

Section 125

From the confines of a jail cell in Liberty, Missouri, Joseph wrote to Bishop Partridge in Illinois that the Saints could buy land in Iowa Territory for \$2 per acre over twenty years with no money down, and the Saints made a deal for the land.

Joseph escaped from Missouri and joined the Saints in Illinois a few weeks later. He purchased land on a peninsula pushing into the Mississippi River across from the Saints' Iowa land and named it Nauvoo. The Illinois land was comparatively expensive. Joseph hoped that the Church could buy it with consecrated funds and offer lots to the poor at prices they could afford, but the offerings were insufficient. It became clear that the Church would have to sell lots in order to pay its mortgage. So Joseph urged Saints in outlying areas to gather to Nauvoo and help pay for the land. Saints across the river wondered if that applied to them. Joseph sought and received section 125 to answer their question.

The Lord's will, declared in section 125, is for the Saints to build a city in Iowa across from Nauvoo and to call it Zarahemla. The Saints were to gather from everywhere else and settle there, in nearby Nashville, Iowa Territory, or across the river in Nauvoo. As usual, there is an explicit rationale in this revelation. The Lord gives a reason why the Saints should do His will: "That they may be prepared for that which is in store for a time to come" (D&C 135:2).

Saints moved as a result of section 125. It was read to the Saints at General Conference on April 6, 1841. "Many of the brethren immediately made preparations

for moving,” and came as soon as their planting was done.¹ Alanson Ripley reported that “Joseph said it was the will of the Lord the brethren in general ... should move in and about the city Zerehemla with all convenient speed which the saints are willing to do because it is the will of the Lord.”²

¹ George D. Smith, ed., *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton* (Salt Lake City: Signature, 1995), 86.

² Alanson Ripley, in John Smith, Journal, March 6, 1841, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.