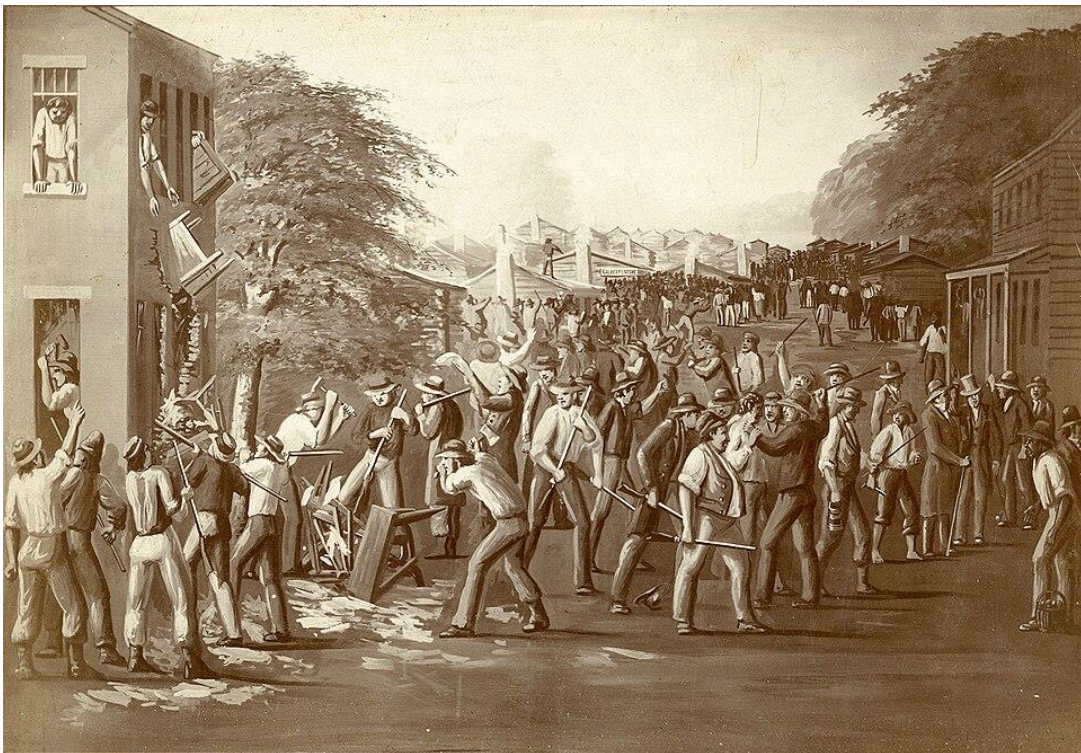


Doctrine and Covenants 98

The Words of the Saint's Prayers enter the Lord's ears - Revelatory Comfort while Under Siege in Missouri



C.C. Christensen, 1882, *The Destruction of the Printing Press in Missouri*

The Section heading for this section gives the background that helps us understand the situation in Missouri and why they might need guidance and comfort from the Lord. It reads:

Section Heading for D & C 98

Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, August 6, 1833. This revelation came in consequence of the persecution upon the Saints in Missouri. Increased settlement of Church members in Missouri troubled some other settlers, who felt threatened by the Saints' numbers, political and economic influence, and cultural and religious differences. In July 1833, a mob destroyed Church property, tarred and feathered two Church members, and demanded that the Saints leave Jackson County. Although some news of the problems in Missouri had no doubt reached the Prophet in Kirtland (nine hundred miles away), the seriousness of the situation could have been known to him at this date only by revelation.

The Knights and other members of the Church had come to Missouri to build a city where the pure in heart could dwell. The other citizens in Missouri saw it differently.

The mob's demands that the Saints leave Jackson County by the first of the year, the destruction of the print shop where the Book of Commandments was being printed, vandalizing shops and businesses and tar and feathering the bishop and another man in front of a cheering crowd in the town square of Independence must have come with great anguish and worry.

The revelation that became Section 98 was received on August 6th, only shortly after the horrific events of July 20 in Independence, Missouri. It appears from Newel Knight's journal that a copy of this revelation reached the Saints in Missouri in the latter part of September, about six weeks after it was received.¹

The first words of the revelation, "I say unto you my friends, fear not, let your hearts be comforted; yea rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks," let them know the Lord was mindful of their trouble, and reading the second verse, "for your prayers have entered the ears of the Lord of the Sabaoth, and are recorded with this seal and testament--the Lord hath sworn and decreed that they shall be granted," must have felt like salve on a wound.

It was further written in verse three that, "Therefore, he hath given this promise unto to you, with an immutable covenant that they shall be fulfilled; and all things wherewith you have been afflicted shall work together for your good, and to my name's glory saith the Lord."²

Newel Knight recorded that they received counsel and instruction from Brother Joseph to help them in their "unpleasant circumstances." They decided to seek remediation from the legal system.

"The mobocratic spirit is not put out, but it is seen manifesting itself from time to time, and under these circumstances and by proper counsel it was decided to petition Governor Dunklin for redress and protection; brothers Orson Hyde and W. W. Phelps were sent to Jefferson City for that purpose, bearing a document setting forth our grievances, and giving the details of the shameful proceedings of July."³

The petition recounted the destruction of property in various instances, threats to life, and the hostile declaration of the mob that they must leave the county. With stirring words, they appealed to the principles of the Constitution to emphasize their need for soldiers to come and offer protection.

The petition in part stated:

¹ Newel Knight Journal, Allen typescript, p. 24

² Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Doctrine and Covenants 98:3.

³ Newel Knight Journal, Allen typescript, p. 24-5

“Influenced by the precepts of our beloved Savior, when we have been smitten on the one cheek, we have turned the other also, when we have been sued at law, and our coat been taken, we have given them our cloak also. When they have compelled us to go with them a mile, we have gone with them twain, we according to the laws of God and man we have borne the above outrages without murmuring: But we cannot bear them any longer, according to the laws of God and man we have borne enough.

Believing with all honorable men that whenever that fatal hour shall arrive that the poorest citizen’s person, property, or rights and privileges shall be trampled upon by the lawless mob with impunity, that moment a dagger is plunged into the heart of the constitution, and the Union must tremble! Assuring ourselves that no republican will suffer the liberty of the press, the freedom of speech, and the liberty of conscience to be silenced by a mob, without raising a helping hand to save his country from disgrace. We solicit assistance to obtain our rights, holding ourselves amenable to the law of our country, whenever we transgress them.”

Newel wrote that the Governor received the men courteously but gave them no answer. A reply from Governor Dunklin came on October 19, 1833. He advised them to follow the law and take their case to court, and that the judge of their circuit “was a conservator of the peace.” Dunklin wrote that he believed that the law was open to redress and that the courts would find in their favor.⁴

The letter from the Governor “comforted the hearts of the brethren,” who believed they would be protected in their rights.⁵ The words of Section 98 became more significant at this moment to the Missouri Saints in Independence that when they were first received.

Twelve days later, on October 31st, the Missouri mobs attacked settlements of church members. Newel Knight described the circumstances:

From the 31st of October until the 7th of November, there was one continual scene of outrages of the most hideous kind. The mob collected in different parts of the county and attacked the Saints in most of their settlements. Houses were unroofed, others were pulled down, leaving women and children, and even the sick and dying exposed to the inclemency of the weather. Men were caught and whipped or clubbed until they were bruised from head to foot, and some women were left upon the ground for dead.

The most horrid threats and imprecations were uttered against us, and the women and children were told, with cursings, that unless they left the county immediately, they should be killed.”⁶

⁴ Ibid., p. 25.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid. pp. 25-26.

A Miraculous Healing for Philo Dibble

Newel continued in his journal and recounted the events of Monday, November 4, 1833. A large group of Missourians captured the Mormon Ferry at the Big Blue River. David Whitmer rode to Kaw Township to recruit help. About 30 men responded, probably some included Colesville Branch members who lived in that vicinity who took arms and rushed to the site. Shots rang out as soon as the Missouri mob saw the men coming. In the gunfire that ensued two Missourians and one of the brethren, Andrew Barber, were killed. One of the wounded was Philo Dibble. A surgeon attended to him and said he had never seen a man survive such a wound.

Newel wrote: [some punctuation added]

“The next day I went to see brother Dibble and found the house where he lay surrounded by the mob. I managed to get in and went to the bed. Two men came and seated themselves at the door and looked upon brother Dibble lying there in extreme agony. I drew the bed curtains with one hand and laid the other upon his head, praying secretly to our Heavenly Father in his behalf. I immediately left, as I did not wish to put myself into the power of the mob.

The next day business took me some ten miles from the place, where I met brother Dibble making his escape from the county. He told me that as soon as I placed my hand upon his head the pain and soreness seemed gradually to move as before a power driving it, until in a few minutes it left his body. He then discharged about a gallon of putrid matter, and the balls and pieces of clothing which had passed into his body. O how our hearts rejoiced and gave thanks to that God who had heard and answered the secret prayer of his servant, although in the midst of an infuriated mob.”⁷

The words of D & C 98:2 about the words of the Saints prayers entering into the Lord’s ears were proven true in the healing of Philo Dibble.

Diane Mangum – August 2025

⁷ Ibid. p. 26.