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# The Fall of Kirtland: The Doctrine and Covenants' Role in Reaffirming Joseph

*Scott C. Esplin*

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The Doctrine and Covenants portrays an abrupt end to the glorious days of Kirtland. Numerous sections record the seven-year period when Ohio served as the Church's headquarters, a duration bested only by Salt Lake City. More canonized revelations preserved in the Doctrine and Covenants originate from the Kirtland area than any other place in Latter-day Saint history. As late as section 110, members were enjoying a Pentecostal season, complete with visions, prophecies, angelic ministrations, and bestowal of greater priesthood keys (see D&C 109–10). Yet after these miraculous events are detailed, only one brief revelation was published from Joseph Smith's final and most difficult year living in Kirtland (D&C 112). Early in 1838, Joseph was forced to flee for his life, never to see the temple or the town of Kirtland again. For the Prophet, all that remained of the place where he had experienced the most recorded visions, had received the most published revelations, and had spent the majority of his adult life were debts, discouragement, and broken dreams. After fleeing, Joseph could only prophesy, wait, and wonder regarding Kirtland. Safely settled in Nauvoo three years later, he was told, "I, the Lord, will build up Kirtland, but I, the Lord, have a scourge prepared for the inhabitants thereof" (D&C 124:83). For the rest of Joseph's life, Kirtland remained on his mind. In fact, the morning of his final day on earth Joseph related his dream the night before of being "back in Kirtland."<sup>1</sup>

Though a trying time for all involved, the fall of Kirtland and the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants that followed may have

produced some of Joseph's and the Church's most important lessons. As with other difficult times in his history, Joseph learned through his experiences in Kirtland much about himself, his friends, and, most importantly, his relationship with Deity. Furthermore, lessons learned through God's interaction with the Prophet following these challenging times may have not only shaped Joseph for the remainder of his life but also reaffirmed his prophetic role to the early Saints.

### Prophecies of Apostasy and Fulfillment

An important lesson evident in the rise and fall of Kirtland is the omniscience of God. In a revelation given before the Church relocated to Ohio, the Lord foretold the glorious events that would happen in Kirtland:

For this cause I gave unto you the commandment that ye should go to the Ohio; and there I will give unto you my law; and there you shall be endowed with power from on high;

And from thence, whosoever I will shall go forth among all nations, and it shall be told them what they shall do; for I have a great work laid up in store, for Israel shall be saved. . . .

See that all things are preserved; and when men are endowed with power from on high and sent forth, all these things shall be gathered unto the bosom of the church. (D&C 38:32–33, 38)

Surely the Lord was outlining wonderful events in Kirtland's near future, including the giving of the law (see D&C 42), the beginning of the endowment, and the sending forth of the first overseas missionaries of the Church. However, predictions in this revelation were followed by an equally prophetic warning: "And if ye seek the riches which it is the will of the Father to give unto you, ye shall be the richest of all people, for ye shall have the riches of eternity; and it must needs be that the riches of the earth are mine to give; but beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old" (D&C 38:39). This warning came with a time-frame, as the Lord later declared His will "to retain a strong hold in the land of Kirtland, for the space of five years" (D&C 64:21).

In 1836, five years after this declaration, Kirtland was at its spiritual apex. The Saints had dedicated the temple, converts flocked to the region, and prosperity loomed on the horizon. In the midst of the rejoicing, Joseph reminded the assembled Kirtland Saints of the Lord's warning:

We are now nearly as happy as we can be on earth. We have accomplished more than we had any reason to expect when we began. Our beautiful house is finished, and the Lord has acknowledged it, by pouring out his Spirit upon us here, and revealing to us much of his will in regard to the work which he is about to perform. Furthermore, we have every-

thing that is necessary to our comfort and convenience, and, judging from appearances, one would not suppose that anything could occur which would break up our friendship for each other, or disturb our tranquility. But, brethren, beware; for I tell you in the name of the Lord, that there is an evil in this very congregation, which, if not repented of, will result in setting many of you, who are here this day, so much at enmity against me, that you will have a desire to take my life; and you even *would do it*, if God should permit the deed. But, brethren, I now call upon you to repent, and cease all your hardness of heart, and turn from those principles of death and dishonesty which you are harboring in your bosoms, before it is eternally too late, for there is yet room for repentance.<sup>2</sup>

A little more than a year later, Joseph experienced the effects of the hatred he warned would destroy the peace of Kirtland.

As the Lord warned, riches and pride doomed Kirtland. Benjamin F. Johnson, a young friend of the Prophet, summarized Kirtland's fall:

At this time, town property and real estate went up to almost fabulous prices, and a general rush was made into business of all kinds. Members of the Quorum of the Twelve and Elders on missions hastened home, bringing merchandise and means for general trade, while the Kirtland Bank issued its paper apparently with full confidence in the future. Goods were sold upon credit with great hope of better times; and "Why be deprived of luxury and fashion today," seemed to be the spirit of the hour. But when goods bought on credit were to be paid for, and notes became due for lands bought at great prices, then began a reaction. Disappointment engendered feelings which reacted upon fellowship, and men in high places began to complain of and reproach each other, and brotherly love was found smothered by the love of the world. The Bank having issued its currency in the same confidence now began to comprehend that its specie vaults were empty, with no possibility to realize upon collateral to replenish them. The spirit of charity was not invoked, and brethren who had borne the highest priesthood and who had for years labored, traveled, ministered and suffered together, and even placed their lives upon the same altar, now were governed by a feeling of hate and a spirit to accuse each other, and all for the love of *Accursed Mammon*. All their former companionship in the holy anointing in the Temple of the Lord, were filled with the Holy Ghost, the heavens were opened, and in view of the glories before them they had together shouted "Hosanna to God and the Lamb," all was now forgotten by many, who were like Judas, ready to sell or destroy the Prophet Joseph and his followers. And it almost seemed to me that the brightest stars in our firmament had fallen. Many to whom I had in the past most loved to listen, their voices seemed now the most discordant and hateful to me. From the Quorum of the Twelve fell four of the brightest: [William] E. McLellin, Luke and Lyman Johnson and John [Boynton]; of the First Presidency, F. G. Williams; the three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and

Martin Harris. Of other very prominent elders were Sylvester Smith, Warren Cowdery, Warren Parrish, Joseph Coe and many others who apostatized or became enemies to the Prophet.<sup>3</sup>

Fortunately, while many of the Prophet's former friends sought his demise, others rose to his defense. On one occasion, several of the Twelve, the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, and other sympathetic authorities of the Church assembled in Joseph's absence in the Kirtland Temple, determined to replace him with David Whitmer. Invited to the meeting, Brigham Young helped quell the uprising:

I rose up, and in a plain and forcible manner told them that Joseph was a Prophet, and I knew it, and that they might rail and slander him as much as they pleased, they could not destroy the appointment of the Prophet of God, they could only destroy their own authority, cut the thread that bound them to the Prophet and to God and sink themselves to hell. Many were highly enraged at my decided opposition to their measures, and Jacob Bump (an old pugilist) was so exasperated that he could not be still. Some of the brethren near him put their hands on him, and requested him to be quiet; but he writhed and twisted his arms and body saying, "How can I keep my hands off that man?" I told him if he thought it would give him any relief he might lay them on. This meeting was broken up without the apostates being able to unite on any decided measures of opposition. This was a crisis when earth and hell seemed leagued to overthrow the Prophet and Church of God. The knees of many of the strongest men in the Church faltered.

During this siege of darkness I stood close by Joseph, and, with all the wisdom and power God bestowed upon me, put forth my utmost energies to sustain the servant of God and unite the quorums of the Church.<sup>4</sup>

Others, though faltering at times, turned to Joseph for aid. For example, Parley P. Pratt was tempted severely by the apostate spirit prevalent in Kirtland. Brought back to his senses by John Taylor, Elder Pratt responded, "I went to brother Joseph Smith in tears, and, with a broken heart and contrite spirit, confessed wherein I had erred in spirit, murmured, or done or said amiss. He frankly forgave me, prayed for me and blessed me."<sup>5</sup>

The Doctrine and Covenants remains silent regarding both the opposition Joseph experienced in 1837 and the support he received from friends. The reader is left to wonder about the emotional state of the Prophet while he was carrying such a heavy load. The burdens of financial difficulty caused by the failure of the Kirtland Safety Society were compounded by charges of being a false or fallen prophet and betrayal by many of his closest companions, including some who had labored with him from the beginning. Truly, the Kirtland apostasy

must have left a devastating imprint on the Prophet's soul.

During one particularly trying time in Kirtland, Wilford Woodruff described the weighty burden borne by the Prophet Joseph:

He appeared much depressed; but soon the Spirit of God rested upon him, and he addressed the assembly in great plainness for about three hours, and put his enemies to silence. When he arose he said, "I am still the President, Prophet, Seer, Revelator and Leader of the Church of Jesus Christ. God, and not man, has appointed and placed me in this position, and no man or set of men have power to remove me, or appoint another in my stead; and those who undertake this, if they do not speedily repent, will burn their fingers and go to hell." He reproved the people sharply for their sins, darkness and unbelief. The power of God rested upon him, and bore testimony that his sayings were true.<sup>6</sup>

Daniel Tyler, a young witness to the events of Kirtland, preserved a similar glimpse into Joseph's heart during these difficult times:

I attended a meeting "on the flats," where "Joseph" presided. Entering the school-house a little before meeting opened, and gazing upon the man of God, I perceived sadness in his countenance and tears trickling down his cheeks. I naturally supposed the all-absorbing topic of the difficulty must be the cause. I was not mistaken. A few moments later a hymn was sung and he opened the meeting by prayer. Instead, however, of facing the audience, he turned his back and bowed upon his knees, facing the wall. This, I suppose, was done to hide his sorrow and tears.

I had heard men and women pray—especially the former—from the most ignorant, both as to letters and intellect, to the most learned and eloquent, but never until then had I heard a man address his Maker as though He was present listening as a kind father would listen to the sorrows of a dutiful child. Joseph was at that time unlearned, but that prayer, which was to a considerable extent in behalf of those who accused him of having gone astray and fallen into sin, that the Lord would forgive them and open their eyes that they might see aright—that prayer, I say, to my humble mind, partook of the learning and eloquence of heaven. There was no ostentation, no raising of the voice as by enthusiasm, but a plain conversational tone, as a man would address a present friend. It appeared to me as though, in case the veil were taken away, I could see the Lord standing facing His humblest of all servants I had ever seen. Whether this was really the case I cannot say; but one thing I can say, it was the crowning, so to speak, of all the prayers I ever heard.<sup>7</sup>

In spite of his efforts, these trials continued until finally Joseph was forced to flee Kirtland early in 1838. Luke Johnson, himself disaffected from the Church at the time, aided in the escape. Learning "that

Sheriff Kimball was about to arrest Joseph Smith, on a charge of illegal banking, and knowing that it would cost him an expensive lawsuit,” Johnson arrested the Prophet on a lesser charge, preventing the other arrest.<sup>8</sup> That evening, Joseph settled the debt, thanked Luke for the intervention, and left for Missouri. Joseph described the escape: “On the evening of the 12th of January, about ten o’clock, we left Kirtland, on horseback, to escape mob violence, which was about to burst upon us under the color of legal process to cover the hellish designs of our enemies, and to save themselves from the just judgment of the law.”<sup>9</sup> Frustrated by the escape, Joseph’s enemies pursued him purposefully:

The weather was extremely cold, we were obliged to secrete ourselves in our wagons, sometimes, to elude the grasp of our pursuers, who continued their pursuit of us more than two hundred miles from Kirtland, armed with pistols and guns, seeking our lives. They frequently crossed our track, twice they were in the houses where we stopped, once we tarried all night in the same house with them, with only a partition between us and them; and heard their oaths and imprecations, and threats concerning us, if they could catch us; and late in the evening they came in to our room and examined us, but decided we were not the men. At other times we passed them in the streets, and gazed upon them, and they on us, but they knew us not.<sup>10</sup>

After being so hounded, the Prophet and his family safely arrived among friends in Far West, Missouri, on March 14, 1838.

### **Reaffirming a Prophet’s Place: Revelations Following Kirtland**

Though the Doctrine and Covenants records few of the historical details surrounding Joseph’s trials in Kirtland, the counsel offered in the sections received immediately upon his arrival in Far West reveals much concerning the Prophet and his relationship with God during this trying time. In fact, though given in Far West and dealing with questions and concerns of the Saints in that area, sections 113 through 116 may address Joseph’s recent past in Kirtland more than his future in Missouri.

Section 113, the first section received after Joseph’s flight from Kirtland, records questions concerning the writings of Isaiah. Removed from its historical context, this revelation may appear to be merely insight into an Old Testament prophecy. Viewed in the context of the Kirtland apostasy, however, the section offers a glimpse into the heart of the struggling Prophet. The opening six verses of section 113 deal with Joseph’s interpretation of Isaiah 11. Though little is known about why this chapter was selected, it was likely not a random selection from among the sixty-six chapters of Isaiah.

The eleventh chapter of Isaiah was, in fact, part of the earliest counsel received by the Prophet Joseph. Among the “many other passages of scripture” (Joseph Smith—History 1:41) repeated to him during his first visit with Moroni on the evening of September 21, 1823, the angel quoted the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, stating that “it was about to be fulfilled” (v. 40). In the chapter, Isaiah initially describes a “rod” coming forth from the stem of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1) and later a “root of Jesse” (v. 10). In “the latter days” (v. 10*a*), Gentiles would seek this “root” when God “shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people” (vv. 10–11).

Doctrine and Covenants 113 contains questions and answers regarding the interpretation of these symbols. The rod is described as “a servant in the hands of Christ . . . on whom there is laid much power” (D&C 113:4). The root is interpreted as one “unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of [God’s] people in the last days” (D&C 113:6). A late Kirtland revelation, in fact, records Joseph receiving “much power” at the hands of Moses, Elias, and Elijah, including “the keys of the gathering of Israel” as well as “the keys of this dispensation” (D&C 110:11, 16). Based on these scriptures, Elder Bruce R. McConkie interpreted the identity of Isaiah’s rod and root: “Are we amiss in saying that the prophet here mentioned is Joseph Smith, to whom the priesthood came, who received the keys of the kingdom, and who raised the ensign for the gathering of the Lord’s people in our dispensation? And is he not also the ‘servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power’? (D&C 113:4–6.) Those whose ears are attuned to the whisperings of the Infinite will know the meaning of these things.”<sup>11</sup> Thus, Doctrine and Covenants 113 is more than just an interpretation of Isaiah 11. It may also be a personal reaffirmation for Joseph that he and his mission were indeed known by ancient seers, including Isaiah. It also reveals that Joseph was not a fallen prophet, as his adversaries in Kirtland proclaimed. Perhaps God gave the interpretation of Isaiah 11 to the Prophet Joseph fifteen years after the angel Moroni first quoted it to him as a tender and timely reminder of his divine call.

Other phrases and themes in the early Far West revelations likewise tie to the recent challenges in Kirtland. Section 114 of the Doctrine and Covenants, revealed one month after Joseph and his family had arrived in Missouri, counsels Elder David W. Patten to settle his affairs and prepare for a mission. However, the final verse declares, “Verily thus saith the Lord, that inasmuch as there are those among you who



deny my name, others shall be planted in their stead and receive their bishopric” (D&C 114:2). Joseph and the Church undoubtedly wondered what to do with the estimated two to three hundred persons who had apostatized in Kirtland, a loss of 10 to 15 percent of the Kirtland membership and one-third of the Church leadership.<sup>12</sup> Section 114 reminded Joseph that no one was irreplaceable in the kingdom, including apostate members of the First Presidency (Frederick G. Williams), members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (William E. McLellin, Luke S. Johnson, John F. Boynton, and Lyman E. Johnson), and the Three Witnesses (Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris). Later Far West revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants record that Hyrum Smith replaced Frederick G. Williams in the First Presidency (see D&C 112:17; 115:1); and John Taylor, John E. Page, Wilford Woodruff, and Willard Richards filled the vacancies in the Apostleship (see D&C 118:6). Joseph learned that the kingdom of God would move forward in spite of those who had fallen.

Another topic from the early revelations in Far West involves the naming of the Church. In Doctrine and Covenants 115, the Lord emphatically names and declares ownership over the organization, saying, “For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” (v. 4). Like other revelations in Far West, this too may have been tied to the Kirtland apostasy.

The name of the Church on the day of its organization, as outlined in section 20, was “the Church of Christ” (D&C 20:1). During its first few years of existence, the Church assumed this official title or the similar “the Church of Jesus Christ.”<sup>13</sup> By 1834, however, confusion had arisen. “Either out of contempt and ridicule, or to distinguish us from others,” the Church’s *Evening and Morning Star* reported, “the church has, particularly abroad, been called ‘Mormonite.’” Emphatically rejecting the appellation, the paper’s editor declared, “We do not accept the above title, nor shall we wear it as our name, though it may be lavished out upon us.”<sup>14</sup> To further clarify misconceptions, a conference of elders was held in Kirtland on May 3, 1834, where the Church’s name was unanimously changed to “The Church of the Latter-day Saints.”<sup>15</sup>

Changing the name from “the Church of Christ” to “the Church of the Latter-day Saints” did not sit well with some early members, especially David Whitmer.<sup>16</sup> “‘Reformers’ insisted that the regular authorities in Kirtland had departed from the true order of things by calling the church ‘The Church of the Latter-day Saints.’ They proceeded therefore to repudiate this title and adopt what they considered the proper one, ‘The Church of Christ,’ and held themselves forth as

the 'old standard'; they rejected the Prophet, and denounced those who adhered to him as heretics."<sup>17</sup> In light of these charges, stemming from the Kirtland apostasy, the Lord's definitive declaration regarding the name of His Church in the last days, as found in D&C 115, is likewise a reaffirmation of His Prophet, so critically attacked for changing the name in Kirtland.

A final evidence that God supported Joseph during the trying days following Kirtland is evident in a subtle word choice prevalent in the revelations during this era. The phrase "my servant" is used frequently throughout the Doctrine and Covenants. In the last section given in Kirtland and the first three sections given in Far West, frequent and emphatic use of this phrase was made in relation to the Prophet Joseph. Four times in section 115, the Lord reminded the Church generally and His prophet specifically of "my servant Joseph" (vv. 1, 13, 16, 18). Doctrine and Covenants 113 prophesied to all involved about a latter-day servant "in the hands of Christ" (v. 4) who would do a great work. Section 112 warned Thomas B. Marsh and the rest of the Twelve to "rebel not" against God's "servant Joseph" (v. 15). Finally, the Lord reassuringly declared of His servant Joseph, "I will be with him, and I will sanctify him before the people; for unto him have I given the keys of this kingdom and ministry" (D&C 115:19).

The recurring use of the phrase "my servant Joseph" must have been reassuring for the beleaguered Prophet. The year 1837 had been brutal, as Heber C. Kimball later described, "There were not twenty persons on the earth that would declare that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God."<sup>18</sup> "The turmoil in Joseph's mind in 1837," writes historian Richard L. Bushman, "seems to have matched the disruptions in the Church."<sup>19</sup> These disruptions went much deeper than the failed Kirtland Safety Society. "The economic emphasis is to some degree an oversimplification. . . . Certainly the banking failure was a precipitating factor in the open rebellion of many Mormons, but it may have been more a symbol of what seemed to be wrong."<sup>20</sup> Though many Saints blamed the bank failure, the real problem in Kirtland may have been disillusionment with the role of Joseph.<sup>21</sup> The problem was compounded by what may have been Joseph's personal struggles, both physical and emotional, in 1837.<sup>22</sup> Bushman continues, "Where was God during these setbacks? Only one revelation during the year was deemed worthy of inclusion in the later *Doctrine and Covenants*. Only one letter in Joseph's voice went into the record. His usual inspiration seemed closed, or at least he chose to keep silent about it."<sup>23</sup> When God did speak again in Far West, the frequent use of the term "my

servant,” coupled with the reminder that God was with the Prophet Joseph and that he held the keys of the kingdom on earth, must have been comforting.

### “God Is My Friend”

The Kirtland era was an important training period for Joseph and the Church. Elder M. Russell Ballard observes:

It has been said that we may yet discover that Kirtland is our most significant Church history site. Let me describe to you how important Kirtland is to the Church. In Kirtland, were revealed basically all of the priesthood offices that we have in the Church today. This was the schooling period for the leaders of the Church. About one-half of the revelations recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants were revealed there, far more than any other location. There is where the School of the Prophets began. There is where Joseph made his Bible translation. There is where the Pearl of Great Price was largely translated. There is where the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants was printed.

More heavenly manifestations and appearances occurred in Kirtland than any other place. For example, in Kirtland the Father and the Son appeared or were seen in vision four times, and the Savior was seen at least six more times by Joseph Smith. In Kirtland is where significant keys were given. The Church headquartered in Kirtland longer than anywhere else except Salt Lake City. We built our first temple and completed our first temple ordinances in Kirtland.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to these experiences, Joseph and the Church gained great doctrinal insight during the Ohio period, including the law of the Lord (see D&C 42), information on the Savior’s Second Coming (see D&C 45; 133), knowledge of life after death (see D&C 76; 137), the Olive Leaf (see D&C 88), and the Lord’s law of health (see D&C 89).

Unfortunately, these lessons came with a price. During the Kirtland apostasy, Joseph learned about the personal pain of betrayal as friend and foe combined to drive him from his home with charges of having fallen from his prophetic office. However, during the final difficult days in Kirtland, Joseph learned whom he could count on: friends and family like Brigham Young and Hyrum Smith. More importantly, upon Joseph’s arrival in Far West, the revelations received from the Lord referring to “my servant Joseph” reaffirmed that the Prophet could also count on his omniscient Eternal Friend. This final lesson from Kirtland may have been the most important, for it kept him going in the face of trial. Years later, Joseph summarized one of the greatest lessons of the Kirtland apostasy, a lesson we all must learn: “I understand my mission and business. God Almighty is my shield; and what can man do

if God is my friend?"<sup>25</sup> Gratefully, the revelations of the Doctrine and Covenants portray and preserve this friendship. **RE**

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## Notes

1. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957), 6:609.
2. Joseph Smith, in Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*, ed. Preston Nibley (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958), 239–40.
3. Benjamin F. Johnson, *My Life's Review* (Independence, MO: Zion's Printing, 1947), 27–28.
4. Brigham Young, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1801–1844*, ed. Elden J. Watson (Salt Lake City: Smith Secretarial Service, 1968), 16–17.
5. Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 144.
6. Wilford Woodruff, "History of Wilford Woodruff," *Millennial Star*, April 29, 1865, 264.
7. "Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith," *Juvenile Instructor*, February 15, 1892, 127–28. The event herein described occurred earlier in Kirtland's history and involved the strained relationship between the Prophet Joseph and his brother William.
8. Luke Johnson, "History of Luke Johnson," *Millennial Star*, January 7, 1865, 5.
9. Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:1.
10. Smith, *History of the Church*, 3:2–3.
11. Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 339–40; see also Kent P. Jackson, "Revelations Concerning Isaiah," in Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson, *Studies in Scripture: Volume One, The Doctrine and Covenants* (Sandy, UT: Randall Book, 1984), 331–32.
12. Karl Ricks Anderson, *Joseph Smith's Kirtland: Eyewitness Accounts* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 216.
13. B. H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1957), 1:392.
14. *Evening and Morning Star*, May 1834, 158.
15. *Evening and Morning Star*, May 1834, 160.
16. David Whitmer consistently held that Joseph and the Church acted inappropriately in changing the Church's name. As late as 1887, in his "An Address to All Believers in Christ," Whitmer charged that Joseph "drifted into many errors and gave many revelations to introduce doctrines, ordinances and offices in the church, which are in conflict with Christ's teachings. They also changed the name of the church" (*An Address to All Believers in Christ* [Richmond, MO: 1887], 4).
17. Roberts, *Comprehensive History*, 1:405.
18. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* (London and Liverpool: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1857), 4:108.
19. Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 340.
20. Marvin S. Hill, "Cultural Crisis in the Mormon Kingdom: A Reconsideration

of the Causes of Kirtland Dissent,” *Church History* 49, no. 3 (1980): 286–87.

21. Marvin S. Hill argues: “The Mormon Church was undergoing a period of considerable growth and change during these years, characterized by a concentration of authority at the top and authority’s increasing control of every aspect of life. . . . A by-product of increased control over economic, political and social life was a growing feeling among many that the prophet and the church were becoming too worldly and too powerful, too much involved in regulating areas of life beyond their rightful domain” (“Cultural Crisis in the Mormon Kingdom,” 291).

22. Joseph was forced to endure a series of vexatious lawsuits as a result of the failed Kirtland Safety Society. At the same time, he was stricken with a near fatal illness, which Joseph said took him “to the borders of the grave” because his “sufferings were excruciating.” Joseph continued, “The enemy of all righteousness was suggesting, apostates reporting, and the doubtful believing that my afflictions were sent upon me, because I was in transgression, and had taught the Church things contrary to godliness” (Smith, *History of the Church*, 2:493).

23. Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*, 340–41.

24. M. Russell Ballard, “Our Kirtland Legacy,” CES Fireside for College-Age Young Adults, November 6, 1994, 1–2.

25. Smith, *History of the Church*, 5:259.