

“My Principality on Earth Began”: Millennialism and the Celestial Kingdom in the Development of Mormon Doctrine¹

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Early Mormonism was thoroughly premillennial.² The saints watched for latter-day signs of the times in anticipation of Jesus Christ’s imminent return, spoke of them in sermons, and published them in newspapers. The righteous would reign for one thousand years while the wicked would be swept off the earth to await their resurrection and judgment. Mormon missionaries urgently preached that God was gathering his elect before Christ’s coming in the clouds—a priority that overshadowed a salvation-to-heaven-or-damnation-to-hell eschatology in Mormon discourse of the period. Latter-day Saint views of the very nature of eternal post-mortality, which to the present are considered a distinctive aspect of Mormon belief, developed out of their anticipation of Christ’s millennial reign. Specifically, beliefs about the location and type of life enjoyed by the millennial saints directly informed their expectations about life *beyond* that first thousand years. Mormons combined millennially-interpreted biblical texts about procreation, husbandry, and community building with Joseph Smith’s revelations on heavenly degrees of glory. Before Mormons speculated about the creation of new worlds and countless spiritual offspring, they wrote about the millennial paradise on the very earth on which they stood where they would raise children in a peaceful kingdom. This article explores the intersections between the nature of the millennium and the nature of eternal life in early Lat-

ter-day Saint thought, including the idea of continued procreation in the eternities. These intersections are traceable in revelations to Joseph Smith as well as the writings of other prominent Mormon leaders published in the Church's various periodicals.

Despite Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon's paradigm-shifting vision of a three-tiered afterlife in 1832, early Latter-day Saint views on eternity remained situated within the traditional heaven/hell dichotomy common to Christianity. Rather than exploring the potential ramifications of this multi-level heaven, many Mormons simply began using the term "Celestial" in place of "Heaven" while keeping to the same general framework of their Protestant heritage.³ The saints fully expected the imminent millennial return of Christ, an expectation that often outweighed other doctrinal questions. It was "a day of warning, and not a day of many words" (D&C 63:58)⁴ as an early revelation dictated by Joseph Smith asserted. Latter-day Saints, like many other Christians, looked to John's Apocalypse for clues about the end of the world, including its timing. The revelation of the three degrees of glory (D&C 76) was shortly followed by a revelation written as a series of questions and answers regarding the Apocalypse.⁵ Rather than asking about the particulars of the degrees of glory, the questions in Doctrine and Covenants 77 shifted their attention from the "where" of eternal life discussed in the previous revelation back to the "when"—unsurprising, given the urgency felt by early Latter-day Saints regarding Christ's return, the coming resurrection, and the thousand years of peace on earth. One question focused specifically on the place of the Latter-day Saints themselves on the timeline of the earth's "temporal existence":

Q. What are we to understand by the sounding of the trumpets, mentioned in the 8th chapter of Revelation?

A. . . . in the beginning of the seventh thousand years . . . the Lord God [will] sanctify the earth, and complete the salvation of man, and judge all things, and shall redeem all things, except that which he hath not put into his power, when he shall have sealed all things . . . and the sounding of the trumpets of the seven angels are the preparing and finishing of his work, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years—the preparing of the way before the time of his coming. (D&C 77:12)

This dispensationalist revelation, following closely on the

heels of Doctrine and Covenants 76, depicts Christ as returning to judge, redeem, and seal. The questions do not examine the implications of section 76 where humans would be assigned to kingdoms based upon their works or the law they were willing to obey. The return of Christ was the foremost issue, receiving more attention here than the differences between the “mansions” Jesus said he would “prepare” for his disciples (John 14:2–3).

Smith’s question-and-answer revelations were more of a group-inspired or directed product than the univocal dictates of a lone prophet. Mormons in a variety of leadership positions had ample opportunity to develop and disseminate their own views, including some women. By 1840, the Saints continued blurring the conceptual boundary between the millennial earth and the celestial kingdom. For instance, the editor of the *Times and Seasons* published a four-part essay called “Mrs. Laura Owen’s Defence Against the Various Charges That Have Gone Abroad.” According to the editor, Owen was “cast out of the Presbyterian church for embracing truth.”⁶ Among her heresies was her expectation of Christ’s second coming—her hermeneutic is typical of the literalism common to the early Saints: “How unexpected will that day come to the greatest part of the world! . . . A gentleman told me the other day, we were not to understand the prophecies faster than their fulfillment. That, indeed, is a strange idea. If that be the case, what is the use of them?”⁷ It was imperative to believe their living prophet, gather with the Lord’s elect, and prepare for the day when Christ will “restore the earth to its former paradise, establish his kingdom and reign with all his saints a thousand years.”⁸ Owen continued: “As you hope to enjoy a millennium: as you hope to come into the celestial glory of God and enjoy his presence,” you must “embrace the fullness of the gospel.”⁹ The celestial glory is introduced here as another way to describe the millennial earth, while no mention is made of other degrees of glory. The eschatology remains bound to the earth upon which they stood.

John’s Apocalypse and other biblical scriptures continued to inform Mormon expectations for their celestial millennium. Similar to Laura Owen, Heber C. Kimball discussed the celestial kingdom using millennial concepts. In his missionary journal Kimball asked the Lord to “bless this people, save them from sin, and pre-

pare them for thy celestial kingdom, and that thy servant may meet them around thy throne.” He hoped to gather people to Zion where they would “be prepared to meet the Savior when he shall descend in the clouds of heaven” at the beginning of the millennium.¹⁰ The Lord coming in the clouds is an image found in Matthew 24, the millennial chapter that Joseph Smith revised.¹¹ The worthy are depicted as gathering around God’s throne, just as in John’s Apocalypse.¹²

Images from the millennium described in John’s Apocalypse also saturated an 1841 epistle from the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The epistle informed readers that “the set time to favor Zion has come.” Completing the Nauvoo temple would give “the great Jehovah . . . a resting place on earth . . . where his law shall be revealed, and his servants be endued from on high.” Those who would “live according to God in the Spirit” would soon “come forth in the celestial kingdom . . . a place where . . . the saints shall unite in the songs of Zion, even praise, thanksgiving and hallelujahs to God and the Lamb, that he has wrought out their deliverance, and bound Satan fast in chains.” These are clear descriptions of the millennial reign found originally in the Apocalypse of John, where a “new song” of praise would be sung to “God and the Lamb, and where Satan would be bound in chains.”¹³

In addition to John’s Apocalypse, Jesus’ New Testament promise that the “meek shall inherit the earth” carried special significance for the oft-displaced Latter-day Saint communities. The tenth Article of Faith asserted that Christ would return and renew the earth to its paradisiacal Edenic state, which the saints hoped to inherit. Prolific pamphleteer and apostle Parley P. Pratt described this paradisiacal state in his article “Regeneration and Eternal Duration of Matter.” When Christ returns, wrote Pratt, “the curses which came upon the earth by reason of sin will then be taken off.” Barren deserts would become fruitful, mountains and valleys would be made flat. “Men will then plant gardens and eat the fruit of them, they will plant vineyards and drink the wine of them, they will build houses and cities, and inhabit them, and the Lord’s elect will long enjoy the work of their hands.” Citing these prophecies from Zechariah 8, Pratt looked forward to the

“great Sabbath of creation; the thousand years of rest and peace; the long expected Millennium.”¹⁴

As Latter-day Saint writers described the millennial kingdom with greater specificity, their literal reading of scripture not only received scornful attention from other sects; it also created some tension within the fold. A literal Bible reading combined with Joseph Smith’s revelations commanding the Saints to gather and build Zion, which led to concrete preparations as the Saints sought to build a literal Zion on earth. These attempts were often met with hostility from those who felt the saints too freely mingled the temporal and spiritual.¹⁵ Further, other Christian preachers sometimes found the material expectations of the saints alarming. In the spring of 1840 a pamphlet skirmish was waged between two Mormon elders and a Methodist preacher. The Methodist had charged the Saints with anticipating a “carnal Paradise,” evidently a heaven with procreation. Mormon elder Samuel Bennett countered the preacher’s criticism by differentiating between the resurrected Saints and those still mortal at the time of Christ’s coming: “Because those saints who are alive, and remain at the coming of the Lord, will not be so far changed, as that the relation of husband and wife, parent and children, will be annihilated, therefore, you would fain create the impression that we teach procreation in the resurrected saints.” Bennett insisted the preacher was “a base, unblushing liar.” This did not prevent the preacher from publishing another pamphlet with the same claim.¹⁶ Meanwhile, Elder Erastus Snow had arrived in the area. He published a retort, taking issue with the assertion that “The Mormon resurrection is in carnality, begetting children, multiplying, &c.”¹⁷ Snow said Bennett had already “positively contradicted” the claim. Citing Isaiah 65, Snow said “the saints who are still alive on earth at the time of Christ’s coming, (who have not been raised from the dead, because they have not died,) will continue to multiply and replenish the earth; to build houses and inhabit them, to plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them; they and their children, and their children’s children, through the millennium or 1,000 years reign.”¹⁸ The elders in this discussion believed procreation was for pre-resurrected beings.

Were these elders retroactively proof-texting their scriptures for such views, or were such views spurred by the scriptures them-

selves? Regardless of the precise line of influence, Latter-day Saints believed there would in fact be children living during the millennium, whether they were born during the thousand years or were simply alive at the coming of Christ and remained on earth to reign. Parents in Nauvoo who desired their children to be “saved in the celestial kingdom” were encouraged to teach them to be “prayerful, watchful, and godly.” If they imbibe them with “the doctrines of the kingdom” “they will soon come to the day, that they will grow up without sin unto salvation.” Growing up without sin unto salvation is a significant phrase that stems from a promise made to the Saints in 1831 regarding the state of children during Christ’s millennial reign (D&C 45:58).¹⁹ Once again, the celestial kingdom and millennial earth are invoked in the same breath.²⁰

A millennium that would include children, homes, flocks, gardens, temples, and saints seemed thoroughly material. Materiality was central to Parley Pratt’s conception of the millennium. Even the physical earth itself was to receive salvation through Christ’s atonement. “In the resurrection, and the life to come,” Pratt wrote,

men that are prepared will actually possess a material inheritance on the earth. They will possess houses, and cities, and villages, and gold and silver, and precious stones, and food, and raiment, and they will eat, drink, converse, think, walk, taste, smell and enjoy. They will also sing and preach, and teach, and learn, and investigate; and play on musical instruments, and enjoy all the pure delights of affection, love, and domestic felicity. While each, like the risen Jesus can take his friend by the hand and say: “Handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”²¹

Pratt’s expectations of a material millennial kingdom were grounded upon a literal reading of the Bible. His was not an undisputed reading, however. Other ministers took notice and responded, and their responses shed further light on developing Mormon views. S. A. Davis, editor of a Universalist newspaper, visited the Mormons at Kirtland, Ohio, in 1837. The universalist reported that he had been “hospitably entertained and kindly treated by Elder [Parley] Pratt and others, who spent most of their time while we were there, in showing us the ‘buildings of the temple,’ and giving us instruction of their new religion.”²² Davis was

most impressed with the “kindness” and “liberality of sentiment and Christian charity” exhibited by the Saints, but found them in some respects quite “superstitious.” What struck him most was their belief “that the glorious millenium [sic] is at hand.” On this point “they have too much worldly wisdom connected with their religion—too great a desire for the perishable riches of this world—holding out the idea that the kingdom of Christ is to be composed of ‘real estate, herds, flocks, silver, gold,’ &c. as well as of human things.”²³ Undoubtedly Pratt’s instruction to Davis emphasized the materiality of the kingdom.

Davis wasn’t alone in his opposition to Mormon materialist millennialism. Even some Mormons themselves were uncomfortable with Pratt’s material descriptions. W. A. Cowdery, editor of the *Messenger and Advocate* at Kirtland, reprinted Davis’s article, commending Davis’s kindness but taking issue with his objection to the temporal expectations of the Saints by offering his own clarifications. “There may be,” conceded Cowdery, “and indeed we fully believe there is, an undue attachment in some of the saints to amass wealth and heap up perishable treasure.” However, “We believe the gentleman must be mistaken if he has imbibed an idea that we consider the kingdom of heaven will be composed of real estate, houses or lands, flocks or herds.” To Cowdery, the kingdom “consisted in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.”²⁴ Competing interpretations continued not merely between Mormons and outside groups, but within the fold itself.²⁵

Like Cowdery, Joseph Smith undoubtedly believed the kingdom of God would include righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. But his revelations also described a literal kingdom on earth to which Christ would return and reign for one thousand years with the Saints (D&C 29:11). At the end of the thousand years Satan would be loosed for a little season and a last battle waged (D&C 43:29–33). Ultimately, the earth would be fully purified and the Saints would inherit it for eternity. To Parley Pratt *this* was “the great secret, which none but the saints have understood; and which was well understood by them in all ages of the world; which is this, that man is to dwell in the flesh, upon the earth with the Messiah . . . not only one thousand years, but forever and ever.”²⁶ The earthly millennium extended into eternity; the de-

scriptions of the thousand-year reign were the buds of eternal life's blossoms. Rather than an ethereal spirit existence or an eternal beatific vision, the Saints anticipated a continuation and perfection of the millennial earth. "After all our longings for a place beyond the bounds of time and space . . . we are at last brought to our common senses, and given to understand, that man was destined forever to inherit this self same planet . . . it being redeemed, sanctified, renewed, and purified, and prepared as an eternal inheritance of immortality and eternal life."²⁷ The Saints were beginning to more explicitly differentiate between the millennial reign and the celestial kingdom.

The earth's actual transition from millennial to celestial was poeticized in the first Latter-day Saint hymnbook compiled by Emma Smith. This hymn, published in 1835, preceded the squabbles between Cowdery, Bennett, Pratt, and others:

That glorious rest will then commence,
Which prophets did foretell,
When Christ will reign, with saints on earth
And in their presence dwell
A thousand years: O glorious day!
Dear Lord prepare my heart,
To stand with thee, on Zion's mount,
And never more to part.

Then when the thousand years are past,
And satan is unbound,
O Lord preserve us from his grasp,
By fire from heav'n sent down,
Until our great last change shall come,
T' immortalize this clay,
Then we in the celestial world
Will spend eternal day.²⁸

What would take place during that eternal day? John's "new song" sung by the saints in the millennium provided a scriptural touchstone for Pratt's interpretation of the "where" and "what" of eternal life: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy

blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9–10). "Immortal man," wrote Pratt, will be "made a king and a priest to God." Earth is man's everlasting home. It, along with "the other material creations which spangle the firmament with a flood of glory, are all heavenly kingdoms, together with the inhabitants thereof: so far as they are glorified. Heaven, then, is composed of an innumerable association of glorified worlds, and happy immortal beings, beaming with an effulgence of light, intelligence and love, of which our earth, small and insignificant as it is, must form some humble part."²⁹ Millennial earth would rise to join celestial earths.

As these planets would be organized, so would human families. Just as the location of eternal life was revealed by Joseph Smith, so too was the substance. Joseph emphasized the human element of the millennium that would inform his understanding of the post-millennium. A frequently cited verse from 1 John promised Christ's disciples that when he returns "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). Joseph explained that this scripture referred to the recognition and relation between humans and Christ after his second coming: "When the savior appears we shall see that he is a man like unto ourselves, and that same sociality which exists amongst us here will exist among us there only it will be coupled with eternal glory which we do not enjoy now."³⁰

Smith's project became that of securing relations on earth, binding them here that they would be bound in heaven. As early as 1839 Pratt was aware of the possible eternal duration of the family. It was Joseph, Pratt explained, who first taught him that the wife of his bosom "might be secured to me for time and all eternity; and that the refined sympathies and affections which endeared us to each other emanated from the fountain of divine eternal love. It was from him that I learned that we might cultivate these affections, and grow and increase in the same to all eternity; while the result of our endless union would be an offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven, or the sands of the sea shore."³¹ This view was much closer to the "carnal Paradise" earlier criticized by the Methodist preacher. The earth, according to Pratt, "is the place where family organization is first formed for eternity,

and where the kindred sympathies, relationships and affections take root, spring forth, shoot upward, bud, blossom and bear fruit to ripen and mature in eternal ages.”³²

This focus on families was the purpose of the coming of Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord. Joseph rephrased Elijah’s “turning” the hearts of the children to the fathers as described in the book of Malachi:

Now the word turn here should be translated (bind or seal) But what is the object of this important mission or how is it to be fulfilled, The keys are to be delivered the spirit of Elijah is to Come, The gospel to be established the Saints of God gathered Zion built up, & the Saints to Come up as Saviors on mount Zion. They would become saviors by building temples and performing all of the necessary ordinances for “all our Progenitors who are dead & redeem them that they may Come forth in the first resurrection & be exalted to thrones of glory with us, & here in is the chain that binds the hearts of the fathers to the Children, & the Children to the Fathers which fulfills the mission of Elijah.”³³

Elijah would come shortly before the millennium not merely to herald the thousand-year reign of Jesus but to help initiate crucial soteriological practices. Joseph Smith’s millennialism became a project in which the Saints would actively participate. They would not simply wait for the coming of Christ and be taken up to heaven for a blissful eternity. Rather, they would preach the gospel and seal their families together prior to the coming of Christ, then continue that work during the millennium. Otherwise the earth would be “smitten with a curse” (D&C 128:18; Mal. 4:5–6). For Joseph, the true curse would be the cessation of the family unit. He preferred annihilation of the self over the annihilation of relationships between family and friends.³⁴ He claimed to have received the priesthood authority necessary to make familial commitments permanent: in New Testament parlance, to bind and loose on earth and in heaven. For centuries many Christians taught that such relationships would dissolve in eternity. The gospel of Luke provides the commonly-cited reply Christ gave to the riddle of the Sadducees. He states that in the resurrection people “neither marry, nor are given in marriage.”³⁵ Commenting on these verses, Joseph asserted that

No man can obtain an eternal Blessing unless the contract or cove-

nant be made in view of Eternity All contracts in view of this Life only terminate with this life. . . . Those who keep no eternal Law in this life or make no eternal covenant are single & alone in the eternal world . . . and are only made Angels to minister to those who shall be heirs of Salvation never becoming Sons of God having never kept the Law of God ie eternal Law.”

The same scripture used by many interpreters to deny family relations in the resurrection was used by Joseph to affirm the necessity of authorized ordinances performed in view of eternity.³⁶ “The earthly is the image of the Heavenly,” Joseph explained, which “shows that is by the multiplication of Lives that the eternal worlds are created and occupied.³⁷

As the earthly was in the image of the heavenly, so was the millennial earth in the image of the celestial. For Latter-day Saints, the geography—as well as activities—of the millennium extended into eternity. “They are not only to reign on the earth a thousand years after the resurrection,” Orson Pratt explained, citing Revelation 5:10, “but in another passage he says, ‘They shall reign for ever and ever,’ (Rev. 22:5).”³⁸ The present earth would become the place of the millennial kingdom, which itself would be an embryo of eternity. The concepts informing the thousand-year millennial age rolled into the eternal celestial kingdom of God. Parley P. Pratt clothed the beautiful and eternal condition of his earthbound Zion in poetry—but even that glorious inheritance would be composed of “worthless toys,—Mere baubles” were it not for the presence of his awaiting family—the promise of an earthly millennium extended into eternity. Pratt wanted nothing more than to live on earth as he would in Heaven and in Heaven as he lived on earth:

I love thee, for thyself, O land of Zion! . . .
 There dwell my family,—my bosom friends,—
 The precious lambs of my Redeemer,—my
 Best of Heaven’s gifts to man,—my germs of
 Life and immortality,—my hope of Heaven,—
 My principality on earth began,—
 My kingdom in embryo, big with thrones
 Of endless power and wide dominion.
 Ye kindred spirits from worlds celestial!
 Offsprings of Deity. . . .³⁹

Early Latter-day Saint leaders including Parley P. Pratt initially conflated or equated the millennial and celestial location and condition. Even as they began to develop theoretical differences between these states they continued to project their early millennial-driven views onto broader eternal realms.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Mormon Scholars Foundation Summer Seminar held at Brigham Young University, July 5, 2010. The author thanks the Mormon Scholars Foundation as well as the seminar participants for their advice and support.

2. The best study on Mormon millennialism is Grant Underwood, *The Millenarian World of Early Mormonism* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1993). Despite being exhaustive, Underwood's work does not draw the connection between Mormonism's millennial views and their peculiar beliefs about the nature of the afterlife.

3. Not all Saints were enthusiastic about the new perspective. See Grant Underwood, "'Saved or Damned': Tracing a Persistent Protestantism in Early Mormon Thought," *BYU Studies* 25, no. 3 (Summer 1985): 93.

4. Unless otherwise noted in the case of important differences, all Doctrine and Covenants references are to the LDS Church's 1981 edition.

5. Section 76 was recorded on February 16, 1832. Section 77 is dated March 1832. A brief revelation calling Frederick G. Williams to the First Presidency (now section 81) separates the two transcripts in the revelation book. See Robin Scott Jensen, Robert J. Woodford, and Steven C. Harper, eds., *Manuscript Revelation Books*. Facsimile edition. Vol. 1 of the Revelations and Translations series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2009), 255.

6. "Mrs. Laura Owen's Defence Against the Various Charges That Have Gone Abroad," *Times and Seasons* 2, no. 4 (December 15, 1840): 254.

7. *Times and Seasons* 2, no. 6 (January 15, 1841): 279. Phillip L. Barlow describes Mormons as employing a "selective literalism" approach to scriptural interpretation and traces that impulse to the present in *Mormons and the Bible: The Place of the Latter-day Saints in American Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 32.

8. *Times and Seasons* 2, no. 7 (February 1, 1841): 301.

9. *Times and Seasons* 2, no. 6 (January 15, 1841): 279.

10. "Extract from the Journal of Heber C. Kimball," *Times and Seasons* 2, no. 19 (August 2, 1841): 493.

11. See Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27. The revision of Matthew 24 was originally published as an unsigned broadsheet at Kirtland, Ohio in 1831 called "Extract from the New Translation of the Bible." See Peter Crawley, *A Descriptive Bibliography of the Mormon Church Volume One, 1830–1847* (Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1997), 60–61. Franklin D. Richards later included it his 1851 book *The Pearl of Great Price*, published in Liverpool, England.

12. See Rev. 5:11; 7:11.

13. "An Epistle of the Twelve, to the Brethren Scattered Abroad on the Continent of America, Greeting," *Times and Seasons* 2, no. 24 (October 15, 1841): 569.

14. Parley P. Pratt, "Regeneration and Eternal Duration of Matter," *The Millennium, and Other Poems: To which is Annexed, a Treatise on the Regeneration and Eternal Duration of Matter*, (New York: W. Molineux, 1840), 145–46.

15. See J. Spencer Fluhman, *A Peculiar People: Anti-Mormonism and the Making of Religion in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

16. Samuel Bennett, *A Few Remarks by way of Reply to an Anonymous Scribbler, Calling Himself a Philanthropist, Disabusing the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints of the Slanders and Falsehoods which he has Attempted to Fasten Upon It* (Philadelphia, Pa.: Brown, Bicking & Guilbert, 1840), 14.

17. *E. Snow's Reply to the Self-Styled Philanthropist, of Chester County* (November 1840), 10.

18. *Ibid.*

19. N.a., "Schools," *Times and Seasons* 3, no. 6 (January 15, 1842): 662.

20. Raising children in the millennium was also described in the first Mormon hymn book:

"There shall the will of God be done,
And saints and angels greet;
And there, when all in Christ is one,
The best from worlds shall meet.
There in the resurrection morn',
The living live again,
And all the children will be born
Without the *sting of sin*."

See Hymn number 34 in Emma Smith, comp., *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter Day Saints* (Kirtland, Ohio: F.G. Williams & Co., 1835), 45 (emphasis in original).

21. Park seems to present materialism as a concern that progressively displaced Pratt's millennial focus whereas I argue his materialism was an outgrowth of his millennialism and literalist biblical interpretations.

22. S. A. Davis, "Kirtland,—Mormonism, &c.," *Glad Tidings and Ohio Christian Telescope* 1, no. 17 (March 14, 1837): 263.

23. *Ibid.*

24. W. A. Cowdery, ed., "Editorials," *Messenger and Advocate* 3, no. 7 (April 1837): 489. Cowdery may well have believed there would be a material millennium with houses and so forth, but the anticipatory acquisitiveness of the Saints evidently bothered him to the extent that it seemed symptomatic of their unrighteous temporal expectations.

25. This point serves as caution against historical treatments of Mormonism that present a linear or monolithic progression of doctrines and beliefs.

26. Parley P. Pratt, *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People, Containing a Declaration of the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of the Latter-day Saints* (New York, N.Y.: W. Sandford, 1837), 166–67.

27. *Ibid.*, 83.

28. Edward Partridge, "Let Zion In Her Beauty Rise," Hymn number 66 in Smith, *A Collection*, 88.

29. Pratt, "Immortality and Eternal Life," 35.

30. William Clayton diary, April 2, 1843. See Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980), 169. Selections from this entry became D&C 130.

31. Parley P. Pratt, *The Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt* (New York: Russell Brothers, 1874), 329. This is another example of theological extensions and developments Mormon leaders fueled alongside—and following the death of—Joseph Smith. Benjamin E. Park argues persuasively for the need to recognize such theological negotiations in "(Re)Interpreting Early Mormon Thought: Synthesizing Joseph Smith's Theology and the Process of Religion Formation," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 45, no. 2 (Summer 2012): 59–88

32. Parley P. Pratt, *Key to the Science of Theology: Designed as an Introduction to the First Principles of Spiritual Philosophy; Religion; Law and Government; As Delivered by the Ancients, and as Restored in This Age, For the Final Development of Universal Peace, Truth and Knowledge* (Liverpool: F.D. Richards, 1855), 162. Pratt earlier used the budding/blossoming anal-

ogy in regards to education and knowledge. See Pratt, "Immortality and Eternal Life," 35.

33. Wilford Woodruff Journal (January 21, 1844), in Ehat and Cook., *Words*, 318; spelling in original.

34. "More painful to me the thought of anihilation [sic] than death, if I had no expectation of seeing my mother Brother & Sisters & friends again my heart would burst in a moment & I should go down to my grave," Joseph Smith Diary, by Willard Richards (April 16, 1843) in Ehat and Cook, *Words*, 196.

35. Luke 20:35.

36. See Colleen McDannell and Bernhard Lang, *Heaven: A History*, 2d ed. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Nota Bene, 2001), 24–32. They discuss other strategies employed by nineteenth-century religious figures on 259–64.

37. Franklin D. Richards, "Scriptural Items," (July 16, 1843), Ehat and Cook, *Words*, 232.

38. Orson Pratt, "Power and Eternity of the Priesthood," *The Seer*, 1, no. 10 (October 1853): 150.

39. Pratt, *Autobiography*, 388–89.