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Prophecy or Commandment given Decem. 25. 1832

Verily thus saith the Lord concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass beginning at the rebellion of south Carolina which will eventually terminate in the death & misery of many souls & the days will ^{come} that war will be poured out upon all nations beginning at this place for behold the southern states shall be divided against the northern states and the southern states will call on other nations ~~beginning at this place for behold the death~~ ~~of the states~~ even the nations of great Britain as it is called & they shall also call upon other nations in order to defend themselves against other nations & then war shall be poured out upon all nations & it shall come to pass after many days slaves shall rise up against their masters who shall be mortaled & disciplined for war & it shall come to pass after many days also that the remnant who are left of the land will mortal themselves & shall become exceedingly angry & shall vex the gentiles with a sore vexation & then with the sword & by bloodshed the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn and with famine & pestilence plague & earthquakes & the thunder of heaven & the fierce & vivid lightning also shall the inhabitants of the earth be made to feel the wrath & indignation & chastening hand of an Almighty God, until the consumption decreed hath made a full end of all nations that ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~day~~ of the saints of the bloodshed of the saints shall cease to come into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth from the earth to be avenged of their enemies; wherefore stand ye in holy places & be not moved until the day of the Lord come for Behold it cometh quickly saith the Lord Amen.



CHAPTER 3

Scott C. Esplin

“HAVE WE NOT HAD A PROPHET AMONG US?”

JOSEPH SMITH’S CIVIL WAR PROPHECY

A month following the artillery rounds fired at Fort Sumter, South Carolina, signaling the start to the Civil War, the *Philadelphia Sunday Mercury* remarked, “We have in our possession a pamphlet, published at Liverpool, in 1851, containing a selection from the ‘revelations, translations and narrations’ of Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism.” Citing what is now Doctrine and Covenants 87, the paper continued, “The following prophecy is here said to have been made by Smith, on the 25th of December, 1832. In view of our present troubles, this prediction seems to be in progress of fulfilment, whether Joe Smith was a humbug or not.” Though early in the war’s advancement, the paper nevertheless speculated about the prophecy, concluding: “The war began in South Carolina. Insurrections of slaves are already dreaded. Famine will certainly afflict some Southern communities. The interference of Great Britain, on account of the want of cotton, is not improbable, if the war is protracted. In the meantime, a general war in

Europe appears to be imminent. *Have we not had a prophet among us?*”¹

Using Doctrine and Covenants 87 as proof of Joseph Smith’s prophetic nature, however, is only part of the section’s history. The prophecy’s use has changed over time, reflecting prophetic reinterpretation, geopolitical developments, and shifts in Church relations with the world. The receipt, recording, and publishing of section 87 reveals much about the Church, including how it uses Joseph Smith’s prophecies, how that use changes over time, and how it interacts with society. At the same time, society’s reporting of section 87 reflects reaction to the message of Mormonism and its central tenet, modern revelation.

RECEIVING, RECORDING, AND PUBLISHING THE REVELATION

Most analysis of Doctrine and Covenants 87 focuses on the historical context that led to its receipt.² Like so many other revelations of the Prophet, the section, received on

December 25, 1832, is rooted in the history of his day. Unfortunately, Joseph Smith's only surviving journal from the period reveals nothing of the event. Its daily entries, which began on November 28, 1832, inexplicably end after little more than a week, only to resume again ten months later on October 4, 1833.³ However, working on the *History of the Church* a decade later in Nauvoo, Willard Richards penned, on behalf of the Prophet, an introduction to the section:

Appearances of troubles among the nations became more visible this season than they had previously been since the Church began her journey out of the wilderness. The ravages of the cholera were frightful in almost all the large cities on the globe. The plague broke out in India, while the United States, amid all her pomp and greatness, was threatened with immediate dissolution. The people of South Carolina, in convention assembled (in November), passed ordinances, declaring their state a free and independent nation; and appointed Thursday, the 31st day of January, 1833, as a day of humiliation and prayer, to implore Almighty God to vouchsafe His blessings, and restore liberty and happiness within their borders. President Jackson issued his proclamation against this rebellion, called out a force sufficient to quell it, and implored the blessings of God to assist the nation to extricate itself from the horrors of the approaching and solemn crisis.

Prefacing the text of the revelation itself, Richards concluded on behalf of the Prophet, "On Christmas day [1832], I received the following revelation and prophecy on war."⁴

While world events, including cholera and plague, clearly contribute to the context, the revelation is most connected to the Nullification Crisis of 1832–33. Latter-day Saint historian Donald Q. Cannon summarized the conflict as follows:

This crisis grew out of the tensions existing between various geographic sections of the pre-Civil War United States. Specifically, the South felt itself threatened by the North. The state of South Carolina was the center of the unrest generated by this controversy. Southerners, and particularly South Carolinians, felt oppressed and disadvantaged by the high protective tariff of 1828, the so-called "Tariff of Abominations." This tariff imposed heavy duties on foreign manufactured goods, which favored the industrial North, while at the same time it worked against the interest of the agrarian South. In addition to the economic problems, the South was becoming increasingly wary of the nascent antislavery movement in the North. In order to protect itself from these threats, South Carolina passed an Ordinance of Nullification.⁵

That ordinance, founded on a philosophy of states' rights, argued that because the states had created the federal government, an individual state could declare a federal law unconstitutional, something the state of South Carolina did on November 24, 1832, to the Tariff Act of 1828, together with its companion, the Tariff Act of 1832. Prohibiting the collecting of duties in the state after February 1, 1833, the stage was set for conflict. Clearly influenced by this issue, Joseph Smith received the revelation.

Though compromise was achieved and conflict averted in February 1833, the word of the Lord reached beyond the Nullification Crisis that precipitated it. An early reference to the revelation came little more than two weeks after its receipt when the Prophet referred to it in a January 4, 1833, letter to N. E. Seaton, editor of a Rochester, New York, newspaper. “I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ,” the Prophet declared, “that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of *bloodshed* as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land.”⁶

Beyond referring to the warnings contained in the revelation, the recording of the text itself is unique. The revelation appears multiple times in what is known today as “Revelation Book 1” (also known as the “Book of Commandments and Revelations”), a collection containing revelations received between 1828 and 1834, and once in “Revelation Book 2” (formerly known as the “Book of Revelations” or the “Kirtland Revelation Book”), a volume containing revelatory text generally received by the Prophet between 1832 and 1834.⁷ However, recording text in a scriptory book and disseminating it are two different matters. Importantly, the revelation, as recorded in Revelation Book 2, lacks the crosshatched symbol found at the beginning of the section that preceded it (D&C 86),



Joseph Smith received his “revelation and prophecy on war” on December 25, 1832. (Community of Christ Library-Archives)

together with the phrase “to go into th[e] covenants,” an indication that D&C 86 was approved for publication in the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants while section 87 was not. In fact, though recorded in multiple places, the revelation remained unpublished for nearly two decades and noncanonized for nearly forty-eight years.

While it was unpublished, the full text of section 87 was not unknown. In addition to his 1833 letter, the Prophet also publicly confirmed the revelation more than ten years later in a meeting in Ramus, Illinois, on April 2, 1843 (see D&C 130:12–13).

Furthermore, he allowed the entire revelation to be copied by multiple individuals. A year into the Civil War, Wilford Woodruff affirmed, “I copied a revelation more than twenty-five years ago, in which it is stated that war should be in the south and in the north, and that nation after nation would become embroiled in the tumult and excitement, until war should be poured out upon the whole earth, and that this war would commence at the rebellion of South Carolina, and that times should be such that every man who did not flee to Zion would have to take up the sword against his neighbor or against his brother.”⁸ A decade later, Woodruff added, “I wrote this revelation twenty-five years before the rebellion took place; others also wrote it.”⁹

In addition to Woodruff’s personal copy, historian Robert Woodford identified eight other manuscript copies of the prophecy on war, including reproductions in the

handwriting of William W. Phelps, Thomas Bullock, Willard Richards, and Edward Partridge.¹⁰ The most prominent individual regularly using a prepublication copy of this revelation was Orson Pratt, who later recalled, “When I was a boy, I traveled extensively in the United States and the Canadas, preaching this restored Gospel. I had a manuscript copy of this revelation, which I carried in my pocket, and I was in the habit of reading it to the people among whom I traveled and preached.” Continuing, Pratt detailed the response he received to this message: “As a general thing the people regarded it as the height of nonsense, saying the Union was too strong to be broken; and I, they said, was led away, the victim of an impostor. I knew the prophecy was true, for the Lord had spoken to me and had given me revelation. I knew also concerning the divinity of this work. Year after year passed away, while every little while some of the acquaintances I had formerly made would say, ‘Well, what is going to become of that prediction? It’s never going to be fulfilled.’ Said I, ‘Wait, the Lord has his set time.’” Concluding his experience, Pratt summarized, “By and by it came along, and the first battle was fought at Charleston, South Carolina. This is another testimony that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of the Most High God; he not only foretold the coming of a great civil war at a time when statesman even never dreamed of such a thing, but he named the very place where it should commence.”¹¹

In spite of its prominence, the revelation itself was never formally published in Joseph Smith’s lifetime. As noted, the Prophet and the rest of the scripture committee did not mark it for publication in the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, nor was it included in the 1844 Nauvoo edition. In

1860, Brigham Young explained, “That revelation was reserved at the time the compilation for that book was made by Oliver Cowdery and others, in Kirtland. It was not wisdom to publish it to the world, and it remained in the private *escritoire*.”¹² Nine years later, Orson Pratt further explained the omission of this section from early editions of the Doctrine and Covenants: “Why did not the revelations in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants come to us in print years before they did? Why were they shut up in Joseph’s cupboard years and years without being suffered to be printed and sent broadcast throughout the land? Because the Lord had His own time again to accomplish His purposes, and He suffered the revelations to be printed just when He saw proper. He did not suffer the revelation on the great American war to be published until some time after it was given.”¹³

Joseph’s revelation was originally excluded not only from published scripture but also from other public records. For example, though the manuscript version of the history of Joseph Smith, authored in Nauvoo in the 1840s, includes both the entire text of the revelation and the background that led up to it, the published accounts of the same history that appeared in Nauvoo’s *Times and Seasons* and later in Britain in the *Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star* both printed the background of the section but omitted the revelation itself.¹⁴

While missionaries relied on manuscript copies of the text for decades, Church leaders finally moved to formally publish the revelation prior to its fulfillment, a development later stressed by Wilford Woodruff: “It was published to the world before there was any prospect of the fearful events it predicted coming to pass.”¹⁵ Ironically, the first publication of the revelation occurred

outside the continent where the Civil War began. In 1850, Church membership worldwide numbered more than fifty-seven thousand, nearly thirty-one thousand of whom lived in Great Britain.¹⁶ Orson Pratt, the individual who seemingly used the prophecy on war most emphatically, presided over the British Mission from August 1848 to February 1851. The day Pratt left for America, his successor, fellow Apostle Franklin D. Richards, wrote his plan “of issuing a collection of revelations, prophecies &c., in a tract form of a character not designed to pioneer our doctrines to the world, so much as for the use of the Elders and Saints to arm and better qualify them for their service in our great war.” Included in the proposed publication later named the Pearl of Great Price was “the destiny of the American Union . . . Joseph’s prophecy of the Union,” a copy of which Richards indicated he received from Orson Pratt while in Liverpool.¹⁷ The Pearl of Great Price, containing the first published account of the prophecy on war, rolled off the Church’s Liverpool presses on July 11, 1851. Noting that “a smaller portion of this work has never before appeared in print,” the book’s preface stressed that the contents, including what it called “A Revelation and Prophecy by the Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, Joseph Smith. Given December 25th, 1832,” were



Apostle and prominent missionary Orson Pratt was instrumental in disseminating the revelation. In addition to frequently citing it, Pratt gave a copy to Franklin D. Richards for publication in the Pearl of Great Price, published it himself in his newspaper, the Seer, in 1854, arranged for it to appear in the New York Times in 1861, and served as editor when it was first included in the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. (Wikimedia Commons)

designed primarily for members. “Although not adapted, not designed, as a pioneer of the faith among unbelievers,” editors acknowledged, “still it will commend itself to all careful students of the scriptures, as detailing many important facts which are therein only alluded to.”¹⁸

As British converts and returning missionaries immigrated to America, the Pearl of Great Price, together with its published account of the prophecy on war, became more familiar to the American Church membership. Ultimately, Orson Pratt again affected the history of the revelation when, as editor of the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, he added it to that text for the first time. Two years later, he edited the first American edition of the Pearl of Great Price, keeping the revelation on war in both texts.¹⁹ In the Church’s general conference on October 10, 1880, revised editions of both the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price, each containing this revelation, were formally canonized. President George Q. Cannon, who as a youth anticipated the section’s fulfillment, declared at the time: “I hold in my hand the Book of Doctrine and Covenants and also the book The Pearl of Great Price, which books contain revelations of God. In Kirtland, the Doctrine and Covenants in its original form, as first printed, was submitted to the officers of the Church and the members of the Church

to vote upon. As there have been additions made to it by the publishing of revelations which were not contained in the original edition, it has been deemed wise to submit these books with their contents to the Conference, to see whether the Conference will vote to accept the books and their contents as from God, and binding upon us as a people and as a Church.”²⁰ With that action, Joseph Smith’s prophecy on war became scripture.

CONFIRMATION AND CONDEMNATION—THE PROPHECY DURING THE CIVIL WAR

While the prophecy on war was working its way to publication and ultimately canonization from 1851 through 1880, the section experienced its most emphatic use as the conflict it prophesied erupted in South Carolina in 1861. The use of Joseph Smith’s prophecy prior to as well as during the Civil War reflects the Church’s feelings about the conflict, its relationship toward the government of the United States, its millennial fervor, and, most importantly, its feelings for the prophetic ministry of Joseph Smith.

References to this revelation increased as war clouds loomed on the national horizon in 1860. Referring to the role South Carolina played in leading the insurrection, Orson Hyde noted in October 1860:

On the 25th day of December, 1832, the Lord spoke to Joseph Smith, and said—“Verily, thus saith the Lord, concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass, beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina, which will eventually terminate in the death and misery of many souls. The days will come that war will be poured out upon

all nations, beginning at that place.” The Democratic party found it necessary to call a convention of delegates to nominate a successor to President Buchanan. No place but Charleston, South Carolina, could be agreed upon as the place for that body to assemble in. A most unlikely place, indeed!—entirely out of the political centre—a small town of about twenty or twenty-five thousand white inhabitants, accommodations very limited for such a body of men, and at a half-dozen prices. But to South Carolina they must go; for the prophecy, twenty-seven years before, said that the serious troubles of the land should begin at that place. The Democratic party of administration fell upon that stone of present revelation, and, according to our Saviour’s words, they must be broken. They had to go to Charleston to break. They did go there, and there they did break into several pieces—split asunder.²¹

For others, like Orson Pratt, the role South Carolina would play in secession seemed to be key. A decade after the war began, Pratt recalled, “When they were talking about a war commencing down here in Kansas, I told them that was not the place; I also told them that the revelation had designated South Carolina, ‘and,’ said I, ‘you have no need to think that the Kansas war is going to be the war that is to be so terribly destructive in its character and nature. No, it must commence at the place the Lord has designated by revelation.’” Pratt told their response: “What did they have to say to me? They thought it was a Mormon humbug, and laughed me to scorn, and they looked upon that revelation as they do upon

all others that God has given in these latter days—as without divine authority. But behold and lo! in process of time it came to pass, again establishing the divinity of this work, and giving another proof that God is in this work.”²²

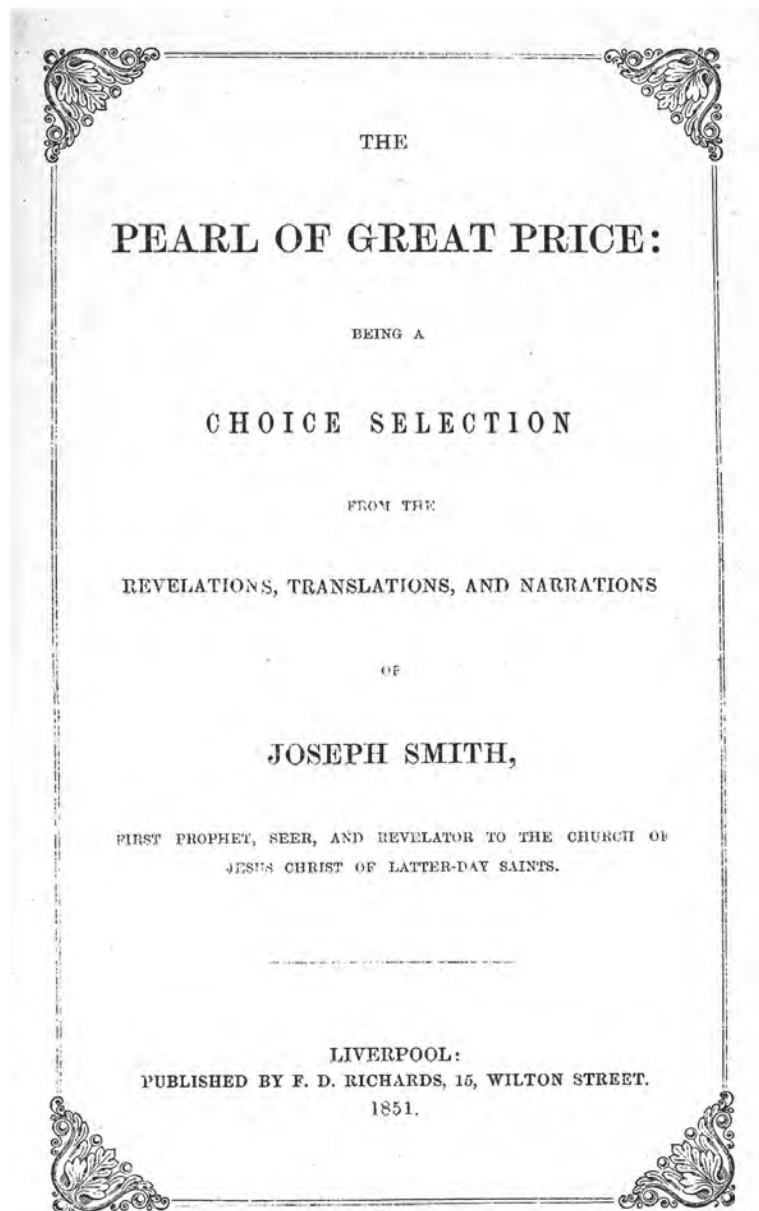
Still others continued to use the prophecy in missionary opportunities, seeking to warn eastern inhabitants while proving that Joseph Smith was a prophet. George Q. Cannon recalled his experience just months before the outbreak of the war:

In 1860, Brothers Orson Pratt, Erastus Snow, myself, and others, were going on missions, and we arrived at Omaha in the month of November of that year. A deputation of the leading citizens of that city came to our camp and tendered to us the use of the Court House, as they wished to hear our principles. The invitation was accepted, and Elder Pratt preached to them. During the service, there was read the revelation to which I have referred—the revelation concerning the division between the South and the North. The reason probably, for reading it was that when we reached Omaha, the news came that trouble was alreading [*sic*] brewing, and several States were threatening to secede from the Union. Its reading made considerable impression upon the people. A good many had never heard of it before, and quite a number were struck with the remarkable character of the prophecy. It might have been expected, naturally speaking and looking at it as men naturally do, that the reading of such a revelation, at such a time, when the crisis was approaching, would have had the

effect to direct men’s attention to it, and they would be led to investigate its truth and the doctrines of the Church and the foundation we had for our belief. But if there were any converted in that audience I am not aware of it. Good seed was sown, but we did not remain to see what effect it produced. The revelation being so remarkable, and the events then transpiring being so corroborative of its truth, one might naturally think, as there were present on that occasion the leading and thinking portion of that community, that a great number would have been impressed with the probability of its truth, and would have investigated and joined the Church.²³

Missionary use of the revelation may have been the motivation for Orson Pratt’s arranging to have it published in the *New York Times*. During the war’s infancy, the newspaper reproduced the prophecy in its entirety on June 2, 1861, with a brief introductory commentary: “Elder Orson Pratt desires us to publish the following extract.”²⁴

Though the Church certainly emphasized the prophecy the most, not all Civil War era references came from Latter-day Saint sources. As the war approached, an increase in its use from Latter-day Saint pulpits led observers to report the prediction. In 1858, San Francisco’s *Daily Evening Bulletin* published an account from its “Special Correspondent” in Utah, detailing talk of a “prophecy, the fulfillment of which [is] near at hand, . . . in which Joseph declared that the time should come when this nation should divide—when the South should rise up against the North, and the North against the South.” Calling



Joseph Smith's revelation on war was first published in 1851 in the Pearl of Great Price by the Church's Liverpool, England, press. (L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University)

the address “disjointed and incoherent,” the reporter downplayed the prediction as “full of holes as is a broken net.”²⁵ In a similarly negative tone, a correspondent reported in the *New York Times* Orson Pratt’s 1860 use of the prophecy. “At this fearful picture” painted by

Pratt, the reporter cynically noted, “I saw upon every countenance a deep settled smile of malignity and savage delight, as the traitorous fiends glutted their imaginations upon the blood of my countrymen.”²⁶ As war approached, the *New York Herald* recorded another of Pratt’s talks involving the prophecy, causing the reporter to go “hunting for it for two days” and calling his interpretation of South Carolina’s pending actions “a very facetous turn and interpretation.”²⁷ Apparently those with faith in Joseph Smith’s ministry saw one thing in the prophecy, while those who doubted his calling found something very different.

For the Saints, the escalation of conflict between North and South was vindication of Joseph Smith’s words. “The revelation upon this subject had been written; it had been published. It was well known to the great bulk of the Latter-day Saints years previous to this,” George Q. Cannon

later recalled. “I, when quite a child heard it, and looked for its fulfillment until it came to pass. And this was the case with the body of the people who were familiar with the predictions which had been uttered by the Prophet Joseph Smith.”²⁸ Later, he further

speculated, “I suppose there is not a boy who has been brought up in this community who did not know of the revelation years before it was published, and, still longer, before it was fulfilled.”²⁹

Latter-day Saint newspapers may have contributed most to Cannon’s conjecture that all were familiar with the prophecy. Orson Pratt’s short-lived Washington, DC, periodical, the *Seer*, produced the first newspaper account of the text in April 1854. Under the heading, “War,” Pratt cited the Pearl of Great Price account of the revelation, adding personal and scriptural commentary regarding its fulfillment.³⁰ In addition, Great Britain’s *Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star* influenced interpretation of Joseph Smith’s prophecy as the United States raced to war. The paper made repeated reference to the revelation as war clouds gathered. In January 1860, the British periodical published the text, noting, “We have not quoted this revelation with the view to attempt to do justice to its many points and wonderful predictions; for, though but short in its wording, it is so full of matter, that a series of articles would not be too much to bring out its points and predictions, glancing at events since it was given in 1832, and looking into the dark future directly before us. The time is coming, and seems near at hand, when not only this revelation, but many others of Joseph’s revelations and prophecies must be brought before the world, and their truth forced upon nations by the course of events and the fulfillment of those prophecies.”³¹

Indeed, the tenor of Civil War references to Joseph Smith’s prophecy highlights the conflict as a condemnation upon the nation for having rejected the Lord. An ocean away from the fray, the most pointed attacks

came from the British Church press. “That nation was once under ‘the special protection of Divine Providence,’ and God sent to them a ‘special’ message and a ‘special’ day of opportunities by one of the greatest of Prophets,” the *Millennial Star* opined in 1860. “But they rejected him, and the special message, and their special day of opportunities; and the cry of Saints, with their wrongs and their repeated drivings, and the cries of the blood of Saints and the blood of Prophets and Apostles, and finally, the injustice of the intended exterminating Utah Expedition, and the pleadings of the last exodus of the Church have gone up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. . . . Because of their many ‘demerits’ and special sins, they have lost ‘the special protection of Divine Providence.’ The dark day of the United States has indeed come.”³² As Southern states formally seceded throughout the winter of 1860–61, the paper reprinted the entire prophecy once more, laying the blame again at the feet of a nation who had rejected God’s word. Noting that “slavery on the one side and fanatical hostility on the other were some of the means” which led to war, the paper concluded: “But it was not the operation of these evils alone that brought so speedily the fulfillment of this prophecy. . . . It was crime the most gross and terrible in its consequences of any that man can commit. It was the shedding of the blood of innocence—it was the murdering of Prophets and Apostles and Saints. Whenever a man or nation was guilty of this crime in ancient times, the retributive justice of the Almighty speedily followed them, and their downfall was sure.” Emphasizing its distance from the conflict, the paper concluded, “Who can behold what is now taking place in that land

and not feel that the Lord's hand is in the events that have transpired? What power but His could so signally have brought to pass his word spoken by his Prophets?"³³

Still smarting from the 1858 invasion by federal troops, Church leaders in Salt Lake likewise connected the Prophet's revelation to national condemnation. "The 'harmonious democracy' that undertook to destroy this people," Brigham Young blasted on the eve of war in October 1860,

broke in pieces in the State where the Lord, twenty-eight years ago, on the 25th of next December, revealed to the Prophet Joseph that the nation would begin to break. But I do not wish to make a political speech, nor to have anything to do with the politics and parties in our Government. They love sin, and roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongues. Had they the power, they would dethrone Jehovah; had they the power, they would to-day crucify every Saint there is upon the earth; they would not leave upon the earth one alive in whose veins runs the blood of the Priesthood. . . . They are broken in pieces. Do I wish to predict this? No, for it was predicted long ago.³⁴

Interpreting the nation's woes as condemnation for persecuting the Saints was so pervasive that even non-Mormon sources repeated the accusation. Mormons believe "the United States Government is being chastened for its sin of persecuting the Latter Day Saints," a Colorado newspaper reported in 1862. "The nation, totally regardless of law and order, ran wild, and the natural result of such a state of things, was the Southern rebellion," it continued. "The only means of cure," the newspaper

claimed, "is for the nation to go right back to where it commenced—to repair the wrongs from the beginning—that is, to reinstate the Mormons in their possessions in Missouri."³⁵

As the conflict continued, however, leaders eventually downplayed this rhetoric, emphasizing the revelation as a sign of Joseph Smith's prophetic mission while trying to maintain loyalty to the Union. In 1864, Brigham Young stressed the Prophet's prophecy as well as the consequences of sin:

The war now raging in our nation is in the providence of God, and was told us years and years ago by the Prophet Joseph; and what we are now coming to was foreseen by him, and no power can hinder. Can the inhabitants of our once beautiful, delightful and happy country avert the horrors and evils that are now upon them? Only by turning from their wickedness, and calling upon the Lord. If they will turn unto the Lord and seek after Him, they will avert this terrible calamity, otherwise it cannot be averted. There is no power on the earth, nor under it, but the power of God, that can avert the evils that are now upon and are coming upon the nation.

However, Young also expressed concern for the suffering:

It is distressing to see the condition our nation is in, but I cannot help it. Who can? The people *en masse*, by turning to God, and ceasing to do wickedly, ceasing to persecute the honest and the truth-lover. If they had done that thirty years ago, it would have been better for them to-day. When we appealed

to the government of our nation for justice, the answer was:—“Your cause is just, but we have no power.” Did not Joseph Smith tell them in Washington and Philadelphia, that the time would come when their State rights would be trampled upon?

Joseph said, many and many a time, to us,—“Never be anxious for the Lord to pour out his judgments upon the nation; many of you will see the distress and evils poured out upon this nation till you will weep like children.” Many of us have felt to do so already, and it seems to be coming upon us more and more; it seems as though the fangs of destruction were piercing the very vitals of the nation.³⁶

As the war neared its end in 1865, Church leaders emphasized that talk of the prophecy did not demonstrate disloyalty to the union. “We frequently hear, ‘You are not loyal,’” John Taylor observed. “Who is it that talks of loyalty?” he countered. “Those who are stabbing the country to its very vitals. Are they the men that are loyal? . . . We will stand by that constitution and uphold the flag of our country when everybody else forsakes it. We cannot shut our eyes to things conspiring around us. . . . But did not Joseph Smith prophecy [sic] that there would be a rebellion in the United States? He did, and so have I scores and hundreds of times; and what of that? Could I help that?” Taylor concluded. “Could Joseph Smith help knowing that a rebellion would take place in the United States? Could he help knowing it would commence in South Carolina? You could not blame him for that.”³⁷

Joseph Smith’s revelation on war was also presented as proof of the Prophet’s divine calling. “These things ought to be a warning to us. We comfort our souls sometimes on the fulfillment of the prophecies of God,” John Taylor noted in October 1863. “We say ‘Mormonism’ must be true because Joseph Smith prophesied thus and so concerning a division of this nation, and that the calamities which are now causing it to mourn should commence in South Carolina. That is true, he did prophecy [sic] that, and did foretell the events that have since transpired, and did tell where the commencement of those difficulties should originate. Well if this is true, are not other things true.”³⁸ Brigham Young similarly observed, “There is no man can see, unless he sees by the gift and power of revelation, that every move that has been made by the Government has been made to fulfil the sayings of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and all earth and hell cannot help it. The wedge to divide the Union was entered in South Carolina, and all the power of the Government could not prevent it.”³⁹ Of course, not everyone reached the same conclusion. Colorado’s *Tri-Weekly Miner Register* countered, “[Mormons] regard it as proof positive that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of the Lord, because that his prophecy is now being fulfilled to the letter. The old Abolition party might, perhaps, have the same reason for believing their leaders to be divinely inspired, for who does not remember . . . to have listened to prophecies in substance exactly the same as this one, from the lips of the earnest apostles of emancipation.”⁴⁰

In spite of a skeptical nation’s response, Church leaders continued to turn to this section as evidence even after the war ended. A generation later, George Q. Cannon declared:

“God has sent a mighty Prophet who predicted, among other things, the civil war that took place in 1861. It is on record in this book (the Book of Doctrine and Covenants). Joseph Smith warned this nation of it—twenty-eight years before it occurred. He told them the cause of it, and the consequences that would follow. This great Prophet has been in their midst, and they have slain him, and have destroyed as far as possible those who believe in his doctrine. God will hold this generation to a strict accountability for these acts.”⁴¹

A CHANGING EMPHASIS— POST-CIVIL WAR USE OF THE PROPHECY

With the conclusion of the Civil War in April 1865, Joseph Smith’s prophecy entered a new phase. While Church leadership continued to reference the revelation, using its fulfillment as proof of the Prophet’s divine calling, they also began noting that the section went much further. Nearly twenty years after the war’s final shots, B. H. Roberts characterized the changing use of the prophecy. “Thus you see this prophecy, so far as we have read it, has been minutely fulfilled—fulfilled in every particular,” Roberts declared. Turning to future fulfillment, he continued, “And the rest of it will be, so fast as the wheels of time shall bring the events due; and the fulfillment of these prophecies prove beyond *controversy*, that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God, and ‘spake as he was moved upon by the Holy Ghost.’”⁴² The same year, Joseph F. Smith noted that only “a portion of that revelation has been literally fulfilled.”⁴³ Increasingly, attention turned to future conflicts in the last days. “This great war,” said Orson Pratt following the conclusion of the Civil War, “is only a small degree of chastisement, just the

beginning; nothing compared to that which God has spoken concerning this nation, if they will not repent.”⁴⁴

Following the conclusion of the Civil War, Church leaders increasingly looked beyond the first part of the section to the latter half, which prophesies conflicts that will culminate in “a full end of all nations” (D&C 87:6). Reflecting the apocalyptic fervor of the day, Orson Pratt answered the question “Do you really believe that such judgments are coming upon our nation?” by declaring, “I do not merely believe, but I *know* it, just as well as I knew, twenty-eight years before it commenced, that there would be war between the North and the South. . . . We know that these judgments are coming with the same certainty that we knew concerning the war of the rebellion.”⁴⁵ John Taylor made a similar interpretation: “Were we surprised when the last terrible war took place here in the United States?” Taylor queried. “No; good Latter-day Saints were not, for they had been told about it. Joseph Smith had told them where it would start, that it should be a terrible time of bloodshed and that it should start in South Carolina. But I tell you today the end is not yet. You will see worse things than that, for God will lay his hand upon this nation, and they will feel it more terribly than ever they have done before; there will be more bloodshed, more ruin, more devastation than ever they have seen before. Write it down! You will see it come to pass.”⁴⁶ Indeed, in the decades following the war, Church leaders seemed to echo Orson Pratt’s interpretation:

That war that destroyed the lives of some fifteen or sixteen hundred thousand people was nothing, compared to that which will eventually devastate that country. The time is not very far distant

in the future, when the Lord God will lay his hand heavily upon that nation. “How do you know this? inquires one.” I know from the revelations which God has given upon this subject. I read these revelations, when they were first given. I waited over twenty-eight years and saw their fulfillment to the very letter. Should I not, then, expect that the balance of them should be fulfilled? That same God who gave the revelations to his servant Joseph Smith in regard to these matters, will fulfill every jot and every tittle that has been spoken, concerning that nation.⁴⁷

In addition to looking for future fulfillment, Church leaders also connected the revelation to other Joseph Smith prophecies, warning that they too would be fulfilled. “Just as sure as the Lord lives,” Brigham Young declared in 1868, “we are going to see times when our neighbors around us will be in want. But some may say, here have ten years, twenty years, thirty years gone, and the sayings of Joseph and the Apostles have not all come to pass. If they have not all been fulfilled, they all will be fulfilled. When we saw the flaming sword unsheathed in the terrible war between the north and the south, we could see in it the fulfillment in part of the prophecies of Joseph. But when peace comes for a short time we forget all about it, like a person who comes into the Church because of seeing a miracle.”⁴⁸ Wilford Woodruff reached a similar conclusion,



Wilford Woodruff, fourth President of the Church, preserved an early copy of Joseph Smith's prophecy on war and used it frequently in his teachings. (Utah State Historical Society)

citing the prophecy in 1881 while declaring, “Joseph Smith was a true Prophet of God. . . . That revelation was published to the world broadcast, and I merely refer to it because it is a thing that is clear to the minds of all men. All the revelations in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, the Bible, and the Book of Mormon, will have their fulfillment in the earth.”⁴⁹

While Church leaders discussed the future, others skeptically challenged the prophecy's past. Aware of its acceptance among the Mormon faithful, the *Salt Lake Tribune* attacked the prophecy in 1874, claiming that Joseph merely used the succession crisis of 1833 as “a splendid show to build up a cheap reputation as a Prophet.” When war failed

to immediately follow, the “unfortunate turn in affairs sent the inspired document to its tomb in the archives of the Church, there to await resurrection should circumstances ever favor,” something the paper claimed the “half crazed fanatic” Orson Pratt did beginning in 1854.⁵⁰ Brigham Young's estranged wife Ann Eliza Young used the revelation to rile up an audience in San Francisco, claiming the “memorable prophecy of Joseph Smith that civil war would work the destruction of the United States” was “promulgated” by the Church so that “when the rebellion finally broke out the Mormons exulted greatly, and held a jubilee to congratulate over the expected destruction of the Government and total slaughter of the male population, when

the Church would at once assume supreme control of the country.”⁵¹

Others, like Chicago’s *Daily Inter Ocean* newspaper, refused to directly confront the revelation. When asked, “Is it true that Joseph Smith predicted about the war of rebellion, and where it would commence?” the paper dodged an answer by tersely responding, “Some of our readers may be able to contribute to this . . . query.”⁵² In the South, the *News and Observer* in Raleigh, North Carolina, warned inhabitants of “two ‘unrighteous pastors’ spreading their doctrines in Wake County.” These Mormon elders were circulating a pamphlet containing what “purports to be a prophecy made by Smith in 1832,” but which, after republishing the revelation in its entirety, the paper concluded, “No proof whatever of the authenticity of this prophecy is given. It is certainly an imposition on the credulity of intelligent people.”⁵³ Most viciously, Maine’s *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* called for the extermination of the Church over its Civil War stance. “The Mormon leaders have discovered and published the ‘singular fact,’ that they have among them a prophetic account, written thirty-three years ago, of the great war between the North and South,” the paper sarcastically announced. “This is a fair specimen of the teachings of the Mormon Church,” it continued. “The audacious blasphemy of the leaders, and the wicked social practices of the people, should condemn them, were miracles wrought now a days, to the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah. The next best thing that can befall them is the vengeance of Congress, which, by the way, is no trifle. Measures should be taken for the thorough eradication of this monstrous and growing evil.”⁵⁴

Though the nation followed through, in some measure, with “vengeance” against the

Church, the two parties eventually reconciled themselves. The way the section has been used, therefore, reflects the changing relationship between the Church and society. Over time, the insinuation that the American Civil War was a chastisement for the nation’s rejecting the Latter-day Saint message has been downplayed. In 1981, Ezra Taft Benson characterized the softened tone. “The desire of the Prophet Joseph Smith was to save the Union from that bloody conflict,” Benson declared.⁵⁵

The change in church and state relationships coincided with a decline in millennialism within the Church at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries.⁵⁶ The de-emphasis on the imminence of the Millennium seems to have lessened the influence of this prophecy. In fact, whereas it was featured prominently throughout much of the nineteenth century, the prophecy was not cited in general conference in the first decade of the twentieth century and used only once in the second. Eventually, apocalyptic references to the “chastening hand of an Almighty God” making “a full end of all nations” (D&C 87:6) dropped off significantly, replaced by messages of salvation present in the revelation.

Furthermore, as subsequent conflicts have occurred, section 87 has been reinterpreted to reflect geopolitical tensions. “It received its widest coverage at the time of the Civil War,” Robert Woodford noted, “but it was revived again when the First World War began and seems to receive some mention with just about every war since then.”⁵⁷ Former Presiding Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin exemplified the expanded interpretation section 87 has received. “In many cases,” Wirthlin declared, “I am quite sure we all think this has to do particularly with the slaves in the Southern States,

but I believe, brethren and sisters, that it was intended that this referred to slaves all over the world, and I think of those, particularly in the land of Russia and other countries wherein they have been taken over by that great nation and where the people are actually the slaves of those individuals who guide and direct the affairs of Russia and China, and where the rights and the privilege to worship God and to come to a knowledge that Jesus Christ is his Son is denied them.” Connecting to post-Civil War conflicts, Wirthlin continued:

In the matter of famine and plague and earthquakes, we can go back to World War I, where 40,000,000 individuals lost their lives either through the war or through famine or plague. And in the world war just passed wherein our own nation was involved, we lost 408,789 of our men. In Korea, we lost 33,629.

The Prophet Joseph gave us this marvelous revelation in 1832. The Civil War came in 1861; the war between Denmark and Prussia in 1864; Italy and Austria in 1865 and 1866; Austria and Prussia in 1866; Russia and Turkey in 1877; China and Japan in 1894 and 1895; Spanish-American in 1898; Japan and Russia in 1904 and 1905; World War I in 1914–1918; then the next war was a comparatively small one, Ethiopia and Italy, when the people in that land of Ethiopia were taken over and controlled by Italy. I am grateful to the Lord that they now have their freedom. Then, the World War just passed and, of course, the Korean War.⁵⁸

A generation later, Elder Neal A. Maxwell reached a similar interpretation: “War has been the almost continuing experience of

modern man. There have been 141 wars, large and small, just since the end of World War II in 1945. As the American Civil War was about to begin, the Lord declared there would be a succession of wars poured out upon all nations, resulting in the ‘death and misery of many souls’ (D&C 87:1). Moreover, that continuum of conflict will culminate in ‘a full end of all nations’ (D&C 87:6).”⁵⁹

The section’s references to additional wars led to one of the most interesting conflicts over the use of Joseph Smith’s prophecy. During debate regarding the League of Nations following the end of World War I, Utah senator and Apostle Reed Smoot apparently used the prophecy to lobby against the treaty’s passage. Fellow Apostle James E. Talmage recorded in his journal, “There is much agitation throughout the land over the question of the adoption of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and the ratification of the Treaty of Peace. Through an unwise and unwarranted misapplication of Scripture, many sensational newspapers are claiming that the ‘Mormon’ Church is opposed to the adoption of the Covenant of the League of Nations. Senator Reed Smoot tried to apply certain passages from the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine & Covenants to show that war is yet to come, and therefore that the League of Nations cannot be regarded as a preventative of war. We regret this misrepresentation, upon which the sensational press has seized.” In a newspaper account that had apparently reached four million readers, Smoot claimed: “You evidently think that when this covenant is ratified we will have no more wars. Do not be deceived, for such will not be the case. If so, the revelations of Prophet Joseph Smith as recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants are not true. I ask you to read the many passages of the Book

of Mormon referring to this nation, as well as the many revelations given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, as to the destiny of the same.” A supporter of the League, Talmage retorted, “In this connection it is proper to say that the First Presidency and all members of the Quorum of the Twelve now at home hold unanimously that there is nothing to be found in the standard works of the Church that can in any reasonable way be construed as in opposition to the proposed League of Nations.”⁶⁰ Though the United States ultimately failed to join the League, the view that section 87 ought not to be used to lobby against it carried the day when, in the subsequent general conference, Talmage observed that “a point emphasized by all [speakers] was that none of the Scriptures accepted by the Church are in any way opposed to the adoption of the proposed League of Nations, but that on the contrary it is the duty of the Church to raise an ensign of peace and to proclaim peace among the nations.”⁶¹

The controversy over Smoot’s application of the prophecy to international politics highlights a final shift in the section’s use. Indeed, as the Church has become more international, the message of section 87 has broadened. Importantly, focus has turned to the gospel as the means of salvation from calamity. Even as the Civil War began, the *Millennial Star* declared, “What the length of the period may be before all these things be fulfilled, we cannot say; but this we can say, and verily know, that the rebellion of South Carolina is the beginning of wars which will surely ‘terminate in the death and misery of many souls’ and in the ‘consumption decreed,’ which is to make ‘a full end of all nations.’ These events convey this warning—one more powerful to the people of God

and to all the world than any mortal voice is capable of giving—‘Stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come; for behold it cometh quickly, saith the Lord. Amen.’”⁶² Apostle Marion G. Romney summarized this emphasis, noting that “the Lord’s purpose in revealing these unhappy impending calamities was not to condemn but to save mankind is evidenced by the fact that with the warning he identified the cause and revealed the means by which the calamities may be turned aside.”⁶³

Indeed, the greatest focus in recent decades has been on the phrase in the prophecy encouraging Church members to “stand ye in holy places, and be not moved” (D&C 87:8). Harold B. Lee, Marvin J. Ashton, Neal A. Maxwell, Dallin H. Oaks, Gordon B. Hinckley, Thomas S. Monson, and scores of other General Authorities have all cited D&C 87:8 in the past four decades.⁶⁴ Each emphasized that, in spite of difficulties ahead, safety can be found in righteousness. In many ways, Spencer W. Kimball’s 1979 plea typifies current use of Joseph Smith’s prophecy on war. “Our constant prayer and our major efforts,” Kimball announced, “are to see that the members are sanctified through their righteousness. We urge our people to ‘stand in holy places’ (D&C 87:8).”⁶⁵

CONCLUSION

The use of Joseph Smith’s “revelation and prophecy on war” has changed alongside the Church that continues to revere it. Unbounded by time, it reaches beyond the Nullification Crisis that precipitated it, the division between Southern and Northern States it most famously predicted, and even periods when war has been “poured out upon all nations” (D&C 87:3). The history of its receipt, recording, and publication

demonstrates how the Church and its leaders have used it as a proof of Joseph’s prophetic mantle, a condemnation for a disobedient nation, a warning of future calamity, and even a reason to question international peace efforts. At the same time, the world has reacted with varying levels of wonder, skepticism, cynicism, or ridicule to the notion that a New York farm boy could know the future.

However, though the revelation points to a time when the “chastening hand of an Almighty God” will make “a full end of all nations” (D&C 87:6), it also provides a singular solution for escaping the Lord’s wrath (see D&C 87:8). Standing in holy places, Saints have continually benefited from a prophecy on war, delivered to a prophet of God on Christmas Day, 1832, by the Prince of Peace.

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NOTES

1. “A Mormon Prophecy,” *Philadelphia Sunday Mercury*, May 5, 1861, cited in Robert J. Woodford, “Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants” (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1974), 2:1110; emphasis added.
2. Nearly every Doctrine and Covenants commentary discusses the Nullification Crisis of 1832. For examples, see Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl, *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1967), 533–34; Lyndon W. Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 180; Stephen E. Robinson and H. Dean Garrett, *A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2004), 3:84–85; Steven C. Harper, *Making Sense of the Doctrine and Covenants: A Guided Tour through Modern Revelations* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2008), 310.
3. Dean C. Jessee, Mark Ashurst-McGee, and Richard L. Jensen, eds., *Journals, Volume 1: 1832–1839*, vol. 1 of the Journals series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2008), 11.
4. *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980), 1:301. This citation uses Roberts’s published edition of *History of the Church*. Interestingly, the manuscript version in Willard Richards’s hand is nearly identical, except in one significant instance. The original states, “The people of North Carolina, in convention assembled,” over the top of which someone clearly corrected, “The people of South Carolina, in convention assembled.” This error appeared in its original printing in the *Times and Seasons* on November 1, 1844 and the subsequent British reprinting in the *Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star* on July 3, 1852.
5. Donald Q. Cannon, “A Prophecy of War (D&C 87),” in *Studies in Scripture*, vol. 1: *The Doctrine and Covenants*, ed. Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson (Sandy, UT: Randall Book, 1984), 335; for an extended analysis, see William W. Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816–1836* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965).
6. *History of the Church*, 1:315. In addition to section 87, this statement by the Prophet may have been influenced by earlier revelations referring to destruction upon the American continent, including D&C 38:28–29, 42:64, and 45:63–64. Seaton apparently only published a portion of Joseph’s message in his newspaper, which drew the ire of the Prophet (see *History of the Church*, 1:326).
7. Determining which copy is the earliest is problematic because the records were kept simultaneously. Revelation Book 1, kept by John Whitmer and used in Missouri during the publication of the Book of Commandments, generally appears to be the more complete record because it contains some revelations missing from Revelation Book 2. However, this

- particular revelation would have been delivered to Whitmer, as he was in Missouri while the Prophet was in Ohio in December 1832. Revelation Book 2, on the other hand, was kept in Kirtland by Joseph Smith and his scribes during the time this revelation was received. Interestingly, for some reason Oliver Cowdery made a second copy of the revelation, including it as the last item in Revelation Book 1, dated July 3, 1835. Also, though dated December 25, 1832, in Revelation Book 2, the text itself was likely copied into that collection by the Prophet's scribe, Frederick G. Williams, sometime later because Williams referred to himself as "counciller" to Joseph Smith in the line immediately preceding this section. He was not appointed to that position until January 22, 1833. Robin Scott Jensen, Robert J. Woodford, and Steven C. Harper, eds., *Revelations and Translations, Volume 1: Manuscript Revelation Books*, vol. 1 of the Revelations and Translations series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2009), "Revelation Book 2," 5–6, 290–91, 380–83, 409, and 476–79.
8. Wilford Woodruff, in *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854–86), 10:13. Woodruff's writing down of the revelation was an idea he frequently repeated (see *Journal of Discourses*, 10:219, 14:2, 22:175, and 24:242).
 9. Woodruff, in *Journal of Discourses*, 14:2.
 10. Woodford, "Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants," 2:1112–14. Of the eight copies, two are identified in Phelps's hand (with a third also possibly his), two in the hand of Thomas Bullock, one each by Willard Richards and Edward Partridge, and a final one that is unidentified.
 11. Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses*, 18:224–25. Like Woodruff, Pratt frequently referred to his use of this section (see *Journal of Discourses*, 13:135, 18:340–41).
 12. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 8:58. An *escritoire* is a writing desk.
 13. Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses*, 13:193–94.
 14. See "History of Joseph Smith," *Times and Seasons*, November 1, 1844, 688; "History of Joseph Smith," *Millennial Star*, July 3, 1852, 296.
 15. Woodruff, in *Journal of Discourses*, 14:2.
 16. H. Donl Peterson, *The Pearl of Great Price: A History and Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 9.
 17. Franklin D. Richards to Levi Richards, February 1, 1851, cited in Peterson, *Pearl of Great Price*, 11; emphasis in original. See also *Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint*, April 10, 1896, 6, Church History Library, <http://ldsarch.lib.byu.edu/CD%20Volume%202/Disc19/v322-323/seg8.htm>.
 18. Preface to the *Pearl of Great Price* (Liverpool, 1851), cited in Peterson, *Pearl of Great Price*, 13–15.
 19. To eliminate duplication, the revelation on war was finally removed from the 1902 *Pearl of Great Price* edition (see Peterson, *Pearl of Great Price*, 23).
 20. *Journal History*, October 10, 1880, 4, <http://ldsarch.lib.byu.edu/CD%20Volume%202/Disc8/v135-137/seg25.htm>.
 21. Orson Hyde, in *Journal of Discourses*, 8:236.
 22. Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses*, 13:135.
 23. George Q. Cannon, in *Journal of Discourses*, 21:265–66. Like Woodruff and Pratt, Cannon made frequent reference both to this revelation and to his experience with it (see *Journal of Discourses* 12:41, 22:135, and 23:104–5).
 24. "A Mormon Prophecy," *New York Times*, June 2, 1861, 3.
 25. "Continuation of Letter from Great Salt Lake," *Daily Evening Bulletin*, July 23, 1858.
 26. "Affairs in Utah," *New York Times*, June 7, 1860, 1.
 27. "Interesting News from Utah," *New York Herald*, November 18, 1860, 2.
 28. George Q. Cannon, in *Journal of Discourses*, 22:135.
 29. George Q. Cannon, in *Journal of Discourses*, 23:104.
 30. "War," *Seer*, April 1854, 241–47.
 31. "The Dark Day of the United States," *Millennial Star*, January 28, 1860, 51.
 32. "The Dark Day of the United States," *Millennial Star*, January 28, 1860, 52–53.
 33. "Division of the United States—Causes Which Have Hastened It," *Millennial Star*, February 16, 1861, 100–101.
 34. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 8:195.
 35. "Mormonism and the War," *Tri-Weekly Miner Register*, October 15, 1862.
 36. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 10:294–95.
 37. John Taylor, in *Journal of Discourses*, 11:92–93.
 38. John Taylor, in *Journal of Discourses*, 10:278.
 39. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 9:367.
 40. "Mormonism and the War," *Tri-Weekly Miner Register*, October 15, 1862.

41. George Q. Cannon, in *Journal of Discourses*, 24:140. See also George Q. Cannon, in *Journal of Discourses*, 25:176.
42. B. H. Roberts, in *Journal of Discourses*, 25:143. Interestingly, not only did B. H. Roberts characterize the changing use of D&C 87; he had a hand in changing slightly the wording of the text itself. Early print versions of D&C 87 concluded verse 3 with the phrase “and *thus* war shall be poured out upon all nations” (emphasis added). During the height of World War I, Roberts remarked in the October 1916 general conference, “It reads in the current print of the Doctrine and Covenants ‘and “thus” war shall be poured out upon all nations.’ But when revising the *History of the Church* some years ago, we found that in the manuscript, it read ‘then,’ that is, when Great Britain shall call upon other nations to defend herself against other nations, ‘then war shall be poured out upon all nations,’” thereby applying the verse to the present conflict. B. H. Roberts, in Conference Report, October 1916, 141. The Church changed the wording from *thus* to *then* beginning with the 1921 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. See B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1948–57), 1:300–301. *Then* is, indeed, in the manuscript version of the *History of the Church*, as penned by Willard Richards in Nauvoo. However, earlier manuscript copies preserve both options. “Then” is used in John Whitmer’s version of the revelation, found in Revelation Book 1, but “thus” is used in Oliver Cowdery’s later copy in the same book and in Frederick G. Williams’s version recorded in Revelation Book 2. See note 7 and Jensen, Woodford, and Harper, *Revelations and Translations, Volume 1: Manuscript Revelation Books*, 5–6, 290–91, 380–81, and 478–79.
43. Joseph F. Smith, in *Journal of Discourses*, 25:97.
44. Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses*, 12:344.
45. Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses*, 17:319.
46. John Taylor, in *Journal of Discourses*, 20:318.
47. Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses*, 20:151.
48. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 12:242.
49. Wilford Woodruff, in *Journal of Discourses*, 22:175; see also Wilford Woodruff, in *Journal of Discourses*, 24:242; and George Q. Cannon, in *Journal of Discourses*, 22:178.
50. “The Prophet Joe Smith,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 8, 1874, 2.
51. “The Mormon Faith,” *Daily Evening Bulletin*, October 12, 1874.
52. “Author of the Book of Mormon,” *Daily Inter Ocean*, June 11, 1881.
53. “Mormon Priests,” *News and Observer*, March 27, 1895, 5.
54. “Mormon Prophecies,” *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier*, March 2, 1867.
55. Ezra Taft Benson, in Conference Report, October 1981, 83.
56. See Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 288–90. See also Grant Underwood, *The Millenarian World of Early Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993).
57. Woodford, “Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants,” 2:1109.
58. Joseph L. Wirthlin, in Conference Report, October 1958, 32–33.
59. Neal A. Maxwell, in Conference Report, October 1982, 96.
60. James E. Talmage, September 17, 1919, James E. Talmage Diary, in James Edward Talmage Collection; L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.
61. James E. Talmage, October 3, 1919, James E. Talmage Diary, in James Edward Talmage Collection; L. Tom Perry Special Collections.
62. “Division of the United States—Causes Which Have Hastened It,” *Millennial Star*, February 16, 1861, 102.
63. Marion G. Romney, in Conference Report, April 1965, 104.
64. See Harold B. Lee, in Conference Report, October 1971, 62; Marvin J. Ashton, in Conference Report, April 1974, 52; Thomas S. Monson, “Pathways to Perfection,” *Ensign*, May 2002, 99; Neal A. Maxwell, in Conference Report, October 2002, 17; Dallin H. Oaks, in Conference Report, April 2004, 8; Gordon B. Hinckley, in Conference Report, October 2005, 65–66.
65. Spencer W. Kimball, in Conference Report, April 1979, 115.