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The Book of Daniel in Early Mormon Thought

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Responding to a revelation that he and select associates “journey to the land of Missouri,” Joseph Smith visited the state for the first time in July and August 1831. Traveling from his newly established home in Ohio, he concentrated his visit in western Missouri, south of the Missouri River, where several of his followers had arrived earlier. On 20 July 1831 he identified Missouri as the land God had “appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints. Wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion” (D&C 57:1-2).¹ Two days later ground was dedicated for the construction of a temple.

After returning to Kirtland, Joseph delivered a revelatory summary of his work in Missouri to those followers who had remained in Ohio:

The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth. . . . Call upon the Lord, that his kingdom may go forth upon the earth, that the inhabitants thereof may receive it, and be prepared for the days to come, in the which the Son of Man

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shall come down in heaven, clothed in the brightness of his glory, to meet the kingdom of God which is set up on the earth (D&C 65:2, 5).²

Thus, as early as 1831, the image of the “stone cut out of the mountain without hands” (Daniel 2:44) was tied to the Mormon kingdom of God, particularly in Missouri. It is clear from a variety of sources that the book of Daniel was used by early Mormons to predict and justify the triumph of the kingdom they felt sure would be the outcome of their missionary work. This paper examines in more detail the role of the book of Daniel in early Mormonism by focusing on the 1830s, and more particularly on its place in the religious and political culture of the early Mormon Church.³ What is attempted here is an invitation to further study on this subject.

The Book of Daniel in Western Culture

The book of Daniel reports the events in the life of a Judean exile at the court of Babylon beginning about 605 B.C. The first six chapters describe certain events that occurred to Daniel and three of his companions in this captivity over about a seventy-year period. The remaining six chapters, written in the first person, record a series of visions of future events. The original texts are in two languages: Daniel 2:4-7:28 are in Aramaic; the rest, in Hebrew.

As Joseph had been in Egypt at the beginning of Israel’s history, Daniel is in Babylon at the beginning of the critical period of the Exile. Like Joseph, Daniel is tempted, but remains faithful to Israel’s God. And, like Joseph, Daniel interpreted dreams and was used by God to influence the political events of his world.

The significant stories of the book include the blessings of abstinence from wine (chap. 1); the delivery of the three persons from the fiery furnace (chap. 3); Daniel’s interpreting the handwriting on the wall (chap. 5); and Daniel in the lion’s den (chap. 6). Perhaps the most influential

part of the volume was Daniel's interpretation of the king's dream (chap. 2) in which the kingdoms of the world in the last days are described as being finally destroyed by a stone cut out of the mountain without hands which rolled forth until it filled the earth. The final chapters (7-12) seem to provide more detail on these events of the last days during which the "Ancient of Days" would play a significant role, as will the "saints of the most high."

Regardless of the arguments relating to the origin of the book of Daniel, whether the Cycle of Daniel stories really date to the sixth century B.C. or, as is more commonly believed by scholars, to the events of the second century B.C., where its apocalyptic messages provided inspiration for the Jews during the Maccabean Revolt, it is clear that the volume was heavily influenced by the author of *1 Enoch* and that Daniel's book in turn helped shape the early Christian book of Revelation.⁴ Its prophetic timetable and its vision of the collapse of the four world kingdoms before the triumph of the fifth and final kingdom has provided grist for the mills of millennial movements ever since.⁵

Interestingly, it was while writing commentaries on the book of Daniel that the first Christian histories were produced in the third century A.D.⁶ Utopian groups throughout European history have also found inspiration in Daniel. Even the English Reformation and later the Puritan Revolution made effective use of its themes.⁷ For all of these groups the book of Daniel reminded and reinforced in true believers (1) that God's purposes are greater than the plans of men; (2) that God is the sovereign Lord over the whole history of mankind; and (3) that God will at last vindicate his people, Israel. Daniel's prophecies also assured the faithful that the end was near when God's kingdom would triumph over all others.⁸

The American Puritan search for self-identity was heavily influenced by biblical metaphors. As Sacvan Bercovich and others have shown, Puritan typology drew on the book

of Daniel, as is evidenced particularly in many early American sermons, histories, and biographies. Thus the ideological roots of the American identity were early worked out in biblical terms. As a biblically conceptualized nation, America's colonial founders combined providence and patriotism in ways that used biblical metaphors (such as Daniel) that "Americanized" the Millennium.⁹ John Berens has argued that this Puritan heritage included (1) the early identification of America as God's New Israel; (2) the jeremiad tradition, particularly the election and fast-day sermons; (3) the blending of national and millennial expectations; and (4) providential history and historiography.¹⁰ Together, these presupposed and thus assured the faithful of God's involvement in history as he led and protected his people. Combined, they helped shape American political culture at the same time they grounded it solidly in biblical images. While they looked back to ancient scripture, they also looked forward to the Millennium.¹¹

America's founding fathers obviously drew on this heritage. From its start, but especially during its Revolutionary years, American political ideology drew on the Bible to justify the emerging nation's special place and divine mission in world history. Thus our Revolutionary forefathers found in the book of Daniel an apocalyptic rationale for their own work.¹²

Book of Daniel in Early Mormon Thought, 1823-37

One of the few Smith family documents that has been preserved from the eighteenth century was a letter of Asael Smith, Joseph Smith's grandfather. Written to Jacob Town in January 1796, it clearly reflects the Revolutionary rhetoric which incorporated views taken from Daniel chapter 2:

He [speaking of the "supreme ruler"] has conducted us through a glorious Revolution and has brought us into the promised land of peace and liberty, and I believe that He is about to bring all the world into the same

beatitude in His own time and way; which, altho' His way may appear never so inconsistent to our blind reason, yet may be perfectly consistent with His designs. And I believe that the stone is now cut out of the mountain without hands, and has smitten the image upon his feet, by which the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold, *viz.*, all the monarchial and ecclesiastical tyranny will be broken to pieces and become as the chaff of the summer thrashing floor, the wind shall carry them all away, that there shall be no place found for them.¹³

Throughout his life, Joseph Smith was exposed to and influenced by the themes and images of the book of Daniel. Wilford Woodruff, a close associate and careful record keeper, reported that one of the scriptures cited by the angel Moroni to the young Joseph Smith in September 1823 was Daniel 2.¹⁴ Toward the end of his life, the Mormon prophet taught, "I calculate to be one of the instruments in setting up the kingdom of Daniel."¹⁵ Clearly, the book of Daniel gave focus and meaning to his mission. Just how important it was becomes apparent when we examine more closely the early years of the Mormon movement.

In spite of critics' statements to the contrary, Mormonism is a biblical religion. Its founding prophet and his followers grew up with, respected, and regularly used the biblical text in their quest for self-understanding as well as in rationalizing and defending the restored Church. Joseph Smith never taught that the Book of Mormon was a replacement for the Bible, and his own "new translation" of the Bible was, from our perspective today, a very conservative work which modified or enlarged (in targumic fashion) barely 10 percent of the total verses in the KJV, and the bulk of these were found in only five books (Genesis and the four Gospels).¹⁶ He loved and believed in the Bible, and no serious study of his life and thought can ignore this fact. The book of Daniel and its use in the early Church provides further evidence for this view.

As shown above, the book of Daniel (esp. chap. 2) was early tied into the Mormon experience in Missouri, and specifically into their quest for Zion and the kingdom of God. Other revelations given by Joseph Smith to the Church contain phrases and concepts from the book of Daniel. In August 1830, a revelation identified the "Ancient of Days" in Daniel 7 as Adam (D&C 27:11).¹⁷ In March 1831, another revelation spoke of the New Jerusalem, which was to be built in Jackson County, as a "place of safety for the saints of the Most High God" (D&C 45:66).¹⁸ In December 1832, another revelation used the phrase "desolation of abomination" of Daniel 9:27 (D&C 88:85).¹⁹ Also the Mormon health code, the Word of Wisdom, promises wisdom and health to those who obey its counsel in a manner possibly reminiscent of Daniel 1.²⁰ In February 1834, after Parley P. Pratt and Lyman Wight had arrived in Ohio from Missouri to seek counsel regarding the Mormon expulsion from Jackson County, Daniel 2 may be alluded to in a revelation explaining why the Saints had been persecuted.²¹ It was in this context that an "army of Israel" [Zion's Camp] was to be organized to "lift up an ensign of peace."²² In March 1835, additional revelation spoke for the first time of the Valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman where Adam, "the Ancient of Days," had blessed his own family anciently (D&C 107:53-54).²³ In May 1838 its exact location in northern Missouri was identified.²⁴

When the Kirtland Temple was dedicated in March 1836, the dedicatory prayer petitioned the Lord to remember "that the kingdom, which thou hast set up without hands, may become a great mountain and fill the whole earth. That thy church may come forth out of the wilderness of darkness, and shine forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."²⁵ And when the commandment to build a temple at Far West, Missouri, came in April 1838, it was justified in terms of Daniel's visions.²⁶

This emphasis on Daniel in the early revelations was also reflected in early Mormon newspapers. As early as September 1832, *The Evening and the Morning Star* (Independence, Missouri) cited Daniel 2 in its discussion of the future of the Church.²⁷ In the February 1833 issue it printed a letter from a missionary who enthusiastically reported his work in these terms: "Thus you see brethren that the cause of truth is prospering, and thanks be to our God . . . and as good old Daniel said, his kingdom shall break in pieces all other kingdoms, so it shall be done."²⁸ In May 1833, the same periodical declared, "There are great things near, and while one nation rises to rejoice, behold another sits down to weep. Verily the fountains of the nations will soon be broken up, for the Lord hath decreed a consumption, and none can stay his hand; yea, as Daniel said: unto the end of the war desolations are determined."²⁹

Such emphasis continued in the Mormon press. By 1835 Mormon elders were thoroughly immersed in Daniel typology. The extant records of several early missionaries confirm this.³⁰ Writing to Oliver Cowdery in November 1835, William W. Phelps wrote that the stone of Daniel 2 started rolling out of the mountain with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon: "There began the church of Christ in 1830; yea, there the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, as foretold by Daniel, commenced rolling to fill the earth, and may it continue, in a moral sense, in dreadful splendor, till it fills the whole, and wickedness is ended. So much for the Hill Cumorah."³¹ By 1836 the same periodical, the *LDS Messenger and Advocate* (Kirtland, Ohio) was equating the "Saints of the Most High" in Daniel with members of the Church.³² And in September 1837, this periodical carried a letter from the Kirtland bishopric in which members there were admonished to endure their troubles so that "the foundation of the kingdom of God might be laid on a sure and certain basis, so that the prophetic vision of Daniel might most certainly be fulfilled.

That this kingdom might break in pieces all other kingdoms, and stand forever."³³

Early Mormon hymnals were another outlet for poetic sentiments that took seriously the visions of Daniel. In the first such collection (1835), at least four hymns incorporated such imagery. Consider these examples:

The prophecies must be fulfill'd
Though earth and hell should dare oppose;
The stone out of the mountain cut,
Though unobserved, a Kingdom grows.³⁴

As Clouds see them fly to their glorious home —
As doves to their windows in flocks see them come,
While empires shall tremble and kingdoms shall rend
And thrones be cast down as wise Daniel proclaimed.

And Israel shall flourish and spread far abroad,
Till earth shall be full of the knowledge of God:
And thus shall the stone of the mountain roll forth —
Extend its dominion, and fill the whole earth.³⁵

Other hymn texts relating to Daniel could be cited,³⁶ but these examples illustrate how saturated early Mormon thought was in Daniel typology.

It seems apparent, then, that the kingdom of God in early Mormon thought was identified with the fifth kingdom of Daniel 2, the "stone cut out without hands."³⁷ Even the United States Constitution, while honored and respected by early leaders as a hallowed document, was viewed as but a prelude to the ultimate government by God and his chosen servants.³⁸ While American protestants saw and encouraged a secularization of the Puritan vision, early Mormons carried it to its logical conclusion.

This vision had serious implications. For Church members it inspired a powerful belief that motivated a zealous missionary program as well as a firm individual commitment to play a part in building Zion in the last days. But non-Mormons saw this Mormon quest as a threat to the

established order and took action against it. Even some members revolted at developments that seemed to threaten their own views of what America should be. In some ways, Laurence Moore is right when he argues that as "outsiders" in American society, early Mormons helped their neighbors define for themselves what it meant to be an American by defining what one was not.³⁹ For this reason Mormon inclusiveness and communitarian outlook were attacked as "un-American" wherever Mormons gathered to build their Zion. These same developments also help us understand the internal dissent that emerged after 1834 in the Church and reached its peak in 1837 in Kirtland and 1838 in northern Missouri. Both experiences were connected to each other and both grew out of the real and imagined consequences of the Mormon quest for Daniel's kingdom.

Marvin Hill has argued that the dissension in Kirtland began after the return of Zion's Camp in 1834, and that this growing dissatisfaction was as much cultural as it was economic when the problems relating to the Kirtland economy erupted in 1837; these became more an excuse than a reason for dissent.⁴⁰ What really bothered the dissenters were changes in Church doctrine and organization and their own consequent conclusions that Joseph was getting too powerful and too involved with the "temporal." Much of the growing opposition came, therefore, to center on key aspects of the kingdom of God. These included the "redeeming" of Zion, the consecration of personal property, and the subsequent threats (so they argued) to their personal freedoms. There was here a conflict basic to American political and religious culture.⁴¹

At least two related aspects need further analysis. The first was articulated in Nathan Hatch's essay, which looked at seekers and primitive Christians in the early Republic who were insistent that the promise of freedom of the American Revolution must be carried out in the churches also.⁴² Many early Mormon converts came out of this mil-

ieu. Second, and this attitude was related to the first, was a kind of antifederalism that distrusted centralized authority and emphasized individual and states' rights.⁴³

One application of this thesis to Mormonism argues that the earliest associates of Joseph Smith came from pockets of antifederalism in New York and Pennsylvania. While more demographic study is needed, surely the political attitudes of those who got involved in the money-digging companies in the 1810s and 1820s shared these anticentralist views. Each seems to have had a seer stone (or closely followed someone who did) for direct communication with Deity, and each participated in the kind of extended limited partnerships these groups created while they engaged in their treasure-hunting activities. These treasure-seeking companies were essentially democracies in which each person shared, according to their contributions, everything they found in their common quest.⁴⁴

Those who formed the first congregations in Mormonism, whether they had been money-diggers or not, shared these views. The early principles of common consent, of group nominating and voting, reveal the democratic tendencies of the movement. But as the Church grew and as new converts required greater organization, it was not possible to maintain a simple democracy where each member had equal access either to power or to revelation for the group as a whole. Thus the Hiram Page episode was an important step toward a more centralized leadership structure.⁴⁵ The organization of the First Presidency in 1831 and the calling of the first Quorum of Twelve Apostles in 1835 were similar developments in this direction.⁴⁶ The publishing by 1835 of a volume of formal revelations was also viewed by many of the earliest converts as a corruption of "primitive" Mormonism.⁴⁷ One important theme in the subsequent writings of those individuals who left the Church in the 1830s was that the Church had changed since they first joined.⁴⁸

There was, then, a definite movement toward centralization, or a kind of federalism, within Mormonism between 1830 and 1840, and this development was linked to both internal and external perceptions and was, in large measure, justified by the use of Daniel's vision of the kingdom of God, a stone cut out without hands and rolling forth to consume the world.⁴⁹

The role of the book of Daniel was particularly noticeable in the events of 1837-38 when both internal dissent and external persecution came to a head. In Kirtland the dissension finally manifested itself in the organization of an opposition church which expressed a longing for the simpler, more "primitive" days of the movement. Calling themselves the "Church of Christ," they reemphasized seer stones, attacked the "authoritarianism" of Joseph Smith, and stressed a democratic approach to church government.⁵⁰ The movement was denounced in a speech by Sidney Rigdon, a member of the First Presidency, in July 1837 in the Kirtland temple. In his speech he cited Daniel 2 in his emphasis on the "Saints" taking the kingdom. Mary Fielding wrote from Kirtland on 8 July 1837 to her sister in Canada:

We had a quiet comfortable waiting upon God in his House. President Rigdon delivered a very striking discourse from Daniel Chap[ter] 2nd Vrs 44. . . . He told us with great warmth indeed, that the Kingdom which was set up should never be destroyed, nor left to other people. No, said he, nor yet change Governours. I really thought from what he said that all opposers from that time rest satisfyed that their exertions would be fruitless, but I do not expect in the least that Satan will give up the contest.⁵¹

Here Daniel's prophecies were used as a proof text against the dissenters who wanted the kingdom for themselves.

But things got worse, and in January 1838 Joseph Smith abandoned Kirtland and headed for Far West, Missouri.

But before departing, he gave another series of revelations, one of which further spelled out the subordinate role of stake organizations to the First Presidency – a development that led to immediate consequences in Missouri as David Whitmer, a sympathizer with the dissenters in Kirtland, was released as the Missouri stake president.⁵²

But dissent followed Church leaders to Missouri. The Whitmer faction and those who shared the views of the dissenters in Kirtland were tried for their membership and expelled from the Church and therefore the community.⁵³ All of this has seemed sinister to subsequent commentators, but if it is put into the larger perspective of the Mormon quest for a covenant community (a quest that can be followed in Western culture from Acts 2 to the Puritans) and the kingdom of God, then it can be seen as part of a consistent development going back to at least 1831. It also prepares us for a closer look at the events and ideas of the last months of Mormonism in Missouri.

The “Danites” in Mormon History

The student of Mormon history discovers that there are very few primary sources available or extant that deal with the last months of 1838 in Missouri. Because the vast majority of texts relating to these critical months were written *after* December 1838, the importance of the Albert Perry Rockwood letters becomes apparent. They are significant contemporary records of the inner history of the Latter-day Saint community at Far West during this period.⁵⁴

Besides their detail for the events during the final months of 1838, revealing, as it were, a closeness that puts the reader in the eye of the storm, these letters also offer an alternative solution to the old debate over the existence and function of Danites in Mormon society. The existence of groups of armed Mormons called “Danites” during 1838 in Missouri has both plagued faithful Mormons and has also seemingly provided almost unlimited “historical” li-

cense to their critics ever since. The presence of the word "Danites" in early sources dealing with the Mormon War in Missouri and the fact that some in the Latter-day Saint community, apparently reacting to the clamor about Danites, crossed out or attempted to delete references to Danites, including the Rockwood material in the Church Archives, have unfortunately further suggested the worst interpretation to critics of the Church as well as to more well-meaning defenders of the faith.

The conceptual framework of Stephen LeSueur's recent book, *The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri*, is based on the assumption that Joseph Smith knew about and even led marauding Danite bands on offensive raids on non-Mormon Missouri farms and villages in 1838. LeSueur's volume consistently maintains an interpretation of the Danites which places major blame on Mormon leaders for their problems in northern Missouri. Thus he concludes that the Court of Inquiry in November 1838 correctly bound Joseph Smith over for trial based on the evidence presented against him, particularly by Sampson Avard. On this matter LeSueur's volume follows directly an old interpretation.⁵⁵

The only other major interpretation has been advanced by Leland Gentry, first in his 1965 dissertation and later as an article in *Brigham Young University Studies*.⁵⁶ Basically, Gentry argued that the Danites were real, but that they went through three stages of development: (1) in June at Far West and in July at Adam-ondi-Ahman, groups were organized to aid specifically in the expulsion of dissenters from the Mormon communities; (2) from June to mid-October 1838, Danites provided protection for Mormons against mob violence, primarily a defensive movement; and (3) in October 1838, during the so-called "Mormon War," the Danites began to steal from non-Mormons, a stage and activity justified and led by Sampson Avard. The value of Gentry's thesis has been that it admits to the existence of Danites and even that Joseph Smith could have

known about the first two stages, but it dissociates the Mormon prophet from its most militant and illegal manifestations. The irony, argues Gentry, was that Avar, in providing the testimony against Joseph Smith in November 1838 as a witness for the State, successfully shifted all blame for his own activity onto the Mormon prophet.

Historiographically, one finds that the farther removed from 1838 a source is, and the more critical the author is of the Church, the greater the detail the account will contain of illegal activity of such a group. Thus, accounts written by either apostates or other enemies of the Church appearing by 1840 tend to support a more secretive, militaristic, extralegal interpretation of Danite activity. And generally, accounts by faithful Mormons after 1840 tend to be very defensive as they reacted to these written attacks. The main difficulty with most of the critical evidence is that it comes from individuals who were clearly prejudiced against Joseph Smith. In fact, nearly all of the most negative accounts can be traced to two main sources—either the highly questionable and surely self-serving testimony of Sampson Avar at the November 1838 Missouri Court of Inquiry, or to individuals who had or did come to question the whole concept of the kingdom of God in early Mormon thought.

Basically, Avar testified that Joseph Smith was “the prime mover and organizer of this Danite Band,” that its purpose was to bring forth “the millennial [*sic*] kingdom,” and that the band was bound together by covenants of secrecy and oaths of death. He revealed the details of a purported secret Danite oath and constitution and described in some detail the night raids this band was to have undertaken against their enemies in northern Missouri. In his testimony Avar referred to the “little stone” spoken of by the prophet Daniel, which he claimed Mormon leaders taught was to go forth and destroy all that was “rotten,”

first in the state of Missouri and then, presumably, in the United States.⁵⁷

Rockwood's own narrative, if examined closely, suggests that both Mormons and non-Mormons have fundamentally misunderstood what the Danites were, and this misunderstanding is perpetuated in the continued use of the term only in ways that critics of the Church early attached to it. Rockwood's record for 22 October 1838 reads:

Far West is the head quarters of the Mormon war. the armies of Isreal that were established by revelation from God are seen from my door evry day with their Captains of 10.s 50.s & 100. A portion of each Day is set apart for drill. after which they go to their several stations (VIZ.) 2 Companies of 10.s are to provide the famalies with meal, 2 provide wood, 2 or 3 Build cabbins, 1 Company of 10.s collect & prepare armes, 1 company provide me[a]t, 1 Company are spies, one Company are for express, 1 for guard, 2 Companies are to gather in the famalies that are scattered over the counties in the vicinity, 1 company is to see to & provide for the sick, and the famalies of those that are off on duty, Others are employed in gathering provisions into the city &c &c.

Those companies are called Danites because the Prophet Daniel has said they shall take the kingdom and possess it for-ever.

Rockwood's record does several things for our understanding of the Danites. First, the origin of the "armies of Israel" predates 1838; in fact, it went back to Zion's Camp in 1834 (D&C 105:30-32).⁵⁸ There, militia operations within and by the Church in 1834 were tied to divine injunctions to redeem Zion, a central part in Joseph Smith's goal of establishing the latter-day kingdom of God in Missouri. And it has been firmly established that Zion's Camp was a defensive operation, depending solely on the invitation and promises of support of the governor of Missouri.⁵⁹

Second, Rockwood's account of the organization of

Danites speaks of the involvement of the whole Mormon community, and he describes its structure in the biblical terms of companies of tens, fifties, and hundreds (cf. Exodus 18:13-26). He clearly says the various groupings provided all kinds of community service, not just bearing arms. Some groups of Danites were to build houses, others were to gather food, or care for the sick, while others were to help gather the scattered Saints into the community. There can be no doubt that Rockwood is describing the *total* activities of a covenant community that viewed itself in the same terms as ancient Israel. Working in groups, these Danites served the interests of the whole. It was hardly a secret organization working under the cover of darkness. In fact, Rockwood is more explicit about Danite activity in the letters he sends than in the accounts he copies into his own letter-book journal. This would hardly be a proper course to take if the whole thing were to be kept in absolute secrecy as Avard argued. Rockwood thus presents a fundamentally different view than Avard, a view which allows for an interpretation of these developments in much broader perspective, both historically and doctrinally.

Finally, Rockwood reveals that the name "Dan" came not from the warrior tribe of Dan (Genesis 49:16-17; Deuteronomy 33:22; 1 Chronicles 12:35) or from the militant references to the "daughters of Zion" (Isaiah 3:16) as critical sources have alleged, but rather, and more consistently, from the book of Daniel, "because the Prophet Daniel has said they [the Saints] shall take the kingdom and possess it for-ever" (see Daniel 7:22). To the student of Mormon history this brings the whole notion into clear focus: early Mormons consistently used the book of Daniel in their own self-understanding of the mission of the Church. The "stone cut out without hands" was to fill the whole earth. It was, in their minds, the kingdom of God, and it was directly related to their millennial expectations. It was not

to be established by bloodshed or law-breaking (cf. D&C 58:19-22; 63:28-31; 98:4-7; 105:5). The righteous were to be gathered out of the world to a central location and, as Rockwood's journal notes, what really bothered their Missouri neighbors (in addition to a number of tactless Mormon comments) was the growing concentration of Mormons in the northern counties and the subsequent implications in a democratic society for economic and political power there. General Clark's counsel, which Rockwood also recorded in his letterbook, to those who remained at Far West after the surrender of Mormon leaders was *not* to gather again.⁶⁰

Throughout Rockwood's letters Mormon millennial expectations are obvious; but nowhere is there the cutthroat secrecy that Avard later succeeded in convincing Judge Austin King and the non-Mormon public that there was. In the other known contemporaneous Mormon references to Danites, the illegal activities that Avard testified about are missing. John Smith's diary speaks of the Danite activity at Adam-ondi-Ahman in very matter-of-fact terms; and the reference in the "Scripitory Book" of Joseph Smith, kept by his scribe George W. Robinson, also confirms the essentials suggested by Rockwood:

Some time past the brethren or Saints have come up day after day to consecrate, and to bring their offerings into the store house of the lord, to prove him now herewith and se[e] if he will not pour us out a blessing that there will not be room enough to contain it. They have come up hither Thus far, according to the order Revel[. . .] of the Danites we have a company of Danites in these times, to put right physically that which is not right and to cleanse the Church of verry great evils which hath hitherto existed among us inasmuch as they cannot be put right by teachings & persuasyons. This company or part of them exhibited on the fourth day of July. . . . They come up to consecrate by companies of tens, commanded by their captain over ten.⁶¹

All of this is not to suggest that every member or company of the Mormon militia obeyed all the laws, nor is it to deny that a segment of them was misled by Avar. But as Richard Anderson has recently shown, even the burning of Gallatin and the raid on Millport can be understood as defensive in nature and came only after years of patient suffering.⁶² Thus to argue that these were simply the more public side of the very dark Danite activities is not historically accurate. It might be suggested that either Sidney Rigdon's speeches or private counsel could have encouraged Avar's activities, but it is inaccurate to continue to use the term "Danite" to cover only an aberration. Rockwood's record would lead us to conclude that the original intention of Danites was to organize modern Israel more completely into a fully integrated community with each person contributing to the benefit of the whole.

Avar's testimony in November 1838 seems to have laid the foundation for all subsequent interpretations. Surely the accounts of individuals like Reed Peck, John Corrill, William Swartzell, James Hunt, Ebenezer Robinson, and even John D. Lee were framed not by what was happening in the Mormon community but by the interpretative framework that Avar managed to provide for anyone who needed a rationale for rejecting either the leadership of Joseph Smith or the centralizing tendencies of a covenant community intent on establishing Zion.⁶³

Students must also consider the various contemporary histories by individuals who remained faithful to the movement as well as other sources, usually autobiographical recollections like those of Mosiah Hancock, William Huntington, or Luman Shurtliff, which are best understood in the same sense as Albert Rockwood used the term Danites.⁶⁴

If this argument has merit, and the Rockwood letters strongly support this interpretation, then the "Danites" in early Mormon history must be completely reevaluated.

When Parley P. Pratt wrote to his wife's family just at the end of the Court of Inquiry, he could, in honesty, tell them that "they accuse us of things that never entered into our hearts."⁶⁵ Joseph Smith, from Liberty Jail on 16 December 1838, could add:

We have learned also since we have been in prison that many false and pernicious things which were calculated to lead the saints far astray and to do great injury have been taught by Dr. Avarad as coming from the Presidency . . . which the presidency never knew of being taught in the church by any body until after they were made prisoners. . . . The presidency were ignorant as well as innocent of these things.⁶⁶

We might even consider the influence the Missouri organization had, not on the host of dime novels of nineteenth-century America,⁶⁷ but on the Nauvoo "council of fifty," or on the organization Brigham Young gave to the "Camp of Israel" at Winter Quarters in 1847,⁶⁸ and on his continued stress on consecration and community building in the Great Basin.⁶⁹

There are other indications of the role of the book of Daniel in 1838 in Missouri. Consider the "Ancient of Days" (Daniel 7:9, 13-14, 22), identified in Mormon thought as Adam,⁷⁰ that was tied to various Missouri Mormon sites (D&C 107:53-54; 116).⁷¹ It is also possible that when the official name of the Church was formalized in April 1838, that "latter-day saints" was included because of Daniel's emphasis on the "saints of the Most High" taking and possessing the kingdom in the last days, as well as to counter the organization of the dissenters in Kirtland.⁷² Joseph Smith continued to emphasize the central notions of the kingdom of God in northern Missouri, including consecration and united firms,⁷³ and the "gathering."⁷⁴

It would also seem that an emphasis on Daniel could, in part, explain the shift in tone and content of Joseph Smith's 1838 history. Where his earlier accounts had

stressed a personal quest for salvation and forgiveness of sins, his 1838 history now seems to place his early religious experiences into institutional and cosmic focus.⁷⁵ Then, too, the fact that the November 1838 Court of Inquiry placed emphasis on the Mormon preaching of Daniel 2:44-45 should confirm for us its perceived place in Latter-day Saint thought.⁷⁶

Finally, Joseph Smith's Liberty Jail letter (March 1839) to the Church, in which he worked through what his Missouri experiences meant, commanded the exiled saints to write histories of their own experiences (thus inviting them to record their part in the history of the kingdom). It also contained several quotes from the book of Daniel.⁷⁷ From all that has been said, this should come as no surprise.

The Book of Daniel in Early Mormon Exegesis

If the book of Daniel was as important in early Mormonism as here suggested, we would expect it to surface in early Mormon pamphlets and books after they began to appear in 1837. Space constraints force us to summarize. The most prolific of the early Mormon pamphleteers, Parley P. Pratt, gave the book of Daniel an important place in a number of his works. The first two chapters of his *A Voice of Warning* (1837) cited Daniel 2;⁷⁸ his very popular British pamphlet, *A Letter to the Queen* (1841), was essentially an extended commentary on Daniel 2;⁷⁹ and Parley authored the 1845 *Proclamation of the Twelve*, which again summarized the teachings of his 1841 tract.⁸⁰

His brother Orson added to the Latter-day Saint literature on Daniel. His early journals (1833-37) document at least ten separate uses of Daniel 2 as a text for his sermons; as early as April 1841 he was discoursing on the topic to his fellow Apostles in England;⁸¹ his own later pamphlets contain commentaries on Daniel.⁸² He maintained this emphasis throughout his life.⁸³

Other early Mormons also stressed Daniel. For ex-

ample, Benjamin Winchester, an early church leader in Philadelphia, wrote of Daniel's prophesied kingdom,⁸⁴ as did William I. Appleby in his 1844 tract, *A Dissertation on Nebuchadnezzar's Dream*.⁸⁵

Joseph Smith continued to emphasize the book of Daniel during the last years of his life, and this undoubtedly influenced those writers mentioned above. In 1839 he taught that his followers ought to have the building up of Zion as their greatest objective and that great destruction was coming before the Ancient of Days would come.⁸⁶ He repeated these sentiments in 1841, adding these words of comfort for his people:

The kingdom will not be broken up but we shall be scattered and driven gathered again & then dispersed reestablished & driven abroad and so on until the Ancient of days shall sit and the kingdom and power thereof shall the[n] be given to the Saints and they shall possess it forever and ever.⁸⁷

In 1842 he used Daniel 7 for a text and told his audience that Daniel prophesied that "the God of heaven would set up a kingdom in the last days."⁸⁸ In 1843 he spoke on Daniel 7 and made some comparisons with the book of Revelation.⁸⁹ In 1844 he reflected in some detail on Daniel 2:44, tying it into his early Missouri experiences.⁹⁰ A close associate who was with Joseph Smith the night before he was killed wrote, "I heard his testimony in the depths of the prison, within its solid doors where he was thrown on the accusation of treason against the government for preaching from Dan. 2:44."⁹¹

Even some individuals who rejected Joseph Smith or claimed to be his successor emphasized Daniel's volume in their own claims. For example, Oliver Olney claimed in 1842 that, based on personal visitations from the "Ancient of Days," he was commissioned to set up a temporal kingdom.⁹² James J. Strang taught of Daniel's kingdom in his *Book of the Law of the Lord*.⁹³

We would even go so far as to suggest that the early Mormon attitudes about the book of Daniel provide not only the background but the rationale for the Council of Fifty in Nauvoo. No one has doubted that Daniel 2 was central to the Mormon political kingdom of God. But while it has been shown how flawed Klaus Hansen's pioneering work is on this topic,⁹⁴ it has been less apparent how clearly related developments in Kirtland and Nauvoo were; that the kingdom they spoke of in Nauvoo had been taught earlier in Kirtland, and that events in Missouri are better understood within this larger context.⁹⁵

Just over a month before he was killed, Joseph Smith told an audience:

The Ancient Prophets declared in the last days the God of heaven shall set up a Kingdom which should never be destroyed nor left to other people; & the very time that was calculated on; *this people* was struggling to bring it out—he that arms himself with Gun, sword, or Pistol except in the defense of truth, will be sorry for it—I never carry any weapon with me bigger than my Pen Knife—when I was dragged before the Cannon and muskets in Missouri, I was unarmed. God will always protect me until my mission is fulfilled. I calculate to be one of the Instruments of setting up the Kingdom of Daniel, by the word of the Lord, and I intend to lay a foundation that will revolutionize the world—I once offered my life to the Missouri Mob as a sacrifice for my people—and here I am—it will not be by Sword or Gun that this kingdom will roll on—the power of truth is such that all nations will be under the necessity of obeying the Gospel.⁹⁶

Conclusion: Early Mormonism and American Political Culture

In many ways Mormon political thought and action embodied and then carried to its logical conclusion the Puritan notion of the religious state or kingdom of God.

The word "kingdom" has always implied a socioeconomic political community. As in early Christianity, this led to misunderstanding and persecution in early Mormon history.⁹⁷ Early Mormons did not need the book of Daniel to justify their seeking an earthly kingdom, as the Book of Mormon both prophesied of apocalyptic events and gave ample models of religious societies presided over by prophet-kings. That volume also spoke many times of Christ's second coming. But Daniel provided a biblical text familiar to most Americans and seemed to suggest a discernible timetable for the events of the last days.⁹⁸

The millennial rhetoric that was so central to early Mormonism could easily speak of "armies of God" and use military metaphors. It is both ironic and paradoxical that to understand the early history of Mormonism it is essential that we see, on the one hand, that it was the most American of religions, which fully embraced the goals and visions of her biblical and colonial heritage; and, on the other hand, that for precisely these beliefs Church members were persecuted by those who were sure they were neither biblical nor American. But in using the book of Daniel, early Mormons proved they were both, more so perhaps than any other group.

Notes

1. Doctrine and Covenants (Kirtland, OH: F. G. Williams, 1835), section 27, p. 154.

2. Ibid., section 24, p. 151. This revelation was designated a prayer by Joseph Smith in *Times and Seasons* 5 (1 April 1844): 482.

3. This essay uses the following definition of political culture: "The system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols and values which defines the situation in which political action takes place." Lucien Pye and Sidney Verba, *Political Culture and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 513, as cited in Jean H. Baker, "The Ceremonies of Politics, Nineteenth-Century Rituals of National Affirmation," in William J. Cooper, Jr., et al., eds., *A Master's Due: Essays in Honor of David Herbert Donald* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985), 165. As Baker sug-

gests, political culture assumes that "societies produce civic arrangements that represent coherent patterns of public life and that [they] are not random happenings." See also John Howe, "Gordon S. Wood and the Analysis of Political Culture in the American Revolutionary Era," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, 44 (July 1987): 569-75, esp. 571.

4. Useful introductions include R. K. Harrison, "The Book of Daniel" in *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969), 1105-34; and Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978). For studies of the book of Daniel which emphasize the apocalyptic themes, see D. S. Russell, *Between the Testaments*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1965); Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (London: SCM, 1964); Russell, *Apocalyptic: Ancient and Modern* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968); and G. K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984). A detailed study which emphasizes the volume's structure of tales and visions is John J. Collins, *Daniel: With an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984). Klaus Koch has noted the recent "Apocalyptic Renaissance" in biblical studies which has seen the shifting of the study of apocalyptic writings (like Daniel and Revelation) from the sidelines of the theological and historical discourse to center stage. *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic* (London: SCM, 1972).

No attempt is made in this paper to treat either the obvious relationship between Daniel and the book of Revelation or the use of the book of Revelation in early Mormon thought. Both aspects would strengthen what is argued herein. Ford has suggested, "it has been computed that in the 404 verses of Revelation, 518 Old Testament citations and allusions are found, 88 of which are from Daniel." J. Massynberde Ford, *Revelation*, Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), 37. It has also been suggested that the book of Daniel could be a commentary on the book of Enoch, a topic that demands more work as Enoch is increasingly found in early Christian literature as well. See Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, tr. John Bowden, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 1:186-92.

For the student of early Mormon thought, this aspect also invites more work; for example, before Daniel citations began to appear in Joseph Smith's revelations, he had revealed to the Church (June-December 1830) what came to be known as the book of Moses, a significant part of which contains the writings of Enoch (see Moses

6:23-8:3). Thus we must ask if there is a similarity between the use or function of Daniel in early Christianity and early Mormonism. The early Christian connection to Daniel is studied in Reinhard Bodenmann, *Naissance d'une Exegese: Daniel dans l'Eglise ancienne des trois premiers siecles* (Tubingen: Mohr, 1986). This study was called to my attention by Gordon Thomasson. Some scholars suggest that the Olivet Discourse (Mark 13) is based on a midrashic interpretation of Daniel and that the "stone" of Israel in Mark 12:10 refers to the stone of Daniel 2:45. See David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983), 184-87; and Donald Juel, *Messianic Exegesis: Christological Interpretation of the Old Testament in Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), chap. 7 on "The Risen Christ and the Son of Man: Christian Use of Daniel 7," 151-70.

Two manuscripts of Daniel were found at Qumran, and it is clear that the volume was revered and cited as scripture by the second century B.C., an argument against it having been written in the second century B.C. For a list of Enoch quotes in Daniel, see the special index in Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*.

5. On the influence of the book of Daniel in Western culture generally, see Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); and Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel, *Utopian Thought in the Western World* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979). See also John E. Groh, "The Kingdom of God in the History of Christianity: A Bibliographical Survey," *Church History* 43 (June 1974): 257-67; and Dietrich G. Buss, "Meeting of Heaven and Earth: A Survey and Analysis of the Literature on Millennialism in America, 1965-1985," *Fides et Historia* 20/1 (1988): 5-28.

6. See, for example, the comments of W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 417-18, also 149, 442-43; Ernst Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 83-84; and, by implication, the comments of Brian Croke, "The Origins of the Christian World Chronicle," in Croke and Alanna M. Emmette, eds., *History and the Historians in Late Antiquity* (Sydney: Pergamon, 1983), 121. The first systematic and official Christian history of the world, which was also a vindication of Christianity, was written by Augustine's student Orosius (*Seven Books of History against the Pagans*) between A.D. 415-418, and it made use of Daniel's images and prophecies.

7. See Ernest L. Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 31-32;

B. S. Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men: A Study in Seventeenth-Century English Millenarianism* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972); and Leo F. Solt, "The Fifth Monarchy Men: Politics and the Millennium," *Church History* 30 (1961): 314-24. The place of Daniel in the thought of the great English scientist Isaac Newton is treated in Richard S. Westfall, *Never at Rest: A Biography of Isaac Newton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 319, 349-50, 804, 816-17, 825-26. See also Newton, *Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel* (London: n.p., 1733).

8. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, 50-51.

9. The literature on this is quite large. Bercovitch has written and edited a number of studies, including *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975); *The American Jeremiad* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978); and ed., *Typology and Early American Literature* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1972), which has an extensive annotated bibliography, 249-337. See also Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation*, 29-30; Harry S. Stout, "Word and Order in Colonial New England," in Nathan O. Hatch and Mark A. Noll, eds., *The Bible in America: Essays in Cultural History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 19-38; Harry S. Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Perry Miller, "The End of the World," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, 8 (April 1951): 171-91; J. F. Maclear, "New England and the Fifth Monarchy: The Quest for the Millennium in Early American Puritanism," *ibid.* 32 (April 1975): 223-60; Mason I. Lowance, Jr., *The Language of Canaan: Metaphor and Symbol in New England from the Puritans to the Transcendentalists* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 36, 41-42, 119-24, 179-81, 211-12; and LeRoy E. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation*, vols. 3 and 4 (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1954). Froom's volumes, while very polemical, are valuable compilations of colonial and American literature containing apocalyptic material and themes.

10. *Providence and Patriotism in Early America, 1640-1815* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978), 2-13. More specifically, for the colonial literature on Daniel, see Ephraim Huit, *The Whole Prophecie of Daniel Explained by a Paraphrase* (London: Overton, 1644) [considered to be the first colonial exposition of Daniel]; Thomas Parker, *The Visions and Prophecies of Daniel Expounded* (London: Paxton, 1646); William Aspinwall, *A Brief Description of the Fifth Monarchy, or Kingdome That Is to Come into the World* (London: Sim-

mons, 1653); Cotton Mather, *Things to Be Look'd For* (Cambridge, MA: S. and B. Green, 1691); Cotton Mather, *Things for a Distress'd People to Think Upon* (Boston: B. Green and J. Allen, 1696); Nicholas Noyes, *New-Englands Duty and Interest, to Be an Habitation of Justice, and Mountain of Holiness* (Boston: B. Green and J. Allen, 1698); Increase Mather, *Discourse Concerning Faith and Fervency in Prayer* (Boston: B. Green, 1710); Richard Steere, *The Daniel Catcher, The Life of the Prophet Daniel* (Boston: J. Allen, 1713); William Burnett, *An Essay on Scripture-Prophecy* (Boston: n.p., 1724); and Richard Clarke, *The Prophetic Numbers of Daniel and John Calculated; In Order to Shew the Time, When the Day of Judgment . . . Is to Be Expected* (Boston: Edes and Gill, Green and Russell, 1759).

11. Recent studies include Richard T. Hughes and C. Leonard Allen, *Illusions of Innocence: Protestant Primitivism in America, 1630-1875* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988); and Richard T. Hughes, ed., *The American Quest for the Primitive Church* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

12. Nathan O. Hatch, *The Sacred Cause of Liberty* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977), 148-49, 152-53, 163. See also Stephen Stein, "An Apocalyptic Rationale for the American Revolution," *Early American Literature* 9 (Winter 1975): 211-25; and Ruth Bloch, *Visionary Republic: Millennial Themes in American Thought, 1756-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). The use of Daniel 2:44-45, the stone cut out of the mountain, to interpret the American Revolution or justify its meaning, is illustrated in various pamphlets of the period: Benjamin Gale, *A Brief Essay, or, An Attempt to Prove, from the Prophetic Writings of the Old and New Testament, What Period of Prophecy the Church of God Is Now Under* (New Haven, CT: Th. and S. Green, 1788); Samuel Osgood, *Remarks on the Book of Daniel and on the Revelations* (New York: Greenleaf, 1794); David Austin, *The Downfall of Mystical Babylon; or A Key to the Providence of God, in the Political Operations of 1793-94* (Elizabethtown, NJ: n.p., 1794); and John Mellen, *A Sermon Delivered before His Excellency the Governor* (Boston: Young and Minns, 1797).

Elias Smith, *A Discourse Delivered at Jefferson Hall, Thanksgiving Day, November 25, 1802* (Portsmouth: N. S. and W. Peirce, 1803), suggested that the American Revolution fulfilled Daniel's prediction (Daniel 2:31-45) and that all human institutions were to be destroyed. Jedediah Morse, in a sermon in November 1810 to the Society for Propagating the Gospel among Indians and Others in North America, used Daniel 12:4, 10, as a test for proving that the Napoleonic Wars were destroying the Antichrists of the Turkish Empire and

the Papacy in preparation for the end of the world. Elias Smith also used Daniel's images and prophecies in *A Sermon on Nebuchadnezzar's Dream* (Boston: n.p., 1820), and *The Whole World Governed by a Jew; or, The Government of the Second Adam, as King and Priest* (Exeter, NH: Henry Ranlet, 1805).

Perry Miller argued several years ago that "the Old Testament is truly so omnipresent in the American culture of 1800 or 1820 that historians have as much difficulty taking cognizance of it as of the air the people breathed." See his "The Garden of Eden and the Deacon's Meadows," *American Heritage* 7 (December 1955): 55.

13. The letter is reprinted in Brigham H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 1:7-8, and in Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Joseph Smith's New England Heritage* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 121-23. Marvin S. Hill has noted that a cousin of Joseph Smith, Joseph Lathrop, in a sermon delivered in May 1797, interpreted events in France at the time as having been foretold in Daniel. See Hill, "The Role of Christian Primitivism in the Origin and Development of the Mormon Kingdom, 1830-1844," Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1968, 17-18. Cf. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 3:236.

14. See sermon of 20 July 1883, *JD* 24:241. While this is a much later reminiscence, Joseph Smith's 1838 recollection (*JS-H* 1:41) states that the messenger "quoted many other passages of scripture, and offered many explanations which cannot be mentioned here." Oliver Cowdery, a close associate in the early years of the movement, himself added several scriptural citations to the list Joseph Smith gave; see *LDS Messenger and Advocate* 1 (February and October 1835). Additionally, there are allusions or direct references to Daniel in this 1838 account by Joseph Smith: compare Daniel 8:27 with *JS-H* 1:46; Daniel 10:12 with *JS-H* 1:32; Daniel 10:9 with *JS-H* 1:20; and Daniel 12:9 with *JS-H* 1:65. The comments of Sidney Rigdon in 1844 probably grew out of these early teachings. See *HC* 6:288-89.

15. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, compilers and editors, *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), 367. George A. Smith, another cousin, later spoke of Asael Smith's belief "that something would turn up in his family that would revolutionize the world." *JD* 5:102 (sermon of 2 August 1857).

16. See Robert J. Matthews, "A Plainer Translation": *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press,

1975), and the extensive bibliography (3 vols.) compiled by Thomas E. Sherry, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible: A Bibliography of Publication, 1847-1987*, copy in Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University. A larger perspective on the use of the Bible in early Mormonism is provided by Gordon Irving, "The Mormons and the Bible in the 1830s," *BYU Studies* 13 (Summer 1973): 473-88.

17. Doctrine and Covenants (1835), section 50, p. 180. These verses were not in chap. 28 of the *Book of Commandments* (1833). Cf. Daniel 7:13, 22. In a 1 January 1834 letter to John Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery identified Adam as the Angel Michael; Oliver Cowdery Letterbook, Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California, 15.

18. *Book of Commandments* (1833), chap. 48, p. 110; Doctrine and Covenants (1835), section 15, p. 13. Cf. Daniel 7:18.

19. Doctrine and Covenants (1835), section 7, p. 104. See also 1 Maccabees 1:54; Matthew 24:15.

20. Cf. Daniel 1:17 ("knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom") with D&C 89:18-19 ("wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures").

21. Doctrine and Covenants (Nauvoo ed., 1844), section 101, pp. 386-87, "until the kingdoms of the world are subdued" (D&C 103:7 in current ed.). Cf. Daniel 2:44 and 7:27.

22. Doctrine and Covenants (1844), June 1834, section 102, pp. 391-94 (D&C 105:16-32, 39-40 in current ed.).

23. Doctrine and Covenants (1835), section 3, p. 86. Cf. Daniel 7:13 ("Ancient of days").

24. Again, Enoch is the "heavenly scribe" recording even events relating to Adam in the book of Moses. See Hugh Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet*, vol. 2, *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1986), 83, 126-37. "The Scriptorium Book of Joseph Smith, kept by George W. Robinson," MS in Library-Archives, Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City (hereafter HDC), 43-44. Known today as D&C 116, it was first published in the *Deseret News*, 2 April 1853, and was added to the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. "Adam-ondi-Ahman" had earlier appeared in the D&C (1835), section 75, p. 205 (D&C 78:15 in current ed.). See also William W. Phelps's poem with the same title in *LDS Messenger and Advocate* 1 (June 1835): 144. A contemporary description of Adam-ondi-Ahman is by A. Ripley in *Elder's Journal* 1 (August 1838): 52. Other relevant studies include Leland H. Gentry, "Adam-ondi-Ahman: A

Brief Historical Survey," *BYU Studies* 13 (Summer 1973): 553-76; and Rollin J. Britton, "Adam-ondi-Ahman: A Missouri Contribution to the World-famed Spots of Earth," *Missouri Historical Review* 20 (January 1926): 236-46. Early Mormons were taught that this was the area where Adam and Eve dwelt after they were cast out of the Garden of Eden, a teaching that truly made America special in God's divine plans. This teaching, combined with others that were linked to it, such as the location of Adam's altar and that it was this place where the final scenes of the earth's temporal history would occur, surely help us understand why Daniel's prophecies relating to the Ancient of Days would be so important to early Mormons. Other relevant sources include Oliver B. Huntington, "Adam's Altar and Tower," *Juvenile Instructor* 30 (15 November 1895): 700-701; Leland H. Gentry, "The Land Question at Adam-ondi-Ahman," *BYU Studies* 26 (Spring 1986): 45-56; and John H. Wittorf, "An Historical Investigation of the Ruined 'Altars' at Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri," *Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, M. Wells Jakeman, ed., no. 113 (15 April 1969): 1-8. A related matter is the identity of Gabriel, an angel whose appearance to Daniel is first mentioned in the KJV in Daniel 8:16; 9:21. Joseph Smith was equating Noah with Gabriel publicly by 1839; see Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 8-9, 13. This identification seems first to have been made in 1834; see the letter of Oliver Cowdery to John Whitmer, 1 January 1834, n. 17 above. Cf. D&C 128:21. Here again, Gabriel is a prominent figure in the pseudepigraphic literature, primarily in the Enoch literature, including Joseph Smith's Enoch text.

25. *LDS Messenger and Advocate* 2 (March 1836): 277-80. Known today as section 109, it was added to the Doctrine and Covenants in 1876. See esp. vss. 72-73. As contemporaneous sources indicate, this prayer was composed by a committee prior to the dedication. The committee consisted of Joseph Smith, Jr., Sidney Rigdon, Warren A. Cowdery, Warren Parrish, and Oliver Cowdery. See Leonard J. Arrington, "Oliver Cowdery's Kirtland, Ohio, 'Sketch Book'," *BYU Studies* 12 (Summer 1972): 426.

26. *Elder's Journal* 1 (August 1838): 52-53. Known today as section 115, it was added to the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. Cf. D&C 115:6 with Daniel 9:24-27. It is interesting to note that D&C 115 also gave the official name of the Church, a change that was possibly influenced by the book of Daniel. See further n. 72 below. See also the letter of Thomas B. Marsh to Wilford Woodruff, 30 April 1838, MS in HDC, which summarized the contents of D&C

115 in the context of the growing opposition to Joseph Smith in Kirtland.

27. *The Evening and the Morning Star* 1 (September 1832): 6.

28. *Ibid.*, 1 (February 1833): 6. Responding to anti-Mormon literature in England, Joseph Fielding wrote: "The arrows and spears only serve to keep the little stone clear as it rolls along." Letter of 20 June 1841, in *Millennial Star* 2 (August 1841): 53. Lorenzo Snow spoke of his mission in England: "The 'Stone of the Mountain', which you sent to rolling in London . . . has not yet ceased moving, but is daily becoming more rapid and powerful in its revolutions." Letter to Heber C. Kimball, 10 November 1841, in *Times and Seasons* 3 (15 March 1842): 712-13; see also the letter of Lorenzo Snow to Don Carlos Smith, 14 April 1841, in *ibid.*, 2 (1 September 1841): 530.

29. *The Evening and the Morning Star* 1 (May 1833): 7.

30. See, for example, Moses Martin Journal, 28 September 1834, 21. MS in HDC. See also his poem dated about 1834 on "The Church of Christ" which concludes with lines equating the Church with the stone of Daniel 2:44. Parley P. Pratt used Daniel 2 in Canada in 1836. *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980), 143-50. An elder in Oakland, Michigan, preached on Daniel 2 at a local conference, see "Journal History," 26 January 1845, 3. See also the comments of Polly W. Jones and William W. Spencer in letters to Ira Jones Willes about October 1835 where they mention Daniel and the Saints of the Most High possessing the kingdom. Correspondence file, Typescripts in HDC, 16, 19. These last items were called to my attention by Ian Barber.

Nowhere is this emphasis clearer than in the Orson Pratt journals where he consistently used Daniel 2 as a sermon text. See the following dates: 18 July 1833, 1 March 1835, 13 March 1835, 1 April 1835, 5 April 1835, 2 June 1835, 17 October 1835, April 1836, 27 May 1836, and October 1837. MS in HDC.

31. *LDS Messenger and Advocate* 2 (November 1835): 221.

32. *Ibid.*, 2 (May 1836): 307-9.

33. *Ibid.*, 3 (September 1837): 561. This is a letter of Newell K. Whitney, Reynolds Cahoon, and Vinson Knight, 18 September 1837.

34. Emma Smith, compiler, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns, for the Church of the Latter Day Saints* (Kirtland, OH: F. G. Williams, 1835), 11 (#5, vs. 2). This hymn was reprinted in David Rogers, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter Day Saints* (New York: C. Vinton, 1838), 20-21 (#11). A Church conference in October 1839 condemned Rogers's hymnal, not because its contents were unorthodox, but because it was being sold as "the one compiled and

published by Emma Smith." See the discussion in Peter Crawley, "A Bibliography of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in New York, Ohio, and Missouri," *BYU Studies* 12 (Summer 1972): 524-26 (item 43).

35. Emma Smith hymnal, 108-9 (#80, vss. 6-7); David Rogers's hymnal, 81-83 (#61); and Brigham Young, Parley P. Pratt, and John Taylor, eds., *A Collection of Sacred Hymns, for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Europe* (Manchester: W. R. Thomas, 1840), 238 (#213).

36. For other examples see 9 (#3) and 109 (#80) in the 1835 volume; in the Rogers's 1838 collection, 21 (#12), 33 (#21), 42-43 (#28), 55-57 (#40), 94 (#70), and 102-3 (#79); in Christopher Merkley, *A Small Selection of Choice Hymns for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* (n.p.: Printed for the publisher, 1841), 17-18 (#9), 20-22 (#10), and 23-24 (#13); and in the 1841 Manchester Hymnal, 274 (#239), 277 (#240), 280 (#242), and 288 (#248). An interesting study would be to compare this kind of material in Mormon hymnals with those in contemporary Protestant hymnals.

37. Other early references to the book of Daniel include *The Evening and the Morning Star* 1 (March 1833): 3; 1 (April 1833): 168, Kirtland ed.; 1 (May 1833): 7; 2 (June 1833): 100, 101; 2 (April 1834): 294-95; 2 (May 1834): 306, 310; 2 (June 1834): 323-24; *LDS Messenger and Advocate* 1 (March 1835): 95; 1 (May 1835): 114-15, 126-28; 1 (June 1835): 129-31; 1 (August 1835): 168-70; *Elder's Journal* 1 (July 1838): 36-37. Sidney Rigdon preached in 1836 from Daniel; see the letter of Charles Olcott, April 1836, in *LDS Messenger and Advocate* 2 (May 1836): 315-16, quoting from *Ohio Free Press*. Of course Mormons used other biblical texts. For example, see the studies of Gordon Irving, esp. "The Mormons and the Bible in the 1830s," *BYU Studies* 13 (Summer 1973): 473-88.

38. See Noel B. Reynolds, "The Doctrine of an Inspired Constitution," *BYU Studies* 16 (Spring 1976): 315-40. See also n. 49 below.

39. R. Laurence Moore, *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 25-47. Moore tends to blame the victim in his approach to early Mormon history.

40. See Marvin S. Hill, "Quest for Refuge: An Hypothesis as to the Social Origins and Nature of the Mormon Political Kingdom," *Journal of Mormon History* 2 (1975): 3-20; and esp. Hill, "Cultural Crisis in the Mormon Kingdom: A Reconsideration of the Causes of Kirtland Dissent," *Church History* 49 (September 1980): 286-97.

41. See particularly, Nathan O. Hatch, "The Christian Movement and the Demand for a Theology of the People," *Journal of American*

History 67 (December 1980): 545-67. See also Robert H. Wiebe, *The Opening of American Society* (New York: Knopf, 1984), 152-60; and Gordon S. Wood, "Evangelical America and Early Mormonism," *New York History* 61 (October 1980): 359-86.

42. Hatch, "The Christian Movement," 545-67. As Hatch shows, the followers of Alexander Campbell, many of whom were among the first converts to Mormonism, shared these views. See also Richard T. Hughes, "From Primitive Church to Civil Religion: The Millennial Odyssey of Alexander Campbell," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 44 (March 1976): 87-103.

43. From a reading of Mormon sources in the 1830s it seems that many of the earliest converts had assimilated a radical whig ideology that included (1) a fear of concentrated power, (2) a concern for personal liberty, (3) a fear of conspiracies which were seen as natural products of too concentrated power in the hands of a few, and (4) a belief that rulers will tend to use corrupt measures to acquire dominion over their subjects. See the discussion in Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967), 32-54. It is clear that these attitudes survived well into early American history.

It is very difficult to generalize about the political ideology of Jacksonian America. The 1828 election began a two-party system coalescing around Whigs and Democrats. But from the beginning each party drew upon a variety of interest groups, and this movement was shattered by the sectional conflicts polarized through the slavery issue by the 1840s. Recent scholarship has revealed how complex the situation was, and that the era was an uncomfortable compromise between various groups that is best seen in relation to the most prominent public issues of Jackson's presidency, especially the nullification crisis and the fight over the national bank. But even here, the politics do not reveal a simple split over economic interests. A good survey of the era's politics, including the various third parties, is Edward Pessen, *Jacksonian America: Society, Personality, and Politics*, rev. ed. (Homewood, IL: Dorsey, 1978), 149-323, plus an extensive bibliographical essay. See also Daniel W. Howe, *The Political Culture of the American Whigs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979); Richard L. McCormick, *The Second American Party System: Party Formation in the Jacksonian Era* (New York: Norton, 1973); and McCormick, *The Party Period and Public Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), esp. chaps. 4-5.

The Whig party seems to have appealed, in part, to those who, like their colonial counterparts, feared a concentration of power.

Thus, in the North especially, anti-Masonic party members were drawn to the Whigs, and increasingly came to oppose Jackson. Here is an explanation of the behavior of William W. Phelps: he had been very active in the anti-Masonic movement, even publishing anti-Masonic newspapers where his strong dislike of aristocratic exclusiveness and political monopolization were voiced. Phelps's 1838 rejection of the centralizing tendencies of the Mormon kingdom of God surely reflected these same concerns, even though he had earlier seen Mormonism as political anti-Masonry. One suspects the same rationale in other Mormons' attitudes by 1838: compare Orson Hyde's letter to Brigham Young, 30 March 1839, MS in HDC; the comments of John Corrill, "I had rather enjoy liberty in hell than suffer bondage in heaven!" in his 1839 History (p. 48 in MS), but deleted from the published version, per Stephen C. LeSueur, *The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1987), 260; and Ebenezer Robinson's account of the strong Latter-day Saint reaction to Joseph Smith's request for a fixed salary in 1838, *The Return* 1 (September 1889): 136-38, cf. Hill, "The Role of Christian Primitivism," 132, n. 3, 191-92.

Much work has yet to be done before we can fully understand Joseph Smith's relationship to the political culture of his time. Another fruitful avenue would be to examine more closely the political thought of Oliver Cowdery. From his coauthoring the "Articles and Covenants" (*The Evening and the Morning Star* 2 [June 1833]: 1-2; D&C 20) in 1829 (see the earliest draft in HDC, Revelations Collection); his possible coauthorship of the "Political Motto" of the Church (HC 3:9); his authorship of a major statement on government (D&C 134); and his editorship of the *Northern Times* (Kirtland, OH), all suggest an anticentralist, prodemocratic philosophy which sought to *limit* church government by carefully defining what its bounds were. See Max Parkin, "Mormon Political Involvement in Ohio," *BYU Studies* 9 (Summer 1969): 484-502, for a closer look at the *Northern Times*. Unfortunately, few copies of the newspaper are extant. Cowdery's communication to the Missouri High Council (the group that finally excommunicated him from the Church in April 1838), was suggestive of his political attitudes; see his comments in Donald Q. Cannon and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *Far West Record* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 165; also his letter dated 4 February 1838 at Far West to Warren and Lyman Cowdery, MS in Cowdery Letterbook, Huntington Library, 84. Thus, while some Mormons opposed rank and privilege by supporting the Whig party in the early 1830s, many of these same leaders came to see this very situation emerging within the Church by 1837-38.

44. For a sample of one such agreement involving members of the Smith family, see *Salt Lake Tribune*, 23 April 1880, cited in Francis W. Kirkham, *A New Witness for Christ in America*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Utah Printing, 1960), 1:492-94. See also Ronald W. Walker, "The Persisting Idea of Treasure Hunting in America," *BYU Studies* 24 (Fall 1984): 429-59. The idea of a possible relationship between antifederalism and early Mormonism was first suggested to me by Gordon Thomasson.

45. *Book of Commandments* (1833), chap. 30, pp. 67-68. Fawn Brodie noted the key role that the Hiram Page episode played in the growth of the Church hierarchy in *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet* (New York: Knopf, 1945), 92. See also the more extended study by Bruce G. Stewart, "Hiram Page: An Historical and Sociological Analysis of an Early Mormon Prototype," master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1986, esp. chaps. 4-5. Many of those individuals who were drawn to Page were later critics of Joseph Smith.

46. See D. Michael Quinn, "The Evolution of the Presiding Quorums of the LDS Church," *Journal of Mormon History* 1 (1974): 21-39; and Quinn, "From Sacred Grove to Sacral Power Structure," *Dialogue, A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (Summer 1984): 9-34.

47. See the "Preface" to the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, iv.

48. Consider, for example, the later comments and writings of such individuals as David Whitmer, *An Address to All Believers in Christ*; John Whitmer, "History"; Benjamin Winchester, "Primitive Mormonism," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 22 September 1889, 2; and Ebenezer Robinson, throughout *The Return*. Warren Cowdery spoke for many in this group when he editorialized in 1837: "If we gave our privilege to one man, we virtually give him our money and our liberties, and make him a monarch, absolute and despotic, and ourselves abject slaves or fawning sycophants. If we grant privileges and monopolies to a few, they always continue to undermine the fundamental principles of freedom, and, sooner or later, convert the purest and most liberal form of Government into the rankest aristocracy." *LDS Messenger and Advocate* 3 (July 1837): 538.

49. Joseph Smith's strongest and most specific statements about the Constitution came after 1838; and by 1844 he was suggesting that the leaders of the Church were to be a "living Constitution." See the comments of Joseph F. Smith, Minutes of the Council of Fifty, 21 April 1880, typescript in Archives, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University. More contemporary perspectives are in Dean C. Jessee, ed., "Joseph Smith's 19 July 1840 Discourse," *BYU*

Studies 19 (Spring 1979): 390-94; and the letter of Orson Pratt to George A. Smith, 21 January 1841, MS in HDC.

50. For more detailed information on this movement, see Max H. Parkin, "Conflict at Kirtland: The Nature and Causes of Internal and External Conflict of the Mormons in Ohio between 1830 and 1838," master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1966, 308-25; Milton V. Backman, Jr., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio, 1830-1838* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 323-29; HC 2:528; and George A. Smith, JD 7:115 (10 January 1858).

51. MS in Mary Fielding Smith Collection, HDC. Also in Kenneth W. Godfrey, Audrey M. Godfrey, and Jill Mulvay Derr, eds., *Women's Voices: An Untold History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 60. Rigdon's powerful oratory, particularly in Missouri, has not been placed into the context of American patriotic rhetoric that had its origins in the colonial jeremiad. For example, compare "Reflections for the Fourth of July, 1834," *The Evening and the Morning Star* 2 (July 1834), which suggests that all earthly governments will crumble, and Rigdon's *Oration Delivered by Mr. S. Rigdon on the 4th of July 1838 at Far West* (Far West, MO: Printed at the Journal Office, 1838), with other American patriotic discourses. See, for example, Cedric Larson, "Patriotism in Carmine: 162 Years of July 4th Oratory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 26 (February 1940): 12-25; Robert P. Hay, "Freedom's Jubilee: One Hundred Years of the Fourth of July, 1776-1876," Ph.D. diss., University of Kentucky, 1967; and Barnet Baskerville, *The People's Voice: The Orator in American Society* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1979). Even Rigdon's "Salt Sermon" (17 June 1838), directed at dissenters at Far West, is less ominous if seen within the larger tradition of American jeremiads and more particularly so when compared with the anti-Tory sermons of the American Revolution and the War of 1812. It was also probably anchored in D&C 101:39-40 rather than Matthew 5:13, although these two texts are obviously related.

52. The text of this 12 January 1838 revelation, one of three given the same day, is in "The Scriptorium Book of Joseph Smith," MS in HDC. Another revelation on the same day addressed the question of procedural matters for bringing the president of the Church before a Church court.

53. Basic accounts of these events are in Leland H. Gentry, "A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri from 1836 to 1839," Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1965, 68-114. See also Cannon and Cook, *Far West Record*, 162-80. Cf. D&C 64:35.

54. For detailed information, both textual and historical, see Dean

C. Jessee and David J. Whittaker, eds., "The Last Months of Mormonism in Missouri: The Albert Perry Rockwood Journal," *BYU Studies* 28 (Winter 1988): 5-41. Rockwood's letterbook is at Yale University; handwritten copies of the original letters he sent to friends and relatives in Massachusetts are in HDC. Some of the following material is taken from the introduction to the published Rockwood Journal.

55. LeSueur, *The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri*, esp. 37-47, 195-204, 207-11. Earlier histories that followed Avard's testimony include John C. Bennett, *History of the Saints, or an Exposé of Joe Smith and the Mormons* (Boston: Leland and Whiting, 1842), 265-72; Henry Caswall, *The Prophet of the Nineteenth Century; or, the Rise, Progress, and Present State of the Mormons* (London: Printed for J. G. F. and J. Rivington, 1843), 155-73; John Hyde, Jr., *Mormonism, Its Leaders and Designs* (New York: Fetridge, 1857), 104-5; Charles Mackay, *The Mormons or, Latter-day Saints: A Contemporary History* (London: Office of the National Illustrated Library, 1851), 89-91; T. B. H. Stenhouse, *The Rocky Mountain Saints; A Full and Complete History of the Mormons* (New York: D. Appleton, 1873), 91-94; William A. Linn, *The Story of the Mormons* (New York: Macmillan, 1902), 189-93; M. R. Werner, *Brigham Young* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1925), 102-3; Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History* (New York: Knopf, 1945), 214-16, 219, 228, 244, 314-15; and Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality*, enlarged ed. (Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilm, 1972), 428-50.

56. See Gentry, "A History of the Latter-day Saints," 213-87; and Leland H. Gentry, "The Danite Band of 1838," *BYU Studies* 14 (Summer 1974): 421-50.

57. For Avard's testimony see *Documents Containing the Correspondence, Orders, Etc. in Relation to the Disturbances with the Mormons; And Evidence Given before the Hon. Austin A. King* (Fayette, MO: Office of the Boon's Lick Democrat, 1841), 97-108.

58. See Doctrine and Covenants (1844), section 102, pp. 390-94.

59. See Peter Crawley and Richard Lloyd Anderson, "The Social and Political Realities of Zion's Camp," *BYU Studies* 14 (Summer 1974): 406-20.

60. See the 4 July 1836 letter of Anderson Wilson and Emelia Wilson to Samuel Turrentine, which suggests the logic of non-Mormon resistance to Mormon bloc-voting and rule by a new majority: "They intend to emigrate here 'til they outnumber us. Then they would rule the country at pleasure. . . . We thought of fighting. This was cruel to fight a people who had not broke the law, and in

this way we became excited. . . . Not that I boast of ourselves, but the spirit that possessed every breast plainly showed that they would either possess their country or the tomb. . . . We defend these principles at all hazards, although we are trampling on our law and Constitution. But we can't help it in no way while we possessed the spirit of 76." See Durward T. Stokes, ed., "The Wilson Letters, 1835-1849," *Missouri Historical Review* 60 (July 1966): 504-8, as cited in Richard Lloyd Anderson, *BYU Studies* 26 (Summer 1986): 12. Clearly both Mormons and their Missouri neighbors claimed a higher law for their behavior. In his study of the Jackson County problems, Richard Bushman pointed out years ago, "The Saints' vision of an earthly kingdom compelled them to seek a measure of political power. After their expulsion from Jackson County, the Mormons knew they must find a sanctuary where they could build their holy city; and only the state could assure them asylum. But Americans could not tolerate social control in Mormon hands. From the beginning until the last decade of the century, the fear of religious aliens in power lay at the heart of gentile hatreds and fears." See Richard L. Bushman, "Mormon Persecution in Missouri, 1833," *BYU Studies* 3 (Autumn 1960): 20.

61. "The Scriptorium Book of Joseph Smith," 61, 27 July 1838. MS in HDC.

62. See Richard Lloyd Anderson, "Atchison's Letters and the Causes of Mormon Expulsion from Missouri," *BYU Studies* 26 (Summer 1986): 3-47.

63. Avard was the key to the investigation; see LeSueur, *The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri*, 198; *Documents Containing the Correspondence, Orders, Etc.*, 90. Yet everyone knew what an unreliable person he was, including General Clark. Nancy Rigdon testified (*Documents Containing the Correspondence, Orders, Etc.*, 147), "I have heard Sampson Avard say that he would swear to a lie to accomplish his object." Sidney Rigdon was even more to the point; see his *An Appeal to the American People* (Cincinnati: Glezen and Shepard, 1840), 66. Reed Peck, whose discussion of Danite activity shows his own prejudice against what he saw as the authoritarian leadership of the Church, reveals his dislike for Avard. See Reed Peck Manuscript, dated 18 September 1839, MS in Henry E. Huntington Library, and first published in Lu B. Cake, *Peepstone Joe and the Peck Manuscript* (New York: Published by L. B. Cake, 1899). John P. Greene wrote that "Doctor Avard also swore false concerning a constitution, as he said, was introduced among the Danites." Greene does not deny the existence of Danites, only Avard's version and accounts. See *Facts Relative to*

the Expulsion of the Mormons, or Latter-day Saints from the State of Missouri (Cincinnati: Brooks, 1839), 33. See also the statement of Lorenzo Young on the Danites in James A. Little, "Biography of Lorenzo Dow Young," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 14 (January-October 1946): 52-53. Even Mosiah Hancock's "Autobiography," MS in HDC, sought to distance the Danites, presumably those of Avard's testimony, from the Mormons; he wrote that these Danites were "of a different stripe" (15). Avard was born about 1800 in St. Peter's, Isle of Guernsey, England. Prior to his conversion to Mormonism, Avard had been a Campbellite preacher. See letter of Orson Pratt, 18 November 1835, in *LDS Messenger and Advocate* 2 (November 1835): 223-24; also Pratt's Journal, November 1835, MS in HDC.

Other early sources that reveal confusion, anger, or rejection of the centralizing tendencies of the Mormon kingdom include James H. Hunt, *Mormonism* (St. Louis: Ustick and Davies, 1844), 165-66, 195-96; statement of Thomas B. Marsh, 24 October 1838 (cf. HC 3:167), but compare his comments in JD 5:206-7 (6 September 1857); John Corrill, *A Brief History of the Church* (St. Louis: Printed for the Author, 1839), 32, 33, 38, 45-48; David Whitmer, *An Address to All Believers in Christ* (Richmond, MO: David Whitmer, 1887), 27-29, 35, who argued that Sidney Rigdon instigated the Danites even though Avard was the leader; and John Whitmer, "History" (MS in Archives, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Independence, MO), esp. chap. 2. William Swartzell, *Mormonism Exposed, Being a Journal of a Residence in Missouri from the 28th of May to the 20th of August, 1838* (Pekin, OH: Published by the author, 1840), claims to be a published diary and as such contains many detailed references to Danite activity. The absence of an original manuscript of the diary and a close look at internal evidence suggest that he is too knowledgeable about future events and that this source ought not be taken at face value. Swartzell refers to the group as "darnites," a strange title for the group by a work that claims to be a contemporary journal. Much of this record seems to reflect Avard's allegations projected back onto Mormon history, yet this source has been constantly used as an independent source to provide proof for Avard's testimony. And even if it is based on an original journal, it ends in August 1838, before the more critical events of 1838 occurred. Thomas Sharp, the publisher of the anti-Mormon *Warsaw Signal*, first summarized Avard's testimony in the issue of 16 June 1841. It clearly confirmed Sharp's perceptions of the Mormons.

64. John Smith's diary, MS in HDC, refers to Danite meetings at Adam-ondi-Ahman, including 4 August (the third meeting since

22 July); 18 August (hears a lecture on consecration and voted to conform); and 15 October (attended conference, "whole church appointed our officers and every man went to work in respective occupations"). John E. Thompson, "A Chronology of Danite Meetings in Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri, July to September 1838," *Restoration* 4 (January 1985): 11-14, provides a useful overview, but he only sees in these references the traditional, sinister meanings. Lyman Wight's diary for this period was destroyed in a fire at the RLDS library early in this century (1907); it would, no doubt, further clarify his involvement, particularly since he was a leader in the Adam-ondi-Ahman area. But quotes from it, used by Rollin J. Britton, who seems to have cited the original as quoted in Joseph Smith III and Heman C. Smith, eds., *The History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*, 4 vols. (Lamoni, IA: Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1897), 2:295-98, would support the interpretation given herein. See the entry for 12 November 1838 when he reacts to Avar'd's testimony before the Court of Inquiry: "Court opened this morning and Sampson Avar'd was sworn. He was a man whose character was perfectly run down in all classes of society, and he being a perfect stranger, palmed himself upon the Mormon Church, invented schemes and plans to go against mobocracy, which were perfectly derogatory to the laws of this State and of the United States, and frequently endeavored to enforce them upon members of the Church, and when repulsed by Joseph Smith, he would frequently become chagrined. At one time he told me that the Presidency of the Church feared he would have too much influence and gain the honor which the First Presidency desired for themselves. At one time he said to me that he would 'be damned' if he did not carry his plans through. More than once did he raise a conspiracy against them [the Presidency] in order to take their lives, thinking that he might then rule the Church. Now when he was brought before the court, he swore that all these treasonable purposes (which he had sworn in his heart to perform) originated with us." Quoted in Rollin J. Britton, *Early Days on Grand River and the Mormon War* (Columbia, MO: State Historical Society of Missouri, 1920), 86.

The Reminiscences of Morris Phelps, MS in HDC, 5-6, probably written after 1852, provide the basis for the material in HC 3:178-82, as well as for the statement of John Taylor in the Bancroft Library (1884) who lays the blame on Avar'd; the *Autobiography of Luman Andros Shurtliff*, MS in HDC, 120, written after 1850, states the "Danite society" was got up "for our personal defense also of our families,

Property and our Religion." He joined in August 1838, considering the Danites a good institution and a blessing for his people. Nowhere does he imply the illegalities Avard did, even though he speaks of signs and passwords and uses military metaphors. In 1885 Anson Call gave a statement to B. H. Roberts and John M. Whitaker which referred to the Danites as a military order "according to the Mosaic Order" (MS in HDC, 5; or typescript, dated 30 December 1885, 2). He remembered Avard as the head of the organization, yet says the facts of the matter agree with Joseph Smith's record, suggesting either confusion or only a peripheral involvement or knowledge.

Even Ebenezer Robinson, *The Return* 2 (June 1890): 287, seems to have equated the "Order of Enoch" and the "Danites" and placed all the blame for "secret societies" on John C. Bennett later in 1842! Like many others, Robinson revealed a strong reaction to the temporal power of Joseph Smith that colors his account. No doubt he used the theme of the Danites to attack this more central concern.

Hosea Stout spoke in 1846 of the "Danite evolutions of horsemanship as practiced in the War in Davis[s] County Missouri in the fall of 1838." *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout*, ed. Juanita Brooks, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press for the Utah State Historical Society, 1964), 1:141 (21 March 1846). This is hardly a sinister reference, and clearly in line with the formations mentioned in the Rockwood letters. Dimick B. Huntington's Reminiscences (MS in HDC, 13-15, written about 1845) indicate that he was appointed in May 1838 a "Captain of the Guard in the Da. . . s[Danites]." This was hardly another sinister appointment; he had been appointed a Constable in Far West and in June he was appointed deputy sheriff—all, it would seem, positions of public trust. One even suspects that, following Rockwood, regular civic positions were just incorporated into the Mormon kingdom, much like what happened later in Nauvoo and the Salt Lake Valley.

Finally, much has been made of the election-day battle at Gallatin on 6 August 1838, at which a violent confrontation occurred between Mormons and non-Mormons. It seems that when Mormons were prevented from voting, a fight broke out. Then a Danite distress signal was called out, a number of Mormons came to the rescue of those being accosted. Students of this period forget that most fraternal organizations in early America had elements of "secret" rites, code names, and distress calls. But most accounts, including that of LeSueur (*The 1838 Mormon War in Missouri*, 59-64) see the action as additional proof that a select group of Danites showed their violent nature by responding to their special distress call. But this

presupposes that only Avard-type Danites voted, which is absurd; doesn't it make more sense to understand the situation in the same way as Rockwood did, that the whole community of men had been organized into "Danites"? A useful overview of this episode is Reed C. Durham, Jr., "The Election Day Battle at Gallatin," *BYU Studies* 13 (Autumn 1972): 36-61.

65. See "Journal History," 1 December 1838, MS in HDC.

66. Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), 380.

67. See Rebecca Foster Cornwall and Leonard J. Arrington, "Perpetuation of a Myth: Mormon Danites in Five Western Novels, 1840-1890," *BYU Studies* 23 (Spring 1983): 147-65. This study indicates (p. 149) that by 1900 at least fifty-six novels had been published in English which used the Danite theme as part of their story line. Years ago Hugh Nibley correctly observed that "The Danites thus supply the anti-Mormon fraternity with a blank check backed by unlimited horror," *Sounding Brass* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1963), 217.

68. *Millennial Star* 14 (1 May 1852): 150-51. Known today as D&C 136, it was first added to the Doctrine and Covenants in 1876; see esp. vss. 2-11. This same organization was used in the evacuation of Nauvoo in 1846. It was also used in organizing the militia in the Salt Lake Valley; see the letter of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to the Saints in the Salt Lake Valley, 9 September 1847, MS in HDC. See also the comments of Parley Pratt regarding the establishment of the Nauvoo Legion in *Millennial Star* 3 (August 1842): 69.

69. See Leonard J. Arrington, Feramorz Y. Fox, and Dean L. May, *Building the City of God: Community and Cooperation among the Mormons* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976). It also seems probable that Brigham Young's later emphasis on the key role of Adam in Latter-day Saint thought had its genesis in this early milieu; for an introduction to his later thought, see David J. Buerger, "The Adam-God Doctrine," *Dialogue* 15 (Spring 1982): 14-58. Unfortunately Buerger fails to see the earlier roots of Young's thought.

70. See n. 23 above. See also Orson Pratt, "The Ancient of Days," *Times and Seasons* 4 (15 May 1843): 204; reprinted in *Millennial Star* 4 (December 1843): 123-24. When the temple endowment was established in Nauvoo, it was justified as "setting forth the order pertaining to the Ancient of Days." See HC 5:1-2.

71. See also "Adam-ondi-Ahman" in D&C 78:15; 107:53-57; 116:1. See also n. 24 above.

72. Cf. D&C 115:4 with Daniel 7:22. A useful overview of the

changes to the name of the Church is Richard Lloyd Anderson, "What Changes Have Been Made in the Name of the Church?" *Ensign* 9 (January 1979): 13-14. Particularly revealing is the 19 October 1834 letter of John Smith to Elias Smith, who had raised questions about changes in the name of the Church: "Now I come to the great question that seems to burden you so much – what business anyone has to call the Church of Christ the Church of the Latter Day Saints or call the children of God saints. I answer the Church of Christ is the Church of Saints and always was. . . . Search the ancient prophecies, you will find that they say considerable about Saints. See Daniel 7ch 18, 22, 27th verses evidently meaning the Church of the Latter Day Saints or the Chr. of Christ. . . . Tell Amos that the work of the Lord prospers, the church increases in numbers very fast, prejudice is giving away in this region [Kirtland,] a spirit of inquiry prevails almost universally, finally the work rools [sic] on and will until the saints of the Latter Day takes the kingdom and possess the kingdom & yea I repeat it the church of the Latter Day Saints will prosper in spite of wicked men and Devils until it fills the whole earth." MS in HDC. This letter was called to my attention by Steve Sorensen.

73. See Lyndon W. Cook, *Joseph Smith and the Law of Consecration* (Provo: Grandin, 1985), 71-83. The revelation on tithing, D&C 118, ought not to be interpreted as meaning just 10 percent, as the term was used in a broad sense to describe general offerings to the Church.

74. For example, members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles were to leave for their mission to Great Britain from Far West. See D&C 118:4-5 and Ronald K. Esplin, "The Emergence of Brigham Young and the Twelve to Mormon Leadership, 1830-1841," Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1981, 363-72. Little emphasis has been given to the early Mormon sense of sacred space/place. Surely the sites identified with Adam could be understood in the context discussed in Steven L. Olsen, "Community Celebrations and Mormon Ideology of Place," *Sunstone* 5 (May-June 1980): 41-45. See also Roger Henrie, "The Perception of Sacred Space: The Case of Utah and Other Sacred Places in Mormondom," master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1972.

75. It is possible to overstate the issues here, but if a narrow look is given to just the accounts of Joseph's first vision, it is possible to agree with Marvin Hill, who first pointed out this shift in emphasis. See "The First Vision Controversy: A Critique and Reconciliation," *Dialogue* 15 (Summer 1982): 31-64.

76. See *Documents Containing the Correspondence, Orders, Etc.*, 111 (John Corroll), 128 (George M. Hinkle), 135 (Burr Riggs), 139 (John Whitmer), and 139 (Alanson Ripley).

77. Compare D&C 121:12 with Daniel 2:21; D&C 121:26 with Daniel 2:28; D&C 121:32 with Daniel 11:36; D&C 121:33 with Daniel 4:35 and 12:4; and D&C 121:46 with Daniel 7:14. The whole letter was not used when D&C 121-23 was prepared for the 1876 edition. For the entire Liberty Jail letter see *HC* 3:289-305. Here, no attention has been paid to the deleted sections, some of which also have allusions to the book of Daniel.

78. *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, Commonly Called Mormons* (New York: W. Sandford, 1837), chaps. 1-2. Outside the standard works of the Church, this was probably the most important and widely distributed Latter-day Saint work in the nineteenth century. Jan Shipps has recognized the importance of the themes of the book of Daniel in the early Mormon attempts to establish a Hebraic kingdom in America, see *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 121, and 186-87, n. 21.

79. *A Letter to the Queen, Touching the Signs of the Times, and the Political Destiny of the World* (Manchester: Printed and published by P. P. Pratt, 1841). See also Parley P. Pratt, "The Kingdom of God, or the Stone Cut Out of the Mountain without Hands," *Millennial Star* 3 (September 1842): 92-94; and his discourse of 20 January 1853, in *JD* 1:172-85. See also the editorial by Thomas Ward in *Millennial Star* 3 (February 1843): 169-70.

80. *Proclamation of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. To All the Kings of the World; to the President of the United States; to the Governors of the Several States and to the Rulers and Peoples of All Nations* (New York: Prophet Office, 1845). That Parley Pratt was the author of this item is made clear in the letter of Brigham Young to Parley P. Pratt, 26 May 1845, MS at Archives, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

81. See the account of his discourse of 11 April 1841, in the *Journal of Wilford Woodruff*, MS in HDC.

82. See esp. his *Kingdom of God* series (Liverpool: James, 1848-49); *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon* (Liverpool: James, 1850); and *Latter-day Kingdom, or the Preparations for the Second Advent* (Liverpool: LDS Book and Star Depot, 1857). For references in his early journals, see n. 30.

83. See *The Seer* 1 (October 1853): 148; 2 (August 1854): 307-11;

and the following sermons in *JD* 7:210-27 (14 August 1859); 13:125-26 (10 April 1870); 15:67-76 (4 February 1872); 16:86-87 (15 June 1873); 17:181-88 (11 October 1874); 17:308-9 (28 February 1875); 18:181-82 (26 March 1876); 18:335-48 (25 February 1877).

84. "Nebuchadnezzar's Dream," *Gospel Reflector* [Philadelphia] 1 (1 and 15 April 1841): 192-200, 201-13. This essay was reprinted in the *Times and Seasons* 3 (1 December 1841): 607-14. See also Benjamin Winchester, *An Examination of a Lecture Delivered by the Rev. H. Perkins* (N.p., 1840), 9-10. A copy of this rare tract is in the Harvard University Library. It should be noted that in his writings Winchester stresses a spiritual rather than a temporal kingdom, which would only be established at the time of the Second Coming of Christ. His own disaffection from the Church was thus related to the same anticentralist tendencies discussed above. For more information on him see David J. Whittaker, "Early Mormon Pamphleteering," Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1982, 139-235.

85. *A Dissertation on Nebuchadnezzar's Dream: Showing That the Kingdom Spoken of by Daniel the Prophet Was Not Set Up in the Days of the Apostles; and the Order of the Kingdom Set Up Then Explained* (Philadelphia: Brown, Bicking and Guilbert, 1844). See also the manuscript of Appleby's unpublished "History of the Signs of the Times for the Benefit of the Church of the Latter Day Saints," dated June 1848, Recklesstown, NJ. MS in HDC. Daniel references occur on 55-56, 77, 97, 113, 159-60.

86. Dated before 8 August 1839. See Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 8-11. Peter Cartright recalled hearing Joseph Smith preach in 1839, "I will show you, sir, that I will raise up a government in these United States which will overturn the present government and I will raise up a new religion that will overturn every other form of religion in the country." See W. P. Strickland, ed., *Autobiography of Peter Cartright* (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1857), 345. Peter Crawley has examined the role of Joseph Smith's trip to the East Coast in 1839-40 in the context of being freed from the restraints of the Whitmer faction in "The Passage of Mormon Primitivism," *Dialogue* 13 (Winter 1980): 26-37.

87. Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 67 (discourse of 21 March 1841). Cf. Daniel 7:9, 14, 21-22, 27.

88. Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 123-26, citing *The Wasp*, 9 July 1842. See also Journal of Wilford Woodruff, 3 July 1842. Cf. Daniel 2:44; 7:9-14, 22-27.

89. Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 183-90 (discourse of 8 April 1843). Cf. Daniel 7:3-8, 12, 16-28; 8:3-27; and Revelation 4:6; 7:1-14.

90. See Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 367 (discourse of 12 May 1844).

91. Dan Jones, in the *Prophet of Jubilee* (1847), 18. I am grateful to Ronald Dennis who translated this material from the Welsh and shared it with me. See also Dan Jones, "The Martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith," MS in HDC, written in 1855; and the "History of Joseph Smith," *Millennial Star* 24 (7 June 1862): 359, which refers to William Law's charges relating to Daniel's kingdom.

92. For details see the Oliver Olney papers, Yale University Library. Cf. HC 5:269-70.

93. James J. Strang, *Book of the Law of the Lord*, 1856 edition, 171. See further the early letter of George J. Adams to James J. Strang, 20 June 1846. MS in Strang Papers, Yale University.

94. See Klaus J. Hansen, *Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1967); and D. Michael Quinn, "The Council of Fifty and Its Members, 1844 to 1945," *BYU Studies* 20 (Winter 1980): 163-97. Quinn suggests (p. 164) that the 7 April 1842 organizational meeting fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel 2:44-45. See also Andrew F. Ehat, "'It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth': Joseph Smith and the Constitution of the Kingdom of God," *BYU Studies* 20 (Spring 1980): 253-79.

95. See D. Michael Quinn, "Echoes and Foreshadowings: The Distinctiveness of the Mormon Communities," *Sunstone* 3 (March-April 1978): 12-17.

96. Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 367 (discourse of 12 May 1844). It is interesting to compare Joseph Smith with William Miller, a contemporary who also stressed the book of Daniel. Mormons probably never could forget that Miller's great publicist, Joshua V. Himes, had written the preface to the first anti-Mormon tract, a work by Alexander Campbell: *Delusions, An Analysis of the Book of Mormon* (1832); or Himes's own *Delusions and Monstrosities* (1842), which had been responded to by John Hardy, *Hypocrisy Exposed* (Boston: Albert Morgan, 1842). In 1841 Joshua Himes reprinted the 1796 work of Joshua Spalding which used Daniel's volume: *Sentiments Concerning the Coming and Kingdom of Christ, Collected from the Bible, and from the Writings of Many Ancient, and Some Modern Believers*. So far the only serious study comparing the two groups is Grant Underwood, "Apocalyptic Adversaries: Mormonism Meets Millerism," *John Whitmer Historical Association Journal* 7 (1987): 53-61, but this essay does not treat the issues from the perspectives suggested here. Other important studies of Mormon apocalypticism

are Keith Norman, "How Long, O Lord? The Delay of the Parousia in Mormonism," *Sunstone* 8 (January-April 1983): 48-58; Stephen J. Stein, "Signs of the Times: The Theological Functions of Early Mormon Apocalyptic," *ibid.*, 59-65; and W. H. Oliver, *Prophets and Millenniumists* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1978), 236-38.

97. Relevant studies that apply the recent insights relating to social and cultural conflict to early Mormon history include Warren Jennings, "The City in the Garden: Social Conflict in Jackson County, Missouri," in F. Mark McKiernan et al., eds., *The Restoration Movement: Essays in Mormon History* (Lawrence, KS: Coronado, 1973), 99-119; Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (New York: Knopf, 1979), 44-64; James B. Allen, "Why Did People Act That Way?" *Ensign* 8 (December 1978): 21-24; and the material in *Sunstone* 4 (July-August 1979): 43-46.

98. For example, Parley Pratt argued that the Book of Mormon "set the time for the overthrow of our government and all other Gentile governments on the American continent." Parley P. Pratt, *Mormonism Unveiled: Zion's Watchman Unmasked, and its editor, Mr. L. R. Sunderland, exposed: truth vindicated: the devil mad, and priestcraft in danger!* (New York: printed for the author, 1838), 15.