
DOCTRINE & COVENANTS

131-132

CHRONOLOGY

- **May 14, 1843** – Hyrum Smith preaches against polygamy.
- **May 16-17, 1843** – JS Comments and Sermon, **D&C 131**; cosmology.
- **May 23, 1843** – Emma Smith temporarily accepts polygamy and witnesses several marriages.
- **May 26, 1843** – Hyrum accepts polygamy, and the temple quorum reconvened and everyone re-endowed.
- **May 27, 1843** – JS indicates to the Church that Hyrum holds the highest calling in the Church.
- **June 23, 1843** – JS arrested for treason against MO, freed by Nauvoo Court on July 1.
- **July 12, 1843** – Revelation, **D&C 132**; polygamy. Hyrum requests revelation in order to help covert Emma. Unsuccessful.
- **September 17, 1843** – Emma Smith temporarily accepts polygamy. The temple quorum receives Emma as the first woman of the quorum and the highest ordinances of the gospel are for the first time delivered to JS and Emma together. JS voted President of the temple quorum.

Note that this is a topic that is difficult for most people. If you have questions or comments, please feel free to contact me. For those that are interested in reading more scholarship on polygamy, the following books may be useful:

- B. Carmon Hardy, *Doing The Works of Abraham: Mormon Polygamy: Its Origin, Practice, and Demise* (Norman, OK: Arthur H. Clark Company, 2007).
- Kathryn M. Daynes, *More Wives Than One: Transformation of the Mormon Marriage System, 1840-1910* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001).
- Todd Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997).

This short article also may be helpful:

- Spencer Fluhman, "'A Subject that Can Bear Investigation:' Anguish, Faith, and Joseph Smith's Youngest Plural Wife" *Mormon Historical Studies* 11 (Spring 2010): 41-51.

It is currently not available online, but I would be happy to forward it along to anyone interested.

JOSEPH SMITH'S SERMONS [SAME INTRO AS 130-131]

After JS's death, when scribes continued the JS History ("Manuscript History of the Church"), they expanded, edited, and combined sermon notes for content. Sermon notes varied in quality and sometimes there was only one available account. For a great case study of this process see my write-up on the textual history of the "King Follett Discourse" here:

<http://www.splendidsun.com/wp/a-textual-history-of-the-kfd-part-i-sources-to-the-history-of-joseph-smith/>

As JS did not record many of his Nauvoo-era teachings and revelations, when Orson Pratt updated the 1876 Doctrine and Covenants to include some of these items, he went to the "Manuscript History of the Church" for sermon accounts. The following several sections are of this type.

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 131 COMMENTS AND SERMON, MAY 16-17, 1843

SETTING

JS travelled to Carthage and Ramus (now Webster), Illinois. William Clayton recorded some of JS's private comments as well as some of his public comments.

PUBLICATION HISTORY

These comments and sermon were only recorded by William Clayton. The Clayton diary is not publicly available, but some scholars gained access in the early 1980s. Clayton's diary was expanded in the MS History, which was used for the "History of Joseph Smith" and published the 1850s *Deseret News* and *Millennial Star*. Orson Pratt then edited this publication for inclusion in the 1876 Doctrine and Covenants. This is one of the least edited JS Sermon reports.

SOURCE MATERIAL

William Clayton Diary ¹	1981 D&C, Orson Pratt
[May 16]...Prest. J. & I went to B.F. Johnsons to sleep. Before we retired the Prest. gave bro Johnson & wife some instructions on the priesthood. He put his hand on my knee and says "your life is hid with Christ in God," and so is many others". Addressing Benjamin says he "nothing but the unpardonable sin can prevent him (me) from inheriting eternal glory for he is	

¹ James B. Allen, *No Toil nor Labor Fear: The Story of William Clayton* (Provo, UT: BYU Press, 2002), 394-396.

<p>sealed up by the power of the priesthood unto eternal life having taken the step which is necessary for that purpose." He said that except a man and his wife enter into an everlasting covenant and be married for eternity while in this probation by the power and authority of the Holy priesthood they will cease to increase when they die (ie. they will not have any children in the resurrection, but those who are married by the power & authority of the priesthood in this life & continue without committing the sin against the Holy Ghost will continue to increase & have children in the celestial glory. The unpardonable sin is to shed innocent blood or be accessory thereto. All other sins will be visited with judgement in the flesh and the spirit being delivered to the buffetings of Satan untill the day of the Lord Jesus." I feel desirous to be united in an everlasting covenant to my wife and pray that it may soon be.</p> <p>Prest. J. said that the way he knew in whom to confide, <u>God told him</u> in whom he might place confidence.</p>	
<p>He also said that in the celestial glory there was three heavens or degrees,</p>	<p>1 In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;</p>
<p>and in order to obtain the highest a man must enter into this order of the priesthood</p>	<p>2 And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];</p>
<p>3 And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.</p>	<p>3 And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.</p>
<p>and if he dont he cant obtain it. He may enter into the other but that is the end of his kingdom he cannot have increase.</p>	<p>4 He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase.</p>
<p>[May 17] ...At 10 Prest. J. preached on 2nd Peter ch 1 - He shewed that knowledge is power & the man who has the most knowledge has the greatest power. Also that salvation means a mans being placed beyond the powers of all his enemies.</p>	
<p>He said the more sure word of prophecy meant, a mans knowing that he is sealed up unto eternal life by revelation & the spirit of prophecy, through the power of the Holy priesthood.</p>	<p>5 (May 17th, 1843.) The more sure word of prophecy means a man's knowing that he is sealed up unto eternal life, by revelation and the spirit of prophecy, through the power of the Holy Priesthood.</p>
<p>He also showed that it is impossible for a man to</p>	<p>6 It is impossible for a man to be saved in</p>

be saved in ignorance.	ignorance.
Paul had seen the third heavens and I more. Peter penned the most sublime language of any of the apostles... ...In the evening we went to hear a Methodist preacher Lecture. After he got through Pres. J. offered some corrections as follows. The 7th verse of C 2 of Genesis ought to read God breathed into Adam the his spirit or breath of life, but when the word "ruach" applies to Eve it should be translated lives.	
Speaking of eternal duration of matter he said. There is no such thing as immaterial matter. All spirit is matter but is more fine or pure and can only be discerned by purer eyes	7There is no such thing as immaterial matter. All spirit is matter, but it is more fine or pure, and can only be discerned by purer eyes;
We cant see it but when our bodies are purified we shall see that it is all matter.	8We cannot see it; but when our bodies are purified we shall see that it is all matter.
The gentleman seemed pleased & said he should visit Nauvoo immediately.	

COMMENTS

1. Some have wondered if this refers to the three degrees of glory, but it appears that it does refer to divisions of Celestial glory. On May 12, 1844, JS preached "there are many mansions for those who obey a celestial law." See also Hyde's "A diagram of the Kingdom of God," *Millennial Star* 9 (January 15, 1847): 23-24.
2. Note that the bracketed language was added by Orson Pratt for the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. Remember the priesthood language in relation to the temple quorum. And why was the Nauvoo Temple established? (D&C 124: the fullness of the priesthood)
5. "Through the power of the Holy Priesthood." This is the Fullness of the Priesthood.

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 132

REVELATION, JULY 12, 1843

SETTING

Hyrum Smith, previously a vocal and dedicated foe of polygamy was converted to the principle by Brigham Young. Emma Smith had vacillated and Hyrum believed that if JS would receive a revelation through his seer stone, that Hyrum could then take it to Emma and convert her. JS indicated that the seer stone was not necessary, and told Hyrum that he would not likely succeed. She completely rebuffed Hyrum and eventually destroyed the original copy of the revelation. Newel K. Whitney's secretary, however, had made a copy.

I think that it is important to keep in mind while reading this document that it was intended to convince JS's wife that polygamy was required by God.

PUBLICATION HISTORY

This revelation was not made public until 1852 when Brigham Young had Orson Pratt announce polygamy to the World. Surprise! In 1876 Orson Pratt deleted the 1835 "Articles on Marriage" from the D&C and added this revelation. It had been awkward that the Saints own D&C had declared that the Church was officially against polygamy.

COMMENTS

1. As a side note, what does the Book of Mormon say about David and Solomon's marital practice?
3. What had the "new and everlasting covenant" referred to before this revelation?
6. Harsh binary ultimatum here.
7. "who is anointed" What does this mean? Hint: I'm pretty sure it is literal.
7. "there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred" – This was likely true at the time...however the last 170 or so years of succession in the First Presidency hinges on it not being the case.
7. remember 131:5 – "The more sure word of prophecy means a man's knowing that he is sealed up unto eternal life, by revelation and the spirit of prophecy, through the power of the Holy Priesthood."
- 8-12. Law.
- 13-14. Through Christ's law is the only way to remain.
15. Perhaps not unlike the difference between pre-mortal and mortal relationships?
16. And here we have the spin on Jesus' comments to the Pharisees.

17. Elsewhere JS described this also relating to child-to-parent sealings. See Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph Smith*, 232, July 16, 1843; George D. Smith, *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1995), 104, May 18, 1843.
19. On the blessings of perseverance in marriage sealings, see also Ronald O. Barney, ed., *The Mormon Vanguard Brigade of 1847: Norton Jacob's Record* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2005), 64; Revelation, July 27, 1842, *Selected Collections*, 1:19; Vilate Kimball, Letter to Heber C. Kimball, June 8, 1843 in Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball, An Apostle; the Father and Founder of the British Mission* (Salt Lake City: Kimball Family, 1888), 345.
20. What does this mean? I encourage you to read closely, JS's "King Follett Sermon" from the original sources and the June 16, 1844 "Sermon in the Grove." Some of your assumptions may not be what JS taught.
24. Why the plural? I don't know, but the plural keeps popping up in interesting places, including at key places in the temple.
26. Do you think this is true?
27. Compare to the Clayton diary up above. It appears that over time the sin against the Holy Ghost has been somewhat expanded.
28. What priesthood, do you think?
- 30-33. So the promises to Abraham are to be our promises.
34. These are details not in the Biblical account.
36. An Abrahamic test. That which is wrong under one condition may not be in another...still, seek professional help if you believe God or and angel wants you to have sexual relationships with anyone besides your one spouse and or kill anyone.
- 37-38. This is a hard thing for all believers of the bible to figure out.
39. This is a bit different from the Book of Mormon, I think.
40. "restore all things" - I think this is key to JS.
- 41-43. Yes, I imagine that "adultery" was on the mind of Emma.
44. Yikes.
46. This aspect of the sealing authority has not to my knowledge ever been in play.
50. This is a very peculiar verse. What do you think it means in context of what was happening?
51. This is perhaps a nod to an offer of polyandry...maybe.
52. And now it starts to get even more personal.
54. Whoa.
55. This verse is key to understanding what JS is trying to do.

56. So, JS hasn't handled everything perfectly and Emma and JS should reconcile.

57. Emma still demanded to have financial title to several key properties.

59. Here is also another very important principle. Church leaders may not be doing everything right. But God in his mercy justifies them. I think he does the same for everyone of us...otherwise everything becomes one giant mess.

61-3. I think "virgin" here doesn't mean the technical definition in this case, at least based on JS's practice.

61. Consent of the wife. This is an area where men (including JS) regularly did not live up to the Lord's standard.

64: Again, this is directed at Emma. Any surprise why she didn't particularly respond very well to this?

65. Law of Sarah: Not sure, but perhaps to give wives to one's husband.