

Section 53

Sidney Gilbert was an entrepreneur, a business partner of Newel Whitney in northern Ohio, when the first missionaries to that area converted him in 1830. In the late spring of 1831 Sidney may have felt left out. He was not named in section 52 among the many missionaries called by the Lord to journey to Missouri that summer, and Joseph had prophesied that “the elders would soon have large congregations to speak to and they must soon take their departure into the regions west.” So Sidney asked Joseph what the Lord had in mind for him to do.¹

The Lord had important work for Sidney and his family to do. He and his wife Elizabeth traveled to Missouri with Joseph Smith to obey section 53. There, at the Lord’s command (section 57), Sidney established a store to provide for the Saints. He helped Bishop Partridge purchase land for Zion. When the Saints were driven from Jackson County in 1833, Sidney was among the Church leaders who tried to pacify the mob and then obtain justice. The dreaded disease cholera slew Sidney in the summer of 1834. Until the end he was anxiously engaged in the cause of Zion.

¹ “[Historical Introduction, Revelation, 8 June 1831 \[D&C 53\]](#),” *The Joseph Smith Papers*; “[History, 1838–1856, volume A-1 \[23 December 1805–30 August 1834\]](#),” p. 121, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, accessed July 30, 2020.