**Historical Background For Section 82**

**Joseph Smith**

I received a letter from the brethren who went up to the land of Zion, stating that they had arrived at Independence, Missouri, in good health and spirits, with a printing press and a store of goods. Agreeable to the instructions of the fall conference, they also sent me the prospectus of a monthly paper, *The Evening and Morning Star*.

According to previous intentions, we now began to make preparations to visit the brethren who had removed to the land of Missouri. Before going to Hiram to live with Father Johnson [and shortly after our own newborn twins had died], my wife had taken two children (twins), of John Murdock's, to rear. She received them when only nine days old; they were now nearly eleven months…On the 24th of March, the twins before mentioned, which had been sick of the measles for some time, caused us to be broken of our rest in taking care of them, especially my wife. In the evening I told her she had better retire to rest with one of the children, and I would watch with the sicker child. In the night she told me I had better lie down on the trundle bed, and I did so, and was soon after awakened by her screaming murder, when I found myself going out of the door, in the hands of about a dozen men; some of whose hands were in my hair, and some had hold of my shirt, drawers and limbs. The foot of the trundle bed was towards the door, leaving only room enough for the door to swing open. My wife heard a gentle tapping on the windows which she then took no particular notice of (but which was unquestionably designed for ascertaining whether or not we were all asleep), and soon after the mob burst open the door and surrounded the bed in an instant, and, as I said, the first I knew I was going out of the door in the hands of an infuriated mob. I made a desperate struggle, as I was forced out, to extricate myself, but only cleared one leg, with which I made a pass at one man, and he fell on the door steps. I was immediately overpowered again; and they swore by G - -, they would kill me if I did not be still, which quieted me. As they passed around the house with me, the fellow that I kicked came to me and thrust his hand, all covered with blood, into my face and with an exulting hoarse laugh, muttered "Ge, gee, G—d—ye, I'll fix ye."

They then seized me by the throat and held on till I lost my breath. After I came to, as they passed along with me, about thirty rods from the house, I saw Elder Rigdon stretched out on the ground, whither they had dragged him by his heels. I supposed he was dead. I began to plead with them, saying, "You will have mercy and spare my life, I hope." To which they replied, "G—d—ye, call on yer God for help, we'll show ye no mercy;" and the people began to show themselves in every direction; one coming from the orchard had a plank; and I expected they would kill me, and carry me off on the plank. They then turned to the right, and went on about thirty rods further; about sixty rods from the house, and thirty from where I saw Elder Rigdon, into the meadow, where they stopped, and one said, "Simonds, Simonds," (meaning, I supposed, Simonds Ryder,) "pull up his drawers, pull up his drawers, he will take cold." Another replied: "Ain't ye going to kill 'im? ain't ye going to kill 'im?" when a group of mobbers collected a little way off, and said: "Simonds, Simonds, come here;" and "Simonds" charged those who had hold of me to keep me from touching the ground (as they had done all the time), lest I should get a spring upon them. They held a council, and as I could occasionally overhear a word, I supposed it was to know whether or not it was best to kill me. They returned after a while, when I learned that they had concluded not to kill me, but to beat and scratch me well, tear off my shirt and drawers, and leave me naked. One cried, "Simonds, Simonds, where's the tar bucket?" "I don't know," answered one, "where 'tis, Eli's left it." They ran back and fetched the bucket of tar, when one exclaimed, with an oath, "Let us tar up his mouth;" and they tried to force the tar-paddle into my mouth; I twisted my head around, so that they could not; and they cried out, "G—d—ye, hold up yer head and let us give ye some tar." They then tried to force a vial into my mouth, and broke it in my teeth. All my clothes were torn off me except my shirt collar; and one man fell on me and scratched my body with his nails like a mad cat, and then muttered out: "G—d—-ye, that's the way the Holy Ghost falls on folks!"

They then left me, and I attempted to rise, but fell again; I pulled the tar away from my lips, so that I could breathe more freely, and after a while I began to recover, and raised myself up, whereupon I saw two lights. I made my way towards one of them, and found it was Father Johnson's. When I came to the door I was naked, and the tar made me look as if I were covered with blood, and when my wife saw me she thought I was all crushed to pieces, and fainted. During the affray abroad, the sisters of the neighborhood had collected at my room. I called for a blanket, they threw me one and shut the door; I wrapped it around me and went in.

…My friends spent the night in scraping and removing the tar, and washing and cleansing my body; so that by morning I was ready to be clothed again. This being the Sabbath morning, the people assembled for meeting at the usual hour of worship, and among them came also the mobbers; viz.: Simonds Ryder, a Campbellite preacher and leader of the mob; one McClentic, who had his hands in my hair; one Streeter, son of a Campbellite minister; and Felatiah Allen, Esq., who gave the mob a barrel of whiskey to raise their spirits. Besides these named, there were many others in the mob. With my flesh all scarified and defaced, I preached to the congregation as usual, and in the afternoon of the same day baptized three individuals.

The next morning I went to see Elder Rigdon, and found him crazy, and his head highly inflamed, for they had dragged him by his heels, and those, too, so high from the ground that he could not raise his head from the rough, frozen surface, which lacerated it exceedingly; and when he saw me he called to his wife to bring him his razor. She asked him what he wanted of it; and he replied, to kill me. Sister Rigdon left the room, and he asked me to bring his razor; I asked him what he wanted of it, and he replied he wanted to kill his wife; and he continued delirious some days. The feathers which were used with the tar on this occasion, the mob took out of Elder Rigdon's house. After they had seized him, and dragged him out, one of the banditti returned to get some pillows; when the women shut him in and kept him a prisoner some time.

During the mobbing one of the twins contracted a severe cold, continued to grow worse until Friday, and then died. The mobbers composed of various religious parties, but mostly Campbellites, Methodists and Baptists, who continued to molest and menace Father Johnson's house for a long time. Elder Rigdon removed to Kirtland with his family—then sick with the measles—the following Wednesday; and, on account of the mob, he went to Chardon on Saturday, March 31st.

April first, I started for Missouri, in company with Newel K. Whitney, Peter Whitmer, and Jesse Gause, to fulfil the revelation. Not wishing to go by Kirtland, as another mob existed in that neighborhood (and indeed, the spirit of mobocracy was very prevalent through that whole region of country at the time), brother George Pitkin took us in his wagon by the most expeditious route to Warren, where we arrived the same day, and were there joined by Elder Rigdon, who left Chardon in the morning; and proceeding onward, we arrived at Wellsville the next day, and the day following at Steubenville, where we left the wagon; and on Wednesday, the 4th of April, we took passage on board a steam packet for Wheeling, Virginia; where we purchased a lot of paper for the press in Zion, then in care of W. W. Phelps.

After we left Hiram, fearing for the safety of my family, on account of the mob, I wrote to my wife (in connection with Bishop Whitney) suggesting that she go to Kirtland and tarry with Brother Whitney's family until our return. From Wheeling we took passage on board the steamer *Trenton.*While at the dock, during the night, the boat was twice on fire burning the whole width of the boat through into the cabin, but with so little damage that the boat went on in the morning; and when we arrived at Cincinnati, some of the mob which had followed us, left us, and we arrived at Louisville the same night. Captain Brittle offered us protection on board of his boat, and gave us supper and breakfast gratuitously. At Louisville we were joined by Elder Titus Billings, who was journeying with a company of Saints from Kirtland to Zion, and we took passage on the steamer *Charleston*for St. Louis, where we parted from Brother Billings and company, and by stage arrived at Independence, Missouri, on the twenty-fourth of April, having traveled a distance of about three hundred miles from St. Louis. We found the brethren in Zion, generally enjoying health and faith; and they were extremely glad to welcome us among them.

On the 26th, I called a general council of the Church, and was acknowledged as the President of the High Priesthood, according to a previous ordination at a conference of High Priests, Elders and members, held at Amherst, Ohio, on the 25th of January, 1832. The right hand of fellowship was given to me by the Bishop, Edward Partridge, in behalf of the Church. The scene was solemn, impressive and delightful. During the intermission, a difficulty or hardness which had existed between Bishop Partridge and Elder Rigdon, was amicably settled, and when we came together in the afternoon, all hearts seemed to rejoice and I received the following: [D&C 82]. (*History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,* 7 vols., introduction and notes by B. H. Roberts [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1932-1951], 1: 259-267.)

**DC 82  Introduction:  *These unusual names have now been dropped except in cases where the identification is not known (see verse 11)***

When you look at verse 11, you will probably note that the unusual names are no longer used. However, the 1981 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants did use the names of Alam, Mahalaleel, Hora, and Shalemanasseh for Edward Partridge, A. Sidney Gilbert, John Whitmer, and W. W. Phelps, respectively. Beginning in 1983 (even though still technically the 1981 edition), the correct names were substituted but the explanatory note in the introduction was not changed as perhaps it should have been.

“The real names were given in the revelations when first written, but fictitious ones were substituted when the revelations were printed in the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. Elder Orson Pratt explained that the fictitious names were used ‘in consequence of the persecutions of our enemies in Kirtland and some of the regions around.’ (*Journal of Discourses*, 16:156.) The real names were added by Orson Pratt in 1876. The correct names of four persons mentioned in section 82:11—Alam, Mahalaleel, Horah, and Shalemanasseh—were not added until a 1983 printing of the 1981 edition, following research that identified the persons. (Robert J. Woodford, “How the Revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants Were Received and Compiled,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1985, 32–33)

**DC 82:3 of him unto whom much is given much is required**

**Neal A. Maxwell**

Of the many restored truths, God has surely given us enough and to spare. Soberingly, however, we have been told that “unto whom much is given much is required” (D&C 82:3). I hope we feel the cutting edge of the word *required*. It is used instead of the milder *expected*. Neither does the Lord say, “It would be nice if …” The word is*required*, bringing us back again to the need for submissiveness in discipleship. (“Becoming a Disciple,” *Ensign*, June 1996, 15)

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

We have laid upon us as a people a greater charge, a greater responsibility than any other people have ever had in the history of the world. We are responsible for the blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ to all who have lived upon the earth, to all who now live upon the earth, and to all who will yet live upon the earth. No other people have had so great a responsibility as that. God bless the faithful Latter-day Saints who carry in their hearts the love and respect of the great doctrine of the eternity of the family, and the tremendous doctrine of vicarious work for the dead. (*Latter-day Commentary on the New Testament: The Four Gospels,*by Pinegar, Bassett, and Earl, p. 238)

**Sheri L. Dew**

At times the demands of discipleship are heavy. But shouldn’t we expect the journey towards eternal glory to stretch us? We sometimes rationalize our preoccupation with this world and our casual attempts to grow spiritually by trying to console each other with the notion that living the gospel really shouldn’t require all that much of us. The Lord’s standard of behavior will always be more demanding than the world’s, but then the Lord’s rewards are infinitely more glorious—including true joy, peace, and salvation. (“We Are Women of God,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 98)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

Now I think it is perfectly clear that the Lord expects far more of us than we sometimes render in response. We are not as other men. We are the saints of God and have the revelations of heaven. Where much is given much is expected. We are to put first in our lives the things of his kingdom.

We are commanded to live in harmony with the Lord’s laws, to keep all his commandments, to sacrifice all things if need be for his name’s sake, to conform to the terms and conditions of the law of consecration.

We have made covenants so to do—solemn, sacred, holy covenants, pledging ourselves before gods and angels.

We are under covenant to live the law of obedience.

We are under covenant to live the law of sacrifice.

We are under covenant to live the law of consecration.

With this in mind, hear this word from the Lord: “If you will that I give unto you a place in the celestial world, you must prepare yourselves by doing the things which I have commanded you and required of you.” (D&C 78:7.) (Bruce R. McConkie, “Obedience, Consecration, and Sacrifice,” *Ensign*, May 1975, 51)

**DC 82:2 he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation**

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

I was thinking, when Brother Rey L. Pratt was speaking of his labors in South America, how certain Italian brethren came confessing their sins and in humility forsaking them—giving up everything in the world for the gospel's sake because they had found the truth, how characteristic that is of those who receive the gospel out in the world. Yet, here at home in the stakes of Zion, in the shadows of Temples, are to be found those who are numbered with the Church who will not keep the commandments of the Lord. Some of them have made covenant in holy places, and yet they do not value the truth; they do not value the teachings of the servants of the Lord and they will not walk in the knowledge which they possess, much less by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God. These shall receive the greater condemnation. Oh how I wish all who live in the stakes of Zion could get the same spirit of humility and faith that is manifested by these humble converts out in the world. What a power we would be for righteousness. (*Conference Report, October 1926*, Afternoon Session 119 - 120.)

**Dallin H. Oaks**

The good name and influence of the Church are especially threatened by the transgressions of its most prominent members, including officers and teachers, since their transgressions are most likely to dilute the moral authority and teaching effectiveness of the Church. A transgression by a member in a prominent position could seriously detract from the Church's ability to teach correct principles, unless the Church takes public action to discipline the transgressor. In contrast, the church discipline required for the transgressions of a member who is not in the public eye, especially if those transgressions are not well known, can be dictated solely by what is needed to save the soul of the transgressor. This contrast, which assigns more serious and more public consequences to the transgressions of the more highly placed and prominent, is supported by the revelation that states, “Of him unto whom much is given much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation.” (*The Lord's Way* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991], 230.)

**DC 82:7 sin no more; but unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return**

**Richard G. Scott**

Abandonment of sin… is an unyielding, permanent resolve to not repeat the transgression. By keeping this commitment, the bitter aftertaste of that sin need not be experienced again. Remember: “But unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return.” **Joseph Smith** declared: “Repentance is a thing that cannot be trifled with every day. Daily transgression and daily repentance is not … pleasing in the sight of God.” (“Finding Forgiveness,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 76)

**Spencer W. Kimball**

Early settlers in the Gila Valley in Arizona stated that when they first arrived they could jump across the little trickle of water running down the San Simon Valley, a small tributary of the Gila River. But the overgrazed valley yielded to erosion. The little freshets of water followed the cow trails and cut deep ruts. Each succeeding storm stream undermined the dirt walls, making the gorge ever deeper and wider. The undercut walls caved in and the cow trail became a rut. The rut became a deep wash, and the wash became a very wide and very deep and almost uncrossable chasm.

So it is with transgression. When a sin is repeated again and again, the channel gets deeper and deeper. And even though the gash in the earth may be filled, any flood of water is likely again to find the bed of the wash and follow it, making it even deeper. Similarly, even though sin be abandoned and forgiven, careless or deliberate action can bring it back.

Old sins return, says the Lord in his modern revelations. Many people either do not know this or they conveniently forget it. “Go your ways and sin no more,” the Lord warned.

And again, “. . . Unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return, saith the Lord your God.” (D&C 82:7.)

Would this mean that the person who has returned to the sins he has professedly abandoned must start the process of repentance again from the beginning? that one cannot return to sin and then start repentance from where he left off?

To return to sin is most destructive to the morale of the individual and gives Satan another hand-hold on his victim. Those who feel that they can sin and be forgiven and then return to sin and be forgiven again and again must straighten out their thinking. Each previously forgiven sin is added to the new one and the whole gets to be a heavy load.

Thus when a man has made up his mind to change his life, there must be no turning back. Any reversal, even in a small degree, is greatly to his detriment. The reformed alcoholic who takes “just a little sip” again may have lost all the ground he has gained. The pervert who relaxes and returns to old companions or situations is in grave danger again. The former cigarette addict who smokes just one more cigarette is on his way back to addiction. It was Mark Twain who said he knew he could quit smoking because he had done it a thousand times. When one quits, he must quit. (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969], chap. 12)

**DC 82:10 I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say…**

Can we bind the Lord our God? How can the Lord of the universe, the creator of worlds without number, and author of the glorious plan of salvation be affected by what we do? Can’t he do whatever he wants whenever he wants to?

In the eternal worlds, there are books containing the laws and commandments of God. For every law, there is a blessing appointed for obedience. These eternal decrees have gone forth and cannot be revoked (D&C 130:20-21). Every individual who abides the law must receive the appointed blessing—no exceptions.  “Unto every law there are certain bounds…and conditions” (D&C 88:38) which are strictly kept by the Lord for he acts according to eternal laws. If God did not abide his own laws, “he would cease to be God” (Alma 42:13). This concept empowers us individually and collectively to bring upon ourselves the irrevocable blessings of heaven. How do we do it? Obedience, obedience, obedience. Obedience not only binds the Lord to bless us, but it also binds Satan from influencing us.

**Richard G. Scott**

It is evident that [the Lord] intends that we do our part. But what, specifically, are we to do? No one would expect to receive a result from physical law without obeying it. Spiritual law is the same. As much as we want help, we must expect to follow the spiritual law that controls that help. Spiritual law is not mysterious. It is something that we can understand. The scriptures define it in significant detail. I will cite key scriptures that teach how to ask for help, then summarize the spiritual law they clarify.

The Savior declared, “I, the Lord, am bound *when ye do what I say*; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise.” (D&C 82:10; italics added.)

John taught, “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, *because we keep his commandments,*and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.” (1 Jn. 3:22; italics added.)

Nephi counseled, “Do ye not remember the things which the Lord hath said?—If ye will *not harden your hearts*, and *ask me in faith*, believing that ye shall receive, *with diligence in keeping my commandments*, surely these things shall be made known unto you.” (1 Ne. 15:11; italics added.)

The Lord has the power to bless us at any time. Yet we see that to count on His help, we must consistently obey His commandments. (“Obtaining Help from the Lord,”*Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 84)

**L. Tom Perry**

Today we find ourselves surrounded with so much depression, despair, lack of confidence, and loss of hope. I ask myself: For what purpose is all this gloom? Consider with me for a moment the great blessings which have been promised us in a covenant with the Lord. He has entered into a solemn and binding contract with each of us from the very beginning to give us all that He hath according to our faithfulness. He has declared, “I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say.” (D&C 82:10.)

By solemn covenant He will perform His part of the agreement. The opportunity to receive these great blessings is ours to control, based on our individual performance. (“Behold, the Lord Hath Shown unto Me Great and Marvelous Things,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 17)

**DC 82:10 when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise**

**Boyd K. Packer**

I would like to tell the young people of an experience I had when I was a very young man and was talking with a very old man. This is the story he told me.

When he was a little boy—that would be nearly one hundred years ago—he lived in a very small community a long way from Salt Lake City. One of the men in the ward, a close relation to the President of the Church, had passed away. When the funeral was held, everyone in the ward went to the funeral, as was the custom. So this little boy went with his father and mother to the funeral. Just as the service was about to begin, to their great surprise in walked the prophet, the President of the Church. He had come a long way by train and then by buggy to attend the funeral service of his relative.

The service was similar to those of other funerals. Some kind things were said about the deceased man. He was described as a good man. Someone said that he had given flour to the widows, and he had helped those in the ward. We like to say kind things at funerals, of course.

The concluding speaker was the President of the Church. What he said was not comforting. He gave a talk that perhaps only the President of the Church could give; and he perhaps could speak in that way only because he was speaking about a relative. He confirmed that this man had been a good man and said that the good things he had done would earn him a reward; but then he said: “The fact is, he did not keep his covenants.”

This man, when he was young, had gone to the temple to be married, to be sealed. Some sweet young girl had persuaded him to change his habits and become worthy, so he stopped doing some wrong things, began to pay his tithing and attend church, eventually received a temple recommend; and then the couple went to the temple and were sealed. But after a while, because the temple was a long way away and they did not return, he forgot. He began to slip back into some of his old habits. He forgot to pay his tithing. He ceased being the man he had become.

His relative, the President of the Church, knew all this, so he acknowledged that all the good he had done would earn him rewards, but he said, “The fact is, he did not keep his covenants.” There were things he did that he should not have done, for he had covenanted not to do them. Similarly there were things he had covenanted to do that he had not done. So he had covenanted not to do some things and covenanted to do some things, and he had become loose and lazy on those things. He was basically a good man, maybe a good Christian as far as the world would judge it. But he had not kept his covenants, his agreements.

When you young people go to the temple to be married, you will hear about the importance of your marriage being sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. “I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say.” And if you do what He says, He cannot break those promises; you will receive what is promised. But if you do not keep your part of the covenant the promises will not be fulfilled. There cannot be justice in your receiving the reward if you have not earned it. (*Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1991], 256-256.)

**Harold B. Lee**

I sat in a class in Sunday School in my own ward one day, and the teacher was the son of a patriarch. He said he used to take down the blessings of his father, and he noticed that his father gave what he called “iffy” blessings. He would give a blessing, but it was predicated on “if you will not do this” or “if you will cease doing that.” And he said, “I watched these men to whom my father gave the 'iffy' blessings, and I saw that many of them did not heed the warning that my father as a patriarch had given, and the blessings were never received because they did not comply.”

You know, this started me thinking. I went back into the Doctrine and Covenants and began to read the “iffy” revelations that have been given to the various brethren in the Church. If you want to have an exercise in something that will startle you, read some of the warnings that were given through the Prophet Joseph Smith to Thomas B. Marsh, Martin Harris, some of the Whitmer brothers, William E. McLellin—warnings which, had they heeded, some would not have fallen by the wayside. But because they did not heed, and they didn't clear up their lives, they fell by the wayside, and some had to be dropped from membership in the Church. (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee,*edited by Clyde J. Williams [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 81.)

**DC 82:11-12 a bond and covenant… To manage the affairs of the poor… both in the land of Zion and in the land of Kirtland**

“Settlement in Missouri established two centers of activity in the Church—Kirtland and Independence. The thousand miles distance between the centers made travel and communication difficult; the fact that Church headquarters remained at Kirtland created misunderstandings, jealousy, and occasional rivalry.

“To resolve some of these misunderstandings, the Prophet convened a general council of the Church in Missouri on 26 April 1832. During the council, a revelation was received which showed the operation of the order of Enoch in this dispensation. Joseph Smith, Newel K. Whitney, Sidney Rigdon, Oliver Cowdery, and Martin Harris were directed ‘to manage the affairs of the poor, and all things pertaining to the bishopric both in the land of Zion and in the land of [Kirtland].’ (D&C 82:12) Accordingly, a central council was created (a board of directors), which in turn established the united order. This central agency was established not only to assist the poor, but to manage the merchandising stores in both Ohio and Missouri. ‘It was my endeavor,’ wrote the Prophet, ‘to so organize the Church, that the brethren might eventually be independent of every incumbrance beneath the celestial kingdom, by bonds and covenants of mutual friendship, and spiritual love.’ (*History of the Church*, 1:269)” (William O. Nelson, “To Prepare a People,” Ensign, Jan. 1979, 20–21)

**DC 82:13 I have consecrated the land of Kirtland in mine own due time…for a stake to Zion**

Search the scriptures for the phrase, “in mine own due time.” You will find that whenever the Lord uses that phrase, he means, “a long time from now.” But in 1832, the saints were already building up a stake in Kirtland. We must conclude, therefore, that the Lord was looking ahead to a distant future in which the Kirtland stake would be a great “benefit of the saints.” The fulfillment of this prophecy began again in 1983, when President Ezra Taft Benson created the Kirtland Ohio Stake.

“**President Ezra Taft Benson** of the Council of the Twelve presided at the creation of the new stake October 16. He told those assembled for the service, ‘I promise you as a servant of the Lord that as you unite in moving the work of the Lord forward in this part of the Lord’s vineyard, your prayers will be answered and you will be magnified even beyond your natural talents.’

“The original Kirtland Stake was the first organized in the Church, on 17 February 1834, and the Prophet Joseph Smith was its president. ‘This was headquarters of the Church for seven years. Here the first temple of the Church was erected in modern times. From this place the gospel was first carried to foreign lands,’ President Benson recalled…

“President Benson noted that the Lord finally withdrew his blessings from the early Saints in Kirtland because they were not obedient to his commandments. “But I rejoice because I feel there is a new spirit in this beloved Kirtland area and in all of the entire state of Ohio,” he continued. “The Lord made it very clear when he said, ‘I, the Lord, will build up Kirtland.’ (D&C 124:83.) Today we are witnessing the fulfillment of that promise.”

“The 2,400-member stake, formed by restructuring units in the Cleveland and Akron stakes, includes eight wards and branches in northeast Ohio.

“Just four years ago, on 14 October 1979, President Benson presided at the groundbreaking for the Kirtland chapel, which is now the stake center. On that occasion, he referred to a prophecy of the Lord written 31 October 1841 in a letter from Hyrum Smith to the Saints still in Kirtland. It warned them to leave because they would not be able to possess their lands in peace, “yet your children may possess them, but not until many years shall pass away; … and then I will send forth and build up Kirtland, and it shall be polished and refined according to my word.” (Anita C. Andrews, “News of the Church,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1983, 67)

**DC 82:14 Zion must increase…her borders must be enlarged**

“Thousands of Saints started gathering to Missouri—site of the new geographic Zion. Within a few short years, however, they were driven from the state. Still, they maintained the hope that they would return sometime in the future and redeem, or reclaim, the latter-day Zion.

“Yet even before the Saints were expelled from Missouri, the Lord provided through the Prophet Joseph Smith an even broader vision of Zion. In 1832 the Prophet was told, ‘Zion must increase in beauty, and in holiness; *her borders must be enlarged*’ (D&C 82:14; emphasis added). Then in 1844, while the Saints were living in Illinois, the Prophet Joseph Smith boldly declared: ‘You know there has been great discussion in relation to Zion—where it is, and where the gathering of the dispensation is, and which I am now going to tell you. … *The whole of America is Zion itself from north to south.’*

When the Prophet announced this remarkable view, it must have been stirring to the Saints. It foreshadowed the most expansive concept of Zion: many stakes spreading over the earth as multiple gathering places for faithful Church members. In 1833, during the time that the Saints were being expelled from Jackson County, Missouri, the Lord offered a glimpse of this broad vision of Zion. He revealed to the Prophet Joseph that the day would come when there would be ‘no more room’ for the Saints in Missouri; ‘and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called *stakes*, for the curtains or the strength of Zion’ (D&C 101:21; emphasis added).

“…More recently, **President Spencer W. Kimball** underscored this important doctrine: ‘The First Presidency and the Twelve see great wisdom in the multiple Zions, many gathering places where the Saints within their own culture and nation can act as a leaven in the building of the kingdom.’” (Arnold K. Garr, “Growing with a Living Church,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1996, 29)

**Spencer W. Kimball**

The Lord has said, “For Zion must increase in beauty, and in holiness; her borders must be enlarged; her stakes must be strengthened; yea, verily I say unto you, Zion must arise and put on her beautiful garments.” (D&C 82:14.)

We look to the day when Zion can be fully built, but the Lord reminds us: “But first let my army become very great.” (D&C 105:31.)

While we are powerfully and energetically enlarging the Lord’s army, we remember also **President Brigham Young’s** prophecy: “The kingdom will continue to increase, to grow, to spread and prosper more and more. Every time its enemies undertake to overthrow it, it will become more extensive and powerful; instead of its decreasing, it will continue to increase, it will spread the more, become more wonderful and conspicuous to the nations, until it fills the whole earth.” (Journal of Discourses, 1:203.) (“Are We Doing All We Can?” *Ensign*, Feb. 1983, 5)

**Robert D. Hales**

This promised Zion always seems to be a little beyond our reach. We need to understand that as much virtue can be gained in progressing toward Zion as in dwelling there. It is a process as well as a destination. We approach or withdraw from Zion through the manner in which we conduct our daily dealings, how we live within our families, whether we pay an honest tithe and generous fast offering, how we seize opportunities to serve and do so diligently. Many are perfected upon the road to Zion who will never see the city in mortality. (“Welfare Principles to Guide Our Lives: An Eternal Plan for the Welfare of Men’s Souls,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 30)

**DC 82:14 her stakes must be strengthened**

**Ezra Taft Benson**

The term stake is a symbolic expression. Picture in your mind a great tent held up by cords extended to many stakes that are firmly secured in the ground.

The prophets likened latter-day Zion to a great tent encompassing the earth. That tent was supported by cords fastened to stakes. Those stakes, of course, are various geographical organizations spread out over the earth. Presently, Israel is being gathered to the various stakes of Zion.

…the stakes of Zion are to be “for a defense, and for a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out without mixture upon the whole earth.” Stakes are a defense for the Saints from enemies both seen and unseen. The defense is direction provided through priesthood channels that strengthens testimony and promotes family solidarity and individual righteousness. (“Strengthen Thy Stakes,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1991, 2, 4)

**DC 82:14 Zion must arise and put on her beautiful garments**

**Ezra Taft Benson**

Here the Lord declares another great purpose of a stake: to be a beautiful emblem for all the world to see. The phrase “put on her beautiful garments” refers, of course, to the inner sanctity that must be attained by every member who calls himself or herself a Saint. Zion is “the pure in heart.” (D&C 97:21.)

Stakes in Zion are strengthened and Zion’s borders enlarged as members reflect the standard of holiness that the Lord expects of His chosen people.

“Put on thy strength, O Zion” is an expression of prophets through the ages. This was interpreted by the **Prophet Joseph Smith** in this manner:

“[This has] reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is *to put on the authority of the priesthood*, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage.” (D&C 113:8; italics added.) (“Strengthen Thy Stakes,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1991, 2)

**DC 82:17 you are to be equal**

**George Q. Cannon**

It is not the design of God that we should fall a prey to the evils that have existed and that have worked out such misery and ruin among other people. It is God's design to save and redeem us from the evils that others have endured. It has been frequently remarked to me by men out of our faith, when conversing upon our principles and the success which has attended their proclamation: “Mr. Cannon, as long as the Latter-day Saints are poor you will do very well; as long as you are persecuted you will stand; but you will be like other people when wealth increases in your midst—when you grow up into classes and some are wealthy and some are poor, and your Church becomes popular, you will be very likely to fall into the same evils and errors that have characterized other churches.” If God did not preside over this Church, such expectations and predictions would doubtless be fulfilled. But God presides; it is His Church, and He has provided remedies for every one of these evils, by which the Church can be preserved, and by which wealth can be increased in the midst of the Latter-day Saints and yet not work out the injurious results that we see elsewhere where it abounds. God has provided a way to prevent this, and that way is to be found in the revelations that were given. (*Journal of Discourses,*26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 13: 101.)

**Jeffrey R. Holland**

I know that a talk in general conference is not going to cut through the centuries of temporal inequity that have plagued humankind, but I also know that the gospel of Jesus Christ holds the answer to every social and political and economic problem this world has ever faced. And I know we can each do something, however small that act may seem to be. We can pay an honest tithe and give our fast and free-will offerings, according to our circumstances. And we can watch for other ways to help. To worthy causes and needy people, we can give time if we don’t have money, and we can give love when our time runs out. We can share the loaves we have and trust God that the cruse of oil will not fail. (“A Handful of Meal and a Little Oil,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 31)

**DC 82:17 you are to have equal claims on the properties, for the benefit of managing the concerns of your stewardships**

“**Orson Pratt** [said]:

The Lord never intended that every man should possess an equal amount of stewardship with his brother. Why? Because God has given to some men greater ability to manage and control property than others. He may give to one, one talent; to another, two; to another, three; to another, five; and to another, ten; and then command them to make use of these talents according to the instructions and revelations given, and be accountable to Him who gave them.

“Each steward's obligation to turn the surplus profits from his stewardship over to the storehouse as a new consecration was another important factor in Zion's program for maintaining a permanent equality within the united order. **Orson Pratt** said:

What provisions did the Lord make in order to maintain this equality among his Saints permanently? He made this arrangement by law—that every man should be considered a steward. . . . These stewards were to render an account to the judge in Zion of their stewardships. . . .

To the Lord's bishop or bishops, as the case may be, he reports what he has done with the means entrusted to his care. If a man has been entrusted with fifty or with a thousand dollars, or with a million, to carry on some branch of business he must, at the end of the year, render an account of that stewardship. If a man is only entrusted with a small farm, he renders an account of his stewardship at the end of the year, and thus all those who are occupied in these different branches of trade, render accounts of their stewardships, *consecrating, at the end of the year, all that they have gained, excepting what it has cost to feed and clothe them.* Are they not equal? Yes, and *this maintains a permanent equality;* for the man who has gained a hundred thousand in his stewardship consecrates all that he has not used; and the man with a smaller stewardship who in the whole year, has only gained fifty dollars over and above what he has used, consecrates that fifty. The man who has gained most consecrates most, the man who has gained least consecrates the least. This reduces them yearly to the same position and condition as they were in when they commenced this heavenly order.

“Finally, a steward's continued right to draw upon the storehouse for funds to operate and expand his stewardship concluded the provisions by which a permanent equality could be maintained within the united order. ‘You are to be equal, or in other words, you are to have *equal* claims on the properties [of the storehouse], for the benefit of managing the concerns of your stewardships,’ a revelation declared, ‘every man according to his wants and his needs, inasmuch as his wants are just.’ This meant, **George Q. Cannon** explained, that all stewards would have ‘an equal claim on the properties of the Lord's treasury.’ The funds in that treasury were to be held in common by all stewards within the system, and each man had a right to share equally in the profits which were derived from the economic ventures of all other stewards. No funds were to be taken from the treasury, however, except by the common consent of the several stewards. But governed by this principle, all stewards were to have equal access to the treasury as a common fund from which they could draw to operate and expand their stewardships.

“The fact that each steward had an equal right to draw upon the common treasury to supply the needs of his stewardship did not mean that each man could withdraw the same amount. Instead, his right to withdraw funds depended upon the size and kind of his stewardship, its legitimate needs, his demonstrated integrity and ability in managing his stewardship, and the principle of common consent.” (Hyrum L. Andrus, *Doctrines of the Kingdom* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973], 278-280.)

**DC 82:19 every man seeking the interest of his neighbor…**

**Brigham Young**

The Latter-day Saints, in their conduct and acts with regard to financial matters, are like the rest of the world. The course pursued by men of business in the world has a tendency to make a few rich, and to sink the masses of the people in poverty and degradation. Too many of the Elders of Israel take this course. No matter what comes they are for gain—for gathering around them riches; and when they get rich how are those riches used? Spent on the lusts of the flesh, wasted as a thing of nought… Instead of being united in our feelings to build up all, each one takes his own course; whereas, if we were united, we would get rich ten times faster than we do now. How are you going to bring a people to that point when they will all be united in the things of this life? By no other means than prevailing upon them to live their religion that they all may possess the Holy Ghost, the spirit of revelation, the light of Christ, which will enable them to see eye to eye. Then their acts and all their dealings would be so connected that they would pull together, as Joseph used to say: “A long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together.” This point gained, we could bear off the Kingdom victoriously, and we could do what we pleased; but there is no doctrine in existence, short of the gospel of the Son of God, by which a people can be brought to a oneness in their temporal matters. (*Journal of Discourses,*26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 11: 349.)

**George Q. Cannon**

So that each man in his stewardship will not be laboring for himself; he will be laboring for the whole, every man and woman being looked after, having a common interest, through inheritance, from our Great Creator, who created this earth for us. He did not create it for a few, not for a class, not for an aristocracy, not for monopolists; but for every one of us, each of us having an equal claim on the elements, and all laboring for the whole human family. Every want supplied, every proper desire of the heart gratified, until misery will flee from the face of this fair earth, until want will be unknown, until the cry of the widow and the fatherless and the distressed will not be heard in the land. The heavens will not be pierced with the cries of suffering humanity, and neither man nor beast will be destitute of that which is good for him. This is the plan which God has devised. It may require what many trained as we have been under the old and existing conditions may look upon as sacrifices to bring it about; but it will come; for God has devised it, and it is the only plan by which we can ever get into the celestial kingdom and become joint heirs with Jesus Christ. He has set us the example of deserting all things in the heavens, leaving His power and high estate to come down here and suffer for his brethren and sisters. We must look to Him and follow Him. (Brian H. Stuy, ed., *Collected Discourses,* 5 vols. [Burbank, Calif., and Woodland Hills, Ut.: B.H.S. Publishing, 1987-1992], vol. 4, April 8, 1894)

**Jeffrey R. Holland**

We may not yet be the Zion of which our prophets foretold and toward which the poets and priests of Israel have pointed us, but we long for it and we keep working toward it. I do not know whether a full implementation of such a society can be realized until Christ comes, but I know that when He did come to the Nephites, His majestic teachings and ennobling spirit led to the happiest of all times, a time in which “there were no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another. And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift.” (4 Ne. 1:2-3) That blessed circumstance was, I suppose, achieved on only one other occasion of which we know—the city of Enoch, where “they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.” (Moses 7:18)

The Prophet Joseph Smith had such a grand view of our possibilities, a view given him by the revelations of God. He knew that the real task was in being more Christlike—caring the way the Savior cared, loving the way he loved, “every man seeking the interest of his neighbor,” the scripture says, “and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God.” (“A Handful of Meal and a Little Oil,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 30)

**DC 82:20 This order I have appointed to be an everlasting order**

**Harold B. Lee**

Five and a half years ago when I, under an assignment from the First Presidency, accompanied Brother Melvin J. Ballard throughout the Church to make the initial announcement of the present movement known as the Church Welfare Plan, he was asked everywhere: “Is this the beginning of the United Order?” And to all such questioners Brother Ballard's answer was the same: “No, it is not the beginning of the United Order, but it may be that in this movement the Lord may be giving His people an examination to see how far they have come toward a condition where they might live as one.”

As I have thought about that question, and as I have thought about his answer, I have had difficulty understanding how a people who are not able to sacrifice to a point where they can pay a tenth of their interest annually and abstain from two meals on the first Sunday of the month and pay that as an offering for the care of the needy, I have difficulty in understanding how we can believe that many of our people are more than ten percent ready for the United Order.

Furthermore, I have difficulty understanding that they would be able to live in the United Order were it to be instituted in this day. I also have grave doubts that prosperous times will make possible that happy day spoken of. I fear we must yet see more difficult and trying times than any we have yet passed through before such a day can come. (*Conference Report, October 1941*, Third Day—Morning Meeting 112-113.)

**DC 82:21 the souls that sins against this covenant…shall be delivered over to the buffetings of Satan**

“In March, 1832, the Prophet created an organization known as the ‘united order,’ which was to direct the economic affairs of the Saints under the law of consecration and stewardship. Those who were chosen to direct this divine economic order… were bound by covenant to administer the program of the order according to the spiritual and moral requirements of that higher standard or law. The Lord said by revelation:

   . . . a commandment I give unto you, to prepare and organize yourselves by a bond or everlasting covenant that cannot be broken.

   And he who breaketh it shall lose his office and standing in the church, *and shall be delivered over to the buffetings of Satan until the day of redemption.*(D&C 78:11-12)

“Again the Lord directed:

   . . . it is expedient for my servants . . . [Newel K. Whitney, Sidney Rigdon, Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and Martin Harris] to be bound together by a bond and covenant that cannot be broken by transgression, *except judgment shall immediately follow,* in your several stewardships—

   To manage the affairs of the poor, and all things pertaining to the bishopric both in the land of Zion and in the land of [Kirtland] . . . .

   This order I have appointed to be an everlasting order unto you, and unto your successors, inasmuch as you sin not.

   And the soul that sins against this covenant, and hardeneth his heart against it, shall be dealt with according to the laws of my church, *and shall be delivered over to the buffetings of Satan until the day of redemption.* (D&C 82:11-12, 20-21)

“Two years later, after the Saints had passed through the turbulent experiences which occurred in Jackson county, Missouri, the Lord again spoke concerning the united order and those who were directing its affairs:

   Verily I say unto you, my friends, I give unto you counsel, and a commandment, concerning all the properties which belong to the order which I commanded to be organized and established, to be a united order, and an everlasting order for the benefit of my church, and for the salvation of men until I come—

*With promise immutable and unchangeable,* that inasmuch as those whom I commanded were faithful they should be blessed with a multiplicity of blessings;

*But inasmuch as they were not faithful they were nigh unto cursing.*

   Therefore, inasmuch as some of my servants have not kept the commandment, but have broken the covenant through covetousness, and with feigned words, I have cursed them with a very sore and grievous curse.

   For I, the Lord, have decreed in my heart, that inasmuch as any man belonging to the order shall be found a transgressor, or, in other words, shall break the covenant with which ye are bound, *he shall be cursed in his life, and shall be trodden down by whom I will;*

   For I, the Lord, am not to be mocked in these things—

   And all this that the innocent among you may not be condemned with the unjust; and that the guilty among you may not escape; *because I, the Lord, have promised unto you a crown of glory at my right hand.*

   Therefore, inasmuch as you are found transgressors, you cannot escape my wrath in your lives.

   Inasmuch as ye are cut off for transgression, ye cannot escape the buffetings of Satan until the day of redemption. (D&C 104:1-9) (Hyrum L. Andrus,*Principles of Perfection* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1970], 343-345.)

**DC 82:22 make yourselves friends with the mammon of unrighteousness**

We are commanded to live in the world without being of the world. Of necessity, we must deal with those whose hearts are set on the mammon of unrighteousness (see the parable of the unjust steward, Luke 16:1-9). Rather than isolate ourselves or make enemies of the unbelievers, we should deal with them fairly and honestly—even making friends with them. In all our dealings, whether financial, social, political, we are to wise as serpents yet harmless as doves. In other words, we have to play the game the way the world plays it. By doing so, we will win the favor of even the vilest of men. This can be done without compromising any principles of righteousness. Think how many General Authorities have been successful businessmen and executives! They have been so successful because they know how to make friends with the mammon of unrighteousness without compromising their principles.

Unfortunately, the early saints didn’t follow this counsel very well. Some of the early saints in Zion would boast to their Missouri neighbors that they would eventually control the entire county. Their Zionist views, too openly declared, quickly engendered the suspicions and hatred of the surrounding settlers. These suspicions and hatreds grew into mobocracy and even murder, until at length, the saints were driven out, without any of the mammon of unrighteousness willing to receive them “into everlasting habitations” (Lu. 16:9).

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

The commandment of the Lord that the saints should make themselves “friends with the mammon of unrighteousness,” seems to be a hard saying when not properly understood. It is not intended that in making friends of the “mammon of unrighteousness” that the brethren were to partake with them in their sins; to receive them to their bosoms, intermarry with them and otherwise come down to their level. They were to so live that peace with their enemies might be assured. They were to treat them kindly, be friendly with them as far as correct and virtuous principles would permit. (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1946-1949], 2: 89.)