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## HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

AUGUST, 1843.

Elder Young said that if elders or high priests are so situated that they cannot get word from the Prophet or the Twelve Apostles, they may get a revelation concerning themselves. The Twelve may get a revelation in any part of the world concerning the building up of the kingdom, as they have to establish it in all parts of the world; so any person can ask the Lord for a witness concerning himself, and get an answer; but not to lead the church: that belongs to the head of the church.

Conference met at half past ten o'clock, according to adjournment. Meeting opened by singing. Prayer by Elder J. M. Grant. The congregation was then addressed by Elder W. Woodruff, from 2 Peter 1 ch. 20, 21 verses: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

If the prophecies that had been fulfilled were fulfilled literally, in like manner would those prophecies which are still unfulfilled be fulfilled literally. The gathering of the Saints, the building up of Zion, the gathering of the Jews, the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the establishing of the church and kingdom of God in the last days, and the preaching of the gospel to all the world, are events looked for by the Latter Day Saints; and notwithstanding these things are unpopular, and not looked for or believed in by the world, yet we feel encouraged to persevere and press forward in assisting to accomplish these great and glorious things, with a firm belief that they will as truly be brought to pass and perfected as those things were which were prophesied in ancient days. He also bore testimony of the truth of the Book of Mormon, Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and of Joseph Smith being a Prophet of God.

Elder Kimball gave his testimony, when the meeting took a recess for two hours.

In the afternoon, after Elder J. E. Page had addressed the meeting, Elder George T. Leach was appointed to preside over the church in New York, in place of Elder L. R. Foster who was about to remove to Nauvoo. After which several children were blessed, and the meeting adjourned until evening; at which time Elder O. Pratt addressed the people, in an edifying manner, concerning the Book of Mormon, its history, what it was, &c.; that it was a history of nearly one half of the globe, and the people that inhabited it;—that it gave a history and names of all those cities which have been of late discovered by Catherwood and Stephens;—that it spoke of the establishing of our government, and what is more highly interesting, it reveals its final fate and destiny; so that by reading the Book of Mormon you can clearly see what will befall this nation, and what will be its final end. In that book you will find recorded the pure principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ as taught by himself on the continent of America, so plain that no two persons could disagree as to the points of doctrine set forth. He then bore testimony of the truth of Joseph Smith, jun., being a Prophet of God, and that the Book of Mormon was true; also that the church of the Latter Day Saints was the church of God. He spoke about two hours; and after he closed, five children were blessed, and then the people were dismissed.

I attended meeting at the stand at 10 a.m., and made a few remarks, the following report of which is by Dr. Willard Richards:—

"Two weeks ago to-day something was said about Elder Sidney Rigdon, and a vote was taken to disfellowship him, and to demand his license, on account of a report brought by Elder Hyde from Quincy.

He then read a letter from Thomas Carlin to S. Rigdon, as follows:—

"Quincy, Ills., August 18, 1843.

Dear Sir:—Yours of the 15th inst. was received, but not in time to answer it by return mail. You say that a Mr. Orson Hyde, on board of the steamboat Anawan a short time

since, was told by an officer of the boat, that a Mr. Prentice, in the vicinity of Quincy, said that some person in high standing in the Church of Latter Day Saints in this place (Nauvoo) had an interview with you, (me) said, he would use all the influence that his circumstances would admit of, to have Joseph Smith arrested and delivered into the hands of the Missourians, &c. This interview is said to have taken place at the time the first warrant was issued against Smith, and that since the last warrant was issued, that the same person had written to you, (me) or had an interview with you, giving the same assurances. It has been publicly said in this town that I (Sidney Rigdon) was the person who had this interview or interviews and correspondence with you. Now, sir, it gives me pleasure to be perfectly able to disabuse you. I have not seen you, to my recollection, nor had any correspondence with you, until the present since 1839, and in all the intercourse I have had with you, I have always looked upon you, as one of the most devoted followers of Joseph Smith, and one of the pillars of the church of the Latter Day Saints. I never sought through the aid of any person to entrap Joseph Smith; a faithful discharge of my official duties, was all that I attempted or desired. Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

THOS. CARLIN."

He then resumed:—"The letter is one of the most evasive things, and carries with it a design to hide the truth. Has any man been concerned in a conspiracy to deliver Joseph Smith to Missouri? If so, who?"

He then read the 7th chap. Hebrews. "Salem is designed for a Hebrew term; it should be Shiloh, which signifies righteousness and peace; as it is, it is nothing—neither Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, or any other language.

I say to all those who are disposed to set up stakes for the Almighty, you will come short of the glory of God.

To become a joint heir of the heirship of the Son, he must put away all his tradition.

I prophecy and bear record this morning that all the combined powers of earth and hell shall not and cannot ever overthrow or overcome this boy; for I have a promise from the eternal God.

If I have sinned I have sinned outwardly; but surely I have contemplated the things of God.

Respecting the Melchisedec priesthood, the sectarians never professed to have it; consequently they never could save any one, and would all be damned together. There was an Episcopalian priest who said he had the priesthood of Aaron, but had not the priesthood of Melchisedec; and I bear this testimony that I never have found the man who claimed the priesthood of Melchisedec. The power of the Melchisedec priesthood is to have the power of 'endless lives,' for the everlasting covenant cannot be broken.

The law was given under Aaron for the purpose of pouring out judgments and destructions.

The sectarian world are going to hell by hundreds, by thousands, and by millions.

There are three grand orders of priesthood referred to here.

1st. The King of Shiloh (Salem) had power and authority over that of Abraham, holding the key and the power of endless life:—angels desire to look into it, but they have set up too many stakes. God cursed the children of Israel, because they would not receive the last law from Moses.

The sacrifice required of Abraham in the offering up of Isaac, shows that if a man would attain to the keys of the kingdom of an endless life, he must sacrifice all things. When God offers a blessing or knowledge to a man, and he refuses to receive it, he will be damned. The Israelites prayed that God would speak to Moses, and not to them; in consequence of which he cursed them with a carnal law.

What was the power of Melchisedec? 'Twas not the priesthood of Aaron which administers in outward ordinances, and the offering of sacrifices. Those holding the fulness of the Melchisedec priesthood are kings and priests to the Most High God, holding the keys of power and blessings! In fact that priesthood is a perfect law of Theocracy, and stands as God, to give laws to the people, administering endless lives to the sons and daughters of Adam.

Abram says to Melchisedec, I believe all that thou hast taught me concerning the priesthood, and the coming of the Son of Man; so Melchisedec ordained Abram, and sent him away. Abram rejoiced, saying, Now I have a priesthood.

Salvation could not come to the world, without the mediation of Jesus Christ.

How shall God come to the rescue of this generation? He will send Elijah the Prophet. The law revealed to Moses in Horeb never was revealed to the children of Israel as a nation.

Elijah shall reveal the covenants to seal the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers.

The anointing and sealing is to be called, elected, and made sure.

'Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God;

abideth a priest continually.' The Melchisedec priesthood holds the right from the eternal God, and not by descent from father and mother; and that priesthood is eternal as God himself, having neither beginning of days nor end of life.

The 2nd priesthood is patriarchal authority. Go to and finish the Temple, and God will fill it with power, and you will then receive more knowledge concerning this priesthood.

The 3rd is what is called the Levitical priesthood, consisting of priests to administer in outward ordinances, made without an oath; but the priesthood of Melchisedec is by an oath and covenant.

The Holy Ghost is God's messenger to administer in all those priesthoods.

Jesus Christ is the heir of this kingdom, the only begotten of the Father according to the flesh, and holds the keys over all this world.

Men have to suffer that they may come up on Mount Zion, and be exalted above the heavens.

I know a man that has been caught up to the third heavens, and can say with Paul, that we have seen and heard things that are not lawful to utter."

Fifteen minutes past one, closed my address.

Sidney Rigdon said: "I never saw Governor Carlin but three times, and never exchanged a word with any man living on the subject. I ask pardon for having done anything which should give occasion to make you think so."

In the evening attended council and prayer meeting with my brother Hyrum, N. K. Whitney, Willard Richards, William Law and William Marks.

Monday, 28.—I was visited by a deputation of Pottawatamie Indians.

Tuesday, 29.—Elder Brigham Young paid a visit to James Arlington Bennett, Arlington House, Long Island, and baptized and confirmed him next day.

I held mayor's court, and tried several cases. Erastus H. Derby was bound over to keep the peace for six months. Previous to the close of the trial he gave up his license as an elder, to the Church Recorder.

Wednesday, 30.—The Nauvoo Neighbor publishes the following article:—

"The following is extracted from the 'Boston Bee,' and reflects great credit upon the writer. Whoever 'Viator' is, he has proven himself to be a man of sound sense and discernment, and of no ordinary legal talents. The sentiments advocated are those that we have always contended for: it is the only common sense view of the subject that can be taken; and we think that on a 'sober second thought' when the film of superstition and prejudice is removed, it is the only light that it will be seen in by all intelligent men.

### 'VESTED RIGHTS OF NAUVOO.'

Mr. Editor:—After an abrupt leave, I am in Nauvoo again, and having been for many years what is called a constitutional man, and feeling a deep interest in the common welfare of all, so far as the rights of 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness' are concerned, you will pardon me as a legal advocate of vested rights, (not your religious tenets, or any other's, for I consider them as a matter connected with the soul) for once more offering you a little 'Bee Bread.'

I am much pleased with the liberal powers of the charter of the goodly city of Nauvoo. The vested rights in that public document, are sufficient for all necessary purposes of a people whose greatest object appears to be to benefit mankind in this world, and happyify them in the next. It is evident on the face of the instrument in question, that the legislature of Illinois, or more properly the people of Illinois through their representatives, have vested in the corporate body of Nauvoo, over a certain district of territory which may be increased in size at pleasure, all the rights, privileges and powers, which the said State possessed in her constitutional capacity, or could claim under the broad folds of the Constitution of the United States.

When I first read the charter, I supposed it was circumscribed by the statutes of the State; but upon a second reading, I saw the beauty of that magna charta: I saw that the legislature of Illinois had ceded to the city council of the city of Nauvoo, the power to legislate for the common weal of Nauvoo, for a part of the 11th section of that Act, reads as follows:—

"The city council shall have power and authority to make, ordain, establish and execute all such ordinances, not repugnant to the Constitution of the United States, or of this State, as they may deem necessary for the peace, benefit, good order, regulation, convenience, and cleanliness of said city."

Now, if words mean anything, here certainly are vested rights, as sacred, as substantial, and, according to the terms of the charter, (perpetual succession) as durable as those of the State, or United States, for the 'benefit and convenience' of the citizens of Nauvoo, and her posterity, *ad infinitum*. It is a wise, liberal and substantial foundation for those who may be so fortunate as to share the salutary effects of its ordinances, and to partake of its growing blessings. If Illinois has power to enact laws for the benefit and convenience of her inhabitants, so has Nauvoo for her citizens. If the Constitution of the United States protects Illinois in her vested rights, Nauvoo has the same claim, and the same power to control it. And, if the

city council of Nauvoo should pass an unconstitutional act or ordinance, literally repugnant to the constitution of the United States or of this State, all that could be done would be to declare it void by some court having competent jurisdiction, and there the matter ends, without any recourse upon the charter any more than there is recourse upon the constitution of the State for unconstitutional acts that so frequently disgrace the statutes of the several States.

When I heard that the legislature, last winter, was laboring to repeal or modify the said charter, it put me in mind of a father and a son who owned a horse which they were too lazy to prove, and bring out his good qualities; but a gentleman observing him, purchased, and in a few days passed by with the noble animal in full mounted harness attached to an elegant carriage, attracted the attention of all that saw him. The son immediately sought the father to sue and get the horse back, but the old man drily replied, 'It takes two to make a bargain.' So if the legislature should repeal or alter the charter of Nauvoo, without the consent of the citizens, they have only to put a quietus on the act, through the supreme court of the United States; as many other cases have been, according to her reports.

Reserved rights and vested rights are very different, and had the legislature reserved any important point in the charter, and the city council used it, without the consent mutually of both parties, they would have been held amenable to the supreme court for the usurpation of that power. But when the 'benefit and convenience' of Nauvoo demands ordinances no broader than the Constitution of the United States, and that of Illinois justifies, no matter whether there is any law on the subject or not, the city council has only to strew their wisdom by their ordinances, and their power by their virtues, and how beautifully the world will behold *imperium in imperio*.

Recently there has been much said about the powers of the municipal court of said city; because that court had the right to issue writs of habeas corpus under their own ordinances. Any man that objects to this power of the municipal court, is ignorant of the vested rights of the Constitution of the United States, for 'the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless, when in cases of rebellion and invasion, the public safety may require it.' The highest objection is, that the writ according to the charter, must be confined to cases arising from the ordinances. Just so. If the writ was not issued upon the direction and rules of ordinances, what would govern it? Do the circuit and supreme courts of the State issue writs of habeas corpus on the laws of the State, or upon the laws of Spain, Portugal, or the United States? Does the supreme court of the United States exercise the right of habeas corpus upon the United States, or upon an *ukase* of the Emperor Nicholas, of Russia.

Again, the municipal court of Nauvoo consists of several persons, whereas the circuit court is one man only; and the world has yet to learn that a 'little brief authority,' is as judiciously exercised by one man, as by six—why, the good old Law Book says, 'in the midst of counselors there is safety.'

Missouri, of late, made a most desperate and illegal attempt to force the Mormon prophet into her bosom, but met with a most sublime failure. After having been once thrust from her warm embrace by pointed steel and burning sulphur, he seems not anxious to throw himself again upon their renewed offers of hospitality and 'pretended justice,' yet Gen. Smith treated the agent of the State of Missouri with all due respect; introducing him to his family, and seating him at the head of his table. All is quiet at Nauvoo. Yours,

VIATOR."

Thursday, 31.—I commenced removing into the Mansion.

Friday, September 1.—A conference was held in Buffalo, New York; Elder John P. Greene presiding; William H. Folsom, clerk. 13 branches, 1 high priest, 58 elders, 2 teachers, 1 deacon, and 247 members were represented.

I attended the meeting of the high council as a witness in the case of Cowles vs. Geo. J. Adams. Charges not sustained.

The following appears in the Times and Seasons of this date:—

"To the Editor of the Times and Seasons:—Sir:—As the Prophet, not long since, told the Unitarian clergyman, in answer to the question, 'What is truth?' truth is a matter of fact, I have thought that a few such precious morsels, occasionally handed out to this generation, if carefully attended to, might save some. Much has been said about the bad translations of the Bible; the meaning here and there warped to favor religious creeds; for which curious phenomena in the sectarian horizon, very few of the literati, have ever attempted to give an account, or even render a reason. Every school boy seems to know that when either of the sectarian translators failed in making the two ends of a sentence meet, he filled up the vacancy with *Italics*, by which means God has been greatly helped towards expressing himself so as to be understood by the learned world, and benefit the poor heathen, if they are correct; but if their thoughts should not happen to be God's thoughts, it is a matter of fact that the mother of harlot holds in her hand a golden cup full of the filthiness of her abominations.