

SILENCING MORMON POLYGAMY

*Failed Persecutions, Divided Saints &
the Rise of Mormon Fundamentalism*

VOLUME 1

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A Foundation of Prophecies



I Defy the United States

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN 19TH CENTURY MORMONISM

CHAPTER 1

Fundamentalist claims to priesthood authority are often difficult for mainstream latter-day saints to grasp for a number of reasons. First, they are often portrayed in an academic vacuum. That is, there have been a number of paradigms almost universally adopted by mainstream latter-day saints that have become so intuitive over the past century that many members of the LDS Church may not even recognize that they are making certain historical assumptions when reading the claims of fundamentalist Mormons. These assumptions make it difficult to grasp their claims and they will be addressed throughout this volume. Second, there are a number of fundamentalist groups with varying claims so universally representing their claims is not entirely possible. Third, some of the founding fathers of fundamentalist Mormonism made statements that are inconsistent one with another.

These first few chapters have been provided to create an exegetical lens through which modern readers may better understand and interpret the various priesthood claims of fundamentalist Mormons – they also provide a foundation of prophecies upon which fundamentalist Mormons rest their priesthood claims. The remaining sections of this volume address the historical priesthood claims surrounding the 1886 revelation received by president John Taylor. They also address significant historical inconsistencies of those claims as related by the founding fathers of fundamentalist Mormonism.¹

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

While commonly taught today, teachings emphasizing obedience to the law of the land were relatively uncommon in nineteenth century Mormonism. In fact, these teachings were largely absent from public discourse until Wilford Woodruff's issuance of the 1890 manifesto. After the manifesto was accepted at the October general conference that year, these teachings increased to meet the

demands of an aggressive public relations campaign pushing for Utah statehood² and they were renewed periodically for a few decades thereafter as Church leadership publically disavowed officially granting permission to hundreds of couples to enter secret plural marriages. Beyond denying approval of post manifesto plural marriages, the increase in preaching strict adherence to the laws of the land was necessary because Mormons had a tenacious reputation for civil disobedience – in fact, their reputation was so engraved in public perception that one Utah judge refused to extend several rights of citizenship to Mormons because, among other things, they believed “[t]hat Congress has no right to interfere with the practices of the Mormon religion, and all enactments against the people are unwarranted.”³

In stark contrast – and over a century later – it is not now uncommon for latter-day saints to mistakenly believe that civil disobedience in LDS Church history was limited to the period of time when the Church was challenging the constitutionality of the anti-polygamy laws in the territory of Utah – or to believe that Mormons have never joined hands in civil disobedience at all. Far from accurate, this misnomer reveals a general unawareness that polygamy as practiced by Joseph Smith and contemporary apostles was illegal in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois long before it was made illegal in the territory of Utah. Punishments ranged from seven years hard labor to disenfranchisement to a \$1,000.00 fine to severe flogging Old Testament style.⁴ The only brief period of legal freedom to live plural marriages without legal persecutions was in the intermountain west before Congress enacted anti-polygamy laws aimed at exterminating the Mormon marriage system.⁵

After the Anti-Polygamy Act of 1862 officially declared polygamy illegal in the territory of Utah and after other acts of Congress increased legal persecutions against the saints, leaders of the LDS Church began performing and/or authorizing plural marriages in Mexico and Canada to circumvent prosecution under Utah territorial laws – and apparently under the mistaken impression that plural marriages were not illegal in Mexico and Canada during that period.⁶ It took another forty-eight years before the Church conclusively put an end to the practice of plural marriages within the structural framework of the LDS Church.⁷

Even had LDS Church leaders been aware of laws in Mexico and Canada forbidding plural marriages, they most likely would have remained defiant of those laws as well. Speaking to the saints in the Assembly Hall on temple square in 1880, John Taylor made this emphatically clear. Declaring “[t]he people of the rest of the country

I Defy the United States

[U.S.A.]” as the Church’s enemies, he concluded that no nation could rightfully forbid plural marriages.⁸

JOHN TAYLOR

1/6/1880

[John Taylor] said the law that governed this people was handed down by God Himself to the prophet Joseph Smith. He said “this law we will observe and do.” The Lord is greater than man. Man’s laws are artificial and not always wise. God’s laws are divine and always possessed of wisdom. The laws of man may be ignored or nullified, but the laws of God never. ... We believe in ... loyalty to our country, but when they enact laws, forbidding us the free exercise of our religion, we cannot submit. God is greater than the United States; and when the government conflicts with Heaven, we will be ranged under the banner of Heaven against the government. The United States says we cannot marry more than one wife. God says different. We had no hand in the business. Joseph Smith had no hand in it. Brigham Young had no hand in it. I had no hand in it. It was all the work of God and his laws must be obeyed. If the United States say different the Saints cannot obey it. ... [W]e will worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience. We want to be friendly with the United States, if the government will let us; but not one jot nor tittle of our rights will we give up to purchase it. ... When adulterers and libertines pass a law forbidding polygamy, the Saints cannot obey it. ... The United States cannot abolish it. No nation on earth can prevent it, nor all the nations of the earth combined. I defy the United States. I will obey the will of God. These are my sentiments, and all of you who sympathize with me in this position raise your right hand.

Salt Lake Tribune

Undoubtedly, as tradition dictated, a flood of hands were raised high following Taylor’s invitation. Five years later, President Taylor was just as adamant about civil disobedience as ever. His brash and straightforward approach to the government’s position leaves little room for academic interpretation or contextual recharacterization. Said he:

JOHN TAYLOR

10/28/1885

The whole question, therefore, narrows itself to this in the “Mormon” mind. Polygamy was revealed by God, or the entire fabric of their faith is false.⁹ To ask them to give up such an item of belief is to ask them to relinquish the whole, to acknowledge their Priesthood a lie, their ordinances a deception, and all that they have toiled for, lived for, bled for, prayed for, or hoped for, a miserable failure and a waste of life. All this Congress demands of the people of Utah. It asks the repudiation of their entire religious practice to-day; and inasmuch as polygamy is, in “Mormon” belief, the basis of the condition of a future life, it asks them to give up their hopes of salvation hereafter. ... Conclude how they will, before this people will renounce the glorious hopes their faith inspires ... they will await the “extermination” to which they are invited. There is no half way house. ... The “Mormons” have either to spurn their

I Defy the United States

religion and their God ... or go calmly on the same issue which they have always had. ... "Mormonism" allowed in its entirety, or "Mormonism" wiped out in blood.
MS 27:43

While this declaration certainly contemplates the possibility of a violent confrontation "wiped out in blood" and may even be construed to encourage such behavior, Mormon civil disobedience also engaged in passive resistance Martin Luther King, Jr. style. With dramatic flair, John Taylor ordered all flags in Utah to be lowered to half mast on July 4, 1885 in solemn protest against the anti-polygamy laws that he considered unconstitutional – and he was certainly not alone.¹⁰ Several apostles openly made calls to civil disobedience over the pulpit at local conferences and they made these same calls at general conferences. Far from uncommon in the territory of Utah, this was a pet topic throughout the 1880s and was commonly taught in the 1870s and 1890s as well.

Speaking to a judge at his sentencing hearing, apostle Clawson made the following remark:

RUDGER CLAWSON

11/3/1884

I have only this to say why judgment should not be passed upon me; I very much regret that the laws of my country should come in conflict with the Laws of God; but whenever they do I shall invariably choose to obey the latter.

As cited in the Martyrdom of Joseph Standing, 8-9¹¹

Also speaking in open court, apostle Abraham H. Cannon delivered perhaps the most eloquent and representative statement made by a polygamist in front of the sentencing judge:

ABRAHAM H. CANNON

11/3/1884

I would like to state to your honor that I have always endeavored to keep the laws of the United States because I have been taught by my parents that the Constitution was a sacred instrument. That I have failed in this respect, and now stand before you convicted of the crime of unlawful cohabitation, is due to the fact that I acknowledge a higher law than that of man, which is the law of God; and that law being part of my religion, sir, I have attempted to obey it.

When I embraced this religion I promised to place all that I had, even to life itself, upon the altar, and

I expect to abide by that covenant which I made; and, sir, I hope the day will never come when I must sacrifice principle, even to procure life or liberty. Honor, sir, to me, is higher than anything else upon the earth, and my religion is dearer to me than anything else that I have yet seen.

I am prepared, sir, for the judgment of the court.

Prophets and Patriarchs 2:289¹²

A few more representative examples follow:

EDITORIAL

7/7/1886

[Do men] think that the Lord would be pleased because people obeyed man rather than God? ...

Any man who says that he really and firmly believes a certain law of God binding on him, and who will not obey it in preference to a conflicting law of man or a decision of a court, has either an unsound mind or a cowardly soul, or is a most contemptible hypocrite. The Latter-day Saints are no law breakers in spirit or intent. Some of them have found themselves in the position foreshadowed in the revelations of God to this Church. A law has been specially framed against an establishment of their religion. The issue is obedience to God or submission to man, choice between a divine decree about which they have no doubt and a human enactment that they firmly believe to be unconstitutional and void. It is a matter of conscience. The course of the faithful and the brave is so plain that it needs no fingerpost to point the way, nor urging voice to whisper "walk therein."

DN

JOHN TAYLOR: PROVO TABERNACLE

11/30/1879

Shall we give up our religion and our God and be governed by practices that exist in the nation which are contrary to the laws of God? All who are in favor of abiding by the laws of God hold up their right hand. (the congregation voted unanimously [sic]). We find the same feeling throughout the territory. ... [I]t is for us to cleave to God and observe his laws and keep his commandments; and then we need fear no evil.

JD 20:356-57

HEBER J. GRANT

4/5/1885

No matter what restrictions we are placed under by men, our only consistent course is to keep the commandments of God. We should, in this regard, place ourselves in the same position as that of the three Hebrews who were cast into the fiery furnace.

DN¹³

GEORGE Q. CANNON

9/--/1899

I admit that those raising children by plural wives are not complying with man-made laws, but in the sight of God they are not sinning, as there is no sin in it.¹⁴

Reed Smoot Hearings 1:9

While not quite as explicit, Joseph Smith made a similar pronouncement when he claimed: "I will always maintain a true principle, even if I stand alone in it"¹⁵ and Blackstone, the preeminent legal authority of that day claimed that "[i]f ever the laws of God and men are at variance, the former are to be obeyed in derogation of the latter."¹⁶ Even Wilford Woodruff, who began the movement to strict

adherence to the law of the land, joined the chorus of civil disobedience. After issuing the manifesto, he lambasted the gentile laws against plural marriage in a meeting of the Twelve and commented that he “would see [the Gentiles] damned in hell before he would agree to cease living with his wives or advise any other person to do so.”¹⁷

Throughout the nineteenth century, this attitude remained a popular refrain of Mormonism. Indeed, it was a very serious matter to refuse to engage in civil disobedience. In 1880, Church leadership sent out a letter asking local leaders to put the saints under a solemn covenant to “stand by the Laws of God and take the consequences rather than obey the laws of man.”¹⁸ After a revelation was given in 1882, men who refused to obey the commandment to enter plural marriage were dropped from positions of authority.¹⁹ Even after the manifesto was publically adopted by the saints in general conference, apostle George Q. Cannon erupted in frustration at the notion of a latter-day saint priesthood holder refusing to live with his wives.

GEORGE Q. CANNON

1/7/1890

I feel like saying, “Damn the law.”²⁰ We can expect neither justice nor mercy in the administration of the law with the present corrupt administrators. ... [any man] who will act the coward and shield himself behind the manifesto for deserting his plural wife or wives, would be damned.

Abraham H. Cannon Journal

Wilford Woodruff went so far as to declare that he would “despise any man” who would disobey God’s law in preference to keeping man’s law.

WILFORD W. WOODRUFF

4/21/1879

God our heavenly Father, knowing that this is the only law, ordained by the Gods of eternity, that would exalt immortal beings to kingdoms, thrones, principalities, powers and dominions, and heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ to a fullness of Celestial Glory, I say God, knowing these things, commanded Joseph Smith the Prophet, and all Latter-day Saints, to obey this law, “or you shall be damned,” saith the Lord. Now, having obeyed the law for many years, the Congress of the United States, and the supreme judges of the nation, stand forth and say, “You shall be damned if you do obey it.” Now Latter-day Saints, what are we going to do under the circumstances? God says, “We shall be damned if we do not obey the law.” Congress says, “We shall be damned if we do.” It places us precisely in the same position that it did the Hebrews in the fiery furnace, and Daniel in the den of lions. ... Our enemies have pursued the same course ... and made it a law of offense to obey one of the laws of our God.

Now who shall we obey? God or man? My voice is that we obey God. ... So say I as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, I will not desert my wives and my children

I Defy the United States

and disobey the commandments of God, for the sake of accommodating the public clamor of a nation steeped in sin and ripened in the damnation of hell. I would rather go to prison and to death. If I would not I would never be fit to associate with the Prophets and Patriarchs of old, and I could not in my heart but despise any man who professed to be a Latter-day Saint, who would do otherwise. ... We certainly, any of us, would be ashamed to deny the faith to accommodate our enemies, then meet the prophets and apostles in the spirit world. May God forbid that this should be the case with any of the blood of Ephraim.

WWWJ²¹

George Q. Cannon and Wilford Woodruff were not the only apostles to suggest law abiders should be held in ecclesiastical contempt – the official counsel of the First Presidency to members of the Church was to engage in civil disobedience or suffer the reputation of an apostate. Thus, these statements were not mere rhetoric for the not-so-transparent purpose of trying to sway public sentiment and offset legal persecutions as historians may be tempted to believe. Far from flamboyant rally cries – these calls were considered the practical and pressing application of correct doctrine as references to the three Hebrews and Daniel demonstrate. A lengthy extract (from a very long epistle) written to the saints in 1885 similarly praised the “glorified” example of these prophets and illustrates this principle further.

AN EPISTLE FROM THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

10/6/1885

The war is openly and undisguisedly made upon our religion. To induce men to ... break its solemn covenants, every encouragement is given. The man who agrees to discard his wife or wives, and to trample upon the most sacred obligations which human beings can enter into, escapes imprisonment, and is applauded; while the man who will not make this compact of dishonor ... who will not say to the world, “I intended to deceive my God, my brethren, and my wives by making covenants I did not expect to keep,” is, besides being punished to the full extent of the law, compelled to endure the reproaches, taunts, and insults of a brutal judge. ... We did not reveal celestial marriage. We cannot withdraw or renounce it, God revealed it, and he has promised to maintain it and to bless those who obey it.²² Whatever fate, then, may threaten us, there is but one course for men of God to take; that is, to keep inviolate the holy covenants they have made in the presence of God and angels. For the remainder, whether it be life or death, freedom or imprisonment, prosperity or adversity, we must trust in God. We may say, however, if any man or woman expects to enter into the celestial kingdom of our God without making sacrifices and without being tested to the very uttermost, they have not understood the Gospel. ...

Upwards of forty years ago the Lord revealed to his church the principle of celestial marriage.²³ The idea of marrying more wives than one was as naturally abhorrent to the leading men and women of the church ... [b]ut the command of God was before

I Defy the United States

them in language which no faithful soul dare disobey, “For, behold, I reveal unto you a new and everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant, and be permitted to enter into my glory.” ... Damnation was the awful penalty affixed to a refusal to obey this law. It became an acknowledged doctrine of the Church;²⁴ it was indissolubly interwoven in the minds of its members with their hopes of eternal salvation and exaltation in the presence of God. ... Who could suppose that any man, in this land of religious liberty, would presume to say to his fellow-man that he had no right to take such steps as he thought necessary to escape damnation! Or that Congress would enact a law which would present the alternative to religious believers of being consigned to a penitentiary if they should attempt to obey a law of God which would deliver them from damnation!

MFP 3:26-27, 32-33²⁵

While the First Presidency does not use the word “apostate” in the above epistle, it clearly states that the saints are to trust in God by continuing the practice of plural marriage whether it means suffering “death ... or imprisonment” and that “no faithful soul dare disobey” the commandment to live this law of plural marriage.²⁶ Further, it states that if they refuse to trust in God by keeping this commandment, “they have not understood [that] the Gospel” requires this sacrifice of all latter-day saints. Since they were in “the same position as that of the three Hebrews,” the implication is clear – civil disobedience was expected and the necessary position for every man of God to take. And the saints undoubtedly understood that there was more than just innuendo in this expectation. Six years previous to this epistle, Orson Pratt openly suggested that saints who wished to renounce plural marriage were “at liberty so to do, and be accountable to God, and be disfellowshipped from the Church, because of their disbelief” and other apostles echoed these sentiments.²⁷

If this counsel wasn’t already difficult to follow given the severity of punishments proscribed for living plural marriage and given the fact that hundreds of men were being hauled off to serve lengthy prison terms every year, the brethren pushed the issue further. Even if the government’s laws were to be disobeyed, the apostles counseled members of the Church to bear the persecution with patience and to “round up” their shoulders under the tremendous burdens the legal persecutions placed upon the saints.

GEORGE Q. CANNON

7/20/1879

If plural marriage be divine, as the Latter-day Saints say it is, no power on earth can suppress it, unless you crush and destroy the entire people. ... A man that enters this Church ought to be able to die for its principles if necessary, and certainly should be able to go to prison for them without crying about the matter. If you are

I Defy the United States

sentenced to prison for marrying more wives than one, round up your shoulders and bear it; prepare yourselves to take the consequences.

JD 20:276²⁸

APOSTLES PENROSE & RICHARDS LETTER TO JOHN TAYLOR 2/16/1887

We then say, we consider the law of God superior to the law of the State, and if we have to break the law of the State to keep the law of God, we will stand by the consequences.

/s Charles W. Penrose / Franklin S. Richards

Charles W. Penrose Papers, Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City, Utah²⁹

FIRST PRESIDENCY LETTER TO APOSTLES PENROSE & RICHARDS 2/28/1887

Whatever the evils and terrors of the Edmunds-Tucker Bill may be, personally we prefer to endure them, than [publicly disavow plural marriages to gain statehood]. We have put our trust in God in the past, and we trust Him in this as in all other things in the future. In doing so, we are not troubled with even the shadow of a doubt as to what the results will be.

/s John Taylor / George Q. Cannon

Diary of John M. Whitaker, 83-84³⁰

That this stance was unyielding was acknowledged by President Taylor in 1885. With the understanding that abandoning plural marriage would be an offense to God, he declared that even if almost all Mormons were shot or imprisoned as a result of civil disobedience, yet “there will always be somebody left to carry on the work” of keeping plural marriages alive.³¹ In 1880, he seemed just as determined to follow this course of civil disobedience as he was the year he died on the underground. He then declared that “One sure thing is that we will not surrender polygamy.”³² The Salt Lake Tribune provides us with an especially vivid picture of the long lasting nature of civil disobedience among nineteenth century Mormons. They noted that this attitude of civil disobedience was not transient or a simple matter of dodging the government during the “brief” period of intense legal persecutions that culminated in the 1880s by demonstrating that acts of civil disobedience continued *en masse* even after the issuance of the 1890 manifesto. The newspaper lambasted Utah Mormons for their obstinate refusal to abide by the laws of the land even after the issuance of an official promise to obey the laws of the land nearly a decade before.

EDITORIAL

9/10/1898

Another phrase of present day Utah is that people are being urged to “live their religion.” This would seem a desirable thing to do. Unfortunately, however, this

I Defy the United States

phrase has an application here other than that understood by people unacquainted with the “mysteries of Mormonism.” One “lives his religion” in Utah who has entered the “celestial order of marriage” and “cohabits” with all his wives [contrary to the law of the land]. Of such case more than two thousand have come to our notice, and this living has resulted in the birth of more than one thousand children since statehood was granted, Jan. 4, 1896.

Salt Lake Tribune

President Joseph F. Smith also refused to obey the law of the land well after the 1890 manifesto had been issued.

JOSEPH F. SMITH

1904

Chairman:

“Do you obey the law in having five wives at the same time – and having them bear you eleven children since the Manifesto of 1890?”

Joseph F. Smith:

“Mr. Chairman, I have not claimed that in that case I have obeyed the law of the land. ... I do not claim so, I have said that I prefer to stand my chances against the law. ... And I wish to assert that the Church has obeyed the law of the land, and that it has kept its pledges with this Government; but I have not, as an individual, I have taken that chance myself.”

Reed Smoot Hearings 1:99

In summary, counsel to disobey the law of the land was commonplace in nineteenth century Mormonism. But beyond being a commonplace teaching, the saints were counseled to engage in civil disobedience regardless of the consequences – whether that included prison or death – and if they failed to stand by those consequences, they should expect to be disfellowshipped or to be branded as an unfaithful apostate.³³ Moreover, they were exhorted to round up their shoulders and accept these consequences with patience. Two questions remain: why was this issue so pivotal to their religious paradigm? and why was John Taylor’s administration unwilling to apply the principles outlined in D&C 124:49 to the situation earlier?

“NO NEED TO BREAK THE LAW OF THE LAND”

The vehement adherence to a policy of civil disobedience now seems relatively foreign to modern saints. Contrary to these teachings of the early brethren, modern saints are more acutely sensitive to strictly abiding by the teaching of the Doctrine and Covenants that there is “no need to break the law of the land” and they are often relatively unaware

of early teachings that sidestepped this scripture when unconstitutional laws were in question.³⁴ In contrast, early Mormons were more prone to balance adherence to the supreme law of the land with another scripture in the Doctrine and Covenants that teaches that the brethren were justified “in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land. And as pertaining to the law of man, whatsoever is more or less than this cometh of evil.”³⁵ Therefore, if the early brethren believed that the law of the land was not constitutional, they would likewise be forced to conclude that any such law also came “of evil.”³⁶ Wilford Woodruff manifested this belief in his personal journal:

WILFORD W. WOODRUFF

12/31/1886

The year of 1886 is past and gone. It has been an important year in the History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints. It has sent to Prison hundreds of the Leading men of the Church and driven into Exile the presidency of the Church & Twelve Apostles and many other leading Men all for obeying the Celestial Law of God and the patriarchal order of Marriage. And our Nation are uniting in passing unconstitutional Laws for the purpose of Destroying the Latter Day Saints from off the Earth. Our nation is becoming very wicked and fast ripening in iniquity and preparing for the Just Judgments of God which await them.

WWWJ

An editorial in the Deseret News expressed this same belief that anti-polygamy laws came of evil and that the saints should not obey them:

EDITORIAL

7/7/1886

[God] is superior to governments and courts. But he tells his Church to befriend the constitutional law of the land. If it is not constitutional, He says it comes of evil. It must support the principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges; if not, it comes of evil. Who is the Lord directing? His Church. Whatever is contrary to the freedom guaranteed by the Constitution, which includes not mere belief but the “free exercise” of religion, He does not command His people to obey, but says they shall do His will.

...

The decision of the Supreme Court [finding anti-polygamy laws constitutional] is final in law. Right or wrong, it regulates the courts. But if it is morally wrong, religiously wrong, actually wrong, all the legislature and national authority in the world cannot make it right. And the true servant of God will do what He has said concerning the laws of the land, namely, “It is my will that my people should observe to do all things whatsoever I command them.”³⁷ And if doing this leads him to prison or to death, he must “obey God rather than man”³⁸ or he will be found “unworthy.” This has been the position of every true Saint of former or of latter days.

DN

In part, it was this belief that anti-polygamy laws were unconstitutional that led to such strong statements against the nation as a whole. Because most historians have noted the glaring contrast between these clarion statements of defiance with the passive course taken by the brethren after the 1890 manifesto, many seem to conclude that these declarations were mere rallying cries or extreme puffery. However, fundamentalists have been quick to note that there is more to substantiate the conclusion that these teachings were not merely political rhetoric and their research ought to be given serious consideration. Not only did Church leadership intellectually believe that anti-polygamy laws were unconstitutional because the first amendment guaranteed them freedom to practice their religion, they received revelations that indisputably gave them reason to believe that their God believed the same as they did and that he would defend them in their acts of civil disobedience so long as they remained steadfast in living the principle of plural marriage.

These revelations commanded the Saints to obey the laws of celestial plural marriage at a time when it had been declared illegal for decades and these revelations from God declared all anti-polygamy laws unconstitutional – specifically referring to the bill of rights and making specific allusions to the first amendment’s guarantee to the free exercise of their religion. While most of these revelations never obtained the status of canon in the Doctrine and Covenants, they were heartily discussed by members of the quorum of Twelve apostles and some of them were approved by that quorum – stringently adopting portions of the revelations as official Church policy.³⁹ Below are some extracts from those revelations that demonstrate this understanding:

REVELATION TO WILFORD W. WOODRUFF

1/26/1880

Thus saith the Lord unto my servant, Wilford Woodruff, I have heard thy prayer and will answer thy petition. ... [L]et mine Apostles and mine Elders who are faithful obey my commandments which are already written for their profit and guidance. ... The devil is ruling over his kingdom and my spirit has no place in the hearts of the rulers of this nation, and the devil stirs them up to defy my power and to make war upon my Saints.

The Presidents of the United States, the Supreme Court, the Cabinet, the Senate and House of Congress of the United States, the Governors of the States and Territories, the judges and others sent unto you, and all men and persons who have taken any part in persecuting you or bringing distress upon you or your families, or who have sought your lives, or sought to hinder you from keeping my commandments or from enjoying the rights which the constitutional laws of the land guaranteed unto you. ... Let [my servants] go forth and cleanse their feet in pure water and bear testimony of it unto the Father who is in heaven.

I Defy the United States

And then, saith the Lord unto mine Apostles and mine Elders, when ye do these things with purity of heart, I the Lord will hear your prayers and am bound by oath and covenant to defend you and fight your battles. ... Nevertheless, let no man be afraid to lay down his life for my sake, for he that layeth down his life for my sake shall find it again and have eternal life. This nation is ripened in iniquity and the cup of the wrath of mine indignation is full. ... And I say again, woe unto that nation or house or people who seek to hinder my people from obeying the Patriarchal law of Abraham, which leadeth to Celestial Glory, which has been revealed unto my Saints through the mouth of my servant Joseph, for whosoever doeth these things shall be damned, saith the Lord of Hosts. ... My people shall not be hindered in the building of my temples unto my Holy Name, if they will hearken unto my voice and do as I command them.⁴⁰ ... I have also ordained you [the Twelve apostles] to sit upon thrones and judge the Gentiles and all the inhabitants of the earth unto whom you have borne testimony of my name in the day and generation in which you live.⁴¹ Fear not, for lo, I am with you until I come, I come quickly. Even So, Amen.
UPR 1:123-29⁴²

REVELATION TO JOHN TAYLOR

6/25-26/1882

You ask, what shall we do? Thus saith the Lord God, obey my law. ... Concerning the course taken by the United States, they have a right to reject this law themselves; as they have a right to reject the Gospel; but it is contrary to the provisions of the Constitution, which is the supreme law of the land, for them to prohibit you from obeying it.⁴³ Therefore, abide in my law which I have revealed unto you, saith the Lord God, and contend for your rights by every legal and constitutional method and in accordance with the institutions, laws, and Constitution of the United States. Be humble, be faithful, be diligent, seek unto me and it shall be made known unto you, from time to time, what my will is pertaining to this matter. I am the Lord Your God, hearken unto me, and obey my law, and your enemies shall be confounded, and my Kingdom shall be victorious. Amen.

UPR 1:129-32

REVELATION TO JOHN TAYLOR

10/13/1882

Thus saith the Lord to the Twelve, and to the Priesthood and people of my Church.

...

You may appoint Seymour B. Young to fill up the vacancy in the presiding quorum of the Seventies, if he will conform to my law [by taking a plural wife contrary to the law of the land]; it is not meet that men who will not abide my law shall preside over my priesthood; ... For My Priesthood, whom I have called and whom I have sustained and honored, shall honor Me and obey My laws, and the laws of My Holy Priesthood, or they shall not be considered worthy to hold My Priesthood, saith the Lord. ... and your enemies shall not have dominion over you, for I will preserve you and confound them, saith the Lord, and they shall not have power nor dominion over you. Even so, Amen.

UPR 1:138-40⁴⁴

I Defy the United States

REVELATION TO JOHN TAYLOR

12/25/1884

[[If you, my people, obey my law and keep my commandments, to do them not in name only, but in reality, I will be your shield and protector, and your strong tower and no man shall be able to hurt you, for I will be your defense. Therefore, humble yourselves before me, and purify yourselves, that your acts and doings may be acceptable before me. For if you do not you will share in the condemnation of the wicked. ... Even so, Amen.

UPR 1:144-45

REVELATION TO JOHN TAYLOR

9/27/1886

My son John: You have asked me concerning the New and Everlasting Covenant and how far it is binding upon my people. Thus saith the Lord: All commandments that I give must be obeyed by those calling themselves by my name unless they are revoked by me or by my authority and how can I revoke an everlasting covenant? ... Have I not given my word in great plainness on this subject? ... I the Lord do not change and my word and my covenants and my law do not. ... I have not revoked this law nor will I for it is everlasting and those who will enter into my glory must obey the conditions thereof, even so Amen.

UPR 1:145-46

REVELATION TO WILFORD W. WOODRUFF

11/24/1889

Thus saith the Lord to my servant Wilford ... I the Lord hold the destiny of the courts in your midst, and the destiny of this nation, and the destiny of all other nations of the earth, in mine own hands, and all that I have revealed and promised and decreed concerning the generation in which you live shall come to pass, and no power shall stay my hand. Let not my servants who are called to the presidency of my Church deny my word or my law, which concerns the salvation of the children of men. ... Place not yourselves in jeopardy to your enemies by promise. ... If the Saints will hearken unto my voice, and the counsel of my servants, the wicked shall not prevail. Let my servants who officiate as your counselors before the courts make their pleadings as they are moved upon by the Holy Spirit, without any further pledges from my Priesthood. I, the Lord, will hold the courts, with the officers of government and the nation responsible for their acts towards the inhabitants of Zion.

...

Awake! O Israel, and have faith in God and his promises and he will not forsake you. I the Lord will deliver my Saints from the dominion of the wicked in mine own due time and way. I cannot deny my Word, neither in blessings nor judgments.

Therefore let mine anointed gird up their loins, watch and be sober, and keep my commandments. ...

Even so, Amen.

UPR 1:146-47⁴⁵

In response to this last revelation, apostle Abraham H. Cannon recorded in his journal:

During our meeting a revelation was read which Pres. Woodruff received Sunday evening, Nov'r 24th. Propositions had been made for the Church to make some concessions to the Courts in regard to its principles. Both of Pres. Woodruff's counselors refused to advise him as to the course he should pursue, and he therefore laid the matter before the Lord. The answer came quick and strong. The word of the Lord was for us not to yield one particle of that which he had revealed and established. He had done and would continue to care for His work and those of the Saints who were faithful, and we need have no fear of our enemies when we were in the line of duty. We are promised redemption and deliverance if we will trust in God and not in the arm of flesh ... my heart was filled with joy and peace during the entire reading.

Abraham H. Cannon Journal⁴⁶

These promises of protection “[i]f the Saints will hearken unto my voice” and if they “obey my law” were the rallying cry of the 1880s. The saints ultimately expected that the Lord would fight their battles for them if they remained true and faithful to this covenant to keep the commandment of plural marriage. These promises, along with the commandment in 1889 to make no “further pledges” or “deny” God’s law by conceding the principle of plural marriage are at the very heart of fundamentalist Mormon claims that Wilford Woodruff’s 1890 manifesto was not inspired by God⁴⁷ and that the practice of taking plural wives continues to be a binding law on the saints of God – despite persecutions and despite the difficulty of this lifestyle. Many fundamentalists believe that had no 1890 manifesto been issued and had the saints remained true to the counsel of their leaders as described above, the Lord would have intervened on their behalf and they would have been delivered from the legal persecutions they were suffering at that time. Thus, some fundamentalist Mormons view the millennial expectations held by the leading brethren in the 1880s (that the second coming would occur in 1890) as prophecies that failed because of the unfaithfulness of the saints at that time.

Looking back at this wealthy history of Mormon civil disobedience in the nineteenth century, modern fundamentalists continue to be brazen in their defiance to the laws of the land as they pertain to plural marriage. Joseph Musser, a well known pioneer of Mormon fundamentalism described the contrasting position of the modern LDS Church like this:

JOSEPH W. MUSSER

In brief, it is claimed by the present leaders of the people that as God enjoined upon the Saints obedience to civil law, and the civil law of this country forbids polygamous marriages, the Saints are excused from the operations of the divine law, and the

Church is in duty bound to bow in humble submission to the unrighteous demands of men, paying homage to the law of the land, though it aims at the destruction of the Church of Christ.

The New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage, 39

Ignoring all of the statements justifying this position as laid forth by apostles after the 1890 manifesto, fundamentalists continue to adhere to a voluminous compendium of statements declaring plural marriage a requirement for exaltation and the following statements that claim the practice of plural marriage will always be found in Christ's true Church.⁴⁸

GEORGE TEASDALE

1/13/1884

I bear my testimony that [plural marriage] is a necessity, and that the Church of Christ in its fullness never existed without it. Where you have the eternity of marriage you are bound to have plural marriage; bound to; and it is one of the marks of the Church of Jesus Christ in its sealing ordinances.

JD 25:21

George Q. Cannon echoed this position when he said that if the saints abandoned plural marriage, “our Church would cease to be the Church of God, and the ligaments that now bind it together would be severed.”⁴⁹

Thus, fundamentalist Mormons see plural marriage as “one of the marks” of the true Church of Jesus Christ. Not only do they understand these statements to denounce the mainstream Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as the Lord's true Church, they also understand these statements to support their position that the true Church must teach and administer the ordinance of marriage sealings with plural wives. As members of the LDS Church have found great meaning and security in the discovery of the *Seventeen Points of the True Church* story, so fundamentalists have found great meaning in these and similar declarations acknowledging that plural marriage is one of the “points” of Christ's true Church.

Nevertheless, modern saints are aware of the doctrinal provision in D&C 124:49 that absolves the saints from the consequences of disobeying a commandment if their enemies prevent them from keeping that commandment. Thus, even if it is a “mark” or “point” of the true Church of Christ, why didn't John Taylor recognize the gravity of his situation well enough to concede plural marriage years earlier on the basis of D&C 124:49? The answer is found in an editorial of the *Deseret News* written by apostle Penrose:

CHARLES W. PENROSE

6/5/1885

I Defy the United States

Influences are at work whose object is to create an impression in favor of the renunciation or temporary suspension of the law of celestial marriage. Arguments are being used to that end, in a semi-private way, with a view to gaining converts to that idea. Perhaps such pleadings may influence a few people who are not in the habit of probing subjects to the bottom and are not particularly gifted with the power to analyze the motives by which men are actuated. Good Latter-day Saints, however, who have within themselves that needful reason for the hope that inspires them are not affected by the shallow pretexts of semi-apostates.

But they should not be so inconsistent as to put forth the flimsy claim that their course is sustained by the revelations of the Almighty. They had better acknowledge that their faith in revelation has dwindled to a fine point, if it ever existed in their breasts, at all, until it is scarcely discernable. They should at once proclaim themselves as unbelievers in the claim that the revelation on Celestial marriage is of divine origin, or else admit that they do not possess the courage of their convictions. But we are not yet through with treating upon the quotations sometimes referred to by the weak-backed who need a ramrod fastened parallel with their spinal column, and occasionally manifest a desire to see the stiffening taken out of others. A favorite passage used by such will be found [in D&C 124:49-54]. Here it is: "Verily, verily I say unto you, that when I give a commandment to any of the sons of men, to do a work unto my name, and those sons of men go with all their might, and with all they have to perform that work, and cease not their diligence, and their enemies come upon them, and hinder them from performing that work; behold it behoveth me to require that work no more at the hands of those sons of men, but to accept of their offering. And the iniquity and transgression of my holy laws and commandments, I will visit upon the heads of those who hindered my work, unto the third and fourth generation, so long as they repent not, and hate me, saith the Lord God. Therefore for this cause have I accepted the offering of those whom I commanded to build up a city and a house unto my name, in Jackson County, Missouri, and were hindered by their enemies, saith the Lord your God."

It is a little singular that some people will persistently refuse to see the difference between a certain special work and a principle or law. The consistency of the Lord relieving the people from any such obligation as the building of a house when prevented by enemies from accomplishing it is self-evident. When it comes to the abrogation of a law, a principle, a truth, the matter is entirely different. The revelation does not apply even remotely to the present situation.

DEN

Thus, at least one apostle felt that D&C 124:49 could not be consistently applied to the practice of plural marriage because plural marriage was then considered a binding ordinance, "law," and "principle" of the gospel. Nevertheless, George Q. Cannon used this scripture to justify the adoption of the 1890 manifesto at the October, 1890 general conference. D. Michael Quinn drew attention to this inconsistency in his groundbreaking research on post manifesto plural marriages.⁵⁰ Some fundamentalists have concluded that president

Cannon may have been sending a coded message to his astute listeners that the manifesto was a political ruse and not a binding doctrinal statement. While this perception may sound sensationalized or conspiratorial, the reader should keep in mind that (1) president Cannon was the driving force behind many, many post manifesto plural marriages, (2) there are a significant number of statements by the early brethren claiming that the manifesto was not a revelation and that it was merely a political ruse, and (3) president Cannon continued to preach (after the adoption of the 1890 manifesto) against applying D&C 124:49 to principles and laws as opposed to specific acts – albeit, he significantly toned down the rhetoric.⁵¹

GEORGE Q. CANNON

9/21/1895

There are revelations in that book [D&C] concerning counsel and the management of affairs that are not binding upon us only so far as they are applicable to us. When, however, it comes to the revelations concerning principle, then those revelations are unalterable, and they will stand as long as heaven and earth will endure, because they are true.

DEN

While modern saints typically respond that plural marriage was never a doctrinal principle or law of the gospel, fundamentalist Mormons tenaciously adhere to the belief that the practice of plural marriage is required for exaltation – just as their pioneer forebears did. Given that stance, it seems all but certain that their pattern of civil disobedience as it pertains to plural marriages will continue. It also seems certain that the struggling legal efforts to silence Mormon polygamy will continue to lag behind the ever growing numbers of fundamentalist Mormons unless, as George Q. Cannon suggested, the government sidesteps every constitutional right held by all Americans to “crush and destroy the entire” culture of fundamentalist Mormonism.

ENDNOTES FOR CHAPTER 1

The reader is reminded that these movements only include fundamentalists who claim authority based upon the 1886 revelation and who claim authority based upon secret ordinations performed in response to that revelation.

2 *Official Statement from the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Issued 6/17/1933); pamphlet reprinted from the June 17, 1933 edition of the *Deseret News*); copy in the author's possession. Pages 11 and 20 read:

FIRST PRESIDENCY

7/17/1933

[O]ur people sacredly covenanted with the Government of the United States that they would obey the civil law ... [when they voted in] support of the State Constitution.

...

[W]e are in honor bound to the government ... upon a consideration we have fully received – Statehood.

Official Statement (1933); see also page 21

3 See Horne, Dennis B., Ed, *An Apostle's Record: The Journals of Abraham H. Cannon*, Gnolaum Books, 2004 (11/30/1889).

4

While there is some lingering dispute as to when plural marriage was first practiced by Joseph Smith, it is most likely that he did not take his first plural wife until he moved to Kirtland, Ohio in 1831. When he and some of his followers moved there in February of that year, the following law was in effect:

OHIO LAW

12/1/1823

Sec. 7. That if any married person, having a husband or wife living, shall marry any other person; every person so offending shall be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof, shall be imprisoned in the penitentiary, and kept at hard labor, not exceeding seven nor less than three years.

Laws of the State of Ohio, revised and passed at the First Session of the Twenty-second General Assembly of the State of Ohio begun and held in the town of Columbus (12/1/1823), Vol. XXII. Sec. 7 - Bigamy. (2/26/1824), 159

In mid-July, 1831, Joseph Smith and some of his followers arrived in Jackson County, Missouri where the following law was in effect:

MISSOURI LAW

--/--/----

Sec. 76. Be it further enacted, That if any person or persons, within this state, being married, or who shall hereafter marry, do at any time marry any person or persons, the former husband or wife being alive, upon conviction thereof, he or they shall be whipped, not exceeding thirty-nine stripes, be fined in not less than one hundred dollars, nor more than five hundred dollars, and imprisoned, not less than six nor more than twelve months, and thereafter be rendered infamous, be incapable of giving testimony, or holding any office, civil or military, within this state.

Laws of the State of Missouri. Revised and Digested by Authority of the General Assembly (1925),
305-06

Incidentally, whippings were not uncommonly found in various criminal codes during this period of history. In 1839, Joseph Smith and some of his followers arrived in Quincy, Commerce, Hancock County, Illinois where the following law was in effect:

ILLINOIS LAW

1833

Sec 121. Bigamy consists in the having of two wives or two husbands at one and the same time, knowing that the former husband or wife is still alive. If any person or persons within this state, being married, or who shall hereafter marry, do at any time marry any person or persons within this state, being married, or who shall hereafter marry, do at any time marry any person or persons, the former husband or wife being alive; the person so offending shall, on conviction thereof, be punished by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, and imprisoned in the penitentiary not exceeding two years.

Revised Laws of Illinois (1833), 198-99

5

While Mexico and Canada could be considered exceptions, the colonies there were never considered a permanent "home base" for the Mormons.

6 Hardy, B. Carmon, *Works of Abraham: Mormon Polygamy Its Origin, Practice, and Demise*, (The Arthur H. Clark Company: 2007), 369; *Solemn Covenant*, 175.

7

In Quinn's *LDS Church Authority*, 1985, this ground breaking research was first undertaken and outlined for the purpose of comforting descendants of polygamists who had married after the 1890 manifesto with the understanding that their marriages had been approved by proper LDS Church authority and that they were therefore not the "illegitimate" offspring of their grandparents. This research has been expanded by a number of academics and is thoroughly examined in volume 2 of *Silencing Mormon Polygamy*.

8

Heber C. Kimball, in a letter penned to his sons in England, similarly noted that it "would be as easy for the United States to build a tower to remove the sun, as to remove polygamy, or the Church and kingdom of God. Give yourselves no trouble, for the Lord has said he will fight our battles, and will defend the kingdom or his own Work." *MS* 28:190 (1/28/1866). See also *JD* 20:276 where George Q. Cannon notes that "no power on earth can suppress it, unless you crush and destroy the entire people."

9

This sentiment was common in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. For more examples of this sentiment, see endnote 35 in the following chapter.

Another author asked in an article entitled "*A Conversation Between Two Cousins*" the following question: "Will we unite with the plurality order of the ancient Patriarchs or will we consent, voluntarily, to be doomed to eternal celibacy? That is the true division of the question. One or the other we must choose. We cannot be married to our husbands for eternity, without subscribing to the law that admits a plurality of wives." *MS* 15:226 (April 1853). More statements of this nature are found in the next chapter.

10 Taylor, Samuel W. and Raymond W. ed., *John Taylor Papers: Records of the Last Utah Pioneer*, (Taylor Trust: 1984-85) 2:350.

11 Nicholson, John, *Martyrdom of Joseph Standing*, (Deseret News Company Printers: 1886).

12 Cowley, Mathias, *Prophets and Patriarchs*, (Ben E. Rich: 1902) 2:289.

13

See Daniel 3:16-18 for the passage of the three Hebrews referred to.

Reporting on the second day of general conference. In September of 1899, the Salt Lake Tribune reported that apostle Grant continued to express these feelings in private meetings. For one reason or another, apostle Grant was upset at the report and denied having made the statements. Here is the account:

HEBER J. GRANT

9/8/1899

Yesterday morning we imputed these words to Apostle Heber J. Grant:

"I am a lawbreaker; so is Bishop Whitney; so is B.H. Roberts. My wives have brought me only daughters. I purpose to marry until I get wives who will bring me sons."

Last night the News had from Apostle Grant the following denial,

"I have never made these remarks at any time either in public or private, in writing or by word of mouth."

The proof of the fact that Apostle Grant said what we charge him with saying is easy. The remark was made by him in the Herald office in this city, in the presence of E.A. McDaniel, Alfales Young and J.H. Moyle all good democrats, and two of them will never deny it. The remark was substantially as we gave it, and of so remarkable a character that it was taken down in writing and signed by two of those who heard it. Salt Lake Tribune

14

59th Congress, 1st Session, Document #486, *Proceedings Before the Committee on Privileges and Election of the United States Senate: In the Matter of the Protest Against the Right of Hon. Reed Smoot, a Senator from the State of Utah, to Hold His Seat*, Washington: (Government Printing Office: 1906). (Hereinafter: *Reed Smoot Hearings*)

15 Smith, Joseph Fielding, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, (Deseret Book Company: 1931), 332. (Hereinafter: *TPJS*)

16 *Blackstone's Commentaries*, 16th edition (1825).

17 *Abraham H. Cannon Journal* (4/1/1892).

18

Larson, Karl A. and Logan, Katharine Miles, Ed., *Diary of Charles Lowell Walker*, (Utah State University Press: 1980) 2:491-92 (3/27/1880).

19

Apostle Abraham H. Cannon made the following entry in his journal:

At a Priesthood meeting ... the strongest language in regard to Plural Marriage was used that I ever heard, and among other things it was stated that all men in position who would not observe and fulfill that law should be removed from their places.

Heber Bennion similarly noted that some “men were dropped from their positions in the Church because they promised to obey the law of the land.” Bennion, Heber, *Supplement to Gospel Problems*, (The Theatre Book Shop: 1922), 80.

20

Abraham H. Cannon noted in his journal (1/7/1890) that “We at least must despise the law administrators,” if not the law itself.

21 Kenney, Scott, Ed., *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, (Signature Books: 1983). (Hereinafter: *WWJ*) This was later echoed in 1881 by George Teasdale in *MS* 41:242-43. All *WWJ* entries have had spelling and punctuation standardized; stylistic capitalizations remain unaltered.

22

For documentation of this claim, see the revelations cited later in the text.

23

This undoubtedly refers to the recorded version of D&C 132. While the practice of plural marriage began before this 1843 revelation, the practice had not been openly “revealed” to the latter-day saints until the 1852 April conference when Brigham Young appointed Orson Pratt (a previous opponent to the teaching) to announce that this was an official doctrine and practice of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The talk is found in *JD* 1:53 ff.

24 See Orson Pratt's discourse beginning at *JD* 1:53.

25 See also *MS* 47:710-11.

26

In this passage, “marrying more wives than one” is equated to the “new and everlasting covenant” referred to in D&C 132 and it is referred to as a commandment. Because the modern LDS Church teaches that celestial marriage may refer to only one wife, this paradigmatic expression is important to emphasize in this context because leaders of the LDS Church did not recognize a distinction between celestial plural marriage and celestial (monogamous) marriage until subtle changes were made as a defensive gesture against contemporary persecutions. *Solemn Covenant*, 297-98.

27 *JD* 20:327 (10/6/1879). For other statements, see *DN* (9/6/1879 & 4/23/1885); *JD* 26:225; and *Diary of Charles Walker* 2:646, 648 (5/7/1885 & 5/21/1885).

28

There is some irony in this position. George Q. Cannon was injured jumping from a train to avoid capture by federal officers on February 17, 1886. He later paid bail

and then went into the underground to avoid prosecution. See *John Taylor Papers* 2:392.

29 As cited in Collier, Fred C., *Doctrine of the Priesthood: The Political Platform of the Manifesto*, 4:2, (Collier's Publishing Co.: 1987), 9.

30 *John Taylor Papers*, as cited in *The Political Platform of the Manifesto*, 14.

31 *DN* (2/25/1885).

32 *DN* (11/12/1880).

33

See for example, the alleged treatment of John Sharp as found in the anonymous letter in the next chapter.

34

See *D&C* 58:21. John Taylor was not insensitive to this issue when he made the infamous declaration "I defy the United States." He stated years earlier that:

JOHN TAYLOR

3/2/1879

There is the Church of God and the kingdom of God. The Church, of course, refers more particularly to spiritual things, and the kingdom to temporal rule and government and management and to temporal affairs. If it does not, what does it mean, I would like some one to tell me? We sometimes preach about "the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our God and his Christ," don't we?

Will the kingdom of God be the kingdom of men? I think not. What does it mean, then, where it says, if we keep the laws of God, we need not break the laws of the land? Because the laws of God are so much more pure and elevated, so much more adapted to the wants and situation of humanity, that we walk right over everything of that sort; and it is nothing comparatively for us to do; what is required we can easily do it, and a great deal on the back of it.

JD 20:166

Joseph F. Smith also addressed *D&C* 58:21 as follows:

JOSEPH F. SMITH

4/9/1882

We are told here that no man need break the laws of the land who will keep the laws of God. But this is further defined by the passage which I will read afterwards — the law of the land, which all have no need to break, is that law which is the constitutional law of the land, and that is as God himself has defined it (D&C 107:77-80). ...

The Lord Almighty requires this people to observe the laws of the land, to be subject to the powers that be, so far as they abide by the fundamental principles of good government, but he will hold them responsible if they will pass unconstitutional measures and frame unjust and proscriptive laws, as did Nebuchadnezzar and Darius in relation to the three Hebrews and Daniel. If law-makers have a mind to violate their oath, break their covenants and their faith with the people and depart from the provisions of the Constitution, where is the law, human or divine, which binds me, as an individual, to outwardly and openly proclaim my acceptance of their acts? ... We intend to continue to be law-abiding so far as the constitutional law of the land is concerned; and we expect to meet the consequence of our obedience to the laws and commandments of God, like men. These are my sentiments briefly expressed upon this subject.

JD 23:70-71

35 See D&C 98:4-8.

36

Because the brethren felt that anti-polygamy laws were unconstitutional even after the manifesto was issued, the divisive question between fundamentalists and mainstream Mormons could be characterized as whether or not the saints must choose the law of the land over the laws of God if the choice is a matter of self preservation. This question leads to the D&C 124:49 issue discussed in the text below. This was not new to Utah Mormonism. T&S 5:470-77 (3/15/1844) quipped that the Church "must not triumph over the state, but actually swallow it up." Weeks later, Sidney Rigdon declared that a "man is not an honorable man if he is not above all law, and above government." T&S 5:524 (5/1/1844). Brigham Young similarly preached: "I don't care anything about all the laws in the world for I will live above them. ... I have a right to proclaim myself a king and priest unto the most High God. Yet I will not transgress your laws." WWJ 2:378

37 D&C 98:4.

38 Acts 5:29.

39

The 1882 revelation was printed in the Danish, Swedish, and German European editions of the D&C and the instructions of this revelation governing the leadership of the Church was extensively implemented – that is, all leadership of the Church had to be polygamists – monogamists either had to comply with the command to take a

plural wife or they were dropped from their positions of leadership. See endnote 19 above.

A mistake in a fundamentalist publication (entitled simply “1886” or “1886: *Addendum*”) has led to the incorrect rumor that the 1886 revelation was also printed in some European editions of the D&C. It was never published in any edition of the D&C.

40

Some of the omitted text here says:

REVELATION TO JOHN TAYLOR

1/26/1880

And while my servant John Taylor is your President, I wish to ask the rest of my servants of the Apostles the question, although you have one to preside over your Quorum, which is the order of God in all generations, do you not, all of you, hold the apostleship, which is the highest authority ever given to men on earth? You do. Therefore you hold in common the Keys of the Kingdom of God in all the world. You each of you have the power to unlock the veil of eternity and hold converse with God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ and to have the ministrations of angels. It is your right, privilege and duty to inquire of the Lord as to His mind and will concerning yourselves and the inhabitants of Zion and their interests. And whenever any one of you receives the word of the Lord, let it be written and presented in your councils and whatever by united consent you deem wise to be presented unto the people, let it be presented by the President, my servant John Taylor, as the word of the Lord. In this way you will uphold him and strengthen his hands, as all the burden should not lie upon one man.

This is significant for a number of reasons to be discussed in later chapters. However, for purposes of this chapter, it is important to note because a number of these revelations were presented to the quorum of Twelve apostles for their approval and were accepted “as the word of the Lord.”

41

This clause is significant because it suggested that the Twelve had jurisdiction over the people passing laws against them and therefore suggests that their authority was greater than that of Congress in these matters.

42

Collier, Fred. C. Compiler, *Unpublished Revelations*, (Collier’s Publishing Co.: 1979), 2nd Ed. 1981. (Hereinafter: UPR). On January 26, 1880, Wilford Woodruff received this revelation while visiting Sunset, Arizona. It was “submitted to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles just prior to April Conference of that year; it was accepted by that body as the word of the Lord.” Cowley, M., *Wilford Woodruff*, 531 as cited in *Anderson*, *The 1886 Revelation*, 21. See also *Improvement Era* 1:542.

43

Referring to this sentiment as expressed in these revelations, Joseph Musser observed that the “Lord evidently had no respect for the laws aimed against the principle – neither did the leaders of the people.” Musser, *The New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage*, 44.

44

This revelation was published in a German Edition of the Doctrine and Covenants and in the *Life of John Taylor*, 349. Joseph F. Smith referred to this revelation as the “law of the church” and the last revelation that he knew anything about in the post manifesto Reed Smoot hearings. See *Reed Smoot Hearings* 2:289.

45

This revelation was given in connection with Wilford Woodruff’s request as to how he should handle questions dealing with the notorious “oath of vengeance” taken in LDS temples in the nineteenth century and as to whether or not he should make a statement disavowing plural marriages to a court. A very informative history is found in *MFP* 3:171-76.

46 See also *Journals of L. John Nuttal* (November 24, 25, and 27, 1889) and *Abraham H. Cannon’s Journal* (12/20/1888). In the latter journal, a proposal had been made for the brethren to abandon plural marriage and Cannon was relieved to find that the apostles were united in their feelings against the idea.

47

Many fundamentalists who belong to the Apostolic United Brethren (AUB) believe that Wilford Woodruff was inspired to create the 1890 manifesto as a political dodge. That does not mean that they believe the contents of the 1890 manifesto are factually accurate or that they believe that the injunctions of the manifesto were inspired – only that the concept of using a manifesto for purposes of secretly approving plural marriages while outwardly denouncing the practice was inspired. Critics have struggled to understand Woolley/Musser teachings on this issue and have interpreted inconsistencies where none exists.

48

The Apostolic United Brethren appears to be an exception to this general rule. The “AUB” accepts the mainstream LDS Church as Christ’s Church but views it as “out of order” just as the Israelites were “out of order” at the time of Christ – still accepted, just somewhat prodigal. Its members are taught that they should not disparage the LDS Church and its leaders teach that “the mother church” should be respected by the “father” (AUB or “the priesthood”) the same as a husband should take care of and honor a wayward wife inasmuch as he is able to do so. Incidentally, AUB’s leaders commonly concede that no organization is exempt from being out of order to some degree (including the AUB) but they emphasize that the LDS Church has

abandoned many doctrines taught by the early brethren – not just plural marriage. Some of these doctrines include: Adam-God teachings; united order or “full consecration”; proper conferral of the priesthood; the ban on blacks receiving the priesthood; the doctrine of dissolution; the kingdom of God as a separate organization from the Church; the ordinance of rebaptism; the ordinance of mother’s blessings; giving a complete temple endowment (as opposed to the shortened version now administered in the LDS Church); the wearing of a full length, unaltered garment; the unchanging nature of all ordinances; prayer circles outside of the temple; the law of adoption (sealing men to men as father/son); and the teaching that a living prophet can never lead you astray – even if he strays from teachings and revelations of previous prophets. This information came from multiple interviews with members of the AUB. Names withheld by convention of implied request.

49 As cited in Hardy, *Works of Abraham*, 308 and as quoted in Bitton, *George Q. Cannon*, 275.

50 *LDS Church Authority*, 48.

51

Ibid. While this issue remains unfamiliar to many latter-day saints, there are a plethora of publications that address these claims. At present, Quinn’s groundbreaking article may remain the most academic treatment of this issue. This issue will be discussed extensively in volume 2.



*C*alls to Issue a Revelation

ABANDONING PLURAL MARRIAGE

CHAPTER 2

The severity of persecutions continued to mount, men were arrested almost daily under the anti-polygamy acts, verbal defiance increased, and pressure to cease the practice of plural marriage continued throughout the 1880s. Beyond repeated requests for a politically motivated declaration of the Church's intent to cease authorizing plural marriages,¹ individuals within the Church began requesting that John Taylor issue a revelation to unequivocally end this controversial practice. Well over a year before receiving the revelation announcing that the Lord would never revoke the law of plural marriage, John Taylor lashed out at these requests for a revelation at a Sunday general conference session:

JOHN TAYLOR

4/8/1885

The principle of plural marriage, against which the main force of the opposition is being hurled, has been a divine institution from before the foundation of the world. There has been some talk about President Taylor issuing a revelation abolishing that system of marriage. When a revelation of that kind is given, it will be when the Lord has no use for the Latter-day Saints, and this will never transpire, for He has promised to give them the Kingdom and to sustain them.

DN

As if his position was not already unequivocally clear after issuing such an unambiguous statement in a crowded conference setting, President Taylor made another proclamation from the pulpit later that same year:

JOHN TAYLOR

10/28/1885

The childish babble about another revelation is only an evidence how half informed men can talk. The "Mormons" have either to spurn their religion and their God, and sink self-damned in the eyes of all civilization at a moment when most blessed in the practice of their faith, or go calmly on the same issue which they have always had.

MS 27:43

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

An editorial in the Deseret News with the subtitles “Proposition to Abandon Polygamy” and “Receive a Revelation” defended President Taylor’s stance and declared that revelations of this nature cannot come by the request of the prophet – God “reveals what he pleases to Prophets and when he pleases, and never revokes what he has said.” In language suspiciously similar to President John Taylor, the editorial further claimed that “God has never made any provisions to relieve us individually from the responsibility resting upon us in connection with the law pertaining to celestial marriage” and in the first person declared “neither have I the slightest idea that he will revoke the law.”² John Taylor was not the only apostle to claim that a revelation ending plural marriages would never come forth. Wilford Woodruff made the following statement to apostle Heber J. Grant in reference to a proposed document to publically claim that the saints were giving up plural marriage:

WILFORD WOODRUFF

12/20/1888

Had we yielded to that document every man of us would have been under condemnation before God. The Lord never will give a revelation to abandon plural marriage.

Journals of Heber J. Grant³

In nearly identical terms, Wilford Woodruff made the same prophecy over a year later in a meeting of the quorum of the Twelve apostles where they were discussing a revelation he had just received. He there claimed that “the Lord will never give a revelation to abandon plural marriage.”⁴ He was also forbidden of the Lord in an 1889 revelation to “deny” this law of plural marriage or to make any concessions to enemies.⁵ Further, he prophesied at the dedication of the Manti temple that “[w]e won’t quit practicing Plural Marriage until Christ shall come”⁶ or as Heber J. Grant recorded the statement, “We are not going to stop the practice of plural marriage until the Coming of the Son of Man.”⁷ Even after he issued the 1890 manifesto, President Woodruff continued to make similar pronouncements, claiming that the “principle of plural marriage will yet be restored to this Church, but how or when I cannot say.”⁸ Lorenzo Snow, in a meeting of the quorum of Twelve apostles five years later repeated this prophecy, promising that plural marriage “will again be practiced by this people.”⁹

Although not quite as direct as the above prophecies, Brigham Young claimed that “God designs to maintain” plural marriage so the saints would never give up this “Holy Law.”

BRIGHAM YOUNG

SPRING 1863

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

For so help us, our God, we will never give up that Holy Law that the noble prophets laid down their lives to maintain. ...

The powers of hell will do their utmost to get this people to give up that holy law which God designs to maintain.

Autobiography of Mosiah Hancock, 48¹⁰

Additionally and previous to the manifesto, apostle Snow strongly opined that no such revelation would come when addressing the judge who sentenced him for having a plurality of wives in 1886. Apostle Snow responded to the prosecuting attorney's prediction that if he was convicted, "a new revelation would soon follow, changing the divine law of celestial marriage"¹¹ with the following chastisement:

LORENZO SNOW

1/16/1886

Whatever fame Mr. Bierbower may have secured as a lawyer, he certainly will fail as a prophet. The severest persecutions have never been followed by revelations changing a divine law, obedience to which brought imprisonment or martyrdom.

Though I go to prison, God will not change His law of Celestial Marriage.

Historical Record¹²

Earlier in the proceedings, he boldly confronted the judge by testifying: "I would prefer to die a thousand deaths than renounce my wives and violate these sacred obligations."

Plenty of these statements pepper the discourses of the era and the speakers made no apologies for their brazen and forthright approach to this confrontation over requests to abandon plural marriages. Only a month after President Taylor's claim that the Lord would not issue a revelation abandoning plural marriage unless He had "no use for the Latter-day Saints," George Q. Cannon brusquely proclaimed that requests for a revelation to abandon plural marriage were born of the seeds of apostasy and other apostles expressed similar views into the 1880s.

GEORGE Q. CANNON

5/15/1885

I look upon such a suggestion as from the devil. It would be quite as proper to propose apostasy for a short season until public opinion would become more favorable to us. If there are any in the Church who cannot stand the pressure instead of talking compromise, let them withdraw quietly from the church. ... doing such a thing would demonstrate utter apostasy, and merit the vengeance of God. ... If there are men in the church who love the world and its favors better than they do God and truth ... now is a good time for them to exhibit the feeling. But if they have any regard left for those who have been their friends and brethren, they ought not, while professing to be members of the church, be consorting with those who are its

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

deadly enemies and assenting to their plans for the destruction of a vital principle of exaltation.

Juvenile Instructor 20:156

Although these statements could be attributed to the notions of several “gentiles” who claimed that the time for the LDS Church to issue a revelation abandoning plural marriage was “nearly ripe,” the gentiles were not the only people pressing for a revelation.¹³ Noting that some saints were “preparing themselves to yield” to the government and concede to abandon the principle of plural marriage, George Q. Cannon chastised such men by saying:

GEORGE Q. CANNON

11/20/1884

I view such men as apostates already in heart. They are more dangerous than our open enemies.

JD 26:7

GEORGE Q. CANNON

5/1/1885

Those who have practiced this principle are assailed with a ferocity never before known. Those who make the attack, perhaps hope to drive the people of God to renounce the doctrine and promise not to obey the revelation.¹⁴ Vain and delusive hope! Unless the Saints apostatize such an action on their part is impossible. By doing so they would deliberately shut the door of the Celestial glory in their own faces. They would say by that action: “We do not have the valor necessary to sustain us in striving for Celestial Glory, and we therefore are content to enter a terrestrial or telestial glory.”

Juvenile Instructor 20:136¹⁵

GEORGE Q. CANNON

10/5/1884

Men say, “Oh, if you will only get a revelation concerning polygamy, if you will only lay polygamy aside, you will no longer have any opposition to contend with; if you will only conform to modern ideas concerning your domestic institutions, we shall have nothing to say against you. ... Vain thought! ... Therefore, those who understand this work, know very well that anything of this kind – unless indeed the people should apostatize – would have no such effect as our friends in many instances think it would have.

JD 25:321-22

GEORGE Q. CANNON

5/15/1885

[S]ome people, calling themselves Latter-day Saints, have been almost ready to go into the open market, and bid for a State government, at the price of conceding this principle of our religion.¹⁶ ... They are ready to sell out their belief as Latter-day Saints ... Can such persons retain the Spirit of God, and take such a course as this? No. They cannot.¹⁷

Juvenile Instructor 20:156

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

John Taylor made similar observations spanning several years:

JOHN TAYLOR

4/7/1866

When I see any of our people, men or women opposing a principle of this kind, I have years ago set them down as on the road to apostasy, and not interested in this Church and kingdom.

JD 11:216

JOHN TAYLOR

10/6-7/1884

God has given us a revelation in regard to celestial marriage. I did not make it. He has told us certain things pertaining to this matter, and they would like us to tone that principle down and change it and make it applicable to the views of the day. This we cannot do; nor can we interfere with any of the commands of God to meet the persuasions or behests of men. I cannot do it, and will not do it.

I find some men try to twist round the principle in any way and every way they can. They want to sneak out of it in some way. Now God don't want any kind of sycophancy like that. He expects that we will be true to Him, and to the principles He has developed, and to feel as Job did – “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.”¹⁸ Though other folks would slay us, yet we will trust in the living God and be true to our covenants and to our God. These are my feelings in relation to that matter.

We have also been told that “it is not mete that men who will not abide my law shall preside over my Priesthood,”¹⁹ and yet some people would like very much to do it. Well, they cannot do it; because if we are here, as I said before, to do the will of our Father who sent us, and He has told us what to do, we will do it, in the name of Israel's God – and all who sanction it say Amen – [the vast congregation responded with a loud “Amen.”] – and those that don't may say what they please. [Laughter.] If God has introduced something for our glory and exaltation, we are not going to have that kicked over by any improper influence, either inside or outside of the Church of the living God. We will stand by the principles of eternal truth; living we will proclaim them, and dying we will be true to them, and after death will live again in their enjoyment in the eternal worlds. That is my feeling; so I don't feel very trembly in the knees, and I do not think you do, generally.

I see sometimes a disposition to try to ignore some of the laws which God has introduced, and this is one of them. People want to slip round a corner, or creep out in some way. There is something very creepy about it.

JD 25:309-10

These “apostates” ready to concede plural marriage may be best represented in a vociferous and anonymous letter sent to John Taylor in early 1886.

ANONYMOUS LETTER TO JOHN TAYLOR

1/11/1886

President Taylor:

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

Dear Brother

I write you in kindly and brotherly love. You are hidden away and cannot know the true feelings of our people, and those that surround you are afraid to tell you if they know. There is a general murmur, a feeling of uncertainty that has not been manifested since the days of Nauvoo.

...

The murmurings go so far as to say if Brother Brigham were with us it would be otherwise, and wish for a man that could lead us out of the darkness. Why does not some one come to the front and save our people from division? If things continue in this way much longer, there will be more danger within than without the Church.

...

Something should be done, by your course you are not uniting the people, but you are setting one part of the polygamists who want to obey the laws of the land against those that will not obey them, but hide or go into court and swear falsely. You will do nothing for us, how in the name of God can you still claim to be a leader when you have ceased to be a leader, but instead become a divider. Why do you not do something for the people? What hope have you? You proclaim to the world that there are 2 per cent polygamists and 98 per cent monogamists, now with half of those in polygamy going back on it, and the other half hiding away, what do you expect to accomplish? In a word why do you not advise the people to obey the law of the land you live in?

...

You are notorious for ignoring the peoples will. ...

I do not want you to come out and go to the pen, but what I and all the people do want is for you to do something. Save us from division and contention within and reproach from without. We appealed to the highest tribunal as a last resort but this did no good, now what can we do?

Take it to the Lord and from his silence he plainly says, "I have heard the cries of the daughters of Zion. I have counted the broken hearts of the many women who have been sent to their graves on account of Polygamy, and I will withdraw for a season until my people shall repent.

If you do not want to take the responsibility of doing away with polygamy upon yourself, you can do this: order an election of all the people and let them say Yes or No without fear or hinderance, and you will see for yourself how they feel, and you will be exonerated from all blame.

John Taylor Papers²⁰

Although we cannot presume that the bold sentiments expressed in this anonymous letter did in fact represent the feelings of a majority of the saints as he portrays, it certainly establishes the fact that there was a vocal minority of saints who desired to have plural marriage suspended – or at least, they wanted polygamy cast down into the southern borders of Mexico so that the majority of saints could abide by the law of the land.

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

Despite persistent folklore, this internal struggle with “apostate” saints “finding fault with” plural marriage was not new to John Taylor’s administration. Heber C. Kimball complained three decades earlier that:

HEBER C. KIMBALL

10/6/1855

If you oppose what is called the ‘spiritual wife doctrine,’ the Patriarchal order, which is of God, that course will corrode you with a spirit of apostasy, and you will go overboard; still a great many do so, and strive to justify themselves in it, but they are not justified of God. ... I am opposed to such characters ... and I have often said that I never want one of them to darken my door.

JD 3:125

HEBER C. KIMBALL

9/28/1856

Many of this people have broken their covenants ... by finding fault with the plurality of wives and trying to sink it out of existence. But you cannot do that, for God will cut you off and raise up another people that will carry out His purposes in righteousness, unless you walk up to the line in your duty.

JD 4:108

FALSE PROPHECIES OR REJECTION OF PLURAL MARRIAGE?

These prophetic-styled statements claiming that a revelation to abandon plural marriage would never be given (and that requests for such a revelation constituted apostasy) make for an interesting conundrum between fundamentalist and mainstream Mormons. Despite the fact that the early brethren clearly considered the 1890 manifesto a political document and not a revelation,²¹ the modern LDS Church continues to push the position that the 1890 manifesto was a divine revelation to Wilford Woodruff. If that position is correct, we have either false prophecies uttered by at least four apostles²² on this relatively narrow issue or we have prophecies that conflict with the direction taken by the LDS Church when it issued the 1890 manifesto. Logically, the nearly forced position of the LDS Church would be to mimic its unofficial response to multiple prophecies that none of the negro race could receive the priesthood until the millennial reign of Christ – that is, prophecies were made by brethren before the Lord’s will had been fully revealed and were therefore made in error.²³ In other words, the above prophecies are erroneous or false. Other examples of unfulfilled prophecies in LDS Church history could be drawn upon to vindicate this position and the characterization of the early brethren as being undeveloped in certain doctrines of the gospel

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

allow for the above prophecies to be comfortably set aside as prime examples of overly hasty speech.²⁴ This apologetic stance is rationally defensible – similar arguments have been used in many religions – and it is sturdy enough to convince millions of saints to set aside these issues as insignificant historical artifacts.

However, latter-day saints have at least one other alternative interpretation to anchor themselves upon. Rather than rest upon a blanket assertion that the early brethren were simply incorrect, they can claim that the law of plural marriage was revoked because the saints were unwilling to live that law at that time. Orson Pratt supplied that rationale when addressing the revocation of the law of full consecration.²⁵

ORSON PRATT

When [the Lord] saw the hold that the traditions in which we had been trained had upon our hearts, he revoked, for the time being, the law of full consecration. Says one, “What! God revoke a commandment?” Yes, that is the way he did in ancient times,²⁶ and he is the same God yet. He did it for our good; for if that law had been in full force this people would not have been in these mountains this day. Our selfishness and covetousness are so great that, as a people, we never would have complied with it. A few amongst us might have done so, but as a people we should have been overcome and ruined; but owing to that law being revoked, many of us will now, perhaps, be saved. ... Thus you see, Latter-day Saints, that we are not under the law of full consecration, and if not under the law we are not under the penalty thereof. ... having been relieved, for a period, from the execution of that law, we were placed under another law, which, in some respects, may be considered an inferior law. ... What is that law? It is called the law of tithing.

JD 16:5-6

Even Joseph Smith made parallel remarks that could substantiate this position.²⁷ Thus, latter-day saints can choose either to believe that three of their Church presidents and an apostle made false prophecies concerning the abandonment of the practice of plural marriages or they can choose to believe that the Lord took plural marriage away from the saints because they would “have been overcome and ruined” as a people.

While fundamentalists are unwilling to concede to the idea that the above prophecies were made in error, they are willing to concede that the Lord took plural marriage away from the large body of saints due to their rejection of the practice. In the Reed Smoot Hearings, President Joseph F. Smith testified that there were thousands of Church members who did not believe in or accept the doctrine of plural marriage and that it had been so since the doctrine was first introduced

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

to the saints.²⁸ A number of other apostles have made statements that substantiate this position. Consider the following:²⁹

FIRST PRESIDENCY

12/19/1891

We formerly taught to our people that polygamy or celestial marriage as commanded by God through Joseph Smith was right; that it was a necessity to man's highest exaltation in the life to come. ... To be at peace with the Government and in harmony with their fellow-citizens who are not of their faith ... our people have voluntarily put aside something which all their lives they believed to be a sacred principle.

Petition for Amnesty³⁰

LORENZO SNOW

3/13/1901

God has removed this privilege from the people.

Brigham Young Jr. Diary³¹

JOSEPH F. SMITH

4/--/1893

[The principle of plural marriage was abandoned in 1890] because the saints rejected it.

John Mills Whitaker Journal³²

REED SMOOT

1/20/1905

My understanding is this: That the manifesto came after passage of certain laws and the final decision thereon by the Supreme Court, and not only that, I believe it came from pressure within the church as well.

Reed Smoot Hearings 3:212

GEORGE Q. CANNON

12/19/1888

Appeal after appeal was made from friends outside of the Church who felt that the case was exceedingly critical, as well as from members of the Church, to do something to ward off what they termed the appalling results that would follow persistence in maintain the practice of plural marriage.

Juvenile Instructor 26:670

WILFORD WOODRUFF

11/14/1889

I hear of murmuring – This is a time of trial for the Latter-day Saints. We have now for upwards of four years been undergoing persecution.

Deseret News Weekly

GEORGE Q. CANNON

7/20/1889

I have been called upon by friends outside of the Church, and urged to take some steps with regard to this matter. They knew the course which the government was determined to take. This feeling has also been manifested more or less by members of the Church.

Deseret News Weekly

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

Even one of Utah's prosecutors noted this inclination against plural marriage when testifying in front of the United States Senate:

HIRAM E. BOOTH

1/13/1905

98 percent of the Mormon people are against polygamy. It is inevitable that it must cease to exist. For several years³³ the sentiment of the younger members of the church has been against polygamy and since the manifesto it has been rapidly dying out.

Reed Smoot Hearings 2:714

CONSEQUENCES FOR REJECTING PLURAL MARRIAGE

This however is not the end of such claims.³⁴ At least a few apostles noted that abandoning plural marriage represented apostasy because giving up one principle of the gospel was tantamount to giving up one's entire religion³⁵ and President John Taylor intimated that people requesting an end to plural marriage could not grasp the repercussions such a course would entail.

JOHN TAYLOR LETTER TO JOHN SHARP

5/2/1887

[T]hey cannot measure its tremendous consequences which would follow to us if we offended our God by Repudiating the Commands He has given us.

Personal Letter³⁶

JOHN TAYLOR LETTER TO FRANKLIN S. RICHARDS

5/2/1887

It is very well to talk glibly about compromising and arranging for dispensing with polygamy, as they call it, but they know nothing of the tremendous consequences that would befall us as a people, or as individuals, if we should follow their suggestions, or allow sympathy, or acquiescence with their views, to have place in our hearts.

Personal Letter³⁷

DANIEL H. WELLS

12/9/1871

It is possible that we as a people may be denied the principle of a plurality of wives – hereafter, for not honoring it thus far. ... If we do not honor this great principle, God will surely take it from us.

Minutes of the Salt Lake School of the Prophets³⁸

BRIGHAM YOUNG

12/23/1871

[I]f anything ever caused that principle to be withheld from us, it will be in consequence of the God of Heaven being displeased with many who have gone into it.

Minutes of the Salt Lake School of the Prophets³⁹

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

BRIGHAM YOUNG

6/3/1866

But suppose that this Church should give up this holy order of marriage, then would the devil, and all who are in league with him against the cause of God, rejoice that they had prevailed upon the Saints to refuse to obey one of the revelations and commandments of God to them.

JD 11:239

BRIGHAM YOUNG

4/--/1877

Hear it ye Elders of Israel, and mark it down in your log-books, the fullness of the gospel is the united order and the order of plural marriage, and I fear that when I am gone, this people will give up these two principles which we prize so highly, and if they do, this Church cannot advance as God wishes for it to advance.

Celestial Marriage, 1⁴⁰

GEORGE Q. CANNON

2/17/1890

[For people to deny plural marriage would be] to set themselves in opposition to God.

George Q. Cannon Diary⁴¹

HEBER C. KIMBALL

10/12/1856

You might as well deny "Mormonism," and turn away from it, as to oppose the plurality of wives. Let the presidency of this Church, and the twelve apostles, and all the authorities unite and say with one voice that they will oppose that doctrine,⁴² and the whole of them would be damned.

JD 5:203

EDITORIAL

4/1/1885

The entire Church and all of its Priesthood, with the Presidency at the head of it might motion and vote against this principle until doomsday with just one effect, (namely) to vote themselves away from the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, from the possession of their Priesthood, and to find themselves very speedily outside the Church and Kingdom of God; while he would raise up others that would honor and observe his law.

Deseret News

There are additional statements that suggest not only would the rejection of plural marriage bring condemnation upon the people, it would bring about a rejection of the Church by God. In other words, if plural marriage is one of the marks of the true Church, the rejection of plural marriage would disqualify the Church from this iconic status.

GEORGE Q. CANNON

11/6/1885

[I]f we were to repudiate this principle, our Church would cease to be the Church of God, and the ligaments that now bind it together would be severed.

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

George Q. Cannon Diary⁴³

JOHN TAYLOR

4/23/1885

What would be necessary to bring about the results nearest the hearts of the opponents of Mormonism? Simply to renounce, abrogate, or apostatize from the New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage in its fullness.⁴⁴ Were the Church to do that as an entirety, God would reject the Saints as a body. The authority of the priesthood would be withdrawn.

DEN

JOHN TAYLOR (CITING JOSEPH IN A MEETING OF THE TWELVE) 10/13/1882

If we do not embrace that principle soon the keys will be turned against us, for if we do not keep the same law our Heavenly Father has we cannot go with Him.

WWW

Thus, fundamentalists can make the case for a logical construct concluding that the mainstream LDS Church has been rejected by God. The argument runs like this: If the saints reject plural marriage, God will reject the Church and the saints as a body. The saints rejected plural marriage. Ergo, God rejected the Church and the saints as a body. Despite significant evidence supporting the case that the saints rejected plural marriage, the reader should note that some fundamentalists do not agree with this interpretation and still sustain the leadership of the mainstream LDS Church.

Speaking shortly after the 1890 manifesto had been issued but before it had been formally presented in general conference, apostle John H. Smith speculated that the 1890 manifesto came as the consequence of the saints' unworthiness before God:

JOHN H. SMITH

10/1/1890

It may be that the people are unworthy of the principle and hence the Lord has withdrawn it.

Abraham H. Cannon Journal

Fundamentalists therefore claim that the above statements are evidence enough that the manifesto was no revelation and that the Lord had already pointed out another course for the faithful saints to follow. Nevertheless, and beyond these prophecies, fundamentalists have more arrows in their quiver. For example, they accurately point out that the injunctions of the 1890 manifesto were not followed by most of the members of the Twelve for nearly two decades after it was issued – a clear indication that they did not consider it a binding commandment from God to cease practicing plural marriages.⁴⁵ They also point out

that Wilford Woodruff (nearly two years after issuing the manifesto) testified in the famous Temple Lot Case that:

WILFORD WOODRUFF

12/2/1890

After the law had been revealed from the Lord, I do not think that it was possible for the Lord to change that law by revealing something that was contrary to the law previously revealed through the prophet. I do not think that He would do that.
Temple Lot Case⁴⁶

Clearly, the current position of the LDS Church is that the manifesto created a doctrinal practice contrary to what existed before 1890. Also very clear is the fact that the early brethren often referred to the principle of plural marriage as a revelation of God (D&C 132). Making the safe presumption that Wilford Woodruff believed that these two propositions were accurate, he appears here to admit that the manifesto was not a revelation – indeed, there are a number of statements that suggest that the manifesto was not a revelation – it was a political document written by a number of men.⁴⁷ Thus, fundamentalists conclude that if the Lord allowed the manifesto to be issued, it is either because He approved of this political ruse or because the saints had rejected His previous instructions not to abandon this law.

This, fundamentalists maintain, is an unmistakably clear issue that leaves little room for error and it establishes their foundation⁴⁸ for rejecting the 1890 manifesto. They look upon the 1890 manifesto as an incident similar to the 116 pages of the Book of Mormon that were lost as a result of pestering the Lord for an answer different than that received in previous revelations.⁴⁹ Thus, they fail to find any divine involvement in the document or the statements defending it. Given that position, fundamentalists assert that the counsel to civil disobedience continues to be binding upon them. They also find the Lord's pronouncements of anti-polygamy laws as unconstitutional (as outlined in the previous chapter) as authoritative and binding upon them as well. Thus, their "only consistent course" is to keep the law of plural marriage and they view this as a great and solemn mission.

However, these factors by themselves would be inadequate to induce some fundamentalists to engage in civil disobedience or to convince them to pursue the lifestyle they do. There are at least two other issues that lead them to the conclusion that divine command requires this of them. First, there are a number of quotes that suggest, when looked at as a harmonious ensemble, that the Lord intended to separate a group of saints from the mainstream LDS Church if the Church abandoned plural marriage. Second, and more importantly, they claim that John Taylor's 1886 revelation was followed by a meeting

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

wherein men were given authority to perform plural marriages after the Church abandoned the practice. These issues are taken up in the following chapters.

ENDNOTES FOR CHAPTER 2

1

This issue is taken up more thoroughly in chapter 4.

2 *DN* 4/1/1885.

3 *Heber J. Grant Collection*, LDS Archives as cited in *The Words of Abraham*, 327; Lyman, Edward Leo, *Political Deliverance*, (University of Illinois Press:1986), 106; and *Solemn Covenant*, 128.

4 *WWJ*, (11/24/1889); Wilford W. Woodruff *Minutes of the Quorum of the Twelve* (12/12/1888).

5

See the previous chapter for the exact wording and the context of this statement.

6

(5/17/1888) As recorded in the *John Henry Smith Journal* (11/9/1888), Special Collections, University of Utah. Other brethren echoed this prophesy. One such instance was in a Mexico conference in 1900. Apostle Abraham O. Woodruff claimed that "no year will ever pass, whether it be in this country, in India, or wherever, from now until the coming of the Savior, when children will not be born in plural marriage. And I make this prophesy in the name of Jesus Christ." See Quarterly Conference in Colonia Juarez, November 18-19, recorded by Joseph Charles Bentley, *Journal and Notes*, 61. As cited in *Solemn Covenant*, 190. Owen Woodruff, in November of the year 1900, "prophesied in the name of Jesus Christ in the Juarez Stake conference that no year would ever pass without children being born into polygamy. After making that prophecy, Woodruff turned toward Counselor [Joseph F.] Smith and said, 'Now if I'm wrong, there sits the man that can set me right.' Joseph F. Smith did not correct him." As cited in, *LDS Church Authority*, 89

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

(see footnote 317); see also Quinn, D. Michael, *Plural Marriages After the 1890 Manifesto* (8/11/1991), Conference in Bluffdale, Utah. Typescript in author's possession. (Hereinafter: *Bluffdale Conference*)

A similar prophecy was also made by Heber C. Kimball as early as 1855: He claimed that the "principle of plurality of wives never will be done away." *JD* 3:125 (10/6/1855).

Secondhand accounts of Lorin C. Woolley claim that John Taylor prophesied that no "year should pass before the coming of Jesus Christ, in which children would not be born under the holy covenant of the Patriarchal Order of Marriage" and that John W. Taylor repeated that prophesy a number of times. See Allred, Byron Harvey, *A Leaf in Review of the Words and Acts of God and Men Relative to the Fullness of the Gospel*, (Review and Preview Publishers: 1980) 2nd ed., 183-84. Similar statements are also made in the *Rudger Clawson Diary* (7/11/1899): apostle Marriner W. Merrill predicted that "the time would never come when children of Polygamous parents would cease to be born in the Church." As cited in *Solemn Covenant*, 318.

7 *Heber J. Grant Journal* and *John Henry Smith Journals* (5/17/1888) as cited in *LDS Church Authority*, 34.

8

Abraham H. Cannon Journal (4/2/1891). See *LDS Church Authority*, 61 (footnote 204); Heber J. Grant recorded President Woodruff as saying that God "will yet open doors that the principle of plural marriage can and will be restored." See his diary of the same date as cited in *Id.*

9 *Minutes of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles* (4/1/1896); *Heber J. Grant Journal* (4/1/1896) as cited in *LDS Church Authority*, 67. See also *LDS Church Authority*, 62 and 72 for similar statements.

10 *Autobiography of Mosiah Lyman Hancock* (1834-1865), typescript BYU Special Collections.

11

This was not an uncommon sentiment. A contemporary editorial opined that it would be "reasonable to look for a change of policy with the change of administration." See *John Taylor Papers* 2:350.

12

Jenson, Andrew, *Historical Record* (Salt Lake City: 1889) 5:144. Immediately following the above quotation, he declared "Though the Presidency of the Church and the Twelve Apostles should suffer martyrdom, there will remain over four thousand Seventies, all Apostles of the Son of God, and were these to be slain there still would remain many thousands of High Priests, and as many or more Elders, all

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

possessing the same authority to administer Gospel ordinances." See also *Deseret News Weekly*, 12 (1/20/1886) and *MS 48:110-11* as additional resources.

13

Barclay, James W. Esq., *Mormonism Exposed*, (London 1884), 28. Despite the title, this was not an anti-Mormon pamphlet. Instead, the author largely applauded the efforts of the saints and made significant efforts to dispel the false reports about their immorality.

14

This is apparently referring to D&C 132, although it could be referring to the unpublished revelation of 1882; either way, it is clearly referring to plural marriage.

15

The rest of this quotation is oft-cited by fundamentalists: "To comply with the request of our enemies would be to give up all hope of ever entering into the glory of God, the Father, and Jesus Christ the Son. This is the prize which the Saints are asked to give for the world to cease their attack upon them! Is it not a costly bargain which they are asked to make? To barter off all hope of eternal felicity with wives and children in the Celestial presence of God and the Lamb for the miserable favor of the world! So intimately interwoven is this precious doctrine with the exaltation of men and women in the great hereafter that it cannot be given up without giving up at the same time all hope of immortal glory."

See endnote 35 below for more instances of this sentiment.

16

Brigham Young addressed this issue as well. Rhetorically querying as to whether or not Utah "shall ever be admitted as a State into the Union without denying the principle of polygamy," he answered, "If we are not admitted until then, we shall never be admitted." *JD 11:269* (8/19/1866).

17 *JD 26:7-8* (11/20/1884).

18 Job 13:15.

19 1882 revelation cited in the previous chapter.

20

As cited in *Internal Struggle*, 10-12. John Taylor justified his jaunt into the underground, in part, on the following basis:

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

Juries have been selected for the express purpose of convicting men who are prominent in the Church; and their partisan bias has become so thoroughly known in the community that the common expression is that an accusation in the courts ... is equivalent to a conviction. The rule of jurisprudence which has come down for ages past has been that the accused shall be deemed innocent until proved guilty. In our courts, we are sorry to say, this has been reversed.

[Even] visiting the residence of a suspected plural wife, or even being seen together, now was considered proof.

The result has been that a Latter-day Saint would almost be as safe in seeking justice in the infernal regions ... as in courts of this character. Indictments have been found against different parties upon the flimsiest evidence, and in some cases upon evidence which would have no weight with any fair-minded jury. The result has been that a reign of terror has prevailed and still prevails in these valleys. Seeing no prospect of fair trial, men have deemed it better to avoid arrest for a season, or until there was a prospect of receiving impartial treatment by the courts and juries. Prosecution has degenerated into persecution.

...

[A]t no time during our existence have we ever shrunk from the investigation of our conduct, our utterances or our lives by any fair tribunal. ... But if there are laws made to entrap us, because of our belief in and practice of the revelations which God has given to His Church ... we desire at least that it shall be upon what all the world calls good evidence and substantial proof, and not upon religious prejudice and through a determination to convict and punish, evidence or no evidence.

Epistle of the First Presidency (reprinted in the Salt Lake Tribune (3/22/1885) as cited in John Taylor Papers 2:352-354

FIRST PRESIDENCY

SPRING/1885

This [plural marriage] is a vital part of our religion, the decisions of courts to the contrary notwithstanding. ... [T]he law was enacted against this principle of our religion. ...

The paramour of mistresses and harlots, secure from prosecution, walks the streets in open day. ...

[but Mormons,] fearful of not obtaining justice in the courts, are avoiding arrest, believing no fair and impartial trial can be had under existing circumstances.

Declaration of Grievances and Protest to the President of the United States as cited in John Taylor Papers 2:357-360

21

Quinn, *LDS Church Authority*; Quinn, D. Michael, *Bluffdale Conference*; Quinn, D. Michael, *How the Manifesto Changed the Church*, paper presented at Sunstone Symposium, (Salt Lake City: 8/--/1990)(Hereinafter: *Sunstone Symposium*). These works clearly demonstrate that there were hundreds of post manifesto marriages, that the general authorities continued to authorize plural marriages after the 1890

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

manifesto, and that they considered that manifesto a political document and not a doctrinal declaration of the Church. See also endnote 7 in the previous chapter.

22

Admittedly, the author has not made exhaustive efforts to unveil more of this genre of statement. However, given the similar statements found within this chapter, one could comfortably presume that there are a number of these statements that have not yet come to light.

23

Elder Oaks noted: "It's not the pattern of the Lord to give reasons. We can put reasons to commandments. When we do we're on our own. Some people put reasons to [the ban on blacks receiving the priesthood] and they turned out to be spectacularly wrong. There is a lesson in that ... The whole set of reasons seemed to me to be unnecessary risk taking." As cited in Martins, Marcus H., Ph.D., *Setting the Record Straight: Blacks and the Mormon Priesthood*. (Millennial Press: 2007), 29.

24

This position reopens the battle worn question of the status of general conference speeches in the early Church since at least one of the prophecies was uttered in a large general assembly on the second day of general conference.

25

Orson Pratt's teachings that conflicted with doctrinal pronouncements of the early brethren have in several instances become the accepted doctrines of the LDS Church today. For a number of controversial examples, see Briney, Drew, *Understanding Adam-God Teachings: A Comprehensive Resource of Adam-God Materials*, (self-published: 2005), 514-39.

26

Apart from the "revocation" of the Law of Moses (whether in part or in toto), see Mark 10:1-5 where the Lord justifies Moses in taking away an eternal principle from the Israelites and in giving them the lesser law of divorce because of the hardness of their hearts.

27

See *HC* 4:93 where Joseph Smith notes that "[t]he law of consecration could not be kept here [in Montrose], and that it was the will of the Lord that we should desist from trying to keep it; and if persisted in, it would produce a perfect defeat of its object, and that he assumed the whole responsibility of not keeping it until proposed by himself." Because this quote was made previous to the reinstatement of the law of full consecration, fundamentalists may be loathe to see this rationale as anything but outdated. However, the similar lines of argumentation used by Joseph Smith,

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

Orson Pratt, and Wilford Woodruff are strikingly consistent. A further commentary on this issue is found in the footnotes of *HC* 4:93 and is worthy of the reader's review.

28 *Reed Smoot Hearings* 1:98-99.

29

In addition to the quotes in the main text, it is worth noting that "one week after John Taylor died (8/1/1887), Utah's monogamous Mormons (polygamists were disenfranchised by that time) voted twenty to one in favor of a proposed Utah State constitution abolishing polygamy." Whitney, Orson F., *History of Utah* (George Q. Cannon: 1904) 3:585. That included approximately ninety-five percent of all Mormon voters voting in favor of making plural marriage a crime "with a severe penalty" according to a *Deseret News* article dated 9/30/1890.

Franklin S. Richards informed U.S. Senators "[t]hat whatever might be the opinion of the committee, the provision at least demonstrated the good faith of the men who framed the constitution to do all in their power, if permitted, to wipe out polygamy." As cited in Allred, Vance, *Mormon Polygamy and the Manifesto of 1890— a Study of Hegemony and Social Conflict*, (Master's thesis, University of Montana, Missoula: 1984), 82. (Hereinafter: *Hegemony*)

John T. Caine further noted that these monogamists "had not accepted the revelation concerning plural marriage as mandatory and obligatory upon them. ... [T]hey deliberately determined on the course they ought to pursue. They put their hands to the plow. They drew the furrow broad and deep. They will not look back." (2/18/1888) LDS Church Archives, call number Pm 243.3 C135p. as cited in *Hegemony*, 83.

This trend continued in 1888 when large numbers of Mormons temporarily "withdrew from membership in the church that they might qualify as electors by taking the test oath" disclaiming any association with "any sect or organization which teaches, advises, or encourages the practice of bigamy or polygamy." Roberts, Brigham H., *Comprehensive History of the Church* (Church Deseret News: 1952) 6:213, 216. (Hereinafter: *CHC*). Nevertheless, the reader should note that some faithful Mormons felt that this was an appropriate political stance and that this position did not reflect a rejection of plural marriage. See chapter 4 for further discussion on this issue.

30 As cited in *Smoot Hearings* 1:18. See also *The Contributor* 13:197.

31 As cited in *LDS Church Authority*, 72.

32 *John Mills Whitaker Journal*, box 123 : Topical Files, Va-Wh (1825-2002), University of Utah, Special Collections; See also *W. H. Smart Diary*, 1901-1902 book, (7/28/1901), 94.

33

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

This reference is somewhat questionable because "several years" could be interpreted to apply only to post manifesto plural marriages.

34

Fundamentalists allege that Heber J. Grant made the following statement in a meeting of the Ensign Ward, Salt Lake City (2/22/1942): "Polygamy has been stopped but not by the Lord." *Truth* 6:203.

35

Orson Pratt mockingly made the following observation:

ORSON PRATT

10/7/1874

"I am a Latter-day Saint but I do not believe in polygamy." Oh, what an absurd expression! What an absurd idea! A person might as well say, "I am a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, but I do not believe in Him." One is as consistent as the other. ... If one portion of the doctrines of the Church is true, the whole of them is true.

The Journal of Discourses, Liverpool, England, 1869, 17:223-24

John Taylor made a similar statement in 1884 when confronted with the issue of abandoning plural marriage: "Their position is about the same as a person saying, 'My church believes in water baptism, but we are not allowed to practice it.'" A Christmas revelation given to John Taylor in 1884 similarly instructs the saints to "obey my law ... not in name only, but in reality." Apostle Charles Penrose made a statement that has become famous among fundamentalists wherein he claimed that: "[i]f the doctrine of plural marriage was repudiated so must be the glorious principle of marriage for eternity, the two being indissolubly interwoven with each other." For a few other instances of this claim, see *JD* 13:116, 166; 25:21, 309-10. See also endnote 47 below.

36 As cited in *The Political Platform of the Manifesto*, 19.

37 As cited in *The Political Platform of the Manifesto*, 18.

38 As cited in *LDS Church Authority*, 26.

39 As cited in *LDS Church Authority*, 26.

40

J. Leslie Broadbent, *Celestial Marriage? In the Case of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints vs. Joseph Leslie Broadbent*, (self published: 1927), 1. Brian Hales has noted that there is no authentication of this quote (<http://www.mormonfundamentalism.com/LawofCon2.htm>). While this fact is a valuable observation that should be duly noted, the language is authentic of the era

Calls to Issue a Revelation Abandoning Plural Marriage

and the relevant content of these claims is verified by other apostles within this chapter. That is, the “Covenant of Marriage in its fullness” and “full consecration” were abandoned by the saints and that these principles constituted the “fullness” of the gospel. Fundamentalists not uncommonly view “full consecration” as a synonym for the united order practiced by the early saints.

41 As cited in *LDS Church Authority*, 39; see also *Deseret Evening News* (2/21/1890).

42

While Wilford Woodruff’s 1890 manifesto never opposed “that doctrine” – only the cessation of its practice – this prophesy clearly contemplates an official action of the Church and some fundamentalists see any distinction between these statements/prophesies and what actually happened in 1890 as splitting hairs. Further, it sounds reminiscent of Brigham Young’s statement claiming that the priesthood would be taken away from the Church if they consented to mingle their seed with the Negroes, which is another instance of changed policy that fundamentalists view as a rejection of God’s previous and lucid instruction.

43

As cited, *LDS Church Authority*, 31. This statement is interesting to consider in light of the materials put forth in the next chapter – that is, the metaphor that the ligaments that bound the Church together were severed could be liberally construed to describe the separation of the saints as explained in the next chapter.

44

While historians of this era universally understand that this statement refers to plural marriage, many latter-day saints are not as well read as these distinguished scholars. Accordingly, here is one oft-cited statement clarifying this issue.

JOSEPH F. SMITH

7/7/1878

The marriage of one woman to a man for time and all eternity by the sealing power, according to the law of God, is a fulfillment of the celestial law of marriage in part - and is good as far as it goes ... but this is only the beginning of the law, and not the whole of it. Therefore, whoever has imagined that he could obtain a fullness of the blessings pertaining to the celestial law, by complying with only a portion of its conditions has deceived himself.

JD 20:28

45

While this is taken up in greater detail in volume 2, Quinn’s *LDS Church Authority* adequately demonstrates the veracity of this position. Significant and very convincing evidence suggests that Wilford Woodruff himself married a plural wife after the 1890 manifesto and just previous to his death. *LDS Church Authority*, 65.

46

Temple Lot Case, (Utah Lighthouse Ministry: 1893), 291. Clearly, the "law previously revealed through the prophet" Wilford Woodruff is referring to is D&C 132. See *Abraham H. Cannon Journal* (12/2/1890) and a *Deseret News* Editorial (7/7/1886) wherein the writer responds to an RLDS article in the *Herald* noting that celestial plural marriages could not have been of the Lord or it would not have been changed (The RLDS Church claimed that plural marriages were never authorized by Joseph Smith). Considering this conundrum, apostle John W. Taylor queried, "Is the Lord a child that he thus changes?" *Abraham H. Cannon journal* (9/30/1890).

47

For a very small sampling of statements under oath, see the *Reed Smoot Hearings* 1:107, 109; 2:51-53, 60-61, 151; 4:11-13 and *LDS Church Authority*, 82-83. A lengthy chapter in volume 2 of *Silencing Mormon Polygamy* addresses many statements (made by the early brethren) denying the 1890 manifesto was a revelation.

48

The word "foundation" is demonstrably precise. There are many evidences that Wilford Woodruff and his associates did not believe the Manifesto was a revelation and that they did not follow the injunctions of the manifesto. This issue is addressed in *LDS Church Authority* and is heavily addressed in volume 2 of *Silencing Mormon Polygamy*.

49

Joseph Musser observed that "President Wilford Woodruff was 'inspired' to sign the manifesto in the same manner that the Prophet Joseph Smith was inspired to give the 116 pages of the manuscript of the Book of Mormon to Martin Harris." *Truth*, 6:21. Fundamentalists take this position because Wilford Woodruff's 1889 revelation instructed him to make no further pledges or promises regarding plural marriages and because John Taylor's 1886 revelation claims that the Lord will not revoke the commandment to live plural marriage – therefore, they claim that the 1890 manifesto is an instance where the word of the Lord was received but after repeatedly questioning that word, Wilford Woodruff received a contrary instruction. Note also Orson Pratt's comments on this subject: "[I]t would be folly to seek the mind of the Lord upon a subject which we already have his mind. ... We have, thus, the will of the lord, it only remains for us to do it." See *Moses Thatcher Journal*, 116-119 as cited in *Anderson*, John Taylor 3-4; see also *Mark* 10:1-5; D&C 50:29-30.



People of Greater Valor

SEPARATING THE SAINTS

CHAPTER 3

Calls to civil disobedience coupled with prophecies that the Lord will never issue a revelation to abandon plural marriages are only a portion of the foundation underlying fundamentalist claims. There are also a significant number of prophecies that the Lord would separate “a people of greater valor” from among the saints if the saints proved themselves unwilling to keep the law of celestial plural marriage. A careful examination of these prophecies, fundamentalists argue, provides us with a contextual understanding of the purpose behind the 1886 revelation given to John Taylor and the subsequent ordinations that flowed out of that revelation. And, of course, those alleged ordinations are what form the crux of fundamentalist priesthood claims behind fundamentalist groups inhabiting the intermountain west.

Perhaps the most important of all of these prophecies that the saints would be separated was made by John Taylor a year and a half before he received the 1886 revelation at the heart of this volume. This statement clarified a number of prophecies that had been made during the saints’ residency in Utah. A plethora of prophecies from modern leaders of the Church had declared that if the latter-day saints did not live up to their covenants, the Lord would raise up a people who would be willing to keep those covenants.¹ In parallel with similar prophecies in 3 Nephi 16:10,² these statements had been unequivocal and lucid. However, they were often imprecise as to which covenants the brethren were alluding to and they were imprecise as to what level of disobedience would bring about the promised cursing. John Taylor’s statement below stands as the sole and sterling exception to this generality. It makes it very clear that the covenants referred to were in relation to plural marriage:³

JOHN TAYLOR

4/23/1885

What would be necessary to bring about the results nearest the hearts of the opponents of Mormonism? Simply to renounce, abrogate, or apostatize from the New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage in its fullness. Were the Church to do

People of Greater Valor

that as an entirety, God would reject the Saints as a body. The authority of the Priesthood would be withdrawn⁴ with its gifts and powers and there would be no more heavenly recognition of the administrations. The heavens would permanently withdraw themselves, and the Lord would raise up another people of greater valor and stability, for his work must, according to his unalterable decrees, go forward; for the time of the second coming of the Savior is near, even at the doors.

DEN

The claim that God separated “a people of greater valor” from among the saints because the LDS Church rejected plural marriage is of crucial importance to fundamentalist claims. While Orson Pratt had already declared (over a decade previous to this statement) that the saints had “strayed so far” from gospel principles and that they needed to repent or God would abandon them for a more righteous branch of disciples, it is quite another thing to claim that the specific reason for this separation would be the abandonment of the principle of plural marriage. It is for that reason that fundamentalist Mormons attach great importance to this statement of John Taylor. Keep in mind however that Heber C. Kimball made a very similar distinction fairly soon after the saints arrived in Utah so we cannot blithely dismiss John Taylor’s 1885 pronouncement as a brash comment made in the heat of persecutions over the practice of plural marriage. Although Heber C. Kimball’s statement specifically mentions speaking evil of plural marriage as a cause for God to cut the saints off and “raise another people,” it also provides other examples of covenant breaking that would lead to the same fate – or, if interpreted without the contextual cues of other statements, it provides what will happen to the saints if they speak evil of plural marriage and if they speak evil of one another and the Lord’s anointed.

HEBER C. KIMBALL

9/28/1856

Many of this people have broken their covenants by speaking evil of one another, by speaking against the servants of God, and by finding fault with the plurality of wives and trying to sink it out of existence. But you cannot do that, for God will cut you off and raise up another people that will carry out his purposes in righteousness unless you walk up to the line in your duty. On the one hand there is glory and exaltation; and on the other no tongue can express the suffering and affliction this people will pass through, if they do not repent.

JD 4:108

At first glance, both of these prophecies seem to suggest that the latter-day saints would be altogether abandoned and this appears to contradict other statements. For instance, consider this statement from apostle Daniel H. Wells:

DANIEL H. WELLS

8/9/1873

Here a people will be prepared for the coming of Jesus, that when he does come he may find a place whereon to lay his head, and some, at least, who sustain heavenly principles. If we are not the people, some others will be gathered for that purpose. We bear testimony that we are that people.

JD 16:131-32

However, this first blush contradiction dissipates when we delve deeper into the study of issue. It was clarified by apostle Orson Pratt many years earlier when he merged these two prophetic concepts. That is, the “people of greater valor” were to be found within the Church but they would be separated over the issue of covenant breaking – and more particularly over the rejection of plural marriage. Noting that the saints had strayed so far from the fullness of the gospel, Orson Pratt claimed that it would be necessary to raise up people “from the midst” of the latter-day saints so that they could “commence anew somewhere in the regions round about in these [Rocky] mountains.”

ORSON PRATT

3/9/1873

I do not know but that it would be an utter impossibility to commence and carry out some principles pertaining to Zion right in the midst of this people. They have strayed so far that to get a people who would conform to heavenly laws, it may be needful to lead some from the midst of this people and commence anew somewhere in the regions round about in these mountains ... I do not know how long it will be before this people are brought to the trying point to see who is and who is not for the Lord; but I would advise the Latter-Day Saints to prepare for this, for it may come sooner than some of you expect. If the Lord should undertake to bring about an order of things different from that which now exists, and establish it not exactly in the midst of this people, but in some place where they can commence anew, I hope the people will begin to pray to the Lord, reckon up with themselves and examine their own hearts, and see whether they are willing and prepared, if called upon, to place all that they have, or as much as they are required in that order of things, and carry it out.

JD 15:361

This statement is interesting on a number of levels and offers helpful insights into understanding the role these statements play in a fundamentalist paradigm.

First, it is interesting to note that Orson Pratt’s statement that the people had “strayed so far” that the need to separate a people of greater valor to “commence anew” already seemed fixed in their future – he treats it as if it was already necessary instead of treating it as a hypothetical or conditional situation as other declarations of the early

brethren seem to hint. Apostle John W. Taylor, son of President John Taylor, made a similar statement in a general conference statement in 1889.

JOHN W. TAYLOR

3/9/1889

We are getting into such a condition that if we were to meet the lord we could not look him in the face and the way we are going it will soon be impossible to tell what we do believe.⁵ ... [T]he raid that has been made upon us has had a purifying effect and it has brought to light scores of men who were hypocrites and who had married wives of whom they were not worthy.

DN

This later statement made by apostle Taylor suggests not only that he agreed that the people had strayed so far that “it [would] soon be impossible to tell” what they believed, it suggests that the people had already been brought to a “trying point” as a result of the religious persecutions aimed at extirpating Mormon polygamy and that this had “had a purifying effect” upon the saints and that all of this had happened before the 1890 manifesto was issued. Together, these statements read as matter-of-fact commentary of latter-day saint society rather than hypothetical predictions.

Second, the specificity of apostle Pratt’s prophecy in context of related prophecies outlined below and in context of fundamentalist claims is interesting because the people were to “commence anew somewhere in the regions round about these mountains” and that the Lord might “undertake to bring about an order of things different from that which now exists.” Both claims arguably fit the fundamentalist position wherein they claim that their original organizations began in the state of Utah and that their priesthood authority claims arise from priesthood allegedly superior to the quorum of Twelve apostles – a priesthood whose authority is comprised of a flexible number of apostles within its quorums who are not led by a first presidency comprised of three men. While the merits of those priesthood claims are addressed in the last section of this volume, it is here only of interest to note that this “order of things” is very different from that which existed in March of 1873 when Orson Pratt made the above comment.⁶

Third, he makes the distinction that the people to be separated were to come “from the midst of this people” and not from some other location. Orson Pratt was not alone in making this very important distinction. On at least two occasions, Daniel H. Wells made similar comments with identical interpolations that clarify the context of John Taylor’s 1885 statement cited above. Along with a small host of similar prophecies,⁷ he expressed the same sentiment that a remnant or portion

of the latter-day saints would “bear off the kingdom” and be zealous in doing the will of the Lord:

DANIEL H. WELLS

10/6/1882

[I]t depends, in a great measure, upon the people themselves, as to how soon the kingdom spoken of by Daniel shall be given into the hands of the Saints of God.⁸ When we shall prove ourselves ... capable ... to overcome every obstacle that may tend to impede the progress of the Church and kingdom of God upon the earth, then our heavenly Father will have confidence in us, and then he will be able to trust us. And it is the Lord's will that it should be so. And if we as a people do not hold ourselves on the altar ready to be used with our means and all that God has bestowed upon us, according to the Master's bidding, for the upbuilding of His kingdom upon the earth, he will pass on and get somebody else; because He will get a people that will do it. I do not mean to say that He will pass on and leave this people; no, there will come up from the midst of this people that people that has been talked so much about — for the kingdom will not be taken from us and given to another people; it is too late in the day.

JD 23:305-06⁹

While these prophecies about a separation of the saints will not ring familiar to most latter-day saints today, notice that this people of greater valor had “been talked so much about” that President Wells expected this 1882 congregation to be familiar with this concept without further explanation. Seven years earlier, President Wells had spoken of this same future group of saints and described the zealous righteousness of this people of greater valor.

DANIEL H. WELLS

10/7/1875

Many will doubtless make shipwreck of their faith and many will be led away by the allurements of sin into by and forbidden paths; yet the kingdom will not be taken away from this people and given to another, but a people will come forth from among us, who will be zealous of good works, willing to do the bidding of the Lord, who will be taught in his ways, and who will walk in His paths.

JD 18:96¹⁰

One might expect this sort of pronouncement to be heavily flavored with castigations as the brethren of the era were prone to offer when preaching. Instead, and rather than lamenting the possibility of a separation of the saints, George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency claimed that such a separation would be necessary in order to redeem Zion. Thus, Cannon suggests that this separation was not only a schism brought about by the abandonment of the practice of plural marriage, he suggests that it was a requirement for the redemption of Zion – and a

requirement before the Savior could fully establish his work on this earth for his millennial reign.

GEORGE Q. CANNON

5/6/1883

There will be a people raised up, if we will not be that people — there will yet be a people raised up whose lives will embody in perfection the revelations contained in this book [the D&C], who will live as the doctrines here taught require, as the laws here revealed show unto us, and they will be raised up, too, in this generation, and such a people will have to be raised up before Zion can be fully redeemed, and before the work of our God can be fully established in the earth.

JD 24:143

Significantly, George Q. Cannon not only claims that a separation would be necessary “before Zion [could] be fully redeemed, “he claims that those people would be “raised up, too, in this generation.”¹¹ Thus, the process of separation was to be a contemporaneous event – not something in the far distant future. Addressing this same group of separated saints three years earlier, Cannon again noted that the fulfillment of these prophecies were necessary to cleanse “a choice people” to receive the Savior in his millennial reign and that they would come out “of this community at present.”

GEORGE Q. CANNON

CIRCA 1880

Before the great day of the Lord shall come, and the day of righteousness and peace dawn upon this fair creation two potent cleansing processes shall be in active operation. The first of these is a preparation of a choice people, purified by an application to their lives, as individuals and a community, of the principles of the gospel of peace. Such a body will evolve from those called Latter-day Saints, who as a Church possess the fullness and power of the pure plan of salvation. Out of this community at present in the merely incipient stages of development and from the remnant of the whole house of Israel, will emanate the nucleus or foundation from which will spring the righteous millennial population of our globe.

MS 42:585¹²

This idea that there would be a “cleansing process” was also put forth by Heber C. Kimball in general conference:

HEBER C. KIMBALL

--/--/1856

I want to say to you, my brethren, the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to the extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Then, brethren, look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall.

Conference Report¹³

Finally, in 1889, barely a year before the manifesto was presented to the latter-day saints in general conference, apostle Orson F. Whitney echoed Cannon's prediction that people were to be raised up out of the existing generation of saints. He said the day was "near at hand" when this separation would occur.

ORSON F. WHITNEY

8/17/1889

Many of this people are perhaps preparing themselves, by following after the world in its mad race for wealth and pleasure, to go down with Babylon when she crumbles and falls; but I know there is a people, in the heart's core of this people, that will arise in their majesty in a day that is near at hand, and push spiritual things to the front; a people who will stand up for God, fearing not man nor what man can do, but believing as the prophet Joseph says, that all things we suffer are for our best good, and that God will stand by us forever and ever.

DN

Note that this people will not fear "what man can do" but they will "stand up for God" – a statement that went straight to the heart in 1889 when the saints were largely engulfed in fear of raids and legal persecutions and when they were heavily entrenched in calls for civil disobedience.

Modern latter-day saints may see in these statements unfulfilled prophecies that remain veiled until their future resolution or they may stand behind the position of Dallin H. Oaks of the quorum of the Twelve apostles, who has heavily emphasized that speculating upon issues where no clear revelation had been received was an unnecessary risk that has led LDS Church leaders into error on other occasions.¹⁴ Both of these approaches allow plenty of exegetical room for mainstream latter-day saints to reject all of the statements made by the early brethren in this section of this volume. Nevertheless, fundamentalist Mormons view these prophecies as a clear demarcation of their mission and their destiny. Accordingly, they connect these things "that have been talked so much about" with the following prophecy of Joseph Smith as recorded in Mosiah Hancock's journal:¹⁵

JOSEPH SMITH

4-6/--/1842

Here you will make a place for the winter; and here you will travel west until you come to the valley of the Great Salt Lake. You will build cities to the north and to the south, and to the east and to the west; and you will become a great and wealthy people in that land. But, the United States will not receive you with the laws which God desires you to live, and you will have to go to where the Nephites lost their power.¹⁶ ... You will live to see men arise in power in the church who will seek to put down your friends and the friends of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Many

will be hoisted because of their money and the worldly learning which they seem to be in possession of; and many who are the true followers of our Lord and Savior will be cast down because of their poverty.

Mosiah Hancock Journal¹⁷

To fundamentalist Mormons, fulfillment of this prophecy is clarion and clearly connected to their history as Mosiah Hancock lived until 1907 when men were being excommunicated for marrying and/or living with their plural wives. This was only a beginning. Members of the quorum of the Twelve actively sought out fundamentalist Mormons and had them excommunicated and imprisoned with renewed energy under Heber J. Grant's administration.¹⁸ Finally, fundamentalists argue that all of the above quotations support their position that the Lord separated a group of righteous saints from out of the Church as a result of the Church's decision to abandon the principle of plural marriages and as a result of the Church's decision to disassociate themselves from latter-day saints who refused to abandon this practice. Indeed, they can draw upon the prophecy of John W. Taylor who predicted on October 10, 1910 that "the Church would one day be divided into two factions – one monogamous and the other polygamous."¹⁹

Nevertheless, even if that position is accepted and even if the saints have already been separated according to those prophecies, the question of priesthood authority remains to be investigated. Brigham Young offers us this important segue into investigating the issue of priesthood authority if the Lord separated some of his saints away from the Church:

BRIGHAM YOUNG

8/8/1844

Does this church want it as God organized it? Or do you want to clip the power of the priesthood, and let those who have the keys of the priesthood go and build up the kingdom in all the world.

HC 7:235²⁰

How fundamentalist Mormons who claimed to have "the keys of the priesthood" that were clipped from the Church were separated from the Church so that they could "go and build up the kingdom" is the focus of the next section of this volume.

People of Greater Valor

1

Making zero attempt to be exhaustive, the following representative selections of quotes were offered to warn the latter-day saints that if they did not keep their covenants, the Lord would take away their priesthood or “seek another people.”

JOSEPH SMITH

1/14/1833

His word will go forth, in these last days, in purity; for if Zion will not purify herself, so as to be approved in all things, in His sight, He will seek another people; for His work will go on until Israel is gathered, and they who will not hear His voice, must expect to feel His wrath.

TPJS, 18

JOSEPH SMITH

1/14/1833

[M]y only trouble at the present time is concerning ourselves, that the Saints will be divided, broken up and scattered, before we get our salvation secure.

HC 6:184

HEBER C. KIMBALL

12/15/1857

We receive the priesthood and power and authority. If we make a bad use of the priesthood, do you not see that the day will come when God will reckon with us, and he will take it from us and give it to those who will make better use of it?

JD 6:125

GEORGE A. SMITH

1/3/1858

God has set his hand at the present time to establish his kingdom. But unless the Saints will so live and so exert themselves that they can preserve the purity of the holy Priesthood among them, the work will be left to other people.

JD 6:161

WILFORD WOODRUFF

7/22/1883

The law of the Patriarchal order of marriage belongs to this dispensation, and after it was revealed to the Prophet Joseph he was commanded to receive it. If he and the people had rejected it, the Church and Kingdom of God would have advanced no further and God would have taken it from them and given it to another people.

WWJ

2

3 Nephi 16:10: “At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations ... and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness

of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them." See also 2 Nephi 12:40; 3 Nephi 7:34, 9:66-69; and D&C 45:4.

3

To be fair, related statements cited in the last chapter suggest that the Church would be rejected by God if the saints rejected plural marriage or that it would not be able to progress any further but the author has found none (issued by an apostle or prophet) that clearly make these prophecies in context of the claim that a people were yet to be separated from the saints sometime after John Taylor's administration began. An editorial in the Deseret News does make this claim:

EDITORIAL

4/1/1885

The entire Church and all of its Priesthood, with the Presidency at the head of it might motion and vote against this principle until doomsday with just one effect, (namely) to vote themselves away from the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, from the possession of their Priesthood, and to find themselves very speedily outside the Church and Kingdom of God; while he [God] would raise up others that would honor and observe his law.

Deseret News

4

The idea of the priesthood being withdrawn from the Church has been understood by some fundamentalists to refer to the separation of the priesthood (fundamentalists who claim authority from the 1886 events) from the Church.

5

The Salt Lake Tribune printed an editorial mocking inconsistent statements put forth by LDS Church leadership on May 3, 1896. A portion of it reads as follows:

EDITORIAL

5/3/1896

[W]e do find it difficult to get at the real meaning of certain statements. While one teacher says one thing, another contradicts it, or says the opposite. Ten years ago our Mormon friends assembled in the Tabernacle in their "Declaration of Grievances and Protest," declared.

"Among the principles of our religion is that of immediate revelation from God; one of the doctrines so revealed is celestial or plural marriage, for which ostensibly we are stigmatized and hated. This is a vital part of our religion, the decisions of the courts to the contrary notwithstanding." Now this seemed to us very plain.

But President Talmage said last year, in his lecture on "The Story of the Mormons" in Ithaca, N. Y.: "Polygamy is not by any means an essential part of Mormon belief, and never has been."

The reader will pardon us if we find a little difficulty in knowing just what is the real doctrine of the church.

Salt Lake Tribune

6

See the discussion of the *Salt Lake Tribune* April, 1873 conference report in chapter 13. Brigham Young called a new quorum of priesthood "higher than the Twelve Apostles."

Abraham H. Cannon's journal entry for the 2nd day of April, 1891 records the following very interesting observation of Wilford Woodruff: "The Presidency and apostles will be organized when Christ comes to the earth." This observation can be read in one of two ways. First, it can be read to say that the First Presidency and the Twelve will never become disorganized. Second, it can be read to implicitly state that the presidency and apostles were not properly organized at the time he issued this statement or that it is a prophesy that they will not be properly organized "when Christ comes to the earth."

JOSEPH F. SMITH

11/10/1901

[The church has] not always carried out strictly the order of the priesthood; we have varied from it to some extent; but we hope in due time that, by the promptings of the Holy Spirit, we will be led up into the exact channel and course that the Lord has marked out for us to pursue, and adhere strictly to the order that he has established. I will read from a revelation that was given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, at Nauvoo, Hancock Co., Illinois January 19, 1841, which stands as the law of the church in relation to the presentation of the authorities of the Holy Priesthood as they were established in the church, and from which I feel that we have not right to depart. The Lord says [in D. & C. 124:124]:

"First, I give unto you Hyrum Smith, to be a Patriarch unto you, to hold the sealing blessings of my church, even the Holy Spirit of Promise, whereby ye are sealed up unto the day of redemption, that ye may not fall, notwithstanding the hour of temptation that may come upon you."

It may be considered strange that the Lord should give first of all the Patriarch; yet I do not know any law, any revelation or any commandment from God to the contrary, that has ever been given through any of the prophets or presidents of the church. At the same time we well know that this order has not been strictly followed from the day we came into these valleys until now and we will not make any change at present. But we will get the mind of the spirit of God upon it, as upon other subjects, and be united before we take any action different to that which has been done.

Journal History of the Church

People of Greater Valor

See also *LDS Conference Reports* (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, UT) of the same day and on page 71. (Hereinafter: *Conference Reports*)

7

For instance, consider the following:

HEBER C. KIMBALL

11/29/1857

There are people here and a people will grow out of this people that will stand forever.

JD 6:102

HEBER C. KIMBALL

10/6/1865

But the day will come when the Lord will choose a people out of this people, upon whom he will bestow his choicest blessings.

JD 11:145; see also DN (11/9/1865)

BRIGHAM YOUNG

God will preserve a portion of this people, of the meek and the humble, to bear off the kingdom to the inhabitants of the earth, and will defend His Priesthood; for it is the last time, the last gathering time.

The Contributor 10:362

BRIGHAM YOUNG

8/9/1874

The Prophet gave a full and complete organization to this kingdom the Spring before he was killed; This kingdom is the kingdom that Daniel spoke of, which was to be set up in the last days; it is the kingdom that is not to be given to another people.

JD 17:156

WILFORD WOODRUFF

9/12/1875

It seems to me that there will be but a remnant even of the Latter-day Saints who will be prepared to inherit eternal life and for the coming of the Bridegroom.

JD 18:117

DANIEL H. WELLS

10/7/1875

A people will come forth from among us, who will be zealous of good works, willing to do the bidding of the Lord, who will be taught in His ways, and who will walk in His paths.

JD 18:96 (10/7/1875); see also DN (11/10/1875)

JOSEPH F. SMITH

7/--/1883

Do we expect or hope that all the people that are now numbered among the Latter-day Saints will be true and faithful to the end? No, we may justly fear that many will fall by the way. But there will be a sufficient number of this people, and of their children's children, and of the honest in heart who are at present in darkness but who will yet come to a knowledge of the truth, who will be sufficiently faithful to the covenants that they make with God, that the kingdom will never fall or be left to another people.

DN

EDITORIAL

5/15/1882

Let the weak knees quake, and the false hearts flutter and tremble; let those of little faith ignore and forsake, if they choose, the holy principles of eternal life committed to their care! Let the winds howl, and the waves dash, and the storms burst forth in all their fury! There are those remaining whom God hath reserved for perilous times, whose knees have never bowed to Baal, whose hands have never

faltered, whose hearts have never trembled ... These shall stand steadfast, firm-rooted as the Rock upon which their hopes are built, and though the floods come and the rains descend and the winds blow and beat upon their house, it shall not fall.

MS 44:314

8

It is interesting to note that President Wells here suggests that the kingdom of God (as distinguished from the Church) is not already in the "hands of the Saints of God."

9 See also *DN* (12/--/1882).

10 See also *DN* (11/--/1875).

11

Note also that this is before the secret ordinations of 1886 dealt with in chapter 7 below.

12

On February 13, 1936, Lorin C. Woolley's council met and discussed this article as it pertained to their mission. They attributed the article to Daniel H. Wells. See Musser, Joseph W., *Brief History of Meetings and Teachings Pertaining to the School of the Prophets and to the Special Calling in the Patriarchal Order of the Priesthood, to January 11, 1934* (Unpublished typescript). A copy is in the author's possession. (Hereinafter: Woolley School of the Prophets) Despite the title, Musser continued to take council minutes until May, 1941. The numbering commences anew after a dozen pages. Numberings before that change are hereinafter designated by the letter "a". Numberings after that change are designated by the

letter “b”. The minutes initially record the names of participants in a numeric code. On Wednesday, November 3, 1937, the record indicates that it is no “longer necessary to write minutes in code.” *Id.*, 101b. The code however is not difficult to decipher in most instances so names have been substituted for the coded numbers throughout this volume.

13

J. Golden Kimball, *Conference Report* (4/--/1904), 29. In contrast, note the following:

JOSEPH F. SMITH

10/11/1901

The Lord, in setting up his church and kingdom in the last dispensation, had in view it's perpetuity. It was not to be thrown down or left to another people. He declared that it was organized “for the last days and for the last time.” It is to stand forever. Therefore, he placed therein presiding authorities and councils with co-ordinate powers, in order that if the head should be removed from any cause, the place should not be left vacant so that the church would remain undirected or without an inspired leader. ... And his church will go forward and never fall or fail, but will triumph over all things beneath the heavens. While men are fallible and imperfect, the church is infallible and perfect because it is a divine structure, under present and perpetual guidance from on high. It stands intact today and will so remain forever.
DEN

14 See endnote 21 in chapter 2.

15

The reader should be made aware that fundamentalist Mormons look to prophecies attributed to John Taylor by Lorin Woolley and Samuel Bateman as well.

16

The prophet suggested that this was somewhere around Snowflake, Arizona or New Mexico but apparently, he did not delineate an exact spot on this occasion.

17 *The Life Story of Mosiah Lyman Hancock*, 7.

18

Heber J. Grant stated that he would “rejoice when the government officials put a few of these [fundamentalists] in the county jail or the state penitentiary” in a personal letter to Joseph Musser. A copy is in the author’s possession. The Salt Lake Tribune printed a list of 220 names of men who had married post manifesto plural wives (including five apostles) and then sardonically noted that “Apostle Francis M Lyman, who at Logan recently declared ecclesiastical war against this class of men, whom he designated as ‘Skull-diggers’ ... should at least write us a private note of thanks ... for our assistance in this matter.” *Salt Lake Tribune* (10/8/1910).

People of Greater Valor

19 As cited in *Bluffdale Conference*.

20

See chapter 10 for a lengthy discussion on this issue.

BRIGHAM YOUNG

8/8/1844

If there is a spokesman, if he is a king and priest, let him go and build up a kingdom unto himself; that is his right and it is the right of many here, but the Twelve are at the head of it.

HC 7:235