

Chapter 5

DEDICATING THE LAND OF ZION

The Lord instructed W. W. Phelps to accompany Joseph Smith to Missouri “that you may be planted in the land of your inheritance to do this work [of printing and teaching].”¹ What was so special about that land? Phelps learned quickly as he perused revelation granted to the Prophet that very June 1831. “And [that land] shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God.”² The land would also be known as “Zion.”³ He had also learned from his own study that the Book of Mormon described a latter-day Zion and the New Jerusalem in glowing terms.⁴ In Kirtland and surrounding communities, the prospect of identifying Zion was discussed openly among the Saints. From that moment on, Phelps would be dedicated to the cause of building Zion more than any other endeavor in his life. Zion would be the center of his multitudinous writings the rest of his life.

The previous fall Joseph Smith had already sent four elders, the two most noteworthy being Oliver Cowdery and Parley P. Pratt, to Indian reserves at the western border of Missouri.⁵ They were joined by new Ohio convert Frederick G. Williams. In Missouri and Ohio, Phelps and these men would become cherished companions in the ministry. Through other June revelations, Joseph Smith also called thirteen pairs of elders and the entire “Colesville Branch” (relocated from New York to Ohio) to journey to western Missouri as well.

Federal Indian agents kept these missionaries out of Indian Territory because the brethren did not have licenses. Elders Cowdery, Pratt, and Williams did not bring any Native Americans into the church; however, they baptized several white settlers (records indicate no more than nine) in Jackson and Lafayette Counties.⁶ Independence, the rough-hewn and sometimes disorderly seat of Jackson County, was the westernmost American outpost in the states as well as a key launching post of the Santa Fe Trail. Independence

was only twelve miles down the Missouri River from the state line that also served as the border of the “Indian lands” established by Congress in the Indian Removal Act of 1830.

TRAVELING TO MISSOURI

Phelps reveled in the thought that he was among the handpicked companions to go to Missouri with the young prophet. This opportunity consoled him following his deeply disappointing jailing in Lyons, his perceived disgraceful departure from the *Ontario Phoenix*, and his financial reversals.

On June 19, 1831, Joseph Smith and his six companions departed Kirtland for western Missouri. They were Sidney Rigdon (thirty-eight years old), his chief assistant at that time and also scribe; Edward Partridge (thirty-seven), called in February as the church's first bishop; A. Sidney Gilbert (forty-one), one of the church's shopkeepers and business agents (Gilbert's wife Elizabeth also accompanied the party); William W. Phelps (thirty-nine), newly converted prominent printer and journalist from New York State; and wealthy members Martin Harris (forty-eight), who was also one of the three Book of Mormon witnesses, and Joseph Coe (forty-seven). Smith was only twenty-five at the time. Clearly, he wasn't disturbed at having older advisers and helpers; he probably preferred having men at his side who were wizened by experience.

Upon arriving in Independence a month later, Phelps wrote a record of his travels and observations and sent it to the *Ontario Phoenix* in Canandaigua, where he had recently resigned as editor.⁷ This account lends considerable information regarding the travels to Missouri and Phelps's observations of Jackson County once they arrived.

The seven brethren traveled by wagon to Cleveland and the Ohio Canal, thence 176 miles southward to Newark, Ohio, and then another 65 miles on the Miami Canal to Cincinnati on the Ohio River. Then the party took a steamboat down the Ohio to Louisville, Kentucky, where they were detained for three days waiting for the steamboat *Don Juan* to take them down the rest of the Ohio to the mighty Mississippi. Phelps was excited that he could see three states (Illinois, Kentucky, and Missouri) at the same time. He also described the vast commerce that he witnessed plying the Mississippi as the brethren steamed on to St. Louis, the gateway to the West. He thought St. Louis to be “quite a city, [but] with the small pox in it.”⁸

Joseph Smith and most of his colleagues wanted to walk the rest of the way across Missouri state, but Sidney Rigdon and Sidney and Elizabeth Gilbert chose not to, probably because of physical impairments. They waited in St. Louis until they could gain passage on another steamboat that would take them upstream on the Missouri River to Independence.

Joseph Smith and the four others, including Phelps, left St. Louis by foot on July 2. It took them twelve days to walk the 240 miles westward through the state of Missouri along the well-used trails known as the Boonslick Trail and the Santa Fe Trail. Having come from the heavily wooded eastern river valleys, Phelps was struck by the rolling prairies: “The prairies are beautiful beyond description, yielding prairie grass, wild sun flowers, small flowers in great variety and color, and continually presenting, or ‘keeping

up appearances' of a highly cultivated country without inhabitants. Meadow peeps o'er meadow, and prairie on prairies rise like the rolling waves on the ocean."⁹

Along the way in Missouri, the brethren encountered a number of people who argued with them about religion, particularly regarding their "belief in the Book of Mormon." Phelps, who in 1842 wrote this portion of Joseph Smith's official history, remembered, "The Lord continued his watchful care and loving kindness to us day by day; and we made it a rule, wherever there was an opportunity, to read a chapter in the Bible, and pray, and these seasons of worship gave us great consolation."¹⁰ Joseph Smith reported that this was "a long and tedious journey" in which he and his colleagues "suffer[ed] many privations and hardships."¹¹

When they got to western Missouri, Joseph Smith and his brethren decided to investigate other counties as possibilities for Zion before entering Jackson County. They went through Saline and Lafayette Counties but apparently chose not to stay there or investigate further.¹² They walked on to Independence, a village of fewer than fifteen hundred people that had been laid out along with the incorporation of Jackson County only four years earlier in 1827. Jackson County had been named for the famous Indian fighter and politician Andrew Jackson, who in 1829 had become president of the United States. Settlements in the rest of the county were sparse. Independence was just coming into prosperity as an outfitting post on the Santa Fe Trail.

SACRED EVENTS IN ZION

When they arrived in Independence, a joyful reunion took place with Joseph Smith's closest associate of the early days of the Restoration, Oliver Cowdery, and with the other missionaries. "The meeting of our brethren, who had long waited our arrival, was a glorious one and moistened with many tears," wrote Phelps. "It seemed good and pleasant for brethren to meet together in unity."¹³ Temporary headquarters for the gathered Mormons was the log home and property of new convert Joshua Lewis in Kaw Township (in present-day Kansas City) along the Santa Fe Trail near the Big Blue River about eight miles west of the courthouse in Independence. Kaw Township received its name from the nearby Kaw River.

The brethren's first Sunday in Jackson County was July 17, 1831. They went right up to the state boundary to Indian lands and held a religious service.¹⁴ Joseph Smith asked W. W. Phelps to preach to a substantial audience. Phelps recorded that in attendance were "specimens of 'all the families of the earth.'" These were numerous Indians, African-American slaves, and American government officials and other whites, approximately twelve hundred in all. Phelps was always excited by new doctrinal insights gleaned from the Prophet. Thus he noted that "Ham, Shem, and Japheth" were all represented: Lamanites (or Indians) descended from Shem, black slaves from Ham, and the white pioneers of the West from Japheth (according to Phelps's and maybe Joseph Smith's interpretation). At this meeting, two persons who had been previously taught the gospel were baptized.¹⁵ Significantly also, because of later repercussions pertaining to Mormon polygamy, Joseph Smith allegedly privately discussed a "revelation" with the brethren that these elders,

who were already married, would also be called upon to take Indian women as wives so as to hasten the day when Lamanites would become “white and delightsome” according to Book of Mormon prophecy (2 Nephi 30:6).¹⁶

Back in the middle of Jackson County, Missouri, Phelps quickly noticed the cultural differences between the party of Latter-day Saints and the original settlers, who hailed primarily from Kentucky and Tennessee. “Education sings small, and few schools are kept, a common occurrence in southern and new states,” he reported. He also noted that there were no “secret societies” (i.e., Masons).¹⁷ In the church’s official history, which reflected conversations Phelps had with Joseph Smith and other leaders, Phelps compared the Indians with the white settlers. The Indians “roamed about without the benefit of civilization, refinement or religion,” whereas the whites demonstrated “leanness of intellect, ferocity and jealousy” and were “nearly a century behind the times.”¹⁸ Smith’s and Phelps’s views about Indians were vastly different from those of most whites, particularly in western Missouri.

Having witnessed these vast differences, but also trusting in the prophetic word, on July 20 the brethren appealed to God in prayer: “When will the wilderness blossom as the rose; when will Zion be built up in her glory, and where will thy Temple stand unto which all nations shall come in the last days?”¹⁹

Their faith and yearnings were rewarded with a profound revelation (D&C 57) that would affect the few men present for the rest of their lives. They were informed that they were standing on “the land which I [the Lord] have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints.” Independence was to be the “center place” for “the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion.” The revelation designated a spot for the temple just outside Independence on a rise about a half mile from the courthouse.²⁰ Joseph Smith reported, “[God] manifested himself unto me, and designated to me and others, the very spot upon which he designed to commence the work of the gathering, and the upbuilding of an holy city.” He added that this region was to be called Zion “because it is to be a place of righteousness, and all who build thereon, are to worship the true and living God—and all believe in one doctrine even the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”²¹

Church leaders were charged in this same revelation to buy lands with consecrated funds for the inheritance of all the Saints. “It is wisdom that the land should be purchased by the saints, and also every tract lying westward, even unto the line running directly between Jew and Gentile.” That line refers to the state line that divided Missouri from Indian lands.²²

The revelation given at this time also specified individual assignments for church leaders who were also called to set up residence in Independence. Edward Partridge, the bishop, was to divide land inheritances among the Saints gathering to Jackson County. Sidney Gilbert was to establish a store to obtain more money to buy more lands and act as the church’s financial agent. Phelps may have been pleasantly surprised when he was called as “printer unto the church” and to send forth his “writings” to the world “in righteousness.” Oliver Cowdery was called to assist Phelps as printer and to help copy, correct, and select materials for the church’s publications.²³ Interestingly, the respective roles of Cowdery and Phelps were reversed from the earlier June revelation directed to Phelps in

Kirtland wherein he was told to assist Cowdery. Evidently Phelps, at this point in time, had risen high in the esteem of Joseph Smith.

Excitement prevailed in the land of Zion over the next two weeks. The Colesville Branch members, along with Sidney Rigdon, Sidney Gilbert and his wife, and the first few missionaries assigned to come to Missouri, arrived in Jackson County. Joseph Smith assigned the Colesville Saints to live in Kaw Township on the Big Blue River.

On August 1, 1831, Joseph Smith received his second official revelation in Zion (D&C 58). The Saints were instructed that they would be called upon to endure tribulations before receiving the glory of this blessed land. Much labor would be required to “bring to pass much righteousness.” Edward Partridge and Sidney Rigdon received more instruction pertaining to their assignments. Martin Harris, who had already contributed considerable funds for the publishing of the Book of Mormon and for gathering New York members to Ohio, was called on again to contribute his treasure. He was enjoined to “be an example unto the church, in laying his moneys before the bishop of the church” for the purchasing of lands in Independence, particularly for the storehouse to be run by Sidney Gilbert, and for the printing office that would come to be known as W. W. Phelps & Co.²⁴ It turned out that these two business buildings would be located near the courthouse square in Independence. Martin Harris willingly obeyed the revelation and contributed the hefty amount of \$1,200 to the buying of lands and properties in Zion.²⁵

Phelps also received abundant attention in this revelation, although not necessarily the kind he desired. First he was commanded to “stand in [his] office,” or assume his responsibility of printer and publisher. This he was no doubt eager to do. But then he heard, “And also he [Phelps] hath need to repent, for I, the Lord, am not well pleased with him, for he seeketh to excel, and he is not sufficiently meek before me.”²⁶ It can be surmised that Phelps had shown some arrogance or pride about various things—perhaps his learning, his experience with politics and publishing, or his fast rise in influence with Joseph Smith and the Mormons. Soon-to-be-disaffected Mormon Ezra Booth commented later that Phelps “made no little display as an editor of a partizan newspaper” in New York and after his baptism “made the dupes believe he was master of fourteen different languages, of which they frequently boasted.”²⁷

The day following this revelation, on a Tuesday, Joseph Smith assisted the Colesville Branch, consisting of about sixty people, “to lay the first log for a house as a foundation of Zion, in Kaw township.” The log was carried and placed by twelve men in honor of the twelve tribes of Israel.²⁸ Phelps was one of the twelve selected to perform this symbolic act. The others were Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Edward Partridge, Oliver Cowdery, Martin Harris, and Joseph Coe from the Prophet’s group and five—Joseph Knight Sr., Aaron Culver, Hezekiah Peck, Ezekiel Peck, and Freeborn DeMille—from the Colesville Branch.²⁹ Sidney Rigdon subsequently dedicated the land of Zion with all Latter-day Saints in Jackson County present and then on August 3, 1831, dedicated the temple lot as well.³⁰ The area was heavily wooded at the time and some distance from any houses.³¹

DESCRIPTION OF THE LAND OF ZION

Regarding these exciting days, Phelps wrote, "It was a season of joy to those present, and afforded a glimpse of the future, which time will yet unfold to the satisfaction of the faithful."³² The leading brethren in Joseph Smith's party continued to explore potential settlement sites in Jackson County and were pleased with the possibilities. Phelps, who enjoyed performing scientific studies of longitude and latitude, weather conditions, and topography, recorded what they saw. Among many other things, he pointed out that

unlike the timbered states of the east, except upon rivers and water courses, which were verdantly dotted with trees from one to three miles wide,—as far as the eye can glance the beautiful rolling prairies lay spread around like a sea of meadows. . . . The prairies were decorated with a growth of flowers that seemed as gorgeous grand as the brilliance of stars in the heavens, and exceed description. The soil is rich and fertile. . . . It produces in abundance, wheat, corn, and many other common agricultural commodities, together with sweet potatoes and cotton. . . . Buffaloe, elk, deer, bear, wolves, beaver, and many lesser animals, roam at pleasure. Turkeys, geese, swans, ducks; yea a variety of the feathered race, are among the rich abundance that graces the delightful regions of this goodly land of the heritage of the children of God. Nothing is more fruitful or a richer stock holder in the blooming prairies, than the honey bee. . . . The season is mild and delightful nearly three quarters of the year. . . . The winters are milder than in the Atlantic States of the same parallel of latitude; and the weather is more agreeable. . . . The disadvantages here, like all new countries, are self evident: lack of mills and schools, together with the natural privations and inconveniences, which the hand of industry, and the refinement of society with the polish of science, overcome.³³

Phelps was convinced that the Lord would prosper Zion with the precious metals of the earth for "the good of his people." He exulted that the vain things of the world would vanish as Zion is beautified.³⁴ Clearly, in just a matter of two months, Phelps had become one of Joseph Smith's leading promoters of the cause of Zion and the person assigned to publish its holy teachings.

On August 7, a Sunday, Joseph Smith received a revelation (D&C 59) that pronounced a blessing upon those who had sacrificed to come to Zion:

Behold, blessed, saith the Lord, are they who have come up unto this land with an eye single to my glory, according to my commandments.

For those that live shall inherit the earth, and those that die [an obvious reference to Polly Knight, who died that very morning] shall rest from all their labors, and their works shall follow them; and they shall receive a crown in the mansions of my Father, which I have prepared for them.

Yea, blessed are they whose feet stand upon the land of Zion, who have obeyed my gospel; for they shall receive for their reward the good things of the earth, and it shall bring forth in its strength.³⁵

No doubt Phelps relished these promises. A few months later when he settled in Independence and began editing *The Evening and the Morning Star*, he never ceased his excitement for Zion and the promises attached to that holy land.

The revelation also instructed the Saints to keep the Sabbath holy. Clearly the blessings of Zion were contingent in part upon honoring the Sabbath.

And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day;

For verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High. . . .

And on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect, or, in other words, that thy joy may be full. . . .

But learn that he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come.³⁶

Even though he had always observed the Sabbath (and would continue to do so throughout his life), William took this advice to heart. He promoted Sabbath worship during his tenure in Zion. In fact, two of the early hymns he would write for Latter-day Saints were about the Sabbath (“Gently Raise the Sacred Strain”) and the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper (“O God, the Eternal Father”).

RETURNING TO KIRTLAND

Two days after this glorious Sabbath, Joseph Smith and ten companions, including Phelps, departed on their return trip to Kirtland. These brethren would need to retrieve their families and put their circumstances in order before assuming permanent residence in Jackson County. In Phelps’s case, he would need to obtain a printing press and equipment. Bishop Edward Partridge remained in Missouri to purchase and oversee the development of lands for new settlement and to preside over the small church there. His family in Ohio would have to join him later. John Corrill and Isaac Morley, who had been called as counselors to Partridge in the bishopric, also stayed behind to help the bishop. Their families too would have to come later.

Even as many spiritually charged events had transpired in Zion, certain seeds of discord had been sown between two groups: leading Saints like Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon who would live in Ohio and those Saints and leaders like Edward Partridge and W. W. Phelps who were assigned to build up Zion in Missouri. At this very time, August 1831, Partridge had argued with the Prophet about the quality of land selected for purchase, and Rigdon had accused Partridge of insulting Joseph Smith.³⁷ This ongoing discord would play out in curious ways over the next two years.³⁸

Joseph Smith and his team chose to travel by canoe on the Missouri River toward St. Louis in spite of the fact that most of them had no experience with canoes. Those accompanying the Prophet were Samuel H. Smith (Joseph’s younger brother who had been a missionary elder assigned to travel to Zion), Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon,

W. W. Phelps, Frederick G. Williams, Reynolds Cahoon (a missionary elder), Sidney Gilbert, Joseph Coe, Ezra Booth (a missionary elder), and Peter Whitmer Jr. (one of the original four missionaries to the Lamanites). They stopped the first night at Fort Osage, twenty miles east of Independence and still in Jackson County. The fort was on a high bluff overlooking the river. Phelps noted with pleasure that they had excellent wild turkey for supper.³⁹ Fort Osage had been envisioned by the explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark on their famous 1804 expedition. Four years later, Clark, the Indian agent for Louisiana Territory, created the fort to defend the territory against hostile Indians and to eventually build friendly relations with them. Later the fort became a peaceful trading post and was in private hands when Joseph Smith and his brethren passed through the area in 1831.⁴⁰

On their third day out the brethren encountered “many of the dangers, so common upon the western waters.”⁴¹ This referred to rapids on the Missouri as well as dangerous impediments floating or stuck in the river. In the vernacular of the time, the bobbing limbs and branches of trees that had been uprooted in spring runoffs were known as “sawyers.”⁴² None of the brethren really knew how to navigate watercraft. Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon nearly drowned after running into a tree lodged and bobbing in the river.⁴³ While they were drying out at their camp on the riverbank at a spot known as “McIlwaine’s Bend,” as reported by Phelps in Joseph Smith’s history, “Brother Phelps, in an open vision, by daylight, saw the Destroyer, in his most horrible power, ride upon the face of the waters. Others heard the noise, but saw not the vision.”⁴⁴

The next morning after prayer, Joseph Smith recorded a revelation (D&C 61). From this revelation and other sources, we can ascertain that the brethren had quarreled during the three days they had been on the water. They had disputed over their safety in their flimsy canoes, whether they should be preaching the gospel en route, and who was guiltiest of making mistakes on their journey. Evidently, after a night of discussion and humbling themselves, Joseph Smith and his colleagues were rewarded with this spiritual manifestation.⁴⁵

Portions of the revelation pertained directly to Phelps. He and Sidney Gilbert were charged to “hasten,” that is, continue quickly by canoe, while the others were told to travel overland to St. Louis to avoid Satan’s potential influence on the Missouri River. Phelps and Gilbert were explicitly promised they would be protected in their journey by water so they could “fill their mission.”⁴⁶

What Phelps and Gilbert’s exact “mission” was is not entirely clear from the record. Perhaps it pertained to their previous respective assignments to be the printer and shop-keeper in Independence. Probably Phelps and Gilbert spent several days in both St. Louis and Cincinnati, the two most important commercial centers in the West, to locate a printing press and mercantile goods in behalf of the church. As it would turn out, Cincinnati is where Phelps obtained the press.

Phelps arrived back in Kirtland sometime during the last week in August. This coincided with the return of Joseph Smith and the others, who had traveled much of the way by stagecoach.⁴⁷

As Phelps's beloved Sally and children flocked around him for a report, he informed them of marvelous revelations that the Prophet had received in Missouri and the prospects for Zion. They no doubt rejoiced together to know that William was soon to embark in his calling as "printer unto the church" in the land of Zion. They would all have the chance to build the New Jerusalem.

NOTES

1. D&C 55:5; *JSP*, MRB:154–55; *JSP*, D1:339.
2. D&C 45:66; *JSP*, MRB:122–25; *JSP*, D1:280.
3. D&C 28:9; 45:67–71; *JSP*, MRB:52–53, 122–25; *JSP*, D1:185–86, 280.
4. 3 Nephi 20:22; Ether 13:2–3.
5. D&C 28:8–9; 30:5; 32:1–3; *JSP*, MRB:52–55; *JSP*, D1:185–86, 189, 202.
6. The missionary work of Oliver Cowdery's team with both Indians and white settlers is discussed in *JSP*, D1:197–98, 200–208.
7. W. W. Phelps, "Extract of a Letter from the Late Editor of This Paper," *Ontario Phoenix*, September 7, 1831. The letter was dated July 23, 1831, a Saturday. This extract was entirely reprinted in Richard Lloyd Anderson, "Jackson County in Early Mormon Descriptions," *Missouri Historical Review* 65 (April 1971): 274–76, and in Lyndon W. Cook and Donald Q. Cannon, eds., *A New Light Breaks Forth* (Salt Lake City: Hawkes, 1980), 159–62.
8. Phelps, "Extract of a Letter."
9. Phelps, "Extract of a Letter." See also Stanley B. Kimball, *Historic Sites and Markers along the Mormon and Other Great Western Trails* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 249–63.
10. The Manuscript History of the Church, located in the CHL, provides the basis for the official history of the church. The exact source for this specific quotation is MHC, vol. A-1, 126–27. *PJS*, 1:357 contains the original manuscript spelling of this portion of Joseph Smith's official history. *HC*, 1:188 contains the edited version. Dean C. Jessee researched the various authors of the *History of the Church* and has concluded that W. W. Phelps wrote the material in MHC and *HC* covering the period from October 31, 1830, to November 1, 1831, in 1841 and 1842. See Dean C. Jessee, "The Writing of Joseph Smith's History," *BYU Studies* 11 (Summer 1971): 441, 446, 466. Hence, Phelps is the author of these words and other interesting descriptions in MHC and *HC* of the Prophet's first visit to Jackson County. This can also be deduced when comparing the language in MHC, *PJS*, and *HC* for this period with Phelps's letter written to the *Ontario Phoenix*.
11. "To the Elders of the Church of Latter Day Saints," *M&A* 1 (September 1835): 179.
12. Walter B. Stevens, *Centennial History of Missouri* (St. Louis: S. J. Clarke, 1921), 99.
13. MHC, vol. A-1, 127; *PJS*, 1:357; *HC*, 1:189.
14. Alexander Baugh, historian of the Mormon movement in Missouri, demonstrates in "Laying the Foundation of Zion: Joseph Smith's 1831 Mission to Western Missouri" that this meeting took place at the home of Robert Patterson near the state line inside Missouri rather than in Indian Territory, as commonly reported in most histories. Baugh's paper was presented at the Mormon History Association conference in St. Charles, Missouri, June 2017.
15. "Jackson County," MS D 6019, folder 7, CHL (hereafter "Phelps in Jackson County"). In 1864 church historian George A. Smith asked Phelps to record his experiences in Jackson County. This document in Phelps's handwriting is the result. See also MHC, vol. A-1, 129; *PJS*, 1:357–58; *HC*, 1:190–91; *JSP*, D2:11n45.

16. W. W. Phelps to Brigham Young (both in Salt Lake City, Utah), August 12, 1861, CHL; *JSP*, D2:11n45. The phrase “white and delightsome” in 2 Nephi 30:6 was changed, probably by Joseph Smith, to “pure and delightsome” for the 1840 edition of the Book of Mormon. See Royal Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon, Part Two: 2 Nephi 11–Mosiah 16* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2005), 895–99.
17. Phelps, “Extract of a Letter.”
18. MHC, vol. A-1, 127; *PJS*, 1:357; *HC*, 1:189.
19. MHC, vol. A-1, 127; *PJS*, 1:357; *HC*, 1:189; *JSP*, D2:6–7.
20. D&C 57:1–3; *JSP*, MRB:158–59. *JSP*, D2:5–12 provides an original document and historical background and significance for this revelation.
21. “To the Elders of the Church of Latter Day Saints,” 179.
22. D&C 57:4–5; *JSP*, MRB:158–59; *JSP*, D2:8.
23. D&C 57:6–15; *JSP*, MRB:160–61; *JSP*, D2:11–12.
24. D&C 58:1–4, 14–18, 27–29, 35–37, 50, 61–62; *JSP*, MRB:160–69; *JSP*, D2:12–21. Verse 28 is the verse about bringing to pass righteousness, and verse 35 contains the quotation about Martin Harris.
25. Orson Pratt remembered, “Martin Harris was the first man that the Lord called by name to consecrate his money and lay the same at the feet of the bishop in Jackson County, Missouri, according to the order of consecration. He willingly did it.” See *JD*, 18:160. Ronald E. Romig discusses Martin Harris’s monetary contribution in “Martin Harris’ Visit to Jackson County,” *Missouri Mormon Frontier Foundation* 2 (Winter 1994): 3. He documents the figure of \$1,200. See also *JSP*, D2:17n81.
26. D&C 58:40–41; *JSP*, MRB:164–65; *JSP*, D2:17.
27. Booth’s account is found in Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled* (Painesville, OH: printed by the author, 1834), 274.
28. MHC, vol. A-1, 137; *PJS*, 1:358; *HC*, 1:196. Oliver Cowdery’s account of the event is found in “The Book of John Whitmer,” in *JSP*, H2:45.
29. William G. Hartley, “*They Are My Friends*”: A History of the Joseph Knight Family, 1825–1850 (Provo, UT: Grandin Book, 1986), 79; “Extract of a Letter from W. W. Phelps,” *T&S* 1 (October 1840): 190.
30. “Book of John Whitmer,” 44–45. See also MHC, vol. A-1, 137; *PJS*, 1:358; *HC*, 1:196, 214; D&C 58:57.
31. Pearl Wilcox gathered the contemporary descriptions in *The Latter Day Saints on the Missouri Frontier* (Independence, MO: n.p., 1972), 41–42.
32. MHC, vol. A-1, 137; *PJS*, 1:358; *HC*, 1:196.
33. MHC, vol. A-1, 137–39; *PJS*, 1:359–60; *HC*, 1:197–98. Phelps used his own contemporary account from the *Ontario Phoenix* to compose the MHC account in 1842.
34. MHC, vol. A-1, 139; *PJS*, 1:360; *HC*, 1:198.
35. D&C 59:1–3; *JSP*, MRB:168–69. *JSP*, D2:30–35 contains an early document of this revelation in Oliver Cowdery’s handwriting along with its historical background and significance.
36. D&C 59:9–10, 13, 23; *JSP*, MRB:170–71.
37. *JSP*, D2:13.
38. Historian Matthew C. Godfrey discusses the growing rift that often became strident in “‘Seeking after Monarchal Power and Authority’: Joseph Smith and Leadership in the Church of Christ, 1831–1832,” *Mormon Historical Studies* 13 (Spring/Fall 2012): 15–37 (hereafter “Joseph Smith and Leadership in the Church of Christ, 1831–1832”).
39. MHC, vol. A-1, 142; *PJS*, 1:361, 361n5; *HC*, 1:202.

40. Howard R. Lamar, ed., *The Reader's Encyclopedia of the American West* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 222, 390–91.
41. MHC, vol. A-1, 142; *PJS*, 1:361; *HC*, 1:202. Elizabeth Marsh, wife of Thomas Marsh, once wrote in a letter that the Missouri River “is always rily and bubbly and looks mad as if it had been cursed.” Cited in *JSP*, D2:39.
42. A website entitled “Discovering Lewis and Clark” has an article entitled “Manholes on the Mo.” It discusses at length the definition of sawyers and their negative impact on river travelers as well as a firsthand account from the Lewis and Clark journey that referred to sawyers. See <http://www.lewis-clark.org/article/1405>. I am indebted to Orion Trunk for leading me to the subject of sawyers and this reference.
43. Ezra Booth, after later angrily parting from Joseph Smith and Mormonism, recounted this event in Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 204–6. Originally Booth wrote this account in a November 21, 1831, letter to the *Ohio Star*, a newspaper in Ravenna, Ohio. See also Lyndon W. Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Provo, UT: Seventy's Mission Bookstore, 1981), 96, 143.
44. MHC, vol. A-1, 142; *PJS*, 1:362; *HC*, 1:202. The “Destroyer” could refer either to Satan or simply to death.
45. See D&C 61:2–5, 20; *JSP*, MRB:175–79; *JSP*, D2:38–44; and Booth's account in Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 204–6.
46. D&C 61:7–10, 21–23; *JSP*, MRB:176–79; *JSP*, D2:40; “Phelps in Jackson County.”
47. MHC, vol. A-1, 146; *HC*, 1:206.