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**SEEKING THE "REMNANT":
THE NATIVE AMERICAN
DURING THE JOSEPH SMITH PERIOD**

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O stop and tell me, Red Man,
Who are ye? why you roam?
And how you get your living?
Have you no God; -no home?
-W. W. Phelps¹

RECENT SCHOLARS HAVE largely set aside the Native American as an important force in early Restoration history, 1830-44. After telling the familiar story of Oliver Cowdery's 1830-31 Lamanite mission, most writers either grow quiet on the topic or say that Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders became preoccupied with more pressing things. But the evidence supports another view. First-generation leaders, while not always having the freedom to interact with the Indian as they wished, consistently sought the Native American "remnant" of Jacob. This argument, more than revising a familiar historical tenet, provides a window through which to view early

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¹W. W. Phelps, "The Red Man," in W. W. Phelps to Oliver Cowdery, 6 November 1834, Letter No.2, *Latter Day Saints Messenger and Advocate* I (1 December 1834): 34. The poem later became the lyrics for Hymn no. 63 in *A Collection of Sacred Hymns, for the Church of the Latter Day Saints*, selected by Emma Smith (Kirtland, Ohio: F. G. Williams & Co., 1835), 83-84.

Mormonism. It shows the millennial spirit of the movement's first years, helps to explain the intensity of early anti-Mormonism, and reveals one of the reasons why the Mormon hegira took the path it did. Finally, it suggests that the Book of Mormon, which lay at the heart of the original disciples' view of the Indian, was more than a theoretical handbook. It actually affected how Mormons thought and what they did².

There is no mistaking the importance of the Indian during the earliest part of Joseph Smith's ministry. His first and greatest revelation was the Book of Mormon, which was not just a record of the "Laminate" or Native American people, but a highly unusual manifesto of their destiny. Historians may find plenty of parallels in the Indian doctrines of various seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century preachers and philanthropists³ but Joseph Smith taught something so unique for its time as to be inflammatory. The Indians, descendants of the Old Testament prophet Israel, would in the last days once more be joined into the ancient Israelite covenant. Redeemed to the Christian fold and blossoming "like a rose,"⁴ the Indian "remnant" would play a fearful role in the final end of things. The Book of Mormon taught not simply Indian redemption but Indian cataclysm.

This Native American heritage and destiny was repeated in one Book of Mormon refrain after another, starting in the book's preface and working

² Examples of the literature minimizing the role of the Indians on early Mormon events include Lawrence G. Coates, "A History of Indian Education by the Mormons, 1830-1900" (Ed. D. diss., Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, 1969), 55-2; Keith Parry, "Joseph Smith and the Clash of Sacred Cultures," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Winter 1985): 67-74; G. St. John Stott, "New Jerusalem Abandoned: The Failure to Carry Mormonism to the Delaware," *Journal of American Studies* 21 (April 1987): 79-82; and Floyd A. O'Neil, "The Mormons, the Indians, and George Washington Bean," in *Churchmen and Western Indians, 1820-1920*, edited by Clyde A. Milder II and Floyd A. O'NEILL (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 77-107. Other scholars have found the Book of Mormon's influence limited on early happenings: Richard Bushman, "The Book of Mormon in Early Mormon History," in *New Views of Mormon History: A Collection of Essays in Honor of Leonard J. Arlington*, edited by Davis Bitten and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 3-18 and Grant Underwood, "Book of Mormon Usage in Early LOS Theology," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (Autumn 1984): 35-74.

³ Dan Vogel, *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon: Religious Solutions from Columbus to Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1986) treats many of these non-Mormon views of the Native American.

⁴ Book of Commandments LII:23-26 (LOS Doctrine and Covenants (hereafter cited as D&C] 49:24-28); Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, edited by B. H. Roberts, 7 vols., 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1951 printing), 1:189.

to an apex in the post-resurrection ministry of Jesus to the early American inhabitants.⁵ "The Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you this land," he stated.

And I say unto you, that if the Gentiles do not repent after the blessing which they shall receive [of having the Gospel restored to them], after they have scattered my people-

Then shall ye, who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, go forth among them, and ye shall be in the midst of them who shall be many; and ye shall be among them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he goeth through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

Thy hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut Off.⁶

Were these stirring and violent images just another example of Christian eschatological metaphor? On the con~, Joseph Smith and the first- generation Mormons proceeded on the assumption of their literal meaning. "The Book of Mormon is a record of the forefathers of our western Tribes of Indians," Smith wrote to N. C. Saxton, editor of a Rochester, New York, newspaper. "The land of America is a promised land unto them," where they would be instrumental in building a New Jerusalem." And, not as an afterthought, Smith added this proviso: "I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of *bloodshed* as had not a parallel in the history of our nation."⁷ Smith's 1832 Civil War prophecy's confirmed the relation- ship between the predicted carnage and the Indian. "The remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves," it declared, "and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation" (D&C 87:5).

⁵Also see revelation to Joseph Smith, Harmony, Pennsylvania, July 1828, Book of Commandments 11:6 (D&C 3:16-20). Here Smith was told the plates had been preserved "for this very purpose" of telling the descendants of the Book of Mormon people of "the promises of the Lord" that soon were to be extended in their behalf.

⁶ 3 Nephi 20:14-17. The injunction, drawn from Micah's jeremiad, was repeated in 3 Nephi 16:15, 3 Nephi 21:11-21, and Mormon 5:22-24. For another variation stressing the Native American and the New Jerusalem, see Ether 13:6-13. Other scholars have noted the importance of these passages. Richard L. Bushman, "New Jerusalem, USA: The Early Development of the Latter-day Saint Zion Concept on the American Frontier" (Honor's thesis, Harvard College, 1955), 89-90, and Underwood, "Book of Mormon Usage," 43

⁷ 4 January 1833.. in *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, compiled and edited by Dean C. Jessee (Salt Lake City Deseret Book, 1984), 273

Orson and Parley P. Pratt, early pamphleteers and apostles, continued the theme. The former held that the "western world, including both North and South America," would ultimately pass to the righteous, which included the "remnant,"⁸ while his brother argued for a literal reading of the Book of Mormon text. The prophecies contained therein, he held, were "plain, simple, definite, literal, positive and very express" and Jesus' prophetic words of American upheaval must be fulfilled to the letter. "This destruction" I included "an utter overthrow, and desolation of all our Cities, Forts, and Strong holds, an entire annihilation of our race, except such as embrace the Covenant and are numbered with Israel."⁹

With these and similar expressions serving as their guide and the Book of Mormon as their handbook, early Church members had no confusion about their imperative. They understood the need of taking the Restoration message to the Native American people, who in turn would play their pivotal role by purifying the land prior to helping to build the New Jerusalem. What was at issue was a major biblical prophetic watershed: turning from the "times of the gentiles" to the new and final era of the chosen people of Jacob (Luke 21:24; D&C 45:25-30).

These fervent themes also filled the air of that pivotal September 1830 conference held at the Peter Whitmer home in Fayette, New York. Neutralizing Hiram Page's spurious revelations on the "up building of Zion," which presumably gave his version of the promised Zion's location, ¹⁰ Smith received several of his own that mixed the themes of the last days, the destiny of the Native American, and the promised New Jerusalem. One of these revelations spoke of the need of the faithful to gather "unto one place upon the face of the land." While the precise site of this gathering place was not then told, another revelation suggested it would be "on the borders by the Lamanites," or near the western Missouri state line. To this region, Smith sent leading elders Oliver Cowdery, Parley Pratt, Peter Whitmer, Jr., and Ziba Peterson to preach to the natives.¹¹

⁸ Orson Pratt, *Divine Authority, Or the Question, Was Joseph Smith Sent of God?* (Liverpool: R James, 1848), p 11.

⁹ In Underwood, "Book of Mormon Usage,"⁴³

¹⁰ *History of the Church*, 1:109-10, 118; Joseph Fielding Smith, *Church History and Modern Revelation*, Series 1 (Salt Lake City Quorum of Twelve Apostles, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1947), 125; and Bruce G. Stewart, "Hiram Page An Historical and Sociological Analysis of an Early Mormon Prototype" (MA thesis, Brigham Young University, 1987), 122- 23.

¹¹ Book of Commandments XXX:8-9 (D&C 28:8-9); XXXII :1-3 (D&C 30:5-6); and *Times*

Millennial fever ran high among the little New York congregation. Several women worked to clothe the missionary band; this was "no easy task" since much had to be fashioned from raw and unprocessed material. Going beyond her strength, Emma=2 OSmith, Joseph's wife, fell ill with "heavy sickness."¹² The Lamanite missionaries were as dutiful. They entered into formal covenants of cooperation that defined the enterprise. "I, Oliver [Cowdery]," said one of these formal agreements, was "commanded of the Lord God to go forth unto the Lamanites to proclaim glad tidings of great joy. ..., and also to rear up a pillar as a witness where the temple of God shall be built in the glorious New Jerusalem."¹³

No spot in the United States suited the twin purposes of Cowdery's covenant as well as western Missouri. After the purchase of Louisiana and especially the War of 1812, many Americans wanted the Native American cleared from all lands east of the Mississippi River and placed in a "Permanent Indian Frontier," west and southwest of the Missouri state border. President James Monroe laid the matter before Congress in 1825; and in the decade following, the U.S. Government began the step-by-step relocation of many eastern bands to present-day Kansas and Oklahoma. The Indian Removal Bill, enacted six weeks after the establishment of Mormonism in May 1830, sought to complete the process. Its provisions called for the Indians still living east of the "Father of Waters" to take up new homes in the new Indian territory.¹⁴ Thus, even as the Lamanite missionaries set out on

and Seasons 4 (15 April 1843): 172 (D&C 32:2-3). As a further indication of the temper of the conference, Smith read Isaiah 5, which in his interpretative eyes revealed Israel's latter-day gathering, when "an ensign to the nations" should be lifted. "Minutes of the Second Conference held by the Elders of This Church, 26 September 1830," in *Far West Record: Minutes of Jbe Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint, 1830-1844*, edited by Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook (Salt Lake City Deseret Book Company, 1983), 3. ¹² Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches o/Joseph Smith* (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1853), 169.

¹³ Letter of Ezra Booth to Rev. Ira Eddy, 24 November 1831, *Ohio Star* (Ravenna), 8 December 1831; Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (chronology of typed entries and newspaper clippings, 1830-present), October 1830, 6, Historical Department Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter LDS Church Archives).

¹⁴ Warren A Jennings, "Isaac McCoy and the Mormons," *Missouri Historical Review* 61 (October 1966): 62-64 For a treatment of the broader episode, see Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy in the Formative Years: Jbe Indian Trade and Intercourse Acts 1790- 1834* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962)

their journey, government persuasion and intimidation were placing large numbers of Indians just beyond the western Missouri border.

The history of that tiny missionary band is now saga. En route to their destination, the missionaries preached in the Western Reserve and reaped a bounteous harvest of converts in and about Kirtland, Ohio not of red but of white people who dramatically changed the flow of LDS history. Their conversions at Kirtland clearly were the most important preaching success of the new church, but the missionaries saw only a diversion. Rather than remaining in the area and extending their remarkable work, Cowdery's group impatiently pushed on despite the closing in of winter. They were on the Lord's errand.

Parley Pratt's matter-of-fact account suggests their zeal. Trudging through scantily peopled and roadless places, he recalled "the bleak northwest wind always blowing in our faces." The missionaries traveled day after day, from sunrise to sunset, sometimes wading in snow to their knees. On their backs they carried their clothing, books, and provisions. "We often ate our frozen bread and pork by the way," Pratt remembered, "when the bread would be so frozen that we could not bite or penetrate any part of it but the outside crust."¹⁵

Behind them in Ohio, Cowdery's troop left a people spiritually charged in their own image. The more enthusiastic of the new converts gave way to the excesses of frontier revivalism. Some adolescents recited visions of the New Jerusalem and carried their ecstasy to include the Native American.

They spoke in supposed Indian dialects, gave Indian chants, or imitated Indian "maneuvers," such as wielding an imaginary sword of Laban, a Book of Mormon relic. Still others reported the natives' yearning for baptism, pretended to preach to them, and even plunged themselves into the neighborhood's icy streams in an imagined immersion of their visionary converts. ¹⁶ These acts reflected the prevailing view of Cowdery and his mission.

¹⁵ *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1985), 40.

¹⁶ Ezra Booth, "Letter III," in Eber B. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled* (Painesville, Ohio: By the Author, 1834), 184-85, 104-105, 126; John Whitmer, *An Early Latter Day Saint History: [The Book of John Whitmer]*, edited by F. Mark McKiernan and Roger D Launius (Independence Herald Publishing House, 1980), 62; John Corrill, *A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints* (St. Louis: Printed for the Author, 1839), 16; Josiah Jones, "History of Mormonites," *Evangelist* 9 (1 June 1841): 134-36; Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, "Autobiography," 194, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah

"He proclaims destruction upon the world in a few years," the Painesville *Telegraph* reported. "We understand that he is bound for the regions beyond the Mississippi, where he contemplates founding a 'City of Refuge' for his followers, and converting the Indians, under his prophetic authority." Cowdery also reportedly spoke of an about-to-rise Indian prophet, who would bring these events to pass.¹⁷

At least in terms of Lamanite converts, not much came from the Cowdery mission, which grew to five members with the addition of Frederick G. Williams, an Ohio convert. Preaching mainly to the Shawnees and the recently transplanted Delawares, the Mormons described a growing warmth to their message that Richard W. Cummins, the dour U.S. agent to the Shawnees and Delawares, ordered stopped "*instanter*," to use the formal Latin of the law. The Mormons were commanded to go "eastward into Missouri or westward to the Leavenworth guard house."¹⁸ Whatever his manner, Cummins was within his rights: Cowdery and his companions did not have the necessary license to teach or reside among the Indians.

The agent's report to his superiors gave a glimpse of the spirit and program of the missionaries. "They say they are sent by God and must proceed," wrote Cummins. They have a new Revelation with them, as there Guide in teaching the Indians, which they say was shown to one of their Sect in a miraculous way, and that an Angel from Heaven appeared to one of their Men and two others of their Sect, and shewed them that the work was from God, and much more &c. I have refused to let them stay or, or go among the Indian unless they first obtain permission from you, or some of the officers of the Genl. Government who I am bound to obey. I am informed that they intend to apply to you for permission to go among the Indians, if you refuse, then they will go to the Rocky Mountains, but that they will be with the Indians. The Men act very strange. 19

¹⁷*Telegraph* (Painesville, Ohio), 16 and 30 November 1830,³ Also see *Ohio Star* (Ravenna, Ohio), 9 December 1830 and Cornill, *Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints*, 6.

¹⁸ John C. McCoy in *Kansas City Journal*, 26 January 1879 and 18 January 1885, quoted in Warren A. Jennings, "The First Mormon Mission to the Indians," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 37 (Autumn 1971) 296-97. For Mormon descriptions of their mission, Letter of Oliver Cowdery, quoted in Joseph Smith to Hyrum Smith, 3 March 1831, *Jbe Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 230-31; and *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, 41-44

¹⁹ Cummins to Clark, 20 January 1831, Papers of St. Louis Superintendency, Bureau of Indian Affairs Microfilm For another contemporary view of the Mormon mission, see "Statement of Isaac McCoy," *Missouri Republican* (Fayette), 20 December 1833, Dale L. Morgan, Clipping File, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as Morgan File)

It has become a frequent historiographical argument that the failure of the Cowdery mission ended the heady excitement about the Indian. True, Joseph Smith, now in Ohio, reined in the unregulated Kirtland charisma that focused on the Indian.²⁰ But the hope of Indian destiny and Zion remained unabated in the Mormon mind. These themes, it was later recalled, were "the most important subject [s] which then engrossed the attention of the Church."²¹ In March 1831 Smith issued an Isaiah-sounding revelation that again set Lamanite Jacob and the New Jerusalem in a grand final-days design. The Native American would "flourish in the wilderness" and "blossom as the rose," it promised, as the future Zion rejoiced upon the "hills" and "mountains."²²

Four months later, the importance of the matter summoned Smith himself to the western Missouri border where he learned that Zion's "center place" lay in Jackson County on a lot to the west "not far from the court-house."²³ But this new revelation said nothing about outer metes and bounds. As early as 1831, the Mormons spoke of an expansive Zion, stretching from Kirtland far into the west to the Pacific shore²⁴ Cummins, the Indian agent, was quick to note the strange interest of Cowdery's mission in being in the Rocky Mountains "with the Indians," while rumors back in Kirtland claimed the missionaries wanted to go to the "base of the Rocky Mountains."²⁵

Smith's 1831 tour also mingled western and Indian themes. Undertaken with an ardor similar to that of Cowdery's mission the year previous²⁶ the Prophet's party formally dedicated the New Jerusalem site by reading the 87th Psalm. "His foundation is in the holy mountains," it began. "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob."²⁷ But there

20 Book of Commandments LIII:1-32 (D&C 50:1-36); see also XUII:3-7 (D&C 41:2-7); XUX:23 (D&C 46:27); and UV:I4-19 (52:14-19); *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, 48 No doubt Smith at least partly had in mind Kirtland's spiritual excesses when, after first arriving in Ohio, he lamented "the devil has made many attempts to over throw" the work, a thrust that Smith labored to counteract. Joseph Smith to Hyrum Smith, 3 March 1831, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 230.

21 *History of the Church*, 1: 182.

22 Book of Commandments UI:22-26 (D&C 49:23-25).

23 Doctrine of Covenants 11835] XXVII:1 (D&C 57:3).

24 *Telegraph* (Painesville, Ohio), 18 January 1831, 3; Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 111; and *Ohio Star* (Ravenna), 27 January 1831, Morgan File.

25 *Telegraph* (Painesville, Ohio), 29 March 1831, 2, Morgan File

26 *Telegraph* (Painesville, Ohio), 14 June 1831, 3, Morgan File; Andrew Cahoon, *Diary*, 4 August 1831, LOS Church Archives

27 Psalm 87: 1-2; *History of the Church*, 1199

were more than dim references that Smith and his friends might have taken as allusions for the American West and the Indian. Smith gave a revelation requiring Sidney Gilbert to open a store in western Missouri that would allow "clerks employed in his service" to go unto the Lamanites and "thus the gospel may be preached unto them."²⁸ He also issued a confidential revelation that presaged the introduction of plural marriage. This latter statement promised that the elders would intermarry with the native women, making the red man's posterity "white, delightful, and just."²⁹

With the government still restraining Mormon activity in the Indian territory, these 1831 revelations were either altered or unpublished to conceal their Indian content and the implicit Mormon interest in the area west of Missouri. But enough was publicly said by Smith's party to prick Missouri ears. "The Mormonites are about to take the country," wrote one alarmed citizen, who obviously had heard something about the Mormon notice of the Far West. "They are preaching and baptizing, through the country, [and] are trying to proceed west to find the New Jerusalem which they say is towards the rocky mountains."³⁰

Suddenly a half dozen splintered and isolated pieces of the early Mormon picture merge and come into focus. The location of the Jackson County New Jerusalem had part of its logic connected with the nearby native tribesmen. But the new city also had geographical and eschatological meaning. To the east, it looked for gentile sheaves-European and American converts. The north would bring the returning Lost Tribes,³¹ while the West

²⁸ Kirtland Revelation Book, Revelation Given in Zion, July 1831, Verses 9b and 10, LDS Church Archives; compare D&C 57:8-9; Ezra Booth, Letter IX, in Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 220.

²⁹ "Revelation given west of Jackson County, Missouri, 17 July 1831," in W. W. Phelps to Brigham Young, 12 August 1861, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives; Thomas Bullock Minutes, "Council in Office," Nauvoo, Illinois, 27 February 1845, LDS Church Archives; Ezra Booth, Letter IX, in Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 220; and William Clayton, *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton*, edited by George D. Smith (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in Association with Smith Research Associates, 1991), xxvi.

³⁰ Delilah Lykins to John and Christiana Polke Mc Coy, 31 July 1831, cited in Warren A. Jennings, "Isaac McCoy and the Mormons," *Missouri Historical Review* 61 (October 1966):65.

³¹ D&C 110: 11; 133:26. Smith held that the American continent would be the gathering place for many of the Lost or Ten Tribes, Smith to N. C. Saxton, 4 January 1833, in *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 273. A variety of sources suggests that this belief was very much a part of the early Mormon mind. See "Intel View of David Whitmer," *Chicago Times*, 17 October 1881; Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 127-28; and Booth, Letter III, in *ibid.*, 185-86.

would gather the Indian remnant that had been seen and hoped for from the Church's beginning. In this program, Smith's millenarian promises of the Lamanite Jacob prospering in the "wilderness" and Zion thriving on the "hills" and "mountains" were more than allegorical flourishes. They whispered of the mountainous American West as one of the future areas of Mormon Indian activity.³²

This message, even similar words, continued among the Mormons in the Western Reserve during the 1830s. Reynolds Calhoun recalled Smith speaking in 1831 about the Lamanite destiny and the coming "great events," when the nations of the earth would tremble.³³ Mormon men freely talked of being "endowed from on high" so that they could minister to the Native Americans in the West.³⁴ Then there were Kirtland's patriarchal blessings. Some of these promised women the chance to teach "the daughters of the Lamanites" in both "the principles of righteousness" and in domestic arts. Men in turn were told of their forthcoming missions to the Natives.³⁵ Cowdery's blessing, which was given by Joseph Smith, Jr., used the images of the March 1831 revelation regarding Lamanite destiny: "Blessed upon the mountains shall his feet be," it said. Moreover, "the blessings of the lasting hills" would be his.³⁶

During an 1837 Kirtland fast and testimony meeting, Jonathan Dunham may have been startled to hear a detailed prophecy of a predicted mission

32 Book of Commandments *III*:25-26 (D&C 49:24-25).

33 High Priests Minutes, 1856-1876," 7 June 1854, Salt Lake Stake, *IDS* Church Archives

34 James Patterson Henderson, Letter to Reverend M. Henderson, 2 February 1832, James Patterson Henderson Collection, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

35 Women: Patriarchal Blessing of Flora Jacobs, 13 June 1837, by Joseph Smith, Sr., William Smith Patriarchal Blessing Book, 177-78, Historical Library, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Independence (hereafter *RIDS* Church Archives); and Patriarchal Blessing of Olive Boynton Hale, 10 November 1836, by Joseph Smith, Sr, in "Journal of Jonathan H. Hale, 1800-1840," *IDS* Church Archives. Men: Patriarchal Blessing of Abel Butterfield, 8 December 1836, by Joseph Smith, Sr., William Smith Patriarchal Blessing Book; Patriarchal Blessing of Amos B. Fuller, 17 June 1836, by Joseph Smith, Sr, typescript in my possession Most recorded Mormon blessings are housed in the *IDS* Archives and are not available to research Therefore only limited conclusions about the timing and Indian content of the Kirtland blessings can be made, though surviving documents were given toward the end of Mormon era in the township, 1836-37.

36 Blessing Upon Oliver Cowdery," 18 December 1833, Patriarchal Blessing Book 1, 12, *LDS* Church Archives No doubt part of the imagery derived from the blessing of the Old Testament Jacob on the posterity of Joseph, Genesis 49:26. Several Mormons came to regard the American Rockies as synonymous with the blessings promised to Joseph of Egypt.

to the Indians in Canada. "Thou art called to do a great work amongst the Lamanites," he was told, "for the time has come when the Gospel, yes the fulness of the Gospel must be preached to the Lamanites."³⁷ About this time, Peter Shirts, later a southern Utah Indian missionary, testified to a vision given to him of his future Native American labor, which Church leaders Sidney Rigdon, John Smith, and Joseph Smith affirmed by a formal blessing and vocal witnessing. He was advised that "much [Indian work] was required at his hand."³⁸

More than prediction and prophesying, there were actual preaching calls. John P. Greene, Amos R Orton, Lorenzo and Phineas Young were each formally designated as Lamanite missionaries, though at least Greene's assignment was deferred until "after others have unlocked the door."³⁹ This proviso apparently referred to Brigham Young's forthcoming call several months later to "preach the Gospel and open the door of salvation to the aborigines, or the seed of Joseph." More than a regular preaching commission, Young later insisted Smith had given him authority to direct the latter-day redemption of the Lamanites.⁴⁰

Clearly the failure of the Cowdery mission had not spent the Mormon zeal for the Indian. Moreover, during the 1830s, the Kirtland air wafted with continued allusions to the Far West. Erastus Snow was told at this time he "should yet be employed in the ministry west of the Rocky Mountains" where he would perform a "good work in teaching and leading the Lamanites."⁴¹ When Lorenzo Dow Young, Brigham's brother, lay close to death, the spiritually wrought Hyrum Smith gave a health blessing full of prophecy.

³⁷ Blessing of 15 July 1837, Kirtland, Ohio, in Jonathan Dunham Paper, *LDS Church Archives*.

³⁸ Recorded in Thomas Dunlop Brown, *Diary*, 13 May 1854, *LDS Church Archives*.

³⁹ Blessing of Those Who Assisted in Building the House of the Lord," 7 and 8 March 1835, *History of the Church*, 2207-8.

⁴⁰ Brigham Young Manuscript History, 2 May 1835, *Mi//ennia/Star* 25 (18 July 1863); Council in Office, 27 February 1845, Bullock's Minutes of Meetings, *LDS Archives*; Meeting of the Council of the First Presidency and Twelve, 29 December 1847, Bullock's Minutes of Meetings, 1847, *LDS Church Archives*; and Brigham Young, Meeting at the Ephraim Meeting House, 24 (?) June 1875, Minutes of Meetings, 1848-52, *LDS Church Archives* Brigham Young's possible appointment had been discussed two months earlier, and in May the Twelve Apostles voted to give Young this assignment as a delegated part of their own duty Ronald K Esplin, "The Emergence of Brigham Young and the Twelve to Mormon Leadership, 1830-1841" (PhD diss. Brigham Young University, 1981), 162

⁴¹ Joseph W. Olsen, "History of Er astus Snow" (MA thesis, Brigham Young University, 1935), 16-17

Young would "live to go with the Saints into the bosom of the Rocky Mountains to build up a place there," the brother of the Prop het forecast.⁴² On another occasion, Sister Heman Hyde interpreted a flow of tongue- speaking, This talk, she explained, was about some of the Saints going to the Rocky Mountains.⁴³ Joseph Smith himself was the likely fountainhead for these whispers. During the Kirtland era, Wilford Woodruff recalled his speaking of "tens of thousands of saints" settling in the western mountains,⁴⁴

These statements, typical of the Mormons of northeastern Ohio, flowed as easily in western Missouri, as members of the new faith began to settle in the area after Joseph Smith's 1831 tour. Paulina E. Phelps, whose family was among the first recruits, remembered Joseph Smith, Jr., blessing her when visiting the area the following year. Told she would go to the Rocky Mountains in her lifetime, the young girl became alarmed. "I did not know at the time what the term 'Rocky Mountains' meant," she later said, "but I supposed it to be something connected with the Indians." Her fear of the Native American froze the event in her mind.⁴⁵

Some of the Mormon Indian interest in Missouri lay in the public domain, The Church's periodical, *the Evening and the Morning Star*, printed numerous pieces about the Native Americans, provided the text of Smith's several revelations regarding them, and rhapsodized how these pieces fit into the latter-day prophetic mosaic. "What beauty to see prophecies fulfilled so exactly," wrote editor W. W. Phelps. In his eyes, the government's Indian resettlement policy was a "marvelous," now-at-hand reality of the old predictions that the Indians were to be gathered. Phelps believed federal agents were acting as "nursing fathers unto. ..[their Indian) children," as Book of Mormon prophecy had foretold. From all indication,

42 James Amasa Utde, "Biography of Lorenzo Dow Young," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 14 (1946): 46,

43 Discussion of the First Presidency and Council of Twelve, in Francis M Lyman Diary, 19 April 1894, 134; and Heber J Grant, Diary, 17 April 1894, both in LOS Church Archives.

44 Wilford Woodruff, Meeting of the Quorum of the Twelve and First Presidency, in Heber I J Grant, Diary, 17 April 1894, 74; "Wilford Woodruff," in Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint ! Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4 vols (Salt Lake City Andrew Jenson History Company, 1901-1936) 1:120-21

45 Affidavit, 31 July 1902, LOS Church Archives For this source and several others dealing with the Mormon fixation with the West, I am indebted to Lewis Clark Christian, "A Study of Mormon Knowledge of the American Far West Prior to the Exodus," (MA. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1972), 65; and Ronald K Esplin, "'A Place Prepared' Joseph, Brigham and the Quest for Promised Refuge," *Journal of Mormon History* 9 (1982) 85-111

the times of the gentiles were "short" and the promises to Jacob imminent. Something "great and good" lay in store for the benighted Lamanite, Phelps believed, as the red man's last days certainly would be his "best."⁴⁶

To his steady drum roll about the Indian and his destiny, Phelps added his view of the land west of the Missouri settlements, which he called the "Far West." Wasn't this, the editor wondered, the land of the covenant, where the Book of Mormon Jaredites and Nephites had once roamed before meeting their destruction? While the world would never prize the area because of its want of timber and mill seats, Deity had a different view. This land was Zion, he argued, the land of Joseph, the receptacle of "the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills." In a few sentences, Phelps wove together some of the images that Joseph Smith had been using when speaking of the western Zion and the soon-to-be redeemed Indian⁴⁷

Understandably, none of this talk set well with the Missourians. Already uneasy over the several thousand potentially hostile natives on their frontier, many angry over their forced relocation, old-line Missourians saw Phelps's articles and the underlying Book of Mormon prophecies on which they were based as provocative and menacing. Weren't the Mormons anxious to ally themselves with these dangerous red men? The reaction of the Missourians was not without cause. These hardy settlers of the border fully understood themselves to be counted among the imperiled "gentiles" spoken of in the Mormon revelations.

With prudence the Missouri Saints might have escaped the rolling tide of violence that finally washed over them. But these were men and women of the first generation, filled with apocalyptic fervor. Mormon historian B. H. Roberts viewed them without illusions. Some of the more reckless had boasted of the rise of the Lamanite and the triumph of their own cause in taking the Jackson County lands. These LDS settlers, Roberts thought, had been "overzealous" and "ignorant," betraying the "effervescence of over-

⁴⁶ *Evening and the Morning Star* 1 (December 1832): (54), (January 1833): 162]; 2 (June 1833)101; W. W. Phelps to Oliver Cowdery, 13 November 1834, Letter III, *Latter Day Saint Messenger and Advocate* 1 (1 December 1834): 33-34

⁴⁷ *Evening and the Morning Star* 1 (October 1832): 137] Phelps was citing Deuteronomy 33:13-17 The editor later would help select Mormon settlement sites in Daviess County and may have had a role in choosing the name of the region's most prominent town, Far West, thus giving another expression to his fascination with the western region

wrought minds."⁴⁸ Then there was Phelps's *Evening and Morning Star*, which had unwisely placed in plain print large parts of the Mormons' prophetic and easily misunderstood Indian agenda.

Joseph Smith grasped that many of his followers in Missouri had been unwise. From his Kirtland headquarters, he scored the "ignorant & unstable Sisters & weak members" who had caused the Missourians to believe the Mormons were "putting up the Indians to slay the Gentiles." Such talk Smith cautioned, endangered the lives of the Saints everywhere.⁴⁹ In a second letter, Smith renewed his stern caution. Nothing, he warned, would rouse Missouri fears more than wild talk about a Mormon-Indian alliance. ⁵⁰

These were not the only reproofs coming from Kirtland. When some Missouri Church members prophesied that "great things would be done" by Mormons among the Native Americans, who in turn would "fight for us," Frederick G. Williams, a member of the First Presidency, also sounded the alarm. "Though all this may be true," he advised in a letter, "yet, it is not needful that it should be spoken, for it ...has a tendency to stir up the (Missouri) people to anger."⁵¹ A formal revelation was as explicit: "Talk not of judgments, neither boast of faith nor of mighty works," counseled the Fishing River declaration (D&C 105:24).

These warnings had little effect first on the most enthusiastic among the Mormons but least of all on the Missourians. With each wave of persecution in the state, the old settlers charged the Mormons with "Indian tampering." During the 1833 Jackson County difficulty, reports spread that the Mormons were stirring sedition among the Indians.⁵² Other rumors had them taking their promised land by the sword -with Indian contrivance. According to Isaac McCoy, a Baptist missionary and long-time promoter of the Indian resettlement, the Mormons were "strongly suspected" of seeking aid during their Jackson County struggles from the natives across the border.⁵³ As matters climaxed, the fears of local settlers greatly increased.

⁴⁸ Introduction," *History of the Church*, 3:xxix-xlvii.

⁴⁹ Joseph Smith to W. W. Phelps, 31 July 1832, *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 247.

⁵⁰ "Smith to John Thorton, et al., 25 July 1836, *ibid.*, 2:458

⁵¹ Frederick G Williams to the Missouri Saints, 10 October 1833, *History of the Church*, 1:419.

⁵² Letter from Missouri, 28 June 1834, *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington, D.C.), 23 July 1834.

⁵³ Statement of Isaac McCoy," 28 November 1833, in *Missouri Republican* (St. Louis), 20 December 1833, reprinted from the *Western Monitor* (Fayette, Missouri) See also Jennings, "Isaac McCoy and the Mormons," 62-82

Word went out that the Mormons and the Indians were "colleagued together" and were about to attack Independence.⁵⁴

When pushed from the county, the Mormons were prevented from going either west or south their clear preference, which would have placed them within easy reach of the Indian Territory. Instead, the Jackson County committee demanded that they go north. "It can only be surmised that the motive behind this [decision] was fear," one scholar concluded, "fear that the Mormons might establish contact with the Indian tribes to the west,"⁵⁵

The Indian issue also played a role with the Clay County expulsion. The local grievance committee charged the newcomers "with keeping up a constant communication with the Indian tribes on our frontier, with declaring, even from the pulpit, that the Indians are a part of God's chosen people, and are destined, by heaven, to inherit this land, in common with themselves." With the nearby Indians restless, such sentiment, the committee complained, filled the citizens "with horror, if not alarm."⁵⁶ Daniel Dunklin washed his hands of the dispute by invoking *vox populi, vox Dei*. "Your neighbors accuse your people of holding illicit communication with the Indians, and of being opposed to slavery," he wrote to Mormon leaders. They "seem to believe it true; and whether true or false, the consequences will be the same."⁵⁷ Dunklin's unhappy verdict was true. Given the high state of Missouri emotion, the usual application of the law was impossible.

As the Missouri turmoil reached its crescendo in 1838, the charges against the Mormons became more precise. The Mormons had secretly placed twelve men among the western tribesmen, said one. Another claimed that Joseph Smith boasted of having fourteen thousand men- presumably Native American warriors-ready to answer his command. ⁵⁸ These and other accusations usually had their direct or indirect origin in what the Missourians believed were the frightful implications of Book of

⁵⁴ *History of the Church*, 1:431; Parley p. Pratt, *History of the Late Persecution Inflicted by the State of Missouri upon the Mormons* (Detroit Dawson & Bates, Printers, 1839), 18

⁵⁵ Warren A Jennings, "The Expulsion of the Mormons from Jackson County, Missouri... *Missouri Historical Review* 64 (October 1960): 56

⁵⁶ *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* 2 (August 1836) 354

⁵⁷ Daniel Dunklin 10 W W Phelps, el ai, 18 July 1836, in *History of the Church*, 2461-62 68

⁵⁸ Affidavit of John N Sapp, 4 September 1838, and Affidavit of Nathan Marsh, in Daniel Ashby, el al Lilburn W Boggs, I September 1838, in Missouri State Department, Document Containing the *Correspondence, Orders, &c in Relation to the Disturbances with the Mormons* (Fayette, Missouri Office of The Boon's Lick Democrat, 1841), 15-17

Mormon prophecy. "Their writings teach," insisted a Missourian, "that the Indians are to embrace Mormonism, and are to be among the *Gentiles* like a lion -are to lift up their hand against our citizens, and cut them off, and repossess the land -and all who do not embrace Mormonism are to be cut off." In short, the Mormons, it was feared, meant to bring on the Millennium "with a vengeance [a] war to the knife."⁵⁹

Missourians claimed that during various stages of their "war" with the new settlers, the Saints took spiritual refuge in their millennial belief. "It was a very common source of rejoicing among all classes [of Saints]," said one, "that the time had arrived when all the wicked should be destroyed from the face of the earth, and that the Indians should be the principal means by which this object should be accomplished." ⁶⁰ As the turmoil grew, the Missourians said the Saints looked for deliverance at the hands of the American Natives, who would be joined and empowered by an apocalyptic "Flying Angel."⁶¹

The truth of these feverish and probably exaggerated rumors will never be fully known. At the very least, the Mormons likely had built quiet ties with the close-by natives, attempting to walk the thin line of being true to their scriptural tenets while at the same time trying to avoid offense to the nervous Missourians. As previously seen, merchant Sidney Gilbert and his clerks received such a confidential preaching mission at the start of the Jackson County settlement: The duty of the "Lord's Storehouse" included native proselyting. In addition, more direct efforts at Indian preaching and converting were probably undertaken as well.

Several slender pieces of evidence from Mormon sources remain. In 1833 members of at least one of the Jackson County congregations predicted that LDS

⁵⁹ Correspondent writing in the *Baptist Ad-ve*, reprinted in the *Evangelist* 9 (1 May 1841): 112-13 An anti-Mormon tract issued after the Saints' expulsion from Missouri ineluctably found itself drawn to the same scriptural passage James Henry Hunt, *Mormonism; Embracing the Origin, Rise and Progress of the Sect, with an Examination of the Book of Mormon, Also Their Troubles in Missouri, and Final Expulsion from the State* (St Louis Unstick and Davies, 1844), 134

⁶⁰ Affidavit of Nathan Marsh, in *Document Containing the Correspondence*, 16

⁶¹ Ibid Compare *Niles' Weekly Register* (Washington, DC.), 14 September 1833 If these rumors about Mormon belief were true, the "Flying Angel" may have been the harbinger of the apocalypse spoken of in biblical and Mormon scripture (Rev 146; D&C 13336) These motifs are also present in Smith's revelation, given 24 February 1834, asserting that the redemption of Zion "needs come by power" and promises "mine angel shall go up before you" (D&C 10315-19)

"representatives" would soon be sent among the various bands of the Indians, who then would perform "great things." Whether actual deeds followed these predictions is unclear.⁶² The Indian Territory, however, did have one identifiably Mormon outpost. During the late 1830s, a mixed branch of Sac, Fox, and Kickapoo Indians known as "Mormon Indians" lived north of Fort Leavenworth. Proselyted in Ohio or Indiana prior to their removal to the Indian territory, these Indians had contact with the Missouri Saints and were the inspiration for Phelps's poem, "O Stop and Tell Me, Red Man," which was placed in the Church's first collection of hymns.⁶³ But evangelizing the Indian and inciting rebellion were two different things. The Saints strongly denied the latter, and most historians have taken them at their word.⁶⁴ "The Mormon saw himself as a harbinger of millennial disaster," Warren Jennings wrote, "and not as an instrument of vengeance ! in the hands of God." ⁶⁵ The Saints were eager to prove the point. When state officials called out the state militia in 1838 to meet a supposed Indian attack, the Mormon ranks in Caldwell County were quickly oversubscribed, "proving to the state," argued one Church member, "that we are ready to suppress foreign invasion as well as internal mobs."⁶⁶ Indeed, the Mormons proclaimed their willingness to defend the region against the "barbarous savages." ⁶⁷

While the Saints were content to preach to the Indian and allow the

62 Frederick G. Williams to the Missouri Saints, 10 October 1833, *History of the Church*, 1:419.

63 James Stapleton Lewis, *Journal and Autobiography*, Books 2-4, 18-19, 36, LDS Church Archives. The initial contact with these Indians was in 1832, apparently in Ohio or Indiana. "Their humility surpassed anything I have ever seen before or since," said Lewis, who was one of the Mormon missionaries.

64 In addition to Warren A Jennings, "Zion Is Fled The Expul sion of the Mormons from Jackson County, Missouri" (phD diss., University of Florida, 1962), see Stephen C. leSueur, *The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987), 71; and B H. Roberts in *History of the Church*, 3:46. The "Fishing River" revelation, 22 June 1834, firmly instructed the Saints to adopt a peaceful course, while suggesting that the "Destroyer," perhaps the Native Americans of the region, would perform a more militant duty (D&C 105:14-15)

65 Jennings, "Zion Is Fled," 305

66 6 October 1838, "The Last Months of Mormonism in Missouri The Albert Perry Rockwood Journal," edited by Dean C Jessee and David J Whitaker, *Brigham Young University Studies* 28 (Winter 1988): 20.

67 "Minutes of a Public Meeting in Clay County, Missouri," 1 July 1836, *History of the Church*, 2453; compare "Memorandum of Agreement," 23 July 1833, *ibid* 1414.

providential hand to bring the cataclysm, the Missouri old timers failed to see the distinction. "It is generally thought that we shall have war with the Mormons & Indians both," one settler wrote during the final stages of the Missouri conflict. Another had the two parties joined as allies, believing that one or two tribes were about to enroll in Smith's cause.⁶⁸ When Governor Lilburn W. Boggs called out the Missouri militia at the end of August 1838, he noted "Indian disturbances on our immediate frontier" as well as the alleged "civil disturbances" in Mormon Caldwell, Daviess, and Carroll counties.⁶⁹ If the two were not directly related, they stood side by side in the Missouri mind.

The same juxtaposition still held two months later. Boggs's exterminating order placed five hundred men between the fleeing Mormons and the Indians, which brought a later comment from Brigham Young. Ever since the Cowdery mission, Young argued, the Mormons had tried to preach to the Indians. Now, in the final act of the Missouri drama, the governor had moved to prevent this or any other kind of contact.⁷⁰

Looking back on their experience, the Saints understood that Indian relations had played a role in their turmoil. When reviewing the causes of their "persecution," Parley Pratt listed Indian relations among the half dozen most disturbing factors. We were "guilty of believing in the present Government administration of Indian affairs," Pratt remarked. To Pratt and most other Mormons, the government's "Permanent Indian Territory" and its policy of gathering were ideally suited to Mormon purposes, however much Missourians feared, and disliked having the Indians close.⁷¹

The Mormons also understood that several Indian agents and missionaries in Indian Territory had opposed them. This certainly had been another factor in their expulsion. General Clark identified in Mormon records as an Indian subagent serving in Kansas supposedly rode from his

⁶⁸ E. A. Lambkin, Letter to Maj Thomas G. Bradford, 8 September 1838, Bradford Correspondence and Eli Haigler, Letter to Parents, Sister, and Brothers, 19 September 1838, in *Franklin County Tribune*, 24 March 1922, both cited in LeSueur, *The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri*, 72.

⁶⁹ B M Lisle, Adjutant-General, Letter to David R. Atchison, 30 August 1838, in *History of the Church*, 365

⁷⁰ Lilburn W. Boggs, Letter to General Clark, 27 October 1838, in *History of the Church*, 3:175; Brigham Young, 2 December 1847, Meeting at the Winter Quarters Council House, Bullock's Minutes of Meetings, 1847, LOS Church Archives.

⁷¹ Pratt, *History of the Late Persecution*, 25.

station to encourage the Jackson County depredations.⁷² Likewise, R. W. Cummins, Cowdery's 1831 opponent, signed the Jackson County anti-Mormon manifesto, while Baptist missionary Isaac McCoy was believed to have led one of the three anti-Mormon companies in 1833.⁷³

But the reasons for the Missouri difficulty ran deeper than government policy or the acts of agents and clergymen. Profound social and cultural differences had separated the two peoples; and within this division, the Mormons' apocalyptic Indian views had stirred continuing and deep animosity. If the question of the Indian's role in the final days had been a major factor in summoning the Saints to Missouri and in the successive persecutions there, it also was an important irritant in their expulsion.

Even before the Church left the state, Joseph Smith was looking at the trans-plains region once again. According to Lewis C. Christian and Ronald K. Esplin, while still in Missouri Smith may have gathered maps of the western region, hoped to dispatch an exploring party there, and reaffirmed his interest in the project while confined in Liberty Jail.⁷⁴ He wished, it was later said, "to find a location west of the rocky mountains."⁷⁵ During this period, Brigham Young also had the West on his mind. "I had a vision," the leader of the Missouri exodus recollected, "and saw that the people would go to the east, to the north, and [then] to the west, but we should go back to Jackson County from the west." For Young and several other Church leaders, if their later recollections can be trusted, Nauvoo was a detour.⁷⁶

At first the Indian lay at the root of this fixation with the West. The western region promised to be a bounteous field for Native American preaching, beyond the Indian agent-infested area across the Missouri border. Several

⁷²Whitmer, *An Early Latter Day Saint History*, 92 This individual possibly was John B. Clark, who led the "exterminating" militia against the Mormons in 1838.

⁷³Cummins in *History of the Church*, 1:376; McCoy in Pratt, *History of the Late Persecution*, 21; *History of the Church*, 1372,391-92; and Jennings, "Isaac McCoy and the Mormons," 62- 82 The latter argues that the missionary's course was more moderate than that portrayed in Mormon sources.

⁷⁴Lewis Clark Christian, "Mormon Foreknowledge of the West," *Brigham Young University Studies* 21 (Fall 1981) 405; Esplin, "'A Place Prepared,'" 89

⁷⁵Orson Pratt quoted in Willard Richards, *Journal*, 26 April 1846, John D lee, *Journal*, same date, both in LOS Church Archives

⁷⁶Brigham Young, II December 1864, *Journal of Discourses* 27 vols (London and Liverpool LOS Book Depot, 1853-86) 1117 Similar comments were made by Heber C Kimball and Joseph Smith, Sr; see *President Heber c. Kimball's journal* (Salt Lake City juvenile Instructor's Office, 1882),77-78; and Oliver B Huntington, *Diary*, 221C, Special Collections, lee library

Patriarchal blessings given in Missouri confined the idea. "Thou shalt become a hunter among the mountains of the West," said one, "and thy steps betrodde upon the banks of the Pacific to seek and to hunt out the long dispersed people."⁷⁷ These promises did not necessarily mean that Zion's center place would be moved to the Rocky Mountains. As Orson Pratt later explained, the early Church leaders understood that "revolutions" regarding the Lamanite would take place. But these things could be achieved by traveling missionaries, while their families remained in the eastern United States among "the strongholds of the gentiles."⁷⁸

The difficulties of Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois altered this view. Instead of serving as a field for Lamanite conversion or peopling one of Zion's outlying "stakes" of settlement, the West -somewhere beyond the Missouri border and near the mountains of Ephraim -beckoned more and more as a place of refuge where the larger part of the Saints might gather. Here Church members would be near bellicose Jacob, who in turn would shield the righteous from the persecuting but soon-to-be-consume gentile. This concept, millennial in expectation and Book of Mormon in origin, helped to shape the next several decades of the latter-day Saint experience.

Isaac Russell, a Canadian convert and one of Mormonism's most stalwart early missionaries in Great Britain, was the first to act on the blueprint. Disillusioned by the Missouri expulsion and sensing the closeness of the end, Russell in 1839 secretly wrote to the members of the Alston Branch in northwest England, many of whom he had baptized. The Native Americans must "now to be visited by the gospel," he insisted. Their redemption had "come," as the gentiles would soon be cut off. Believing the Missouri disaster to be a sign of Church members' lack of worthiness, Russell hoped to lead a small band of true disciples into the "wilderness," where red and white men could prepare "a city of Peace, a place of Refuge." This Zion, Russell claimed, would be protected during the "time of indignation" when the Native American redeemed "all this land."⁷⁹

Russell did more than write a letter. He apparently led a group of recent immigrants west from Louisiana in an unsuccessful attempt to raise

⁷⁷ Blessing of Perregrine Sessions, 7 January 1838, given by Isaac Morley at Far West, Caldwell County, Missouri, in *Diaries of Perregrine Sessions* (Bountiful, Utah: Carr Printing Co, 1967), 36B Such wording and promises were not unusual in the Missouri period.

⁷⁸ Remarks, 1 August 1847, in William Clayton, *An Intimate Chronicle*, 372.

⁷⁹ Russell, Letter to the Alston Branch, 30 January 1839, quoted in Willard Richards, Letter to Joseph Fielding and William Clayton, 26 November 1845, LOS Church Archives.

hoped-for Indian colony.⁸⁰ His misadventures cost him his membership but not the long-term disapproval of Joseph Smith or William Law, a counselor in the First Presidency, who saw Russell's infraction as misdirected eagerness. "Read the Book of Mormon and you will find that Joseph (Smith) has not fallen," Law implored Russell, "he has not done his work yet." Russell was invited to return to the body of the Church. "You would be received here with open arms," Law promised, "were you to come back."⁸¹

Over the course of the next several years, Russell was followed by several like-minded enthusiasts, whose Indian sympathy and millenarian Book of Mormon views drove them to private and unauthorized acts. Joseph Smith, on the other hand, while fully cognizant that "he had not done his work yet" with the Lamanite, was more cautious - constrained by the rod of the Missouri persecution. In his view, the Church must avoid another such debacle, even while attempting somehow to fulfill its obligation.

Clearly the matter concerned him. Extricating himself from Missouri, he boarded with a Mormon family near Quincy, Illinois, for a day or two. "I have had a revelation with regard to you," he told one of the family's sons. "God has shown to me that you have got to go among the Lamanites." When this individual came to breakfast the next day ready for an Indian preaching tour, Smith had to explain, "It is not time now but after awhile your work is with them."⁸² For the Mormon leader, it was a question of timing and proper opportunity.

More than a dozen of his followers later said that Smith spoke similar things to them during the Church's stay in Nauvoo, Illinois. But the Mormon leader did more than predict future events. Perhaps for the first time since his 1831 trip to Missouri, Smith had the chance to meet Native Americans first hand. One of the most important of these encounters involved an Oneida Indian, who traveled several hundred miles to Illinois with his wife and daughter to visit the Mormons. The native styled himself as "an Interpreter of six tribes," whom he confidently predicted would "receive the work." He himself did, being "joyfully" baptized in May 1840. The unnamed Indian

⁸⁰ *History of the Church*, 3:226, 336.

⁸¹ William Law, Letter to Isaac Russell, 29 November 1840, Mary Jean Freebairn Papers, *IDS Church Archives*.

⁸² Oliver Boardman Huntington, *Diary and Reminiscences*, 129, Special Collections, Lee library

may have been Lewis Dana and his wife Mary Gont. During the next decade, the two were at the heart of the Mormons' Lamanite effort.⁸³

Freed from the fetters of Missouri and perhaps quickened by the Indians' conversion, Smith in 1840 began a series of Indian evangelizing efforts-usually confidentially, often omitting the details from official and even private records.⁸⁴ While some missionary work had already been done among the Indians still in the east, the attention now turned west. Among the first to go were John Lowe Butler and James Emmett, the latter having previously shown a zeal for the Lamanite while living in Missouri.⁸⁵ Venturing among the Sioux in probably southern Minnesota, Butler and Emmett re-ported only harrowing experiences: "They stole our horses and shot our cattle and came very near shooting us." Hoping for a better result, Joseph Smith called for the two missionaries to renew their efforts. While their second 1840 mission was less eventful, it proved no more fruitful than the first.⁸⁶

The Butler-Emmett mission failed, but something favorable to the Mormon cause was clearly happening. Wilford Woodruff, who was preaching in Great Britain, recorded encouraging news in his diary. "I am informed the Lamanites are beginning to embrace the work considerable," he penned.⁸⁷ Brigham Young, also in England, apparently heard the same rumor.

83 Wilford Woodruff, Diary, 13 July 1840, Woodruff Papers, LDS Archives; *Millennial Star* 1 (August 1840): 89; *Women's Exponent* 15 (May 1883), 1883; and William G. Hartley, *John Lowe Butler: History and Autobiography of a Mormon Frontiersman* (Provo: John Lowe Butler Family Organization, 1992), pp. 156--62. Mormon records usually use the spelling "Dana," but there are other variations such as "Denna," "Denny," and "Dany." He was born 1 January 1800, in Oneida County, New York, the son of Jonathan Dana. Missionary File, Historical

84 Most missionary Indian diaries are sparse to the point of omission. To cite one example, after Brigham Young received the "keys" to preach to the Indians in 1835, "we visited & preached to them [and] they believed it," he said several years later. "Council in office," 27 February 1845, Bullock's Minutes, Brigham Young Papers. Yet Young's diary at the time is silent on the episode.

85 Edward Stevenson, Autobiography, 63, LDS Church Archives.

86 John Butler, Autobiography, 21, Special Collections, Lee library. Butler gives the year 1842 for his missions, but Butler's biographer places the work two years earlier. *Hartley John Lowe Butler*, 156--62. Also see Phebe W. Woodruff to Wilford Woodruff, 4 May 1840, in *Millennial Star* (August 1940): 89-90.

87 Wilford Woodruff, Diary, 9 November 1840, Woodruff Papers, LOS Church Archives

He wrote to Joseph Smith wanting to know how "cousin Lemuel gets along with his business."⁸⁸

These veiled passages no doubt had reference to Jonathan Dunham's 1840 Indian mission. After receiving a blessing in mid-1837 promising him a "great work" with the Lamanites, Dunham filled several eastern missions, including work with the Brotherton, Oneida, Stockbridge, and Tuscarora nations, and apparently several others as well.⁸⁹ When not preaching, he had other Church-related assignments. In Kirtland he was made a member of the Second Quorum of Seventy, took a leading role in the migration of the Kirtland Camp to Missouri, and after the Mormon expulsion, found himself once more preaching in the East.⁹⁰

In May 1840 he returned to Nauvoo, where he recorded in his diary the conversion of an Oneida interpreter. "One Lamanite ordained and blessed by the Patriarch," he wrote. Ten days later, on 13 May without any explanation written in his journal, he "fixed to go to west." He was heading for the Indian Territory in present-day Kansas. By the first week of June, he was within a few miles of Fort Leavenworth, when he turned southeast about six miles to the lodge of Thomas Hendricks, "Chief of the Stock- bridges." With Hendricks away, he preached to the nearby Kickapoos and visited the Delaware headman Timothy Towsa. But his chief interest lay with Hendricks, who continued to be absent. After spending less than a week in the area, Dunham found it necessary to "go away into the woods," as word came that Indian agents wanted him out of the territory. But still he remained, secretly fed by the Stockbridge women.⁹¹

Nothing more is known about the details of Dunham's mission, for his diary abruptly breaks off at this point. But the missionary, and apparently his superiors, were well pleased with the result. Returning to Nauvoo, he was promptly dispatched with three other elders for a short mission to the Allegheny, Buffalo, Catteraugus, Onondaga, Oneida, Tonawanda, and Tuscarora people in the East. Writing to the Kirtland Saints, Dunham described this new assignment as "urgent indeed." For one thing, he wished to return to his "station" near Fort Leavenworth as soon as possible. But the larger

⁸⁸ Brigham Young, Letter to Joseph Smith, 7 May 1840, Joseph Smith Collection, LDS Church Archives.

⁸⁹ Blessing Given to Jonathan Dunham, 15 July 1837, and Missionary Diaries, 1837 and 1839, 1 Jonathan Dunham Papers, LOS Church Archives.

⁹⁰ Journal History, 20 December 1836, 9 April 1837, 13 March 1838, and 15 July 1838.

⁹¹ Dunham, Diary, 3 May-9 June 1840

reason lay with the rapid unfolding of events. "A new scene of things are about to transpire in the west, in fulfillment of prophecy," he wrote. He signed his letter, 'J Dunham Lamanite.'⁹²

En route to the eastern tribes, he stopped in Kirtland where he dispensed even stronger meat. The American nation was about to be destroyed, Dunham told friends, but a place of safety was being prepared for the Saints near the Rocky Mountains. These and some of Dunham's other millennial doctrines left the Kirtland community very much on edge. "Such teachings are not all understood in this place," wrote one member seeking clarification from Nauvoo authorities. "They are calculated to make excitement & what the consequences may be I am not able to say." The worried Kirtland correspondent of course had in mind the frequent and explosive anti-Mormon epithet of LDS "Indian tampering," which for him was more than a theoretical question. Dunham's letter had fallen into the hands of a Universalist minister, who after reading it was ready to believe the worst. The Mormons "ought to be seen to," he was heard to say.⁹³

Among the western Indians, there was a different response. After enduring the pain of being removed from their traditional lands, they must have welcomed the Mormons' offers of friendship and their expressions of Indian destiny. Certainly Dunham was excited by the response he had received. Many Lamanites were "believing the Gospel," he told colleagues, a calculation that may have included Hendricks himself.⁹⁴ During the next half dozen years, the chief would receive the repeated and solicitous attention of the Mormons. But the success of the Dunham mission lay more than in finding believers, or at least sympathizers. For the Mormons, it seemed the confirmation of their millenarian view. "Lamanite Jacob" and the "end of the gentile" were now fully joined by a counterpoint that had been developing since the Church's beginning: "the West as refuge."

The preaching forays of Butler, Emmett, Dunham, and perhaps others may be what Church secretary William Clayton had in mind when he described Joseph Smith's "original measures" of having Mormon representatives move from tribe to tribe, trying "to unite the Lamanites and find a

⁹² Dunham to Hyrum Kellogg, quoted in Thomas Burdick, Letter to unnamed correspondent, 28 August 1840, Joseph Smith Papers, LOS Church Archives.

⁹³ Burdick, Letter to unnamed correspondent

⁹⁴ James Blakeslee, Letter to George A. Smith, Journal History, 20 September 1840.

home for the Saints."⁹⁵ Oliver Olney, a disaffected Mormon who claimed to know the plans of Smith and other leaders, spoke in the same vein. First a few Saints, Olney suggested, would go "by degrees" into the West, to be followed by a general exodus of the people. When Smith's followers were at last in the sanctuary of the Rocky Mountains, they would unite with the Native Americans and forge a powerful people. Such a scheme, Olney asserted, had been the Mormons' long-held dream.⁹⁶

These ideas may help explain the presence of several Indian deputations that came to Nauvoo during the early 1840s. The Sauk and Fox were the first, led by the celebrated Keokuk. The Mormons regaled the one hundred chiefs, warriors, and family members, who ferried the Mississippi River in "full dress"; and Joseph Smith earnestly, spoke to them about the history and promises of their people as contained in the Book of Mormon. Smith also added several exhortations to good behavior, with which the usually pliable Sauk chieftain promised to comply. Several years before he had secured a copy of the Book of Mormon, Keokuk said, and now he told Smith, "I believe you are a great and good man."⁹⁷ The *Warsaw Signal*, always a thorn to the Saints, reported an additional theme of the discussion. The two parties, the newspaper said, talked of the New Jerusalem, "to which they were all going to emigrate."⁹⁸

The Pottawatamies provided an even more interesting visit in the spring of 1843. The Mormons had had contact with various branches of the tribe since the start of their movement, and many Missourians had linked the two groups as co-conspirators, perhaps because both were viewed as seditious. The Pottawatamie had long defied the American advance onto their lands and had allied themselves to the British during the War of 1812. When meeting with Smith, Chief Apaquachawba and his companions poured out an unhappy vial of complaint. The white man, they said, had "distressed and oppressed" the Pottawatamies, driven them from their homes, and now their numbers were dwindling.

⁹⁵ Clayton, Diary, 1 March 1845, in Andrew F. Ehat, "'It Seems Uke Heaven Began on Earth': Joseph Smith and the Constitution of the Kingdom of God," *Brigham Young University Studies*, 20 (Spring 1980): 269.

⁹⁶ Oliver Olney letters, 20 and 22 July, 4 and 6 October 1842, Beinecke Library, Yale University, microfilm LOS Church Archives.

⁹⁷ *History of the Church*, 4:401; Alexander Neibaur, Journal, 12 August 1841, Special Collections, Lee Library

⁹⁸ *Warsaw Signal*, 25 August 1841, 2, Morgan File

The Native Americans had come to do more than complain. They had been told that Smith spoke with the Great Spirit, and they wished his advice and aid. Would the Mormons join the recently formed mutual defense alliance of the ten confederated tribes of the Indian Territory? At least, would Smith send some of his "chiefs" to confer with them? To confirm their anti-American credentials, they showed Smith a large British medal of silver, emblazoned with a half moon and the King's crown, no doubt a relic of their earlier alliance.

When the Pottawatamies had arrived in Nauvoo a day or two before, the Mormons had scurried to find an interpreter. They had been forced to employ a long-standing opponent, and now Smith tried to avoid further difficulties with him and his similarly disposed friends by talking past the Indian offer. His hands were tied, he said; and as for the question of sending envoys to the Pottawatamie villages, that was impossible. The visibly moved prophet, however, advised the Indians to stay unified and peaceful and to pray to the Spirit. The future, he promised, would be kinder. Then raising the Book of Mormon in his hand, the Mormon leader gave the prescription for their redemption: "This tells what you will have to do."⁹⁹

The local Indian agent, Henry King, thought the Mormon protestations of peace were hollow. "It seems evident," King wrote to the Iowa governor, "from all that I can learn from the leading men among the *Mormons* and from various other sources that a grand conspiracy is about to be entered into between the *Mormons and Indians* to destroy all white settlements on the frontier." King believed the attacks might begin within the next few months.¹⁰⁰

Clearly the expulsion of the Saints from their lands near the Indian Territory had not exorcised the fear of Mormon "Indian tampering" -and with some reason. For behind the carefully measured public words of Smith, the Mormons continued to work to realize their millennial hopes, which centered on Indian conversion and coordination. Less than two weeks after the departure of the Pottawatamies from Nauvoo, despite Smith's earlier

⁹⁹ Mr. Hitchcock, Letter to John Chambers, in John King to John Chambers, 14 July 1843, Iowa Superintendency, 1838-49, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824-81, BIA Microfilm #363, 357-60; Helen Mar Whitney, "Scenes and Incidents in Nauvoo," *Woman's Exponent* 11 (1 October 1882): 70; and *History of the Church*, 5:479-81. The latter incorrectly cites the Wilford Woodruff journal as its documentary source

¹⁰⁰ John King, Letter to John Chambers, 14 July 1843, =2 0Iowa Superintendency, 1838-49, Letters Received, 360

protestations to the contrary, the Mormon prophet again dispatched Jonathan Dunham on an "exploring excursion to the west," a phrase that was only half true. Increasingly, future events would show, these words were a code for Indian work. 101

During the past several years, Dunham had risen rapidly in Nauvoo society. Now Joseph Smith's confidant (Dunham "shall not want a friend while I live"), he had been given command of the Second Cohort of the Nauvoo Legion and would soon be one of its senior commanders, while his Indian activity was gaining him equal recognition among Nauvoo insiders, who privately called him "Black Hawk." 102 In July 1843, Dunham made his way into Iowa Territory, where he passed among the Sacs and may have spoken with Sioux and Winnebago representatives. But his primary mission lay with the Pottawatamies, who provided him with a prearranged guide to their villages just south of present-day Omaha, Nebraska. Unfortunately, the content of his mission is lost. His otherwise detailed journal says nothing of his negotiation with the tribes' headmen, after which government authorities ordered him from the area. 103

As Dunham traveled back to Nauvoo, the Pottawatamies were close behind. One hundred tribesmen reportedly moved east to the Des Moines River, out of which a smaller delegation was chosen to go to the Mormon capital, this time bringing their own interpreter. 103 They arrived in Nauvoo two days after Dunham's return, bringing several important questions. Federal authorities had been anxious to clear the tide to more land for American settlement. Should they sell, the Indians asked? The tribesmen also had a larger and potentially a more explosive question. Taking their earlier request for a Mormon alliance one step further, they wondered if Smith would be willing to become their "father" or protector?

Given the frontier fears of both the Mormons and the Pottawatamies,

101 14 July 1843, *History of the Church*, 5:509.

102 *Journal History*, 2 April 1842 and 12 June 1843; *The Papers of Joseph Smith* edited Dean C Jessee, 2 Vols. (Salt Lake City Deseret Book Company, 1992), 2:417; Joseph Smith, *Journal*, 26 August 1843, Joseph Smith Papers, LDS Church Archives; *Warsaw Signal*, 29 October 1845, 1. Subsequently Dunham became the Nauvoo "Wharf Master" and led the Nauvoo police *Journal History*, 16 December 1843, and *On the Mormon Frontier The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844- 1861*, edited by Juanita Brooks (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 162.

103 Dunham, *Journal*, 16 July to 26 August 1843. Most of these entries are published in *History of the Church*, 5:542-49.

104 John King, Letter to John Chambers, 14 July 1843, Letters Received, 360; 28 August 1843, *History of the Church* 5:556

the last question was especially difficult; and Smith carefully replied in a formal letter, as though opponents were looking over his shoulder. To the first question, he suggested the Indians retain their lands "to live upon formal, yourselves and your children." The second required greater length. He was "happy to render. ..any assistance" in his power, he wrote, but his help, must be consistent with the laws of the United States. "Should the United States appoint me as your [Indian] agent to transact your business for you I shall cheerfully comply; and will always do the best I can for you, but you know I cannot do anything in this matter except it be appointed me by the authorities of our land." 105 Smith however left room for an additional, confidential response. He told the Pottawatamies that Dunham, who once more was preparing to go west, would tell them "more about this business." Thus, when the emissary left in late summer for another visit to the Pottawatamies, he carried with him the gifts of a hand-drawn map of the Pottawatamie lands and several fragments of Egyptian papyri left over from Smith's translation of the Book of Abraham -but he also bore Smith's private instructions. 106

Six months later, Smith again tried to meet the demands of the Mormons' millennial Indian theology, while at the same time trying to avoid the responsibility of a public clamor. From the little Mormon lumbering colony on the Black River in Wisconsin, Apostle Lyman Wight and his companions wrote Nauvoo with a question. The Wisconsin Mormons had become "spiritual and temporal" counselors to several bands of Nenomomie, Chippeway, and Winnebago Indians, Wight said. These Native Americans had shown a "great anxiety" to hear the Mormon gospel and to receive the Book of Mormon, but wished to go to the southwest, perhaps to the Colorado 1 River valley of Texas, where they believed the ir life would be easier. Wight hoped his settlement could go with them.107

How much of the Indians' plans were of Wight's making is unclear.

105 *History of the Church*, 5:556; Joseph Smith to Pottawatamie Indians, 28 August 1843, Joseph Smith Papers, LOS Church Archives.

106 Three years later, the Pottawatamies still had Smith's letter, map, and two papyri pages. Willard Richards Journal, 11 July 1846, LDS Church Archives.

107 For additional data and interpretation on Wight and his later activity, see Davis Bitton, ed., *the Reminiscences and Civil War Letters of Levi Amoni W ight Life in a Mormon Splinter Colony on the Texas Frontier* (Salt Lake City University of Utah Press, 1970); and "Mormons in Texas: The Ill-fated Lyman Wight Colony," *Arizona and the West: A Quarterly Journal of History* 11 (Spring 1969) 5-26

His name had been linked to rumors of Mormon Indian interest since his conversion in 1830.¹⁰⁸ He had named a son "Lamoni" after a Lamanite convert whose story was told in the Book of Mormon. Moreover, following the Missouri expulsion, he had spent six months with Smith in the Liberty, Missouri, jail, where the Mormon leader had plied him with talk about the Saints' obligation to the Lamanite and the beckoning vision of the West.¹⁰⁹

Wight was attuned to Book of Mormon Indian promises and believed the time was ripe for their fulfillment. From "Green Bay [Wisconsin) to the Mexican Gulf," the mass of Lamanites cried out for Mormonism, he said. "Give us an understanding of your doctrine and principles," they seemed to be saying, "for we perceive that your ways are equal, and your righteousness far exceeds the righteousness of all the Missionaries that we have yet been acquainted with; that your conduct with one another is like that of ours, and all your feasts and attendant ceremonies are precisely like that of ours."¹¹⁰

The question of cooperating with the Wisconsin natives had deep implications. Unlike the quiet steps that Smith and his colleagues had already taken, Wight's proposal would place Mormon Indian policy in the glare of public knowledge. A Nauvoo council meeting of the Mormon leaders in February 1844 tried to have the best of both worlds. Wight was "on his own ground and must act on his own responsibility," Church leaders told the men who bore the Wisconsin petition to Nauvoo. But whatever the decision, Smith assured, Wight "shall never be brought into difficulty about it by us."¹¹¹ In short, while Nauvoo refused to accept responsibility for Wight's acts, the apostle had tacit permission to proceed.

During this same meeting, Smith took steps to implement parts of Wight's proposal. He authorized the organization of a western "exploration" company. Moses Smith, a prospective member, recalled that the Mormon prophet intended for twenty-five scouts to go west of the Missouri River

¹⁰⁸ Josiah Jones, "History of the Mormonites," *Evangelist* 9 (1 June 1841): 134-35; Affidavit of John N Sapp, *Documents Containing the Correspondence*, 17

¹⁰⁹ Lyman Wight, Letter to Sanford Porter, 7 December 1855, and Lyman Wight, Letter to Wilford Woodruff, 24 August 1857, Lyman Wight Correspondence, LOS Church Archives.

¹¹⁰ Lyman Wight, et al., Letter to Joseph Smith and the Twelve Apostles, 14 February 1844, in Lyman Wight, *An Address By Way of an Abridged Account and Journal of My Life* (Austin, Texas pub., 1848), 2.

¹¹¹ Joseph Smith, Journal, 20 February 1844; "Lyman Wight Biography," *Millennial Star* 27 (29 July 1865): 472; Wilford Woodruff, Diary, 20 February 1844, LDS Church Archives

to explore the country and visit the Indian tribes. Their prescribed itinerary included northwestern Texas, New Mexico, the California and Oregon coast, with a return circuit of South Pass and Council Bluffs. The scheme emphasized Indian work. The Mormon leader asked the company to establish a settlement among the natives, where some of the group would remain until met by the emigrating body of the Saints.¹¹² Spiritual credentials were required. "I want every man that goes [on the expedition] to be a king and a priest," Smith said, apparently referring to the expected spiritual endowment of the soon-to-be-given Nauvoo temple rites. "When he gets on the mountains, he may want to talk with his God; [and] when with the savage nations [I want him to] have power to govern." In the process, a new city might be born in a day.¹¹³ Like Wight's plan, Smith's proposal envisioned Mormon settlement in the West, the conversion of the Indians in the region, and the ushering in of long-foreseen last events.

Six weeks later, Smith's interest in the Native Americans had not cooled. He and his Council of Fifty met with eleven Native Americans. "We had a very pleasant and impressive interview," secretary William Clayton wrote without providing detail.¹¹⁴ In another session the Council of Fifty discussed Wight's southwest proposal. A Mormon colony led by Wight should be placed near the "Cordilleras," or Rocky Mountains, at the headwaters of the Red and Colorado Rivers, Smith concluded, perhaps somewhere in the expansive American Southwest. After the meeting, Smith met privately with Wight and again confirmed the mission. His instructions on these two occasions, Wight recalled, were designed to bring the Lamanites the "knowledge of the truth, [thus] paving the way for the redemption of Zion and building the Temple in Jackson County." After Smith's final charge, given with "great zeal," the two men shook hands and said good-bye. The event carried a special poignancy and power. It was Wight's last meeting with his Prophet.¹¹⁵

This last Council of Fifty meeting may have been the event that another apostle, Amasa Lyman, later referred to. Joseph had given the leading elders a "frank relation" about their Lamanite mission and said "don't stop" till it

112 'Obituary,' *Gospel Herald* (Voree, Wisconsin) 4 (14 June 1849): 54.

113 Smith, *Journal*, 20 and 23 February 1844.

114 4 April 1844, *An Intimate Chronicle*, 128.

115 Wight, *An Address by Way of an Abridged Account*, 4-5; and Lyman Wight, Letter to Prairie LaCross, Wisconsin, 29 November 1844, *ibid*, 5

was accomplished.¹¹⁶ Such advice was difficult for even Smith to follow. With events in Nauvoo pressing hard upon him and his campaign for the American presidency requiring the labor of the Church's elders, Smith postponed the western expedition until fall.¹¹⁷

The halt did not end Smith's Native American activity. There were a few last events that gave his career a symmetry. He had begun preoccupied by the Lamanite and interested in the West, and his final days had similar themes. Five days before his death, Smith and his closest associates passed over the Mississippi River. They thought they might find refuge from their troubles in the Rocky Mountains, they explained. ¹¹⁸ Then they returned to Nauvoo, where Smith, dressed in his Nauvoo Legion uniform and standing on a "small house frame," spoke to his followers before going to fateful Carthage. Only reminiscent accounts remain, but their reports appear faithful to themes that had compelled Smith during his life. You will yet be called upon to go the "*strongholds* of the Rocky Mountains," Smith predicted. "You will gather the Red Man. . . from their scattered and dispersed situation to become the strong arm of Jehovah." At that time, he continued, the Lamanite would become "a strong bulwark of protection from your foes."¹¹⁹

The next generation of Mormons-and their opponents-paid a great deal of attention to these ideas, but so had the men and women of Joseph Smith's era. Their Indian views made them unique. Other Christian missionaries tried to uplift and protect the American native, as the Saints had too, but none saw the Indian as an indispensable ally in the last-day drama that promised to cleanse the landscape and bring a new era. "In these points," one scholar judged, "Smith was completely original."¹²⁰ In the Mormon theological view, the Native American was not the European's noble savage of the wilderness. Nor was he the evil barrier to white man's progress

¹¹⁶ Council in Office," 27 February 1845, Bullock's Minutes.

¹¹⁷ Obituary," *Gospel Herald* 4 (14 June 1849): 54.

¹¹⁸ *History of the Church*, 6:547.

¹¹⁹ William Pace, Autobiography, 4, Special Collections, Lee Library. Pace was apparently quoting Alfred Bell of Lehi, Utah, who reportedly made a transcript of Smith's address For other versions of the speech, which claimed to be copies of William Clayton's report, see Wilford Woodruff, Affidavit, 18 November 1878, and John S Fullmer, Statement, 28 April 1881, John S. Fullmer letter Book; both in LOS Church Archives

¹²⁰ G. SI John Stott, "New Jerusalem Abandoned: The Failure to Carry Mormonism to the Delaware," *Journal of American Studies* 21 (April 1987): 76

that so many American settlers thought. He was, instead, a tool of divine pleasure, soon to be the Lord's delight.

Mormon unusualness went further. A decade before the Oregon=2 Otrail- blazer or the California argonaut, before Manifest Destiny filled Americans with dreams of continental empire, Joseph Smith and some members of his small visionary band looked to the trans-plains West. If this "vision" later took on the additional meaning of "refuge," at the start the Mormons were looking for the person of their millennial dreams, the Native American. It was a religious quest that revealed a sincere belief.

The millennial Book of Mormon expectation of the Lamanite, so bright and exciting at the start, became in the course of events not just a promise but a burden. The demands of this obligation brought Church members from New York state to Missouri and began their movement to the West. If the Mormon trek cannot be understood without it, neither can much of the toil and "persecution" that was felt along the way. In a millennial outburst of faith, the first Mormons had sought "the Remnant," and their quest shaped their movement's history.