

summer of 1831, that they should gather up from the Eastern lands, New York, the New England States, Pennsylvania and the Middle States, from Ohio and various parts of the United States, upon the western frontiers of Missouri; that is, that they should continue to gather, but not let their flight be in haste, and let all things be prepared before them. God led forth the Prophet that He had raised up to the western part of Missouri, and pointed out, by His own finger, where the great city of Zion should stand in the latter days, the great city of the New Jerusalem that should be built up on the American continent. I say He pointed out these things and gave direction to His people to gather to that land, and commanded them to lay the cornerstone of a great and magnificent temple that was to be built during the generation in which the people then lived. The cornerstone was laid in the summer of 1831, in Jackson County, State of Missouri. All these things were done by the people of God by commandment and revelation, and in this way they still further showed, one to another and to all people as well as to the heavens, that they did love the Lord their God.

Many commandments were given to the people about affairs there in Jackson County—how they should regulate their property and how they should become one—revelations that were intended to produce the greatest possible union that could exist among the people of God, if they had been complied with. The people complied with them in part, but yet, through inexperience, for the want of understanding, because of the weakness of mortality, and because of the wicked and corrupt traditions that they had imbibed in regard to property, they did not fully carry out the mind and will of God in relation to their con-

secrations and inheritances. It is true that they purchased the land from the American Government, or much of it, and paid their money into the land office in that county; but yet, not carrying out the command of God to the very letter, the Lord was not pleased, and before they had been located there fourteen months He threatened them very severely. Said He, “If you do not remember my commandments to keep them, and not only my commandments, but the Book of Mormon, which I have caused to come forth and to be written for your edification, as the New and Everlasting Covenant; if you do not give heed to the words of instruction and counsel, and the commandments written in that book, behold, saith the Lord, there remains a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the inhabitants of Zion.”

We did not know what the judgment or scourging was. We had only been about fourteen months on the land, and we did not understand the nature of it. The Lord told us in another revelation, which is published in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, that, inasmuch as we did not do just precisely as He told us to do in regard to obtaining our lands, we should be driven by our enemies—“Behold and lo, your enemies shall be upon you; you shall be persecuted and driven from city to city, and but few of you shall stand to receive an inheritance.” We could not comprehend all this. We thought perhaps we should be faithful enough that this prophecy might not be fulfilled upon our heads. Although they were the very best people on the earth, yet there was a lack among them, through want of experience or through the former traditions of the Gentiles which they had imbibed from their childhood; but the Lord required us to be very good and to give heed to