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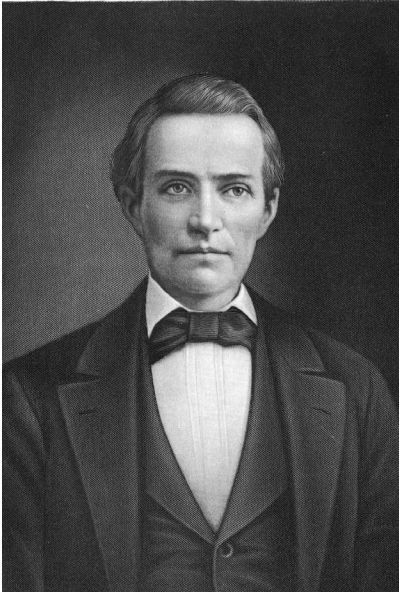
ORSON SPENCER AND THE PRUSSIA MISSION



Historical Introduction

AFTER ORSON SPENCER AND JACOB HOUTZ WERE BANISHED from preaching in the kingdom of Prussia in early 1853, they questioned their own efforts. “Had we done all that we could to plant the Gospel in the hearts of the people to whom we were sent?” they wondered.¹ It was Spencer’s third mission, and after serving as president of the British Mission for a year and a half, he found it difficult to be evicted from Berlin after less than two weeks. One can infer the reasons for his insecurities: his call had come from the leaders of the church in 1852, and he had sacrificed to leave his young family behind in Utah Territory, so why were his efforts so fruitless? Spencer and Houtz concluded, however, that the problem was not because they had done too little, but because the national laws were intolerant of new religions and because Satan had a great influence in the world: “I

1. Spencer, *Prussian Mission*, 12; p. 60 herein.



Orson Spencer. © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

do exceedingly marvel at the great power of the Devil among the nations. The extent of the oppressions, cruelties, abominations, and miseries, is greater than my heart ever conceived before.”² Having done all they felt they could do, Spencer and Houtz departed for England, and Spencer detailed their experience in a letter to Brigham Young before returning home to America.

Orson Spencer’s Early Life and Church Service, 1802–52

Orson Spencer was born March 14, 1802, in West Stockbridge, Massachusetts, the eleventh of his family’s children. After an illness in his teenage years left him with a disabled leg for life, he pursued a life of intellect, education, and religion. He graduated from Union College and the Theological College at Hamilton, both in New York, in 1824 and 1829, respectively. After his 1829 graduation, Spencer began work as a Baptist minister, and in 1830, he married Catharine Curtis. Ten years later, while still living in Massachusetts, his brother Daniel Spencer brought the message of the restored gospel to Orson’s home.³ Spencer and his family were baptized and subsequently moved to Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1841, where he became an alderman and taught at the University of Nauvoo, a fledgling institution that oversaw education in the community.⁴ In the summer of

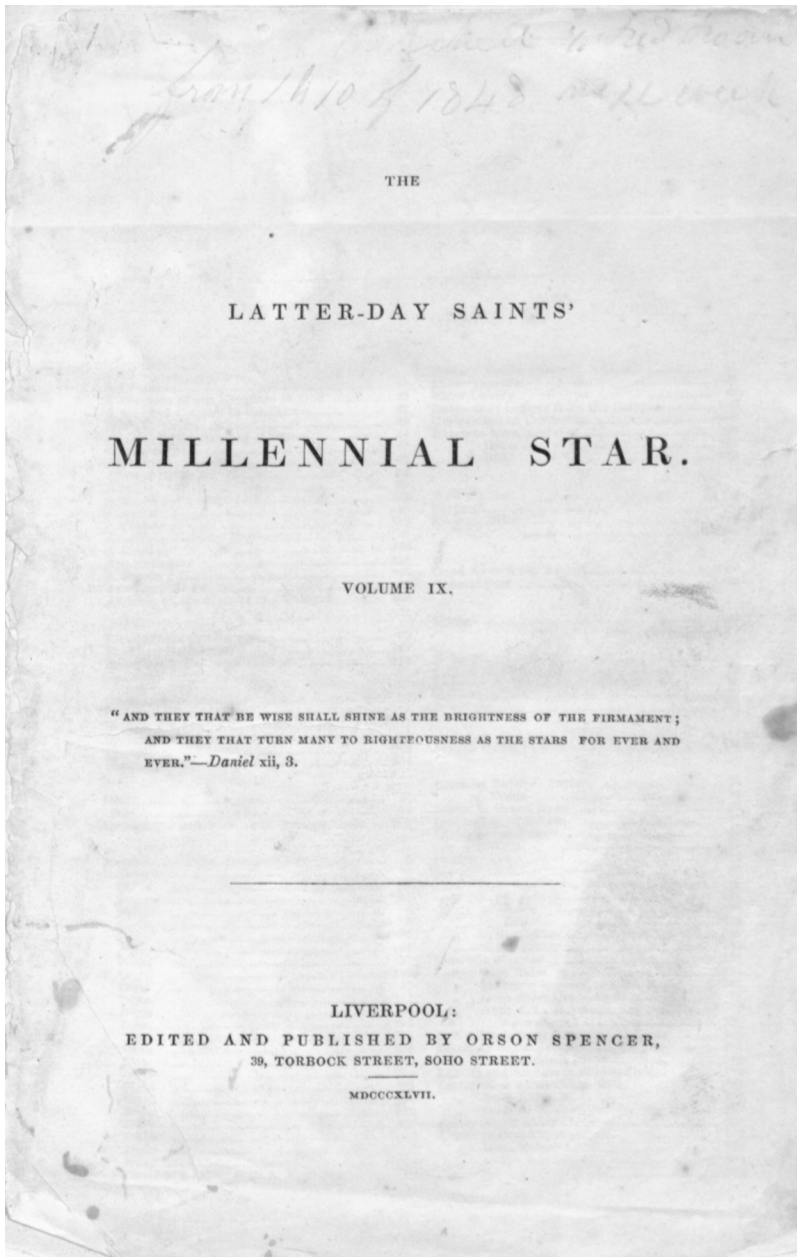
2. Spencer, *Prussian Mission*, 14; p. 64 herein.
3. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 9–15; Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 9–27; Sadler, “Life of Orson Spencer,” 1–5.
4. The University of Nauvoo operated from 1841 to 1845 to encourage education among Latter-day Saints. Classes in secular subjects—science, writing, foreign languages, arithmetic, and so forth—were taught to adults in the community, and

1843, he served a mission to the eastern states, where he ministered to his wife's family before bringing his own parents back to Nauvoo with him; they died within a few years. As the majority of the Saints were driven out of Nauvoo in early 1846, Catharine died along the trail thirty miles out of Nauvoo.⁵

As a new widower, Orson Spencer was called on a mission for the church in 1846. He was asked to leave his six living children, all under the age of fourteen, behind in Winter Quarters in present-day Nebraska so that he might take over Apostle Orson Hyde's duties to preside over the British Mission. Before Spencer reached Liverpool on January 23, 1847, erroneous word arrived in England that he had died. In reality, it was his brother Hyrum Spencer who had died, but the message was taken as fact, and Apostle Franklin D. Richards departed from his labors in Scotland to take over Spencer's intended post in Liverpool.⁶ "Few men in the 19th century possess that degree of longevity which enables them to read in the public prints their own obituary notice, but it has been Elder Spencer's privilege to read the feelings of his brethren concerning him, when they expected never to see him again in mortality," Richards quipped when he found Orson very much alive.⁷ As president of the mission, Spencer's duties included editing and writing for the *Millennial Star*, the official church publication in Britain; he also published two widely circularized tracts⁸ and a theological treatise consisting of letters between him and a Baptist minister in Massachusetts.⁹ Additionally, he enjoyed success as a preacher: "Wherever I go, the Saints gather around me as though they would worship me. They often walk ten or twenty miles to see me and hear me preach. . . . The gospel is

the university oversaw the local common schools, intended for children. Black, "University of Nauvoo," 189–206.

5. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 15–41; Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 28–32; Sadler, "Life of Orson Spencer," 5–49.
6. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 47–84; Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 32–38; Sadler, "Life of Orson Spencer," 50–52.
7. Franklin D. Richards, "Address," *Millennial Star* 9, no. 3 (February 1, 1847): 42.
8. Orson Spencer, *The Gospel Witness* (Liverpool: R. James, 1848); Orson Spencer, *Character!!* (Liverpool: R. James, 1848).
9. Orson Spencer, *Letters Exhibiting the Most Prominent Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Liverpool: Orson Spencer, 1848).



The title page of a volume of the *Millennial Star*, "edited and published by Orson Spencer." Courtesy of Church History Library.

spreading wonderfully, probably not less than five thousand will be added to the Church this year.”¹⁰

In August 1848, Apostle Orson Pratt replaced Spencer as president of the British Mission (the third “Orson” in a row to hold the calling), so Spencer was free to return to his family in America.¹¹ For the next few years, Spencer was involved in local politics in Utah and became chancellor of the University of Deseret, which later became the University of Utah.¹² As chancellor, he lectured on the value of education, donated books, and oversaw the primary schools in the territory.¹³ He was serving in this capacity when he was called on another mission in August 1852. His companion was to be Jacob Houtz, no stranger to the Spencer family: after being baptized in 1844, Houtz traveled in Daniel Spencer’s company to arrive in Salt Lake City in 1847. Beginning in 1851, Houtz relocated from Salt Lake City to Springville, Utah, where he established a farm and built a gristmill.¹⁴ Moses Clough was also called to labor in Prussia, but he couldn’t obtain a passport and instead spent three years in England.¹⁵ Spencer and Houtz departed from their homes to begin their new mission to Prussia, only three years after Orson had returned from his earlier mission to England.

10. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 63.

11. Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 39–42; Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 108; Early Mormon Missionaries database, s.v. “British Mission.”

12. The General Assembly of Deseret established the University of Deseret in 1850. It was nicknamed the “Parent School,” as it was intended as the guardian of all of Utah’s educational endeavors. Due to the lack of financial support, classes were discontinued in 1852. The university opened again in the 1867, and in 1894 it became the University of Utah. Davis Bitton, “University of Utah,” in *Encyclopedia of Latter-day Saint History*, 1275–76.

13. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 122–23; Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 94–97; Sadler, “Life of Orson Spencer,” 63–69.

14. Whitney, *History of Utah*, 4:108; “Houtz, Jacob,” in appendix 2, p. 336 herein.

15. Crawley, *Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church*, 3:55–56.

History of the German Mission and Orson Spencer's Attempt in Prussia, 1852–53

Daniel Carn (or Garn) arrived in Hamburg, Germany,¹⁶ in April 1852 and officially opened the German Mission of the church. However, due to its proximity to other nations, Latter-day Saints had been spreading the gospel in the country on a limited basis throughout the previous decade. In September 1840, English convert James Howard became the first Latter-day Saint to visit the country, but he did little, if any, preaching. The following year, Apostle Orson Hyde stopped in Germany on his way to Palestine and began studying German. On his way back in 1842, he returned to the country and published a Latter-day Saint tract in German, *Ein Ruf aus der Wüste* (A Cry from the Wilderness). These early efforts had little or no impact on conversions in Germany itself, but there were many Germans who were baptized in the United States or England.¹⁷ In the fall of 1851, George Parker Dykes, who had been laboring in Denmark, and Apostle John Taylor, who had been serving in France, arrived in Hamburg and began publishing a German periodical, *Zions Panier*. Taylor brought with him George Viett, a German schoolteacher, who had started to translate the Book of Mormon into German, and he and Dykes joined forces in the translation, which was published in 1852.¹⁸ Carn entered Hamburg on April 3, 1852, and in the coming months he organized the Hamburg Branch. However, he was imprisoned in January 1853; after an American

16. Hamburg is an important port city on the Elbe River in northern Germany. It was originally built around 825. *Merriam-Webster's Geographical Dictionary*, s.v. "Hamburg."

17. Scharffs, *Mormonism in Germany*, 1–8.

18. Five men assisted with the German translation of the Book of Mormon between 1851 and 1852: John Taylor, the president of the French Mission; George P. Dykes, a missionary who knew some German and was asked by Taylor to assist; George Viett, a German schoolteacher who had been baptized in France; John Miller, a convert who was baptized during the translation project; and Daniel Carn (or Garn), who was called as president of the German Mission and replaced John Taylor. Dykes and Viett were mainly responsible for the translation. The translation was completed April 1852 and published in Hamburg the following month. Scharffs, "Das Buch Mormon," 35–39; Crawley, *Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church*, 2:322–25.

consul negotiated his release, he was banished from the city.¹⁹

Such were the conditions when Orson Spencer and Jacob Houtz arrived in Hamburg to begin their efforts in the neighboring kingdom of Prussia²⁰ in January 1853.²¹ But religious tolerance in Prussia was even worse than that in Germany. On January 20, Spencer and Houtz visited American consul Samuel Bromberg²² in Hamburg to have their passports endorsed. Bromberg was skeptical that they would



Portrait of Jacob Houtz. Courtesy of Church History Library.

be permitted to preach in the Prussian capital, Berlin: “Prussia will not treat you as the Syndic of Hamburg has Elder Carn, debating a long time whether they will allow you to operate there—their course will be prompt and energetic, probably setting you out of their kingdom *immediately*.”²³ Subsequently they traveled to Berlin and met with American envoy Daniel D. Barnard,²⁴ who informed the missionaries that minority religions were not well tolerated, with foreign ministers being ejected from the

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19. Carn did return to Hamburg, and in December 1853 he arrived in Liverpool with thirty-three emigrating German Saints. Scharffs, *Mormonism in Germany*, 1–13; Jenson, *Encyclopedic History of the Church*, 280.
 20. Prussia, a kingdom that included parts of present-day northern Germany and western Poland, was a powerful state of the German Confederation. It was abolished in the twentieth century. *Merriam-Webster’s Geographical Dictionary*, s.vv. “Germany,” “Prussia.”
 21. George C. Riser, Jacob F. Secrist, George Mayer, and William Taylor also arrived to preach in Germany. Mayer soon transferred to Switzerland, while Riser, Secrist, and Taylor all went back to England within four months after arriving in Germany, due to problems with local governments. Scharffs, *Mormonism in Germany*, 11–12.
 22. Samuel Bromberg (about 1805–1880s?) was born in Hamburg and was an American consul from 1849 to 1853. He later moved to New York City.
 23. Spencer, *Prussian Mission*, 3; p. 46 herein.
 24. Daniel D. Barnard (1797–1861) was a US representative from New York and American envoy to Prussia from 1850 to 1853. See Penney, *Patrician in Politics*.

country. In addition, Prussian laws forbade people to emigrate unless they had performed mandatory military service, so Latter-day Saints, with their doctrine of “gathering,” would be considered “obnoxious to the policy and laws of the Government.”²⁵ Spencer and Houtz considered preaching in “a secret, unobserved course of introducing the Gospel,” but they recognized that the only practical method was to be direct and request permission from “the powers that be.”²⁶ On January 29, they wrote a letter to Karl Otto von Raumer,²⁷ the minister of public worship, requesting an audience with the king and permission to preach in the country. On February 1, they met with the police, who told them: “You, Orson Spencer and Jacob Houtz, are hereby commanded to depart out of this kingdom to-morrow morning, under the penalty of *transportation*; and you are also forbidden ever to return to this kingdom hereafter, under the penalty of being transported.”²⁸

Spencer and Houtz were disappointed to be banished, but at the same time, they relished the persecution: “My heart inwardly rejoiced, and I said to myself, our religion is good, and pure, and faultless, having come from the holy heavens; and having spoken against that, you will have to answer it to Him, who revealed it from the Heavens for the blessing and salvation of all those who should receive it.”²⁹ Less than two weeks after their arrival in Germany, Spencer and Houtz obediently left Prussia and proselytized in England, which was considerably more receptive to their message than Prussia had been.³⁰ After a few months in England, Spencer led a group of Latter-day Saints across the plains and arrived in Utah in August 1853.³¹

25. Spencer, *Prussian Mission*, 5; p. 49 herein.

26. Spencer, *Prussian Mission*, 6; p. 51 herein.

27. Karl Otto von Raumer (1805–59) was appointed as minister of religious affairs by King Frederick Wilhelm IV in 1850. Mitchell, “Mormons in Wilhelmine Germany,” 21–22.

28. Spencer, *Prussian Mission*, 10–11; p. 58 herein.

29. Spencer, *Prussian Mission*, 11; p. 59 herein.

30. Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 75; Sadler, “Life of Orson Spencer,” 70–71; Spencer, *Prussian Mission*, 16; p. 68 herein.

31. Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 75; Sadler, “Life of Orson Spencer,” 71; Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 133; Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel database, s.v. “Orson Spencer/Joel J. Terrell Company (1853).”

Continued Church Service

In April 1854, just eight months after returning from his Prussian mission, Orson Spencer was called on yet another mission, this time within the United States. He left his wives and children, never to see them again. First he labored in Cincinnati, Ohio, along with Apostle Orson Pratt, in part to establish a waystation for Latter-day Saint emigrants from Europe.³² In July 1855, Apostle Erastus Snow, president of the mission at St. Louis, Missouri, called him to edit the *St. Louis Luminary*, a church periodical; Spencer agreed to take the position, but as it turned out, he would never take over the editorial duties of the paper.³³ Soon after arriving in St. Louis, he was sent to preach to the Cherokee Nation, but there is no evidence of him being successful in ministering to them.³⁴ In September 1855, he returned to St. Louis with a fever. He never recovered and died there on October 15, 1855.³⁵ His body was transported to Utah and interred in the Salt Lake City Cemetery the following summer. Spencer's daughter, Aurelia Spencer Rogers, later reminisced, "The hardest thing for me to bear, was the thought of my father dying away from home, with none of his family near to comfort him in his last moments; although he had kind friends to minister to his wants, which was quite a satisfaction. My father could be counted as one who had left father and mother, wives and children and all

32. Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 76–78; Sadler, "Life of Orson Spencer," 73.

33. "Obituary of Orson Spencer," *St. Louis Luminary*, October 20, 1855. The *St. Louis Luminary* ran from November 22, 1854, to December 15, 1855. Apostle Erastus Snow bought a press and printing supplies and set up the printing office in the local meetinghouse. In January 1855, he assigned James H. Hart to edit and take charge of the paper. Before departing for Utah in August 1855, Snow appointed Orson Spencer as the new editor, but Spencer fell ill and later died, so Hart continued to edit the paper. Subscriptions were doing quite well in late 1855, but John Taylor advised that the *Luminary* be discontinued, since Snow was back in Utah and Spencer had died. Crawley, *Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church*, 3:163–65. See also Black, "St. Louis Luminary: The Latter-day Saint Experience at the Mississippi River, 1854–1855," 157–73.

34. Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 79–82; Sadler, "Life of Orson Spencer," 75–76.

35. "Obituary of Orson Spencer."

that he held dear, for the gospel's sake."³⁶

Jacob Houtz likewise continued to serve the church after his unsuccessful Prussian mission. On his way back from Europe in 1853, he stopped in the eastern United States, where he converted his sister Catharine Boyer and brought her to Utah. He constructed mills in Springville, where he spent most of the remainder of his life. He served another mission to the eastern United States in 1869, and he died in Springville on December 11, 1896.³⁷

Orson Spencer's Family Life

As noted earlier, Orson Spencer married Catharine Curtis in 1830, but she died in 1846 while the family was relocating from Nauvoo. In January 1846, before Catharine died, Spencer married Eliza Ann Dibble, but they never lived together or had children; their marriage was canceled in 1849.³⁸ Spencer and Catharine had eight children, with two of them dying at a very young age, so six were living when Spencer left to preside over the British Mission.³⁹ Despite the intense demands of presiding over the mission, Spencer did not neglect his family duties. He frequently sent money and letters of advice and encouragement to his children. He married a second wife, Martha Knight, while he was in England.⁴⁰

In 1848, the Spencer children traveled from Winter Quarters to Salt Lake City with Brigham Young's company. Daniel Spencer, their uncle, had prepared a room in a fort for the children to occupy. Orson arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in September 1849 and was reunited with his children, who met their new stepmother and little half sister.⁴¹ He married three additional women in the ensuing years in Salt Lake City: Margaret Miller in October 1849, Mary Jane Burn Davis (known simply as Jane) in February

36. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 148–49.

37. Whitney, *History of Utah*, 4:108–9; "Houtz, Jacob," in appendix 2, p. 336 herein.

38. Smith, "Story of Eliza Ann Dibble," 12.

39. Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 106.

40. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 52–75; Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 43–63; Sadler, "Life of Orson Spencer," 52–59.

41. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 76–122; Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 72–73; Sadler, "Life of Orson Spencer," 60–62.

1852, and Mary Hill Bullock in September 1852.⁴² It is not clear what kind of relationship there was between Spencer and Mary Bullock: they were sealed days before Spencer departed for his mission to Prussia, they had no children, and Aurelia Spencer Rogers makes no mention of Mary as a wife. The sealing might have been done in gratitude for Mary and her late husband, James Bullock, caring for the Spencer children during Spencer's first mission.⁴³

After Spencer left in 1852, Martha spent the duration of his absence caring for many of his children, only three of them her own. Margaret might have also helped out in the home, though she had no children of her own. Jane gave birth to her only child with Spencer in December 1852, after he had already departed.⁴⁴ It is not clear what these families did to support themselves during his absence, though it is reasonable to suppose that he sent them funds, as he had done on his previous mission.

Spencer and Jane were divorced about the time Spencer left on his third and final mission, and Martha had a daughter after he left. He continued to write letters of encouragement home: "We are separated, too, for a little season, in order that we may better understand each other's value, and love more fervently and serve one another more patiently."⁴⁵ In his last letter to his family, he wrote, "Let me die many deaths before I turn away from such a God or from such a people. . . . I feel to bless you, and hope that you will have many things next winter that will make you comfortable."⁴⁶ The next message to his family was written by someone else, informing them that he had died.⁴⁷

Source Note

After retreating from Prussia to England in 1853, Orson Spencer recounted his failed attempts in a letter to President Brigham Young. "After some

42. Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 105.

43. Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 106; Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 130.

44. Spencer, *Life Summary of Orson Spencer*, 106.

45. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 137.

46. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 141.

47. Rogers, *Life Sketches of Orson Spencer and Others*, 142.

careful hesitancy,” Spencer agreed to have the letter “printed in the British Isles, before its perusal by him for whom it was primarily designed. . . . The British Saints had always manifested a deep interest in all the foreign missions, and have recently made frequent and particular inquiry after the result of the mission to Berlin. . . . The Author has concluded to furnish the public with the full report of the mission in pamphlet form, feeling that a mere abstract, printed in the *Millennial Star*, would not be as satisfactory.”⁴⁸ Spencer’s letter is herein reproduced as published in the pamphlet *The Prussian Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1853). He describes his impressions of the country during his brief time there, his interactions with local officials before they banished him and Houtz, and his unfavorable opinion of European governments.

DOCUMENT TRANSCRIPTS

Orson Spencer to Brigham Young, February 8, 1853⁴⁹

To President Brigham Young.

Honoured and Beloved Brother,—I feel it my pleasure and duty at this time and place, to advise you of my doings, touching the Mission to the kingdom of Prussia, which I have had the honour to undertake according to the appointment of the Church. With the exception of a few of the first days of my journey from Great Salt Lake City, I have enjoyed good health—abating sea-sickness always. For this I am grateful to God, and to the Priesthood in Zion, whose intercessions are ever effectual in behalf of the faithful. The toils and difficulties of crossing the plains were measurably forgotten through the delightful union and rich heavenly instruc-

48. Spencer, *Prussian Mission*, 2.

49. Orson Spencer, *The Prussian Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1853).

tions of the large company of Elders with whom I was happily associated. I pass over many striking incidents attendant upon our journey through the States and across the Atlantic Ocean, by briefly saying, the good and mighty hand of our God was strikingly made manifest in our comfort, preservation, and prosperity up to the time of our arrival in Liverpool. All our brethren appointed on Missions to England and Europe have now safely arrived, except brothers Lamoreaux, Pitt, and Toner, whom we soon expect.⁵⁰ The elements have combined to give them a very astonishingly swift passage. One company of Elders crossed the Atlantic in 15 days, by a sailing packet, and one or two others in 18 days.

On the 20th January, brother Jacob Houtz and myself sailed from Hull for Hamburg; brother Moses Clough being detained in England for want of a passport. On our arrival in Hamburg, we found Elder Daniel Carn just expelled from that city by an order of the government. He has retreated to Altona,⁵¹ a Danish dominion, for the present, but he feels very uncertain whether he will be allowed to continue his labours in that region to any good purpose much longer.⁵² The other portions of the German Mission who have reached Hamburg are no less unsettled as to their prospective field of labour. The former, accompanied us to the American Consul, a native German, Mr. Bromberg, in order to get our passports endorsed;

50. William Pitt arrived in Liverpool on March 9, 1853, aboard the *William Nelson*. Daniel Toner arrived in Liverpool on April 1 aboard the *Roscius*. Andrew L. Lamoreaux arrived in Liverpool on April 26 aboard the *Kossuth* and left two days later for France. "Arrival," *Millennial Star* 15, no. 13 (Mar. 26, 1853): 202; "Arrival," *Millennial Star* 15, no. 16 (April 16, 1853): 250; "Arrival," *Millennial Star* 15, no. 19 (May 7, 1853): 296.

51. Altona was a city next to Hamburg, Germany, but it belonged to Denmark from 1640 until 1864. It became part of Hamburg in 1937. *Merriam-Webster's Geographical Dictionary*, s.v. "Altona."

52. Daniel Carn arrived in Hamburg in April 1852 as president of the German Mission. He began making a few converts, but in January 1853, he was confronted by government officials, who objected to his preaching. He refused to leave Hamburg because he had not broken any laws, but he was arrested for a few hours before he moved to Altona, which then belonged to Denmark. Carn participated in Latter-day missionary endeavors in Altona and continued to oversee proselyting in Hamburg. He was again arrested in October 1853 and permanently left Germany thereafter. Scharffs, *Mormonism in Germany*, 9–13.

Mr. Bromberg expressed some surprise at our presumption in undertaking to carry the Gospel to the kingdom of Prussia. Says he, Prussia will not treat you as the Syndic of Hamburg has Elder Carn, debating a long time whether they will allow you to operate there—their course will be prompt and energetic, probably setting you out of their kingdom *immediately*. But, he continued, if you should find it otherwise, I earnestly request that you will please to inform me. He renewed the same request at a still later interview. He observed that American citizens had frequently suffered imprisonment and abuse in Germany, and the American government had been distinctly informed of the same, but the information lay upon the files of Congress without ever being even called up. Hamburg is sexually corrupt, like other nations of Europe, and it is said, not only to license 15,000 females to transgress the laws of virtue and of God, the revenue of which goes to support the army, but the columns of the German newspapers contain notices, advertising for the company of females, naming what hour of the day the gentleman will admit them to his apartment. Oh earth! how shameless! The secretary of the American Legation, Mr. Fay,⁵³ residing at Berlin, told me that the prostitution of the sexes in that city was greater than we should dare to *think*; and the Sabbath, says he, is a holiday.⁵⁴

Upon our arrival at Berlin we were, in company with other railway passengers, immediately surrounded with a moveable fence or paling, and guarded by soldiers armed with guns and bayonets, until our examination was finished. We then took a carriage, and were soon set down at a respectable hotel, within five to eight minutes' walk of the king's palace. Our passports were demanded and taken to the police-office. We accordingly soon secured a neat, well furnished room in the hotel, which we soon dedicated to God and the service of the Mission during our residence in it.

53. Theodore Sedgwick Fay (1807–98) was born in New York and was Secretary of the American Legation in Berlin from 1837 to 1853. He was also a prolific writer. *New International Encyclopædia*, s.v. “Fay, Theodore Sedgwick,” 8:409.

54. Prostitution was legally tolerated in Hamburg as a “necessary evil” that “must be endured under strict supervision of the authorities.” As long as prostitution was legal, it could be monitored and regulated so that human trafficking and venereal diseases could be kept in check, they argued. In Berlin, prostitution had been alternately tolerated and forbidden, but an ordinance in 1851 tolerated it again after it had been illicit for a few years. Sanger, *History of Prostitution*, 189–252.

The next day we went to visit the American Legation, for the purpose of securing any useful information as to the laws and usages of the Prussians, and also what toleration or religious restrictions existed among them, and further, what would be a proper method of securing an interview with the king, if we should seek it.⁵⁵ We gave our names to the American minister, Mr. Barnard, but not having a card of introduction at hand, we were not admitted to his presence. We then sought an interview with his secretary, Mr. Fay, residing in another street, where we obtained ingress, his dignity being more accessible. Mr. Fay hailed us as American citizens very familiarly, and readily put many pointed questions concerning our Mission, and especially the nature of our religion; as, Do not your people totally reject christianity? No, we do not reject true christianity; no, by no means. But do your people believe in polygamy? Most assuredly, we believe in the Patriarchal Order of a Plurality of Wives, as taught in the Old and New Testament.⁵⁶ I wish to be open to conviction of truth, how can you prove the doctrine of Plurality from the Scriptures? it is not at all congenial with my feelings. I waived such an abrupt and hurried investigation, and sought to turn the conversation by promising at another time to put some books into his possession, that might satisfy his mind better than a hasty conversation could do. Mr. Fay politely proffered to give us a card to the Hon. Mr. Barnard, for which we thanked him kindly, and promised

55. Frederick William IV (1795–1861) was king of Prussia from 1840 to 1861.

56. After the public announcement of polygamy, Latter-day Saints justified the practice as not only acceptable but in many ways superior to monogamy. They often used biblical arguments, including the fact that numerous patriarchs had many wives and that God had commanded Adam and Eve to multiply. Orson Pratt claimed that polygamy had been practiced in the early Christian Church, but secular Roman law forbade it, and Christianity abandoned the practice. Benjamin Johnson also argued that the New Testament taught that the gospel of Christ was the same gospel of the Old Testament polygamists, and that Paul's admonition for bishops to be "the husband of one wife" (1 Timothy 3:2) implied that polygamy was practiced in his day. Latter-day Saints reasoned that monogamy led men to engage in various immoral activities, so polygamy would solve that problem as well. There were also several other physiological and sociological reasonings offered in support of the practice. Whittaker, "Early Mormon Polygamy Defenses," 43–63; "Christian Polygamy in the Sixteenth Century," *Seer* 1, no. 12 (December 1853): 177–83; Johnson, *Why the "Latter Day Saints" Marry a Plurality of Wives*, 12.

to call upon him again soon. We then soon had the pleasure of being admitted into the presence of Mr. Barnard, who was once a citizen of New York State, near Rochester. Mr. Barnard, apparently at the age of 55 or 60, seemed intelligent and dignified, but rather disposed to have our interview brief, saying that he was very busy just then; upon which intimation I immediately arose, and said to brother Houtz, Then let us leave—giving him to understand that we were not so dull that we could not appreciate a hint. Upon this he immediately said, O, no, sit a little. Accordingly we sat down, and broached our business. We wished an interview with the King of Prussia, and such a knowledge of the laws as would best subserve the interests of our Mission. He responded, I can render you no aid whatever in getting access to the king—perhaps Mr. Fay may inform you how the king is likely to be approached by strangers. We had not however asked his aid in any way, but said incidentally that we had yet to learn how his majesty could be approached. He said there was but one Church known in the laws of Prussia, and that was the Evangelical Church, of which the king was the acknowledged head, and the king felt it his duty to protect their religious order as much as any other interest pertaining to the people.⁵⁷ The Evangelical Lutheran Church was the only established religion of the kingdom, but as there were some whole provinces that adhered to the Roman Catholic faith, that religion existed by *permission* of Government, under the special and personal supervision of the king's police. The Jews also have some shadow of religious privilege. The Baptists have a secret and unobserved existence in Prussia; but Baptist missionaries from other countries were not allowed to remain in the kingdom of Prussia. Professor Oncken, a Baptist, was immediately ejected from Prussia. And many highly respectable sectarian ministers have been unceremoniously ejected from Prussia. The Baptists are not permitted to hold public meetings in any public place, or to baptize, or to administer the rites of marriage. Their meetings are held in an unobserved stolen manner; and their baptisms practised after the same

57. The king of Prussia was head of the country's state church. In 1817, King Frederick William III united the Reformed and Lutheran churches in Prussia. Some Lutherans objected, and in 1841, King Frederick William IV permitted a group of Lutherans to break off and form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Prussia. "Light on the Lutheran Church in Germany," 260–61.

manner.⁵⁸ I inquired of Mr. Barnard, if there was anything in the policy of the Government, or in their existing laws, that would forbid persons to emigrate from Prussia to other countries. He replied, that both the policy and the existing laws of the Government distinctly forbade emigration. The law, continues he, forbids any man to leave this kingdom until he has performed service in the army during a given number of years. And if any citizen of Prussia, after returning from a foreign land, (though he may have been absent twenty years,) is proved not to have served in the royal army of Prussia, he is immediately forced into the army, until the law which he has violated is magnified. The labouring poor are regarded as constituting an essential part of the support of Government, and any religion that favours emigration is obnoxious to the policy and laws of the Government.⁵⁹

Seeing no poor persons in the streets, as in England, I inquired the cause. My interpreter and guide replied, If a poor person were to lisp any expression of his wants or sufferings, he would be immediately seized and put into the custody of the Government officers, and put out of sight, and disposed of in a manner quite unwelcome to a freeman. An intelligent gentleman, who had been a student of the University of Berlin,⁶⁰ told me that thousands died of starvation; and the oppression of the people was wholly beyond endurance, and insurrection and rebellion would inevitably take place soon. The rebellion of 1848⁶¹ humbled the King, insomuch that he granted the people, in the language of Mr. Barnard, the shadow of a

58. The Prussian constitution of 1850 nominally provided for religious freedom, but various articles in it contained exceptions to religious liberty that were open to interpretation. It stated, "The exercise of religious liberty shall not be permitted to interfere with the civil or political duties of the citizens." Thus state-recognized religions, such as Catholics and Lutherans, were granted more liberty than nonrecognized religions, such as Baptists. Mitchell, "Mormons in Wilhelmine Germany," 19–22.

59. In Prussia in the 1840s, citizens were permitted to leave the country as long as they did not owe military duty, after stricter emigration laws had been in place during earlier decades. Torpey, "Leaving: A Comparative View," 16–18.

60. The University of Berlin, known today as Humboldt University of Berlin, was founded in 1811 under the auspices of Frederick William III of Prussia by Wilhelm von Humboldt.

61. In the 1840s, reforms raged in Paris, and in March 1848, crowds of protestors similarly gathered in Berlin. King Frederick Wilhelm IV surprisingly responded to

constitution; but though the spirit of tyranny was forced to go abroad for a little season, seeking rest, yet it has returned to the breast of the King of Prussia, with seven other spirits worse than the first. As in the empire of France, the efforts of Prussians to mollify the rigors of despotism have only resulted in multiplying those rigors tenfold. And the King's little finger in the year 1853 is thicker than his thumb was previous to 1848. And this retrograde tendency to absolutism is supposed to be universally prevalent on the whole continent of Europe.

We readily ascertained from the American Legation, that our arrival in Berlin was looked for[,] and the object of our mission was no secret. That Legation was familiar with the fact, that the King had sought an acquaintance with the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We found our appointment had been published in German newspapers, also a notice of the Danish emigration. An exaggeration of the number of the Danish emigration, and also a misrepresentation of the design of our people in obtaining emigrants from Europe, in order to become a state and subserve political ends, were quite apparent in the different public German prints. On Thursday, the 27th January, we again called upon the secretary, Mr. Fay, not knowing whether we should be allowed to remain in Berlin long or short, but desirous to make as many acquaintances as possible, and glean from the whole a knowledge of the best possible course to pursue, not forgetting to humble ourselves before the Lord for all our unworthiness. But from some cause our reception with the secretary was decidedly different from what it was the day before. Cool and reserved, he had concluded that his mind ought to be established in matters of religion, at the age of 45 years, and he declined reading the books which he had previously requested the pleasure to see. He gave his opinion, that if we wished to communicate with the King, he was only accessible through some prime minister, or leading officer in the state department. He named the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and also his excellency the State's Minister of Public Worship, V. Raumer.

Now, after retiring to our room, and calling upon the Lord, according

their demands by promising a constitution and election reform, but he changed his plans in April 1849. A constitution was created in December 1848 and revised in 1850. Barclay, "Revolution and Counter-revolution in Prussia," 73–85.

to the privilege of the priesthood in days of revelations from the heavens, we deemed it necessary to mark out some course of conduct to be pursued in our mission, not knowing whether we should be permitted to stay a day or a year. Only two methods of procedure seemed to present to our minds from which we might select one. One method was, to adopt a secret, unobserved course of introducing the Gospel, without excitement or much notoriety, until we could gain a foothold. We, however, soon came to the conclusion that this method, however desirable, would be wholly impracticable. We could not even stop an hour in any person's house, private or public, without sending our passport to the police-office, to give notice of our whereabouts. There was danger of hiring any one to secrecy that might harbour us, lest he should prove to be a minion of Government in disguise. For, we were most credibly informed that a system of secret espionage was continually practised, and the minions of Government, unobserved, were operating in every sphere—in domestic and private life, as well as public, and yet unknown, except to the authorities of the Government. This fact was most abundantly confirmed to us. The question then arose in our minds—is it the design of the Apostolic power that sent us, that we should undertake to introduce the Gospel in this manner where such a rigid police ordeal exists, with all these liabilities and contingencies. Our conclusion was in the negative. The time has not yet come in this way to fish and hunt in order to save the souls of men, as the spies in Canaan saved Rahab and her house.⁶² But the powers that be, shall be honored according to their station, firstly, in order that sovereigns and rulers may be proved in their official responsibilities, knowing full well that they, too, have a Sovereign and Ruler in the eternal heavens, who will judge both the prince and the peasant by one impartial scale of unerring justice. On the other hand, we had received encouragement from his Majesty the King of Prussia that he would maintain an honourable bearing towards a deputation from a

62. Jeremiah 16:16 speaks of the gathering of Israel: "Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks." In Joshua 2, Joshua sends spies to Jericho, and the harlot Rahab takes them in; in Joshua 6, Jericho is destroyed, but Rahab and her family are saved for her treatment of the spies.

numerous and worthy people, whose history and doctrines he had officially inquired after, through our honourable delegate at Washington, J. M. Bernhisel;⁶³ and whose inquiry had been promptly responded to by an early transmission of all the information which our best books could furnish. The Prussian Ambassador, residing in London, had forwarded to his Majesty, at Berlin, a full and complete set of books from the Church's Branch Office, in Liverpool (England). We concluded that we had a right to anticipate at least a respectable reception, until our mission could be fairly and honourably disposed of, on principles of civility at least. Accordingly our reflections finally balanced in favor of addressing a request to one of the highest officers of the Government of Prussia for to grant us an interview with his Majesty the King of Prussia, and also the privilege of preaching and publishing the Gospel of Jesus Christ in his dominions. Accordingly, we drew up the following letter, addressed to his excellency V. Raumer, State's Minister of Public Worship. Here I insert an exact transcript of the original letter:—

“To His Excellency Mr. V. Raumer, State's Minister of Public Worship.

“The undersigned Ministers of the Gospel of the Church of Jesus Christ, from the United States of America, constitute a deputation from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (commonly called Mormons), bearing credentials from Brigham Young, Governor of the Territory of Utah, United States of America.

“Your excellency is doubtless aware that his Majesty the King of Prussia, not long since, instructed his Majesty's Minister at Washington, Baron V. Herolt, to inquire of the delegate in Congress from Utah Territory, the Hon. J. M. Bernhisel, what were the distinguishing tenets and doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (*alias* Mormons). In response to that inquiry, the books best calculated to give the information desired by his Majesty the King of Prussia, were promptly forwarded to his Majesty from the Church's Office, in Liverpool (England).

“Further action was also taken by the Church of Jesus Christ of

63. In 1851, John Milton Bernhisel (1799–1881) was appointed as a Utah territorial delegate to Congress in Washington, DC. He served from 1851 to 1859 and again from 1861 to 1863. Barrett, “Dr. John M. Bernhisel,” 159–63.

Latter-day Saints at their late General Conference, held at Great Salt Lake City, September 1st, 1852, to send the undersigned as a chosen deputation, whose duty it should be to seek, in the most respectful manner, an interview with his Majesty the King of Prussia, and with his excellency the State's Minister of Public Worship, in order to answer any interrogations that might be propounded by his Majesty, or by his Majesty's Minister of Public Worship, whereby the marvellous work which has been wrought by the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the land of America, and in the islands of the sea, and in remote parts of the earth, may be conveyed to all sovereigns and all subjects, who are meekly and humbly waiting for the salvation of the true Israel of God, scattered abroad among every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.⁶⁴

"The undersigned deputation do also most respectfully solicit the royal favor of being permitted to preach and publish to his Majesty's subjects, in the kingdom of Prussia, the prominent doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as set forth in the publications previously forwarded to his Majesty, at the instance of the Hon. J. M. Bernhisel.

"The undersigned have taken the liberty to address your Excellency in the use of the English language, being but imperfectly skilled in the knowledge of the German tongue.

"And the undersigned will await the reply of your Excellency at Hotel Zur Stadt, Magdeburg, Monstrasse, No. 11.

"In the meantime, supplicating grace, mercy, and peace from the God of Heaven to rest upon his Majesty the King of Prussia, and upon his Majesty's State's Minister of Public Worship, for ever, we have the honor to subscribe ourselves your humble servants in the Gospel of Jesus Christ,

"Orson Spencer.

"Jacob Houtz.

"Berlin, January 29th, 1853."

64. Acts 3:13 uses the phrase "the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers"; the expression "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" originated in Revelation 14:6.

The foregoing letter having been dedicated to God, we took particular pains to deliver into the residence of His Excellency, with our own hands; the porter of his Excellency received the same, and said that the delivery was right. When this duty was discharged, we felt perfectly tranquil, and satisfied that we had done the best that we could. This letter was delivered to His Excellency on Saturday, the 29th January. On Monday, the 31st, at night, we received a summons signed by the President of the king's police, requiring our attendance at the police office, on Tuesday, the 1st February, at 11 o'clock, a.m.

The night previous to our examination before the king's police, I told Elder Houtz that we would prepare ourselves again to call upon the Lord, and I assured him that we should have some intimation from our Heavenly Father concerning our true position, that night. Here allow me to say, that in all our decisions and doings, there existed the most perfect union of spirit and effort between myself and brother Houtz.

We laid ourselves down to sleep, full of praises, and confidence in our God, neither knowing nor fearing any harm.

That night, I had a dream, which I trust you will allow me to relate. I saw myself on the platform of a scaffold of a barn—the rails and poles laid across from one great beam to another. On the verge of this scaffold of rails and slabs lying far aloft, above the barn floor, in a scattered relation, I saw myself leading the way, and a companion following, the latter saying, this will be a precarious matter to walk on such a scaffold, from one great beam to the other. Yes, said I, but we shall *go* it. Another companion did not seem to reach the height of the scaffold before he went back. A few other men seemed to be sitting hard by the border of the same scaffold, but not exactly upon it. I succeeded in reaching the opposite great beam, in one or two instances however, fixing a place for my companion to step with caution. But after I reached the opposite beam I had yet to make two or three steps, solely upon the beam about twelve inches wide, which seemed the most difficult part of the whole matter. But these steps I was bound to take at all hazards. It occurred to me that it would ill become me to stoop or crawl on my hands and knees, and accordingly I made the attempt to walk the short distance that remained, in a perfectly upright position of the body. But while I was making the requisite steps, I found that I *must* go off. And having gone as far as I could, I made a virtue of necessity, and

jumped barely in time to secure my feet under me, and alighted upon some old hay, without any injury, to the gratification of some that were looking on from the side which I had departed from. I joined in the congratulation, and said it was a quick movement indeed. I awoke, and discovered that it was a dream, and immediately exclaimed, From whence is this dream? Is this from God? Lord, how shall I know whether this is from thee or from some other source? The reply then came to me, quick as thought, in an easy manner, as though it had been read from some printed book—"Mine Angel hath stood by your bed-side, to keep all foul spirits away from you, in order that my Spirit might indite the truth upon your mind, even as a fond and tender mother watches over her sleeping child to brush the flies away, and to prevent its being disturbed when it needs refreshing; and this is the way that I revealed myself to my servant Jacob at Bethel, while he slept upon a stone for a pillow: and this is the way that I revealed my will to Solomon in a dream."⁶⁵ Then it was, as the foregoing dream and answer to my enquiry flowed into my mind, like honey and oil, that my heart melted within me, and my soul rejoiced in praises to my Heavenly Father. And I exclaimed, has the Lord even spoken to me, and His Angel, like the police of Heaven, stood by my bed-side, while I was unconscious of it, and knew not the glory that surrounded me? This testimonial of the divine guidance and protection, to me, a stranger, in a strange land, afforded me ample compensation for all the travel of a long journey through sea-sickness and frosty deserts, and the privation of family, of home, and of the priesthood of Zion—and the expense of time and means. Many are the testimonies of the Lord to them that keep His commandments, but the richest of all his testimonies are those which come when they are most needed. In the morning I communicated the dream to Elder Houtz, and told him at the same time, that I did not know how long we should be in crossing the scaffold, but probably we might have to jump in order to escape something worse. It occurred to me that it would be best to employ a licensed interpreter of the English and German languages to act for us before the police

65. In Genesis 28:11–19, the patriarch Jacob rests on stone pillows and has a dream of angels ascending and descending on a ladder, and God promises land for his posterity. In 1 Kings 3:5–15, the Lord appears to Solomon in a dream and promises him a wise heart.

court, although brother Houtz had a passable knowledge of the German. My object was, to have a private interpreter in disguise, that could oversee both the public interpreter and the Prussian judges, without himself being known as an interpreter. Upon our admission into the presence of the court, however, the court whispered to the public interpreter, and he was detained and not suffered to be present at our examination. Either the clerk of the court or one of the judges acted as interpreter, mangling the English, however, rather disagreeably. After some interchanges of words among themselves, in a low tone, and while passing from one court room to another, they at length commenced the examination, which I will relate with as much accuracy as my memory will permit:—

What is your object in coming to the city of Berlin?

We came here to obtain permission of the authorities of Prussia to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the fundamental doctrines of which are set forth in printed books, which have been sent to his Majesty your King. I then interposed and asked the Court, if we were summoned before that Court in answer to a letter bearing our signatures, addressed to his Excellency V. Raumer, in which letter the object of our visit to the city of Berlin was distinctly explained. The answer of the Court was in the negative. Still, certain questions and concurring circumstances led us to scruple the veracity of the reply. Court.—Will you state what was your object in coming here? or what religion do you teach? Is it the Evangelical religion? Is it the Catholic or the Protestant religion you wish to teach? Answer.—I will tell you in few words. We wish to teach the Gospel as revealed to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, from the Heavens. This Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized in the year 1830, in America, by Joseph Smith, a Prophet sent of God, and ordained by the ministry of an Angel from Heaven to reveal and preach salvation to the inhabitants of the earth. Court.—Who is this Jesus Christ? and who is Joseph Smith? Answer.—{Before we could answer the last questions we had to indulge a smile, that authorities high in the established Evangelical Church of Prussia should be troubled with such a weak memory as to forget who Jesus Christ was. They might forget and lose the spirit of Christ, but how should they forget his name?} How, said the Court again, does your religion differ from the Evangelical or Lutheran Church? Reply.—Our Church is an exact likeness to the Primitive Church, having in it Apostles, Prophets,

&c., with the gifts of miracles, healings, &c., enjoying the ministry of angels from heaven. Court.—You have some order of marriage—what is your order of marriage, and how does it differ from that of the Evangelical Church? Answer.—If two persons are mutually agreed, and there are no known obstacles to their union, they are married for time and for all eternity. Court.—Well, that is our method of marriage. I then said, then you marry for time and for all eternity, do you? Yes. Here I take occasion to remark, that the Court did not seem to rest satisfied with the inquiry about marriage, and the answer. They either had a vague and imperfect idea of our system of plurality of wives, or they had forgotten something perhaps which they had been instructed to inquire after, or they could not express their question in English, according to their wish. They undoubtedly conceived that there was something objectionable in our system of marriage, which they wanted to use to our disadvantage, but could not get at it. Have you any secret signs and tokens among you, like unto the Catholics? No, not to my knowledge, for I do not know what secret signs the Catholics have.⁶⁶ I asked, if they knew before of our coming, and the object of it. They replied, they suspected our business. Again, I inquired if Mr. V. Raumer, the State's Minister of Public Worship, was the most suitable government officer to apply to, in order to get access to the King, and also to decide the question whether we might preach and publish the Gospel in the Kingdom of Prussia? The Court replied in the affirmative, and said that our application to preach the Gospel would then be handed over to his Excellency Mr. V. Raumer, for his sanction or rejection. This led us most assuredly to believe not only that his Excellency Mr. V. Raumer had received our letter of the 29th January, 1853, and instigated the summons which had brought us before the King's Police, February 1st, but also that Mr. V. Raumer was actually in session with the President of the King's Police in an adjoining room, and did *dictate* the order for our banishment out of the kingdom, which followed the investigation. After we had borne testimony

66. Spencer conveniently used his lack of knowledge of Catholic symbols to skirt the issue, as Latter-day Saints do use "signs and tokens" in temple rituals. In Spencer's time, these practices were done in other buildings, since the Latter-day Saints did not then have a temple. Bradshaw, "Freemasonry and the Origins of Modern Temple Ordinances," 159–237.

to the work of the Lord, and the organization of the Church by his Prophet Joseph Smith, and also to the doctrines of the Church, they took our declarations in writing, and requested us to sign the same, which we did do with all readiness, being glad to leave upon their public records a knowledge of the fundamental principles of salvation, with the testimony of two witnesses bearing the eternal Priesthood of God signed to the same. And I verily believe our testimony will remain against them to the final reckoning of the judgment day. Our testimony was then translated into the German for the comprehension of the whole Court, and transferred into another room for the inspection and action of some higher powers. During this period we held some little conversation with that member of the Court, who could speak imperfect English, concerning the relative populations and products of Berlin and New York. I never was more sensible of the instruction given by Jesus Christ to his disciples—when you are brought before governors and kings, “take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.”⁶⁷ While we were going to the place of trial, I repeated aloud to Brother Houtz the foregoing passage of Scripture, feeling to rejoice abundantly in the assurance that the precious promise of Christ would in very deed be perfectly fulfilled. Surely the Lord is a God of Truth, and let all people trust in his most holy and unerring word.

After the lapse of some time, the decision of the higher authorities was returned from some distant apartment or office, and we were permitted to read our destination in the English language. The decision of the Court was in substance as follows:—You, Orson Spencer and Jacob Houtz, are hereby commanded to depart out of this kingdom to-morrow morning, under the penalty of *transportation*; and you are also forbidden ever to return to this kingdom hereafter, under the penalty of being transported. After perusing the order, I requested the Court to give me a copy of it, in order that I might have some written instrument to show the authority that had sent me. My request was denied, and I was given to understand that we would have to obey the order without any copy being given. This denial was *significantly* expressed. I then said, have we committed any fault, or any crime whatever, that we should be subjected to such abrupt and rigid

67. Matthew 10:19.

banishment? The reply was, No! but it is your religion that has caused it. When this declaration was made, imputing the only fault to our religion, my heart inwardly rejoiced, and I said to myself, our religion is good, and pure, and faultless, having come from the holy heavens; and having spoken against that, you will have to answer it to Him, who revealed it from the Heavens for the blessing and salvation of all those who should receive it. I next sought to have them protract the time of our departure, alleging that we had some unfinished business that would detain us a week, or at least two or three days, in order to finish it, &c. No; was the peremptory reply, you cannot have it; you must go, to-morrow morning. Finding them inexorable, I then said, I suppose the morning means any time till evening. The reply was, you must go to-morrow morning at eight o'clock, at the same time using some contemptuous expression in the German, which was understood by Elder Houtz to be uttered in some anger. The ruling judge, then got the railway time-table, after which he said, that we must depart at half-past seven o'clock the next morning.

The court next asked, if we fully understood our destination and their decision, and if we did, they wished we would sign a declaration that we were not ignorant of the decision, but fully understood it, which we consented to sign. Finding, that the more we said to them, so much the more they endeavoured to thrust us away in a barbarous manner, we ceased our efforts. They then passed us into two other rooms, in each of which we underwent a minute and distinct inspection, the object of which appeared to be, to take a registry of the description of our persons, and perhaps another object was to overawe us with a sense of our danger if ever we were found again in the precincts of that kingdom. But we looked down upon them as being as much beneath us as the very dust of our feet: and they had no power but from God, who was our friend by covenant, and not theirs. Therefore we felt more contempt for them, than they possibly *could feel for us*, because we had knowledge from whence all power emanates, and they were ignorant. Poor wretches! our souls were full of blessings and heavenly desires for their good, and the good of their king and all his subjects, up to the very day that they thrust us from their presence, and would not hearken to the great tidings which we had brought to them over seas and continents, and Angels had brought from the distant realms of glory. The heavens will bear an eternal record that we loved their souls, and poured

out our hearts night and day that peace and salvation might come unto them; but now our desires are turned to other people who are more worthy of the kingdom of God. They took the precaution so to mark our passport, that when we had occasion to show it, some significant marks would show policemen that we were under sentence of expulsion from the kingdom. It was now past two o'clock in the afternoon, and we still desired to see if the American Minister, or his Secretary, could or *would* do anything expressive of his disapprobation of such proceedings towards American citizens. We knew that such treatment was undoubtedly in violation of the comity of civilized and friendly nations. Our next object was to prove the fidelity of our own Ambassador towards American citizens. We however found that both the members of the Legation had gone out upon a riding excursion, and would not return to their office till evening. Although the time allowed to us to tarry was inadequately short, still we called again, and with some difficulty obtained a few moments of the Secretary's time in signing our passports, and the meagre consolation from him that many others, and some of the best men, had been as abruptly driven from the city as we had been. We then resigned ourselves submissively to the decree that thrust us out, being abundantly assured that there was no probable chance to evade it. Reflections, of course, arose in our minds—had we done all that we could to plant the Gospel in the hearts of the people to whom we were sent? Would it have been wisdom in us to have remained beyond the time stipulated by the government for our departure, and thereby put the validity and efficacy of their order to the test? Was there a reasonable hope that we could have set down with impunity in any other part of the Prussian dominion? Was it possible that the king himself (living in close proximity with the State's Minister of Public Worship, and the President of Police) had not been a co-worker in the expulsory order, and perhaps would have countermanded the order of his State's Minister and the President of Police? These were questions that passed and repassed through our minds with as deep considerations as the circumstances of the case would allow. We felt the importance of the mission, its bearing upon the destinies of a great and precious people, and the lamentation that must follow any neglect or mismanagement on our part. The repulse was sudden, and, so far as we knew, unparalleled in the history of the missions of this Church. For the success of this mission, prayer had probably been offered up to God

daily from the hearts of the best of men in many lands. As yet, however, up to the date of this letter, we have not been able to discover any essential error in our proceedings. Our minds have enjoyed quietude and satisfaction in the endeavour to do the best that we could, and we have been enabled, in all meekness and faith, to wash our feet clean from the condemnation that may attend the inhabitants of Prussia. And should you, dear President, upon the reception of this letter, think proper to give us your approbation for having gone to the full extent that our wisdom and ability would permit in righteousness, it will tend greatly to confirm our joy and satisfaction in the important mission assigned us. A careful observer of signs and circumstances might feel prompted to conjecture several reasons, or rather causes, why the message of heaven has been so abruptly and deplorably spurned, and rejected by the authorities of the kingdom of Prussia. The genius of the Prussian Government is widely different from what many living in the free United States, might suppose it to be.

There are two classes of men, who are in some measure qualified to form a tolerably correct estimate of the nature and character of the governments of Europe, or more especially of the Western parts of Europe. One class is, those who have travelled or lived under these governments; another is, those who have seen the condition of these nations, in the visions of the Spirit of God. But one abatement should enter into the calculation of those who have travelled into the nations of Europe, only a few years since; and that is this: Europe is not now what it was only a year or two since. The bias and wane to Democracy which existed a few years since, is now making an accelerated retrograde movement back to the most rigid despotism. Where revolutions have recently occurred,⁶⁸ the people themselves have proved to demonstration that they cannot abide either freedom, or blessing, or salvation. They cannot endure the simplest principles of self-preservation and order, saying nothing of the purer and higher order and organization

68. In 1848, numerous revolutions occurred throughout Europe, including in France, Prussia, Italy, Poland, Romania, and Hungary. Discontent with feudal systems and other issues sparked upheavals in France, and the revolutionary spirit spread across the continent. Additionally, the infamous Irish Potato Famine created turbulence in the British Isles at this time. Some Latter-day Saints viewed these events as heralding in the second coming of Jesus Christ. Revolutions would lead to religious

of the Gospel. Southern Slaves are better qualified to appreciate blessings (aside from the curse upon them) than the great mass of white subjects in Western Europe.⁶⁹ Consequently, like the dog, the latter return to their own vomit, and like the sow that was washed, they return with ten-fold greediness to their wallowing in the mire.⁷⁰ The freest and most intelligent nation of Europe, except England, has made a most palpable *demonstration* towards popular freedom. The result has been, that the people themselves could not abide any thing but high-handed despotism. Their hearts are so full of filthiness, abomination, and every deceitful and wicked thing, that nothing but the fetters of despotism, drawn tighter and tighter, until they actually perish in their chains, will meet the exigency of their case. This demonstration in favour of a sort of *telestial* salvation,⁷¹ has been made by the most inviting and promising part of all Continental Europe. France is the flower and pride of the Continent of Europe. But France cannot abide even the twilight that shoots up from the Western horizon. She recoils back

freedom, which in turn would lead to Mormon converts who could gather to Zion. Jews would also be freed from oppression and thereby be able to fulfill prophecies about their role in Palestine. See Livingston, *From Above and Below*, 35–70.

69. Most nineteenth-century Protestant whites held a belief that black Africans and African-Americans descended from biblical Cain, and this tradition likewise permeated Latter-day Saint ideas. Some blacks were ordained to the priesthood during the lifetime of Joseph Smith, but after the Latter-day Saints migrated to Utah, Brigham Young banned those of black African descent from receiving the priesthood and participating in temple ordinances, a practice that was in place until 1978. Mauss, “Casting Off the ‘Curse of Cain,’” 82–83; Reeve, *Religion of a Different Color*, 106–39, 259; Allred, “Traditions of Their Fathers,” 34–49.
70. In the New Testament, 2 Peter 2:22 reads, “But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”
71. In Latter-day Saint theology, God will ultimately judge all people and assign them a degree of glory based on their actions. These glories are the celestial, terrestrial, and telestial, *telestial* being a uniquely Latter-day Saint word. The telestial kingdom is the lowest of the three, and its inhabitants are described as “liars, and sorcerers, and adulterers, and whoremongers, and whosoever loves and makes a lie.” Larry E. Dahl, “Degrees of Glory,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 1:367–69; Revelation, 16 February 1832, in Godfrey et al., eds., *Joseph Smith Papers, Documents, Volume 2*, 191 [Doctrine and Covenants 76:103].

towards her own nocturnal darkness, as more congenial to the abominations that have long been growing sturdy and invincible with the duration of many ages. How then shall the nations dwelling in exterior darkness, without even the faint radiations of twilight, abide any thing but the vials of wrath, and those without mixture. Western Europe, including Prussia, Austria, Greece, Russia, and Turkey, are, in comparison with France, as huge beasts likened to some slender animals whom some effort has been made to tame: the grisly bear, tiger, and lion, in other words, compared with the deer or antelope. But if my information be correct, even France is far deeper in the pit of horrid abomination than Sodom ever dared to be.⁷² What then must Western Europe be? Here, similitudes fail. The despotism and slavery of Western Europe is like the darkness of ancient Egypt, more capable of being felt than described. The lips of the populace are sealed, and the province of their *thoughts* is confined to the narrow, dark chambers of their natal embryo. Long-continued estrangement from natural rights and privileges has rendered even conscience their enemy, and a despot accusing and menacing them for presuming to think or speak in matters of freedom and salvation. The spirit of truth has been so belied, and so ingeniously transformed and depicted for many ages as an enemy to the popular masses, that it is regarded as a visitant of hideous designs, and no matter in what form it comes, it is looked upon as full of “fire-brands, arrows, and death;” and the people flee before the first symptoms of its approach, as they would from the pestilence, and myriads of forked-tongued serpents. But are the rulers happy who have reduced the people to this sad and hopeless dilemma? No, far from it. That which they have sown, they stand in momentary and awful fear of reaping. They have reduced and subjugated the people through lies, bribery, sensuality, imprisonment, tortures, murders, and, worse than all, pious dogmas that doubly kill. Those are happy, like robbers, whose immense, blood-bought treasures have to be watched with incessant and fearful anxiety. But though you, dear brother, may not ask, yet some will doubtless ask, how can all these things be and continue in countries where there exist such splendid and richly endowed Universities of learning, and where religion is not only universal, but established by

72. *Sodom* alludes to a biblical city known for its wickedness, described in Genesis 18–19. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “Sodom.”

law, and the sovereigns themselves are the pious heads of the Church, and profess and solemnly avow that they receive continued revelations from the God of Heaven, to direct them in all their ways? Universities have schooled the people, and law-established Churches have prayed and preached the people into the nethermost corners of hell. But for these, the people would not, and could not, have been subjugated and reduced to such impotence, wretchedness, and abomination.

I do exceedingly marvel at the great power of the Devil among the nations. The extent of the oppressions, cruelties, abominations, and miseries, is greater than my heart ever conceived before. If these be the fruits of early apostacy and transgression of the laws, covenant, and ordinances of God, then my heart exclaims, how terrible are thy judgments against evil doers, Oh, thou Holy One of Israel! Oh, thou righteous ruler of heaven and earth, suffer not men to continue in their wickedness, and corrupt the whole earth; but cut off the wicked speedily, before they multiply and increase their wicked ways upon the earth.

The condition of the wicked nations of the earth is so complicated, so full of entanglement, so hopelessly corrupt, that it really seems bordering upon unkindness and want of fatherly compassion not to allow them to make a speedy end of themselves, and sweep the earth clean of such unspeakable pollution. When I have stood by the bedside of a fellow-man suffering excruciating agonies from some mortal and incurable disease, I have most heartily wished that death might hasten to his release, and rescue the sufferer. When I contemplate the condition of many nations of Europe, as beyond the pale of recovery to righteousness, and as led captive to the Devil, and a prey to every deceitful and hurtful lust—shut out from knowledge—all domestic and social ties sundered, even as the precious growing corn is rent and trampled under foot of swine⁷³—all offices of humanity abolished or banished—the cries of starvation, excessive and rewardless toil, the wailings of calamity, and the groanings of oppressed innocence, are hushed at the point of the bayonet, or by the gloom of the dungeon—and the light of eternity is not permitted to reflect a ray of consolation upon the benighted mind—my heart exclaims, Oh Lord, hasten to reap down the

73. Compare Matthew 7:6, which speaks of pearls, rather than corn, being trampled by swine.

earth, and suffer not the miseries of the human race to linger. Let the strong be dispossessed of his ill-obtained goods. But, after the testimony of Thy servants has gone forth to all nations, let righteousness be laid to the line, and judgment to the plummet; and sweep away the refuges of lies; and abolish the covenant with death; and break up the agreement with hell.

Now, dear sir, that there is an agreement between some of the potentates in high places, and the satanic rulers of the darkness of this world, suffer me to give a very reliable account of some extraordinary features in the character of the Czar of Russia.⁷⁴ My information comes through an intimate friend of the Emperor Nicholas, said to be a philosopher of considerable distinction. Nicholas, the Emperor of Russia, claims that he receives revelations from God continually, and that he has been raised up by the God of heaven for the express purpose of uniting the Catholic, and Greek or Protestant, Churches into one Church. By him the long lamented breach between these adverse religious powers is to be healed. The reins of authority and power are given to him for this express purpose and end. He regards the Pope of Rome to be a usurper and impostor; and he, Nicholas, is ordained of God to destroy the power of the Pope, and unite the two great contending religious powers into one. Now, the Emperor Nicholas is the brother-in-law of Frederick William, the King of Prussia; that is, the Empress of Russia, the wife of Nicholas, is the sister of Frederick, the King of Prussia. Now, the King of Prussia is said to be a very pious man, and his brother-in-law, Nicholas, must be equally pious, seeing that he receives revelations from God, and is ordained to so great a work of restitution in the affairs of Europe. And there is ample proof that the latter couples works with his faith, in that he musters the largest and most effective military force now known in Europe. *Par nobilium fratrum*,—a pair of noble brothers!⁷⁵

The Emperor of Austria,⁷⁶ too, for the first time, it is said, has paid a very friendly and familiar visit to Berlin to see King Frederick. Each of these sovereigns, it will be recollected, claims to be the representative of adverse religions. Catholics, Greeks, and Lutheran Protestants here seem

74. Emperor Nicholas I (1796–1855) reigned from 1825 to 1855.

75. Nicholas I was married to Alexandra Feodorovna, or Charlotte of Prussia (1798–1860), the daughter of Frederick Wilhelm III.

76. Emperor Franz Joseph I (1830–1916) reigned over Austria from 1848 to 1916.

inclined to dip their several spoons into one common soup-dish,—

“How pleasant ’tis to see
Kindred and brethren all agree.”

It only needs the Sublime Porte, or the Mahometan Ottoman, to cast *his* spoon into the same soup-dish, and the holy quadrangle will be nearly complete enough to take peace from a fourth part of the earth, and carry out the *consumption* decreed of heaven, and make an end of many nations. No doubt, these pious personages will do up their work religiously, according to their holy profession and calling. They already know how to use the sword, in order to back up their revelations, and, if other things are lacking, to make out their full equipment, I think the arsenal of heaven can furnish a ready supply of such effective instruments as plague, pestilence, and famine, by which the *consumption decreed* will be accomplished. And if the straggling dissenters, under the name of “spiritual rappers,” who have fled to the United States, do not hail from the ensign of Western Europe for their license to preach and reveal the things of the “Spirit World,” they are in danger of being hurled into oblivion by the greater works of the authorities at their fountain head on this side the Atlantic.⁷⁷ The people of the Continent are living in fearful apprehension of revolutions and wars; and the suspense, jealousy, and vigilance consequent upon such a state of things, are like the precursory pangs of dissolution. The first shadow of suspicious appearances is readily magnified and changed into real form and substance, and summary execution nips the germ before any development of the bud can designate to what class or genus it belongs. The rulers fear the people, and the people hate the rulers.

The last desperate effort is now making of trying to unite the different sovereigns against the people, under the sway of their respective sceptres.

77. Spiritualism began in New York in the late 1840s and then spread rapidly across the country, including among some Latter-day Saints in the San Bernardino colony in California. Spiritualists believed they could contact the spirits of the dead, who would respond by knocking or by manifesting themselves through a medium, a living person. Apostle Amasa Lyman opposed spiritualism in San Bernardino in the 1850s, but in the late 1860s and 1870s, he and other disaffected members became involved in the spiritualist Godbeite movement. Bitton, “Mormonism’s Encounter with Spiritualism,” 39–50.

This is a *dernier resort*;⁷⁸ necessity alone dictates it, and necessity may perhaps bring this union of rulers into a temporary completion. The channels of intercommunication among the people are measurably closed or abolished, through a system of espionage that has reached the zenith of perfection. Consequently the people cannot know their own strength, neither can they consolidate their energies into any position of self-defence against the shameless aggressions of despotic rulers. No plans can be concerted or even discussed with safety; no whispers can reach the ceiling of midnight privacy, but the spirits of air will convey the same to their antagonistic oppressors. Therefore the people are being prepared to be led forth to the slaughter, by despots, even as the ox that knows not his bloody destination. They cannot help themselves; they have neither knowledge nor power to help themselves. The chains of darkness hold them fast. There is none to deliver—no arm to bring salvation. But some one may say, is there none of Heaven's Police to guard the way of the righteous—to open the window-shutters of the soul—to cleanse the avenues of intelligence, and let in the redeeming light of eternity, except for those who dwell in Zion? Yes, it may be there is all this, and more; but seemingly not now. Is not the Lord beginning to say to many nations, "this is your hour, and the power of darkness"?⁷⁹ and as he said to Judas when Satan had entered into him, "what thou doest, do quickly"?⁸⁰ Do not the powers of darkness prevail over all flesh, excepting but a small portion? And is not that wicked revealed in high places (though in lying wonders) so effectively as to ensnare the nations, and ultimately to execute the *decree of consumption*, when few men shall be left. But if judgments are permitted to go forth, and wars are allowed to make many nations desolate, in order to gratify the evil propensities of despotic rulers, may we not fondly hope that many millions, now groaning under the iron hand of their oppressors, will make a happy exchange of their condition? They are not voluntary and intelligent agents in these prospective scenes of carnage and human slaughter, and are therefore comparatively innocent. And though swept off this earth by appalling calamities, and the ambitious schemes of blood-guilty rulers, yet they will go to that land where the "weary

78. *Dernier resort* (or *ressort*) means "last resort." *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "dernier."

79. Luke 22:53.

80. See John 13:27.

will be at rest, and where the wicked will cease from troubling.” In that land to which the signs of the times seem to indicate that they are hastening, they will become accessible to the servants of God and to the glorious light of truth, which are now withheld from them by the cunning craft of men, and by rulers who make merchandise of the souls of men, and sacrifice millions upon the bloody altar of their ambition.

But I have already protracted this letter beyond my original design, and must now close. The work of the Lord is very prosperous in Great Britain, under the able Presidency of Elder Samuel W. Richards. The Saints are progressing in knowledge, union, and the power of the spirit of truth. I have had the pleasure to preach to several large meetings of different Conferences, and find that the revelation concerning the New and Everlasting Covenant is not only happily and gratefully received, but it is also inspiring the thousands of British Saints with the most ardent desires to be gathered to the valleys of the mountains. On account of the great length of time required in order to get your instructions relative to my future movements, and that of those associated with me in the Prussian Mission, I have written to President Orson Pratt for his earliest advice as to the propriety of my laboring in the United States, together with Elder Jacob Houtz, until you think proper to call me to my family and the bosom of the Church.⁸¹ A homeward mission is always acceptable, when it is followed with your approbation and blessing. Elder Clough is advised to stop in England at present. Any advice that your multiplied engagements may suffer you to give my dear family in my absence will be most sensibly appreciated.

That you may long live to feed the Church of Christ with knowledge and understanding, and hold the sceptre of righteousness on the earth, and enjoy the fruits of your abundant labors, is the unceasing prayer of your humble servant, and truly affectionate brother in the Gospel of Jesus Christ,

Orson Spencer.

Liverpool, England, February 8th, 1853.

81. Orson Spencer and Jacob Houtz left England on April 2, 1853, aboard the ship *America*, and Spencer returned to Utah later that year. “Departure of Elders Spencer and Houtz,” *Millennial Star* 15, no. 16 (April 16, 1853): 250; Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 1:338.