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THE REJECTION OF THE CHURCH, BEING A REPLY TO THE "DESERET NEWS,"

THE CHIEF ORGAN OF THE
UTAH MORMON CHURCH.

BY PRES. JOSEPH SMITH.

WHEN the question is asked: When was the Church disorganized? We answer: Whenever that which was *contrary and adverse* to the revealed word and rules given to the church at its origin was introduced into its formulated creed, or its well understood faith, the elements of disorganization came in with it.

This was well understood by those men who constituted the Twelve in the days of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. In the *Times and Seasons* for December 15th, 1841, will be found an Epistle signed by Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, William Smith, Lyman Wight, Wilford Woodruff; John Taylor, George A. Smith and Willard Richards. In this Epistle, occurs the following:

"The building of the Temple of the Lord, in the city of Nauvoo, is occupying the first place in the exertions and prayers of many of the Saints at the present time, *knowing as they do that if this building is not completed speedily, 'we shall be rejected as a Church with our dead,'* for the Lord our God hath spoken it."

This is at the beginning of the Epistle, and is the premise upon which the rest of the article is based. The words "we shall be rejected as a church with our dead," are italicized in the printed article, as above, showing that special attention was called to them. It closed in these words:

"The Elders everywhere, will instruct the brethren, both in public and private, in the principles and doctrine set forth in this Epistle, so that every individual of the Church may have a perfect understanding of his duty and privilege."

Joseph Smith writing September 6th, 1842, closes a letter to the Church thus:

"Let us therefore, as a Church and a people, and as Latter Day Saints, offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness; and let us present in his holy Temple *when it is finished*, a book containing the records of our dead, which shall be worthy of all acceptance."

Joseph Smith was Editor of the *Times and Seasons* at the time, and in the same number in which the letter above referred to is found, there is an editorial under the caption of "The Temple," in which occurs the following:

"The word of the Lord is, build my house; and until that command is fulfilled, we stand responsible to the great Jehovah for the fulfillment of it: and if not done in *due time*, we may have to share the same fate that we have heretofore done in Missouri."

We give these extracts to show that the idea of a rejection of the church did not originate with the Reorganized Church, nor with those whom the *Deseret News* chooses to class as apostates. Such a contingency was known to be in the near future when the

things quoted were written; and the apprehension of such a rejection was appreciated by the then Twelve.

At the trial of Elder S. Rigdon, Nauvoo, September 8th, 1844, Parley P. Pratt, then of the Twelve, said:

"The great God said through Joseph—Build this Temple; I give you a sufficient time to build it, and if you do not build it by the appointed time, you shall be rejected as a people with your dead."

THE TWELVE'S THEORY OF THE SUCCESSION
IN 1844.

The prominent theory advanced by the Quorum of the Twelve at the death of Joseph and Hyrum respecting the succession was that the place occupied by those two men would not again be filled; but that the authority and responsibility to carry on the work rested with the Twelve, as a quorum. To this claim perhaps no reasonable objection was at that time urged. The argument upon the part of the Twelve seemed to be good; and there are strong reasons for believing that had the Twelve remained true to the principles of the faith as established by Joseph Smith, acting in their calling, there would have been no reason for so dread a separation as has taken place. The body of the people seemed to comprehend this when on the 8th of August, 1844, the matter was put before them in this form, "All in favor of supporting the Twelve in their calling, signify it by the uplifted hand;" and all voted to so sustain.

Positive and strong declarations were frequently made, as the public prints of the church show, that the Twelve as a quorum would lead the church; one of which may be found in an Epistle signed by Brigham Young, as the president of the quorum, dated August 15th, 1844, and is as follows:

"Let no man presume for a moment that his (Joseph's) place will be filled by another; for, remember he stands in his own place, and always will; and the Twelve Apostles of this dispensation stand in their own place and always will, both in time and eternity, to minister, preside and regulate the affairs of the whole church."

And another in the same Epistle:

"Brethren, be not alarmed, for if the Twelve should be taken away, still there are powers and officers in existence which will bear the kingdom of God triumphantly, victorious in all the world."

On September 23, 1844, a statement was made to the Church that "when any alteration shall be required, reasonable notice will be given."

PREPARING TO ORGANIZE.

On the 6th of August, 1847, the Twelve, comprising Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, Willard Richards, Wilford Woodruff, George A. Smith and Amasa Lyman, were *re-baptized*, in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake, Brigham Young baptizing and confirming the rest, himself being baptized and confirmed by H. C. Kimball. On the evening of the 7th, succeeding, Heber C. Kimball baptized (rebaptized) fifty-five in the City Creek, and on Sunday, August 8th, the "whole camp of Israel renewed their covenant by baptism;" "two hundred and eighty-eight" being "rebaptized" during the three days.

On December 5th, there was a feast and a council held at a private house in Winter Quarters, near where Council Bluffs, Iowa, now is, at which Orson Hyde made and Wilford Woodruff seconded a motion that Brigham Young be President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints; which motion was carried. Brigham Young then nominated Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards as his Counselors, and

they were so appointed. On the next day John Smith was appointed Patriarch by the Twelve.

On December 24th, 1847, nineteen days after the feast and council, one thousand of the then fleeing multitude, met in a "Log Tabernacle" and chose Brigham Young President. This was reconfirmed the next year in October, at Salt Lake City, by a conference held there. This is when and how Brigham Young and his fellows organized the Utah Mormon Church.

NUMBER OF THE CHURCH IN 1844.

It must be remembered that there were in Nauvoo and vicinity at the death of Joseph and Hyrum, an estimated number of twenty thousand; and in the United States and Europe an estimated membership of one hundred and fifty thousand. These so far as the *Times and Seasons* and *Millennial Star* were taken and read; and so far as the Elders disseminated the views concerning the Presidency and the position occupied by the Twelve,—had been taught that no such organization would take place; or if it did, "seasonable notice" would be given.

SHORT AND IMPERFECT NOTICE.

But all the notice that was given must have been what circulated from mouth to ear during the lapsing of the nineteen days referred to; and that could not have been very extensive. The council was held by special call, the conference in December was a special one; and when held, less than a twentieth of the number of the Church estimated to be at Nauvoo and vicinity, and less than one hundredth of the entire membership, as estimated at the death of Joseph, were present when that vote was taken. It was sprung upon the people without that previous

preparation and notice that the Church was entitled to, under the circumstances. It was done, too, after the man so chosen had rebaptized his co associates unto himself in the waters of Utah, a land afar from the place where the promised Temple was to be builded. It was presented at a time when no such extra official act was needed. Brigham Young, as President of the Twelve, was virtually the leader; and by the counsel of his quorum had done as he deemed best. No additional priesthood was conferred by the choice; nor could there be. That body of Twelve men could have done all that the exigency demanded. By the taking of Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards out of it, the Twelve was disorganized. By the defection of John E. Page, William Smith and Lyman Wight, and removal of the three created into the Presidency, that Twelve upon which Joseph had "rolled the work," (if such a thing had occurred), had been vitiated.

A NEW LINE OF POLICY.

But a new line of policy had been adopted by the man thus created President. That system of marriage which was to vitiate and destroy, was to be fostered and finally made a church tenet. To do this a re-creation, a reorganization must be had. It was for this end that the renewal of a covenant made years before was presented in that far away land; and in the rebaptism and reconfirmation that followed were the seeds of that disorganization laid which culminated in the completed rejection of the "church as a church."

REBAPTISM AND REORGANIZATION.

Following in the footsteps of this example, a wholesale rebaptism took place, a readjustment of quorums ensued.

BRIGHAM FAILED TO HAVE THE POLYGAMY REVELATION TESTED BY THE QUORUMS.

The quorum referred to by Orson Hyde, September 8th, 1844, as the one "where revelations can be tested," was disbanded by Pres. Young. The rule given by Joseph the Seer, by which whatever was alleged to be a revelation from God to the church was to be tested was ignored. The way was now prepared for the final stroke of policy, by which the usurpation of unwarranted power was made complete. It is not amiss to believe that all who were emigrated to Utah were rebaptized into this reformation, (reorganization).

A SECOND GENERAL REBAPTISM.

Again, in 1856, after the fatal introduction of the unauthorized revelation touching plural marriage, August 29th, 1852, which Brigham Young had so artfully prepared the way for, a Reformation took place. A general rebaptizing was ordered, and the faithful and obedient were baptized into the spirit and power of the "New and Everlasting Covenant"—the Plural Marriage tenet.

POLYGAMY-FIRST PUBLICLY INTRODUCED, IN 1852.

In defense of this dogma it is asserted that Joseph Smith received the revelation and practiced its precepts.

JOSEPH THE SEER NEVER PRESENTED POLYGAMY TO THE CHURCH, NOR TO THE QUORUMS.

It is certain, however, that at no time in Joseph's life was this doctrine, called a revelation, submitted to the tribunal test required. No such claim for its validity was ever made. No publication of it as a church tenet, or as a properly accredited revelation from God, was ever made during the time that Joseph lived. The practice of its precepts if had, was in secret. Not until its secret practice could no longer be concealed did even Brigham Young

avow it. Then he came before a special conference eight years after Joseph's death, and told the beggarly tale that it was a "copy," the original having been "burned by Emma Smith," Joseph's wife. Joseph's wife declared that she never burned it, never saw it.

EVIDENCES OF REJECTION.

The iniquity that destroyed the organization of the church, perfecting its rejection, had now done its work. Henceforth there can be no doubt that the church to which the command to build the temple at Nauvoo had come had been rejected. Its quorums had been broken. The law of their organization was ignored. Instead of the Twelve remaining complete as a quorum as left by Joseph, three of them, by the new and strange policy of Brigham and his fellows, had been driven away from it, and three taken out of it in an unauthorized manner, and without a proper and seasonable notice, those so taken had been put in the places of Joseph and Hyrum. The quorum next to the Twelve, of which the law provides there may be seven times seventy only, had swollen to one hundred and twenty-five times seventy, by improper ordinations. Twice had the people been required to be rebaptized, under the plea of a renewal of their covenant. The original bond, stated of God and recognized as the new and everlasting gospel from 1830 to 1844, had been thus weakened and derided. The Temple in which they were to receive the further endowment of the Spirit "when finished," had not been completed.

What further evidence of a rejection can any one ask?

WHO ARE THE TRUE, GENUINE CHURCH.

It is a principle well known in civil law, and ought to be in ecclesiastical

circles, that whenever a church is founded, its principles of faith formulated, its traditions fulminated from the forum and pulpit, those declarations become the *constitution* of its corporate and legal existence. If in the history of any church, anything out of harmony with, or antagonistic to *that constitution* is introduced, or a change is sought to be made in the creed and government, which is opposed and resisted, or denied by any of the members of the church, that portion of the membership that remains in adherence to the faith as it was before the change was attempted or made, is the church. Nor does it make any difference in law how few this adhering portion may be, or how numerous the changing membership, the church is that part of the members remaining true to the original tenets. Saint Jerome anciently said: "Wherever the true faith is, there is the church."

In spiritual harmony with this principle of law is the statement of Joseph Smith, the Seer, whom these Utah people profess so much to revere, and whose words when possibly favorable to them they so delight to quote. He wrote as follows:

"There are many called, but few chosen; and why are they not chosen? Because their hearts are *set upon the things of the world* and are aspiring to the honors of men; they do not learn the lesson that the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven; and that the powers of heaven can not be controlled nor handled, only upon the principles of *righteousness*. That they may be conferred upon us it is true, but when we undertake to cover our sins, to gratify our pride, vain ambition, or to exercise *dominion or compulsion* over the souls of the children of men in any degree of unrighteousness; behold the heavens withdraw themselves, the Spirit

of the Lord is grieved, then amen to the priesthood, or to the authority of that man. Behold, ere he is aware, he is left to kick against the pricks; to persecute the Saints, and to *fight against God*."

And again:—"We further caution our brethren against the impropriety of the organization of bands or companies, by *Covenants, Oaths, Penalties, or Secrecies*. * * And let our covenants be that of "the everlasting covenant," as it is contained in the holy writ, and the things which God *has* revealed to us; pure friendship always becomes weakened the very moment you undertake to make it stronger by *Penal Oaths and Secrecy*."

This statement was made forty five years ago, and it seems almost prophetically, as if the Spirit guided the pen of the Seer. "But when we undertake to *cover our sins* to gratify our *pride, vain ambition*, or to exercise *dominion or compulsion* over the souls of the children of men in any degree of unrighteousness." This is the condition named by the Seer. In the same letter we see that he cautions the Saints not to enter into secret organizations, or to bind themselves by oaths to each other.

THE GOSPEL FAITH CHANGED BY BRIGHAM AND OTHERS.

The case is clearly made. There was an attempt to introduce other principles into the faith, quite distinct to any of those held at the organizing of the church. What was sought to be incorporated into the creed was directly contrary to the faith formulated and taught from 1830 to 1844. The inevitable ensued; the man or men who essayed to do it, practiced deceitfully and corruptly. There was *an end to their priesthood*. They no longer held the "powers of heaven." They were practicing unrighteously; not in a small degree, but in a great and vital departure from the faith. "He that repenteth and is baptized shall be saved," "This is my gospel," "What-

soever is more or less than this cometh of evil," had been given as the Divine Will. These were the constitutional pillars of the law. To depart from them was to say "Amen to the priesthood" of him who did so. If our Utah Mormon contemporaries have not departed from the original faith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, there has not been an apostacy, nor departure from the faith since Christ's ascension.

If, as the *News* claims, the "power of the priesthood was conferred for the last time," there were those upon whom it had been bestowed who would remain true to the faith. With them would this power of the priesthood remain. It could not be with those who were practicing secretly what was contrary to the publicly avowed faith of the church. It must be with the few, or the many, who remained in adherence to the faith as it existed when it was bestowed. This is the claim of the Reorganized Church. It takes the position that the power to act for the upbuilding of the church having been conferred, there would always remain men of the faith who could perform every functional duty necessary to the perpetuation of the work. If the quorum of the First Presidency was broken by death, or apostasy, the twelve, if faithful, would remain as the leading quorum. If both the Presidency and Twelve were destroyed by similar means, the Seventy remained. If all three of these leading quorums should conclude to abandon the faith, or be killed in the massacres of the faithful, the priesthood held alike by *Elder* and *Apostle*, would hold efficient authority to still carry on the work.

How happened it? The First Presidency was broken by death. The

Twelve had the opportunity to carry the work on to its completion, as it had been begun. Did they? Let the history of the long thirty-nine years since elapsing tell.

A REVELATION MUST BE LAWFULLY EXAMINED AND TESTED.

What revelation touching the church was presented to the Twelve, then to the Seventy, and thence to the *whole body* under the administration of President Young?

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY MUST BE ORGANIZED BY REVELATION. (SEE DOC. AND COV., REV. FEB. 17, 1834.)

Through whom did the command to organize the First Presidency in 1847 come?

THE POLYGAMY REVELATION NEVER TESTED EVEN IN THE BRIGHAMITE CHURCH.

When and where was the revelation on plural marriage submitted for examination before its final foisting upon the people in 1852? The spirit of it had ruled *in secret* for years, so we are told by its devotees. The man who presented it stated that it had been in his care all the years from Joseph's death to that day.

NAUVOO TEMPLE NOT "FINISHED."

The Temple was unfinished. The dread consequences of a failure to do that work in due time, were known to Pres. Young and his co-workers, and public statement of them had been made. The Lord had said: "I give you sufficient time in which to accomplish this work." If you do it you shall be blessed within its walls. If you do not do it you shall be rejected as a church. The iniquity of unrighteousness which caused the "heavens to withdraw themselves" and "grieved the Spirit," was at work. Priesthood, the right to act in the name of Christ *as quorums*, was at an end. Whatever acts were done by them afterward must be weighed in

the balances of individual righteousness and acceptability before God. The powers by which the gospel should be preached and souls won to Christ and salvation had been conferred. They could not be destroyed, except by personal unrighteousness, and unlawful ministrations. Those persons upon whom the authority to act had been conferred who accepted the new departure, were left to fight against God. On the other hand those who had received this right to act and who refused to accept the new dogma were still commissioned of Christ. His work must be completed in righteous administration of the gospel law as it had begun. Upon these, sooner or later, the lot of reorganizing the broken but faithful element into an acceptable whole was to fall.

IN NOVEMBER, 1851, THE SPIRIT OF GOD REVEALED THE COMING REORGANIZATION.

Just prior to the crowning act of forgetfulness of the original faith upon the part of those who had forfeited their priesthood, a number of those who had been true to the constitution of the Church met by direction of the Spirit and avowed their allegiance to that constitution, and in formal terms declared their opposition to the iniquity that had been secretly at work. These men held valid priesthood. It had been conferred upon them as individuals in the days of the Seer. No power on earth could divest them of it, unless they had become iniquitous, or had denied the faith. This they had not done.

THE ELDERS INQUIRE FOR THE OLD PATH,
AND WALK THEREIN.

They had refused to accede to the new dogma, preferring the command of God: "Thou shalt take the things written in my scripture to be *my law* to govern my church." Those men had the right, under God's command, to re-

organize the church so sadly marred, and they set about doing so. The Spirit worked with them, and the end though sure, is not yet.

SUPREME RULE.

THE Utah leaders deny that the United States has supreme control in and over the territories; and yet Joseph the Seer, whom they profess to revere, said in his famous letter to John C. Calhoun:

"Congress, sent to do the people's business, has all power. * * * Congress, with the President as executor, is as almighty in its sphere as Jehovah is in his."—*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, pp. 395-6.

And in his "Views on the Government, and Policy of the United States," he said:

"In the United States *the people* are the government, and their united voice is the *only* sovereign that should rule, the *only* power that should be obeyed, the *only* gentlemen that should be honored, at home and abroad, on the land and on the sea"—*Times and Seasons*, vol. 5, p. 533.

If the Utah Mormons were governed by these principles, they would not submit to have their leaders rule in political and civil affairs, nor force them or influence them into evading or resisting the Nation's laws.

A GOOD IDEA.

"OF what use is the Holy Ghost," said an old Utah Mormon, a few days since, "if we have to be told every thing by our leaders, and must blindly obey their counsels? Why, according to their policy there is no use for it—no place for it. We are no better than the mules over Jordan, if we can do only as we are told!" And the old Saint straightened up, and trode more firmly, as his new born idea struggled into the light.