

Prophet Joseph Smith by heavenly messengers (see RESTORATION OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST). Through Joseph Smith the Lord said:

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 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. Wherefore, may the kingdom of God go forth, that the kingdom of heaven may come [D&C 65:2, 5–6].

GEORGE W. PACE

KING FOLLETT DISCOURSE

The King Follett Discourse is the name given to an address the Prophet Joseph SMITH delivered in Nauvoo, Illinois, on April 7, 1844, at a general conference of the Church. It was a commemorative oration for a Church member named King Follett, who had died in an accident on March 9, 1844. The discourse may be one of the Prophet's greatest sermons because of its comprehensive doctrinal teachings. It was his last general conference address, delivered less than three months before he was martyred. Key doctrinal topics in the sermon include the character of God, man's potential to progress in God's likeness, the Creation, and the tie between the living and their progenitors.

Joseph Smith delivered the sermon to several thousand people in a grove west of the Nauvoo Temple in a natural amphitheater, where benches and a rostrum had been placed. He spoke for two hours and fifteen minutes. Four experienced scribes took synoptic notes: Willard Richards, Wilford WOODRUFF, William Clayton, and Thomas Bullock.

The spring of 1844 was a time of tension and turmoil in the Prophet's life. On the one hand, the Church was flourishing in Nauvoo and abroad, construction of the Nauvoo Temple was proceeding apace, and generally men and women were serving in the Church with dedication and effectiveness. On the other hand, apostates, political factions in Illinois and Missouri, and other groups were conspiring against Joseph Smith.

Of the kinship between God and man, Joseph Smith taught, "If men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves" (*TPJS*, p. 343). "It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the Character of God, and to know that we may converse with him as one man converses with another" (*TPJS*, p. 345). Echoing his FIRST VISION, the Prophet taught what he called the "great secret": "If the veil were rent today, and . . . God . . . [were] to make himself visible, . . . if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form—like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man" (*TPJS*, p. 345).

Creation, he taught, was not by mere fiat or ex nihilo. God's role was to bring harmony to primal, unorganized elements and to "institute laws" whereby weaker INTELLIGENCES might have the privilege of advancing like himself (*TPJS*, p. 354).

Of man's potential, the Prophet said that even as God is eternal and self-existent, so the intelligence of man is also eternal. The Father has become what he is through eternities of progress. Christ, who did nothing but what he had seen the Father do (cf. John 5:19), followed identical paths and patterns. Since all mankind have a divine Father, they are potential "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ" (*TPJS*, pp. 346–47; cf. Romans 8:17). In this sense, all the children of God are embryonic gods or goddesses. Obedience to the fulness of the gospel is the perfecting process through which they may go "from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one; from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation . . . until [they] arrive at the station of a God" (*TPJS*, pp. 346–47).

On the link between the living and their progenitors, the Prophet asked, "Is there nothing to be done?—no preparation—no salvation for our fathers and friends who have died without having had the opportunity to obey the decrees of the Son of Man?" (*TPJS*, p. 355). He answered, "God hath made a provision that every spirit in the eternal world can be . . . saved unless he has committed [the] unpardonable sin" (*TPJS*, p. 357). He explained these provisions as they apply both in mortality and in the world beyond. To the mourners, the Prophet testified, "We have reason to have the greatest hope and consolations for our dead of any people on the earth; for we have seen them walk worthily in our midst, and seen them sink asleep in the arms of Jesus; and those who have died in the

faith are now in the celestial kingdom of God” (*TPJS*, p. 359).

The Prophet indicated some of his concerns: threats on his life, his love of the Saints, the loneliness of leadership (“You never knew my heart”), the wonderment he felt in retrospect (“I don’t blame anyone for not believing my history. If I had not experienced what I have, I could not have believed it myself” [*TPJS*, p. 361]). He finished with a plea for peace and invoked God’s blessing on the assembly.

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KING JAMES VERSION

See: Bible: King James Version

KIRTLAND ECONOMY

[*This article reports the main facts and points of interest regarding the economic events in Kirtland in the 1830s and the significance of this historical development in the overall growth of the Church.*]

In early 1830, Kirtland, Ohio, was a small rural trading center of approximately 1,000 people, none of whom was LDS (see *HISTORY OF THE CHURCH: C. 1831–1844*). Six years later, it was a bustling community of 3,000, with commercial, mercantile, and small manufacturing firms, and a temple serving the 2,000 Latter-day Saints in the town. Despite its rapid growth and apparent prosperity, within another two years Joseph SMITH departed Kirtland, leaving behind disgruntled creditors, warrants for his arrest, a failed banking experiment, and a divided Mormon population preparing to leave the temple and their homes. By 1840, only 200 Latter-day Saints remained in Kirtland.

The study of the Kirtland economy between 1830 and 1840 continues to generate controversy among historians. One question has to do with the precipitous increases in the land prices between 1832 and 1837. Were they the result of “reckless land speculation” by Joseph Smith and other Church leaders? The average price per acre of land sold in Kirtland rose from approximately \$7 in 1832 to \$44 in 1837, only to fall back to \$17.50 in 1839. These dramatic changes, however, were related to movements in the general price level, trends in the value of land in neighboring communities, and the impact of population growth. Probably between 25 and 40 percent of the change in the nominal price of land was associated with generalized inflation during this period. As much as 84 percent of the remaining change in the real price of land was correlated with the rise and fall in population. Joseph Smith was primarily responsible for the call to gather to Kirtland; naturally, the newcomers needed land. An examination of land transactions reveals nothing in the buying, selling, or subdividing of land that was unusual for a frontier community.

Another question has to do with Joseph Smith’s debts. Was his use of credit “irresponsible”? Early studies of the economic difficulties in Kirtland emphasized debts and ignored assets. Actually, Joseph Smith’s potential cumulative indebtedness during this period, including all purchases of land and merchandise, totaled a little over \$100,000, considerably below earlier estimates by some historians. At least \$60,000 of this debt was eventually settled, and probably much more, since the remainder produced no lawsuits and primarily represented debt for land, which would likely have been paid for or the land reclaimed. At the same time, because of the increase in prices, President Smith and his associates held almost \$60,000 equity in land. In the environment of rapid population growth from 1830 to 1837, many New York, Buffalo, and Cleveland merchants willingly extended Joseph Smith credit. His position of leadership in an expanding community, the value of his current assets, and the expectation of continued growth made these transactions reasonable at the time.

The financial problems of Church leaders arose from two circumstances. First, their debts were largely in the form of 90-to-180-day notes, while their assets were primarily in nonliquid land. Second, Joseph Smith found it very difficult to