

Joseph Smith=s Letter from Liberty Jail (March 20, 1839)

“With her husband imprisoned in Liberty Jail, Emma Smith and her children were among the Latter-day Saints who made their way across northern Missouri to Quincy, Illinois, in the winter of 1839. This experience was vivid in her mind when she wrote to Joseph on March 7:

I shall not attempt to write my feelings altogether, for the situation in which you are, the walls, bars, and bolts, rolling rivers, running streams, rising hills, sinking valleys and spreading prairies that separate us, and the cruel injustice that first cast you into prison and still holds you there, with many other considerations, places my feelings far beyond description. Was it not for conscious innocence, and the direct interposition of divine mercy, I am very sure I never should have been able to have endured the scenes of suffering that I have passed through, since what is called the Militia, came into far West, under the ever to be remembered Governor's notable order. . . . We are all well at present, except Frederick, who is quite sick. Little Alexander who is now in my arms is one of the finest little fellows, you ever saw in your life, he is so strong that with the assistance of a chair he will run all round the room. . . . No one but God, knows the reflections of my mind and the feelings of my heart when I left our house and home, and almost all of every thing that we possessed excepting our little children, and took my journey out of the State of Missouri, leaving you shut up in that lonesome prison. But the recollection is more than human nature ought to bear. . . . The daily sufferings of our brethren in travelling and camping out nights, and those on the other side of the river would beggar the most lively description. The people in this state are very kind indeed, they

are doing much more than we ever anticipated they would; I have many more things I could like to write but have not time and you may be astonished at my bad writing and incoherent manner, but you will pardon all when you reflect how hard it would be for you to write, when your hands were stiffened with hard work, and your heart convulsed with intense anxiety. But I hope there is better days to come to us yet.

“On March 19, less than two weeks after the failure of the second jailbreak attempt, Joseph Smith received his wife's letter, along with letters from his brothers Don Carlos and William, and from Bishop Edward Partridge. This correspondence called forth an immediate response. . . .”

Liberty Jail Clay County Mo March 20th 1839.

To the church of Latter-day saints at Quincy Illinois and scattered abroad and to Bishop Partridge in particular

[Your] humble servant Joseph Smith Jr. prisoner for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake and for the saints taken and held by the power of mobocracy under the exterminating reign of his excellency the Governor Lilburn W. Boggs in company with his fellow prisoners and beloved Brethren Caleb Baldwin Lymon Wight Hyrum Smith and Alexander McRae send unto you all greeting. May the grace of God the father and of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ rest upon you all and abide with you for ever. May knowledge be multiplied unto you by the mercy of God. And may faith and virtue and knowledge and temperance and patience and Godliness and brotherly kindness and charity be in you and abound that you may not be barren in anything nor unfruitful.

Forasmuch as we know that the most of you are well acquainted with the wrongs and the high toned injustice and cruelty that is practiced upon us whereas we have been taken prisoners charged falsely with every kind of evil and thrown into prison inclosed with strong walls surrounded with a strong guard who continually watch day and night as indefatigable as the devil is interrupting and laying snares for the people of God. Therefore dearly and beloved Brethren we are the more ready and willing to lay claim to your fellowship and love.

For our circumstances [p. 1] are calculated to awaken our spirits to a sacred remembrance of every thing and we think that yours are also and that nothing therefore can separate us from the love of God. and fellowship one with another and that every species of wickedness and cruelty practiced upon us will only tend to bind our hearts together and seal them together in love we have no need to say to you that we are held in bonds without cause neither is it needful that you say unto us we are driven from our homes and smitten without cause we mutually understand that if the inhabitation of the state of Missouri had let the saints alone and had been as desirable of peace as they were there would have been nothing but peace and quietude in this state unto this day we should not have been in this hell surrounded with demons if not those who are damned, they are those who shall be damned and where we are compelled to hear nothing but blasphemous oaths and witness a scene of blasphemy and drunkenness and hypocrisy and debaucheries of every description.

And again the cries of orphans and widows would not have ascended up to God. the blood of innocent women and children yea and of men also would not have cried to God against them it would not have stained the soil of Missouri. but oh! the unrelenting hand the inhumanity and murderous disposition of this people it shocks all nature it beggars and defies all description. it is a tale of [p. 2] wo a lamentable tale yea a sorrowful tale too much to tell too much for contemplation

too much to think of for a moment to much for human beings it cannot be found among the heathens it cannot be found among the nations where Kings and tyrants are enthroned it cannot be found among the savages of the wilderness yea and I think it cannot be found among the wild and ferocious beasts of the forest that a man should be mangled for sport women be robed of all that they have their last morsel for subsistence and then be violated to gratify the hellish desires of the mob and finally left to perish with their helpless offspring clinging around their necks

but this is not all after a man is dead he must be dug up from his grave and mangled to pieces for no other purpose than to gratify their spleen against the religion of God. They practice these things upon the saints who have done them no wrong who are innocent and virtuous who loved the Lord their god and were willing to forsake all things for Christ sake these things are awful to relate but they are verily true it must needs be that offenses come, but WO! to them by whom they come.

O God where art thou and where is the pavilion that covereth thy hiding place how long shall thy hand be stayed and thine eye yea thy pure eye behold from the eternal heavens the wrongs of thy people and of thy servants [p. 3] and thine ear be penetrated with their cries yea o Lord how long shall they suffer these wrongs and unlawful oppressions before thine heart shall be softened towards them and thy bowels be moved with compassion to-wards them.

O Lord God almighty maker of heaven earth and seas and of all things that in them is and who controreth and subjecteth the devil and the dark and benighted dominion of shayole. Stretch forth thy hand let thine eye pierce let thy pavilion be taken up let thy hiding place no longer be covered let thine ear be inclined let thine heart be softened and thy bowels moved with compassion toward us let thine anger be kindled against our enemies and in the fury of thine heart with thy sword avenge us of our wrongs remember thy suffering saints oh our God and thy servants will rejoice in thy name for ever.

Dearly and beloved Brethren we see that perilous times have come as was testified of we may look then with most perfect assurance for the rolling in of all those things that have been written and with more confidence than ever before lift up our eyes to the luminary of day and say in our hearts soon thou wilt veil thy blushing face he that said let there be light, and there was light hath spoken this word, and again thou moon thou dimmer light thou luminary of night shall turn to blood we see that every thing is fulfilling and the time shall soon come when the son of man shall [p. 4] descend in the clouds of heaven. our hearts do not shrink neither are our spirits altogether broken at the grievous yoke which is put upon us.

We know that God will have our oppressors in derision that he will laugh at their calamity and mock when their fear cometh oh that we could be with you Brethren and unbosom our feeling to you we would tell you that we should have been at liberated the time Elder Rigdon was on the writ of habeas corpus had not our own lawyers interpreted the law contrary to what it reads against us which prevented us from introducing our evidence before the mock court, they have done us much harm from the beginning they have of late acknowledged that the law was misconstrewed and tantalized our feelings with it and have literally forsaken us and have forfeited their oaths and their bonds and we have a come back on them for they are co-workers with the mob.

As nigh as we can learn the public mind has been for a long time turning in our favor and the majority is now friendly and the lawyers can no longer browbeat us by saying that this or that is a matter of public opinion for public opinion is not willing to brook it for it is beginning to look with feelings of indignation against our oppressors and to say that the mormons were not in the fault in the least we think that truth honor and virtue and innocence will eventually come out triumphant we

should have taken a habeas corpus before the high Judge and escaped [p. 5] the mob in a summary way but unfortunately for us the timber of the wall being very hard our auger handles gave out and hindered us longer than we expected we applied to a friend and a very slight uncautious act gave rise to some suspicion and before we could fully succeed our plan was discovered we had every thing in readiness but the last stone and we could have made our escape in one minute and should have succeeded admirably had it not been for a little imprudence or over anxiety on the part of our friend.

The sheriff and jailor did not blame us for our attempt it was a fine breach and cost the county a round sum but public opinion says that we ought to have been permitted to have made our escape that then the disgrace would have been on us but now it must come on the state. that there cannot be any charge sustained against us and that the conduct of the mob, the murders committed at Hawn's Mill, and the exterminating order of the Governor, and the one sided rascally proceedings of the Legislature has damned the state of Missouri to all eternity I would just name also that General Atchison has proved himself to be as contemptible as any of them we have tried for a long time to get our lawyers to draw us some petitions to the Supreme Judges of this state.

but they utterly refused we have examined the law and drawn the petitions ourselves and have obtained abundance of proof to counter act all the testimony [p. 6] that was against us, so that if the Supreme Judge dose not grant us our liberty he has got to act without cause contrary to honor evidence law or justice sheerly to please the devil but we hope better things and trust that before many days God will so order our case that we shall be set at liberty and take up our habitation with the saints we received some letters last evening one from Emma one from Don C. Smith and one from Bishop Partridge all breathing a kind and consoling spirit we were much gratified with there contence we had been a long time without information and when we read those letters they were to

our souls as the gentle air, is refreshing but our joy was mingled with grief because of the suffering of the poor and much injured saints and we need not say to you that the flood gates of our hearts were hoisted and our eyes were a fountain of tears

but those who have not been inclosed in the walls of a prison without cause or provocation can have but a little idea how [sweet] the voice of a friend is one token of friendship from any source whatever a wakens and calls into action every sympathetic feeling it brings up in an instant every thing that is passed it seizes the present with a vivacity of lightning it grasps after the future with the fierceness of a tiger it retrogrades from one thing to an other until finally all enmity malice and hatred and past differences misunderstandings and mismanagements be slain victims at the feet of hope and when the heart is sufficiently contrite then the voice of inspiration steals along and whispers

my son peace be unto thy soul thine adversity and thy afflictions shall be but a small moment and then if thou endure it well God shall exalt thee on high thou shalt triumph over all thy foes thy friends do stand by thee and they shall hail thee again with warm hearts and friendly hands thou art not yet as Job thy friends do not contend against thee neither charge thee with transgression as they did Job and they who do charge thee with transgression there hope shall be blasted and there prospects shall melt away as the hoary frost melteth before the burning rays of the rising sun and also that

God hath set to his hand and seal to change the times and season and co blind their minds that they may not understand his marvelous workings that he may prove them also and take them in there own craftiness also because their hearts are corrupt and the thing which they are willing to bring upon others and love to have others suffer may come upon them selves to the very utmost that they may be disappointed also and their hopes may be cut off and not many years hence that they and their posterity shall be swept from under heaven saith God that not one of them [p. 8]

is left to stand by the wall cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed saith the Lord and cry they have sinned when they have not sinned before me saith the Lord but have done that which was meet in mine eyes and which I commanded them but those who cry transgression do it because they are the servants of sin and are the children of disobedience themselves and those who swear false against my servants that they might bring them unto bondage and death.

Wo unto them because they have offended my little ones they shall be severed from the ordinances of mine house their basket shall not be full their houses and their barns shall famish and they themselves shall be despised by those that flattered them they shall not have right to the priesthood nor their posterity after them from generation to generation it had been better for them that a millstone had been hanged about their necks and they drowned in the depth of the sea wo unto all those that discomfort my people and drive and murder and testify against them saith the Lord of hosts a generation of vipers shall not escape the damnation of hell behold mine eye seeth and knoweth all their works and I have in reserve a swift judgement in the season thereof for them all for there is a time appointed to every man [p. 9] according as his work shall be

and now beloved Brethren we say unto you that inasmuch as God hath said that he would have a tried people that he would purge them as gold now we think that this time he has chosen his own crucible wherein we have been tried and we think if we get through with any degree of safety and shall have kept the faith that it will be a sign to this generation altogether sufficient to leave them without excuse and we think also that it will be a trial of our faith equal to that of Abraham and that the ancients will not have were off whereof to boast over us in the day of judgment as being called to pass through heavier afflictions that we may hold an even weight in the balances with them but now after having suffered so grate a sacrifice and having passed through so grate a scene of sorrow we trust that a Ram may be caught in the thicket speedily to relieve the sons and daughters of

Abraham from their great anxiety and to light up the lamp of salvation upon their countenances that they may hold on now after having gone so far unto everlasting life.

Now brethren concerning the places for the location of the saints we cannot counsel you as we could if we were present with you and as to the things that were written heretofore we did not consider them any thing very binding therefore we now say once for all that we think it most proper that the general affairs of the church which are necessary [p. 10] to be considered while your humble servant remains in bondage should be transacted by a general conference of the most faithful and the most respectable of the authorities of the church and a minute of those transactions may be kept and forwarded from time to time to your humble servant and if there should be any corrections by the word the Lord they shall be freely transmitted and your humble servant will approve all things what soever is acceptable unto God if any thing should have been suggested by us or any names mentioned except by commandment or thus saith the Lord we do not consider it binding.

therefore our hearts shall not be grieved if different arrangements should be entered into nevertheless we would suggest the propriety of being aware of an aspiring spirit which spirit has oftentimes urged men forwards to make foul speeches and influence the church to reject milder councils and has eventually been the means of bringing much death and sorrow upon the church we would say be aware of pride also for well and truly hath the wise man said that pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall

and Again outward appearance is not always a Criterion for us to Judge our fellow man but the lips betray the haughty and over bearing imaginations of the heart, by his words and his deeds let him be scanned flattery also is a deadly poison a frank and open Rebuke provoketh a good man to

Emulation and in the hour of trouble he will be your best friend, but on the other hand it will draw out all the coemption of a corrupt heart And lying and the poison of asps shall be under their tongues and they do cause the pure in heart to be cast in to prison because they want them out of their way, A fanciful and flowery and heated imagination be aware of be cause

the things of God Are of deep import and time and experience and careful and ponderous and solemn thoughts can only find them out. thy mind O Man, if thou wilt lead a soul unto salvation must stretch as high as the utmost Heavens, and search in to and contemplate the lowest considerations of the darkest abyss, and Expand upon the broad considerations of Eternal Expanse, he must commune with God. how much more dignified and noble are the thoughts of God, than the vain imaginations of the human heart, none but fools, will trifle, with the souls of men,

how vane and trifling, have ben our spirits, our Conferences our Councils our Meetings our private as well as public Conversations to low to mean to vulgar [p. 12] to condescending, for the dignified Characters of the Called and Chosen of God, according to the purposes of his will from before the foundation of the world to hold the keys of the mysteries of those things that have ben kept hid from the foundation until now, of which some have tasted a little and which many of them are to be pored down from heaven upon the heads of babes, yea the weak obscure and despicable ones of this earth.

Therefore we beseech of you brethren that you bear with those who do not feel themselves more worthy than yourselves, while we Exhort one another, to a reaffirmation, with one and all. both old and young. teachers and taught both high and low rich and poor bond and free Male and female. Let honesty and sobriety, and candor and solemnity, and virtue, and pureness, and meekness, and

simplicity, Crown our heads in every place, and in fine become as little Children without malice guile or hypocrisy: and now Brethren after your tribulations if you do these things, and exercise fervent prayer, and faith in the sight of God Always

he shall give unto you knowledge [p. 13] by his holy spirit yea by the unspeakable gift of the holy Ghost that has not been revealed since the world was until now which our fathers have waited with anxious expectation to be revealed in the last times which their minds were pointed to by the Angels as held in reserve for the fullness of their glory a time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld whither there be one god or many gods they shall be manifest all thrones and dominions principalities and powers shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ

and also if there be bounds set to the heavens or to the seas or to the dry land or to the sun moon or stars all the times of their revolutions all their appointed days months and years and all the Days of their days, months and years, and all their glories laws and set times shall be revealed in the days of the dispensation of the fullness of times according to that which was ordained in the midst of the council of the eternal God of all other Gods before this world was that should be reserved unto the finishing and the end thereof when every man shall enter into his eternal presence and into his immortal rest

but I beg leave to say unto you Brethren that ignorance superstition and bigotry placing itself where it ought not is often times in the way of the prosperity of this church [p. 14] like the torrent of rain from the mountains that floods the most pure and crystal stream with mire and dirt and filthiness and obscures every thing that was clear before and all hurls along in one general deluge but time tethers wethers tide and notwithstanding we are rolled in for the time being by the mire of the flood the next surge peradventure as time roles on may bring us to the fountain as clear as crystal and as

pure as snow while all the filthiness flood wood and rubbish is left is left and purged out by the way."

How long can rolling waters remain impure what power shall stay the heavens as well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri River in its decreed course or to turn it up stream as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter day saints

what is Boggs or his murderous party but wimbling willows upon the shore to catch the flood wood as well might we argue that water is not water because the mountain torrents send down mire and riles the crystal stream although afterwards renders it more pure than before or that fire is not fire because it is of a quenchable nature by pouring on the flood, as to say that our cause is down because renegades liars priests thieves and murderers who are all alike tenacious of their crafts and creeds have poured [p. 15] down from their spiritual wickedness in high places and from their strong holds of the divine a flood of dirt and mire and filthiness and vomit upon our heads no God forbid hell may pour forth its rage like the burning lava of Mount Vesuvius or of Etna or of the most terrible of the burning mountains and yet shall mormonism stand. water, fire, truth, and god are all the same truth is as mormonism

God is the author of it he is our shield it is by him we received our birth, it was by his voice that we were called to a dispensation of his gospel in the beginning of the fullness of times it was by him we received the book of mormon and it was by him that we remain unto this day and by him we shall remain if it shall be for our glory and in his almighty name we are determined to endure tribulation as good soldiers unto the end but brethren we shall continue to offer further reflections in our next epistle you will learn by the time you have read this and if you do not learn it you may learn it that

walls and iron doors and creaking hinges and half scared to death Guards and jailers grinning like some damned spirit lest an innocent man should make his escape to bring to light the damnable deeds of a murderous mob is calculated in its very nature to make the sole of an honest man feel stronger than the powers of hell.

But we must bring our epistle to a close [p. 16]. [We] send our respects to Fathers, Mothers, wives, and children, Brothers, and Sisters. we hold them in the most sacred remembrance we feel to inquire after Elder Rigdon if he has not forgotten us it has not been signified to us by his scrawl. Brother George W. Robinson also and Elder Cahoon we remember him but would like to jog his memory a little on the fable of the bear and the two friends who mutually agreed to stand by each other and

perhaps it would not be amiss to mention Uncle John and various others, a word of consolation and a blessing would not come amiss from any body while we are being so closely whispered by the Bear but we feel to excuse every body and every thing. Yea the more readily when we contemplate that we are in the hands of a worse than a Bear for the Bear would not pray upon a dead carcass. Our respects and love and fellowship to all the virtuous saints we are your Brethren and fellow sufferers and prisoners of Jesus Christ for the gospels sake and for the hope of glory which is in us. Amen.

Joseph Smith Jr., Hyrum Smith, Lyman Wight, Caleb Baldwin, Alexander McRae. [p. 17]

Continued to the church of Latter-day-saints.

We continue to offer further reflections to Bishop Partridge and to the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day-saints whom we love with fervent love and do always bear them in mind in all our prayers

to the throne of God. It still seems to bear heavily in our minds that the church would do well to secure to themselves the contract of the Land which is proposed to them by Mr Isaac Galland and to cultivate the friendly feelings of that gentleman in as much as he shall prove himself to be a man of honor and a friend to humanity.

We really think that his letter breaths that kind of spirit if we can judge correctly. and Isaac Van Allen Esqr. the attorney General of Iowa Territory that peradventure such men may be wrought upon by the providence of God to do good unto his people. Governor Lucas also. We suggest the idea of praying fervently for all men who manifest any degree of sympathy for the suffering children of God.

We think that peradventure the United States surveyor of the Iowa Territory may be of grate benefit to the church if it be the will of God to this end if righteousness should be manifested as the girdle of our loins It seems to be deeply impressed upon our minds that the saints ought to lay hold of every door that shall seem to be opened for unto them to obtain foot hold on the Earth and be a making all the preparations that is within the power of possibles for the terrible storms that are now gathering in the heavens with darkness and gloominess and thick darkness as spoken of by the prophets who [p. 1] cannot be now of a long time lingering.

For there seems to be a whispering that the angels of heaven who have been intrusted with the council of these matters for the last days have taken council together and among the rest of the general affairs that have to be transacted in there honorable council they have taken cognisance of the testimony of those who were murdered at Hawn's mills and also those who were martyred with D. W. Patten. and else where and have passed some decisions peradventure in favor of the saints

and those who were called to suffer without cause. These decisions will be made known in their time and they will take into consideration all those things that offend.

We have a fervent desire that in your general conferences that every thing should be discussed with a great deal of care and propriety lest you grieve the holy spirit which shall be poured out at all times upon your heads when you are exercised with those principles of righteousness that are agreeable to the mind of God. and are properly affected one toward another and are careful by all means to remember those who are in bondage and in heaviness and in deep affliction for your sakes and if there are any among you who aspire after their own aggrandizement and seek their own opulence while their brethren are groaning in poverty and are under sore trials and temptations they cannot be benefited by the intercessions of the holy spirit which maketh intercession for us day and night with groanings that cannot be uttered .

We ought at all times to be very careful that such highmindedness never have place in our hearts but condescend to men of low estate [p. 2] and with all long suffering bare the infirmities of the weak."

Behold there are many called but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen? Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world and aspire to the honors of men that they do not learn this one lesson. that the rights of priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness that they may be conferred upon us it is true but when we undertake to cover our sins & or to gratify our pride or vain ambition or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men in any degree of unrighteousness behold the heavens withdraw themselves the spirit of the Lord is grieved and when it has withdrawn amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man behold ere he is aware he is left unto himself to kick against the pricks to persecute the saints and to fight against God.

We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men as soon as they get a little authority as they suppose they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion hence many are called, but few are chosen. No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion by long suffering, by gentleness and meekness and by love unfeigned, by kindness [p. 3] by pure knowledge which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy and without guile reproving betimes with sharpness when moved upon by the holy ghost and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love to ward him whom thou hast reprov'd lest he esteem thee to be his enemy

that he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death thy bowels also being full of charity to ward all men and to the household of faith and virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God and the doctrines of the priesthood distil upon thy soul as the dew from heaven the Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee for ever and ever

the ends of the Earth shall inquire after thy name and fools shall have thee in derision and hell shall rage against thee while the pure in heart and the wise and the noble and the virtuous shall seek council and authority and blessings constantly from under thy hand and thy people shall never be turned against thee by the testimony of traitors and although their influence shall cast thee into trouble and into bars and walls thou shalt be had in honor and but for a small moment and thy voice shall be more terrible in the midst of thine enemies than the fierce"

Lion because of thy righteousness and thy God shall stand by thee for ever [p. 4] and ever. If thou art called to pass through tribulation if thou art in peril among false brethren if thou art in peril amongst robbers if thou art in peril by land or by sea if thou art accused with all manner of false accusations if thine enemies fall upon thee if they tear thee

from the society of thy father and mother and brethren and sisters and if with a drawn sword thine enemies tear thee from the bosom of thy wife and of thine off springs and thine elder son although but six years of age shall cling to thy garment and shall say my father Oh my father why can't you stay with us oh my father what are the men going to do with you and if then he shall be thrust from thee by the sword and thou be dragged to prison and thine enemies prowling around thee like wolves for blood of the Lamb

and if thou shouldst be cast into the pit or into the hand of murderers and the sentence of death passed upon thee if thou be cast into the deep if the billowing surge conspire against thee if the fierce wind become thine enemy if the heavens gather blackness and all the elements combine to hedge up thy way and above all if the very jaws of hell shall gap open her mouth wide after thee know thou my son that all these things shall give thee experience and shall be for thy good

The son of man hath descended below them all art thou greater than he therefore hold on thy way and the priesthood shall remain with thee for their bounds are set they cannot pass thy days [p.5] are known and thy years shall not be numbered less therefore fear not what man can do for God shall be with you for ever and ever

now Brethren I would suggest for the consideration of the conference of its being carefully and wisely understood by the council or conference that our brethren scattered abroad who understand the spirit of the gathering that they fall into the places of refuge and safety that God shall open unto them between Kirtland and Far West Those from the East and from the West and from far countries let them fall in some where between those two boundaries in the most safe and quiet places they can find and let this be the present understanding until God shall open a more effectual door for us for further considerations.

And again we further suggest for the consideration of the council that there be no organizations of

large bodies upon common stock principals in property or of large companies of firms until the Lord shall signify it in a proper manner as it opens such a dreadful field for the avaricious and the indolent and corrupt hearted to pray upon the innocent and virtuous and honest we have reason to believe that many things were introduced among the saints before God had signified the times and notwithstanding the principles and plans may have been good yet aspiring men or in other words men who had not the substance of Godliness about them perhaps undertook to handle edge tools children you know are fond of tools while they are not yet able to use them.

Time and experience however is the only safe remedy against such evils there are many teachers but perhaps not many fathers there are times coming when God will signify many things which are expedient [p. 6] for the well being of the saints but the times have not yet come but will come as fast as there can be found place and reception for them"

And again we would suggest for your consideration the propriety of all the saints gathering up a knowledge of all the facts and sufferings and abuses put upon them by the people of this state and also of all the property and amount of damages which they have sustained both of character & personal injuries as well as real property and also the names of all persons that have had a hand in their oppression as far as they can get hold of them and find them out.

And perhaps a committee can be appointed to find out these things and to take statements and affidavits and also to gather up the libelous publications that are a float and all that are in the magazines and in the encyclopedias and all the libellous histories that are published and that are writing and by whom and present the whole concatenation of diabolical rascality and nefarious and murderous impositions that have been practiced upon this people that we may not only publish to all the world but present them to the heads of the government in all there dark and bellish hugh as the last effort which is enjoined on us by our heavenly father before we can fully and completely claim that promise which

shall call him forth from his hiding place and also that the whole nation may be left without excuse before he can send forth the power of his mighty arm

it is an imperious duty that [p. 7] we owe to God to angels with whom we shall be brought to stand and also to ourselves to our wives and our children who have been made to bow down with grief sorrow and care under the most damning hand of murder tyranny and oppression supported and urged on and upheld by the influence of that spirit which hath so strongly riveted the creeds of the fathers who have inherited lies upon the hearts of the children and filled the world with confusion and has been growing stronger and stronger and is now the very main spring of all corruption in the world.

And the whole Earth groans under the wait of its iniquity. It is an iron yoke it is a strong band they are the very handcuffs and chains and shackles and fetters of hell therefore it is an imperious duty that we owe not only to our own wives and children but to the widow and fatherless whose husbands and fathers have been murdered under its iron hand which dark and blackening deeds are enough to make hell itself shudder and to stand aghast and pail and the hands of the very devil tremble and palsy

and also it is an imperious duty that we owe to all the rising generation and to all the pure in heart which there are many yet on the Earth among all sects parties and denominations who are blinded by the subtle craftiness of men where by they lay in wait to deceive and only kept from the truth because they know not where to find it therefore that we should waist and ware out our lives in bringing to light all the hidden things of darkness where in we know them and they are truly manifest from heaven.

These should then be [p. 8] attended to with great earnestness Let no man count them as small things for there is much which lieth in futurity pertaining to the saints which depends upon these things you know brethren that a very large

ship is benefited very much by a very small helm in the time of a storm by being kept work ways with the wind and the waves therefore dearly beloved brethren let us cheerfully do all things that layeth in our power and then may we stand still with the utmost assurance to see the salvation of God and for his arm to be revealed.

And again I would further suggest the impropriety of the organization of bands or companies by covenant or oaths by penalties or secrecies but let the time past of our experience and sufferings by the wickedness of Doctor Avard suffice and let our covenant be that of the everlasting covenant as is contained in the Holy writ. and the things that God hath revealed unto us. Pure friendship always becomes weakened the very moment you undertake to make it stronger by penal oaths and secrecy.

Your humble servant or servants intend from hence forth to disapprove every thing that is not in accordance with the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ and is not of a bold and frank and an upright nature they will not hold their peace as in times past when they see iniquity beginning to rear its head for fear of traitors or the consequences that shall flow by reprovng those who creep in unawares that they may get something to destroy the flock we believe that the experience of the saints in times past has been sufficient that they will from henceforth be always ready to obey the truth without having mens persons in admiration [p. 9] because of advantage it is expedient that we should be aware of such things and we ought always to be aware of those prejudices which sometimes so strongly presented themselves and are so congenial to human nature against our neighbors friends and brethren of the world who choose to differ with us in opinion and in matters of faith.

Our religion is between us and our God their religion is between them and their God there is a tie from God that should be exercised to wards those of our faith who walk uprightly which is peculiar

to itself but it is without prejudice but gives scope to the mind which enables us to conduct ourselves with grater liberality to word all others that are not of our faith than what they exercise towards one another these principals approximate nearer to the mind of God because it is like God or God like

There is a principal also which we are bound to be exercised with that is in common with all men such as governments and laws and regulations in the civil concerns of life this principal guarantees to all parties sects and denominations and classes of religion equal coherent and indefeasible rights they are things that pertain to this life therefore all are alike interested they make our responsibilities one toward another in matters of corruptible things while the former principals do not destroy the latter but bind us stronger and make our responsibilities not only one to another but unto God also hence

we say that the constitution of the United States is a glorious standard it is founded in the wisdom of God it is a heavenly banner it is to all those who are privileged with the sweats of its liberty like the cooling shades and refreshing [p. 10] waters of a great rock in a thirsty and a weary land it is like a great tree under whose branches men from every clime can be shielded from the burning rays of an inclement sun.

We brethren are deprived of the protection of this glorious principal by the cruelty of the cruel by those who only look for the time being for pasturage like the beasts of the field only to fill themselves and forget that the mormons as well as the Presbyterians and those of every other class and description have equal rights to partake of the fruit of the great tree of our national liberty but notwithstanding we see what we see and we feel what we feel and know what we know yet that fruit

is no less precious and delicious to our taste we cannot be weaned from the milk neither can we be drawn from the breast neither will we deny our religion because of the hand of oppression but we will hold on until death

we say that God is true that the constitution of the united States is true that the Bible is true that the book of mormon is true that the book of covenants is true that Christ is true that the ministering angels sent forth from God are true and that we know that we have an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens, whose builder and maker is God a consolation which our oppressors cannot feel when fortune, or fate, shall lay its iron hand on them as it has on us now we ask what is man remember brethren that time and chance happeneth to all men we shall continue our reflections in our next

We subscribe ourselves your sincere friends and brethren in the bonds of the ever [p. 11] lasting gospel prisoners of Jesus Christ for the sake of the gospel and the saints. we pronounce the blessing of heaven upon the heads of the saints who seek to serve God with an undivided heart in the name of Jesus Christ Amen.