, volume 1, pages 283-84)

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