MARRIAGE RATES

See: Vital Statistics

MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB

According to ancient and modern scripture, Jesus Christ, the bridegroom (Matt. 25:1–13), will host a "marriage supper" at his second coming when he symbolically claims his bride, the faithful members of his Church (Rev. 19:5–9; D&C 109:73–74).

In Jesus' parable of the marriage of the king's son (Matt. 22:1–14), "the king" represents God, and "his son" is Jesus. The guests first "bidden to the wedding," are the house of Israel. Guests invited later from "the highways" are the GENTILES to whom the gospel went after most Jews rejected it in the MERIDIAN OF TIME (JC, pp. 536–40).

Latter-day Saints believe that by teaching and exemplifying the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world they are extending to all mankind the invitation to come to the marriage feast. "For this cause I have sent you . . . that the earth may know that . . . all nations shall be invited. First, the rich and the learned, the wise and the noble; . . . then shall the poor, the lame, and the blind, and the deaf, come in unto the marriage of the Lamb, and partake of the supper of the Lord" (D&C 58:6–11).

After partaking of the sacrament with his apostles, Jesus said, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:29). In latter days, the Lord declared, "The hour cometh that I will drink of the fruit of the vine with you" (D&C 27:5–12). "There is to be a day when . . . those who have kept the faith will be . . . admitted to the marriage feast; . . . they will partake of the fruit of the vine," or the sacramental emblems of Christ's atoning sacrifice, and reign with him on the EARTH (TPJS, p. 66).

[See also Last Days; Millennium.]

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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MARTYRDOM OF JOSEPH AND HYRUM SMITH

The violent deaths of the Prophet Joseph Smith at the age of thirty-eight and his brother Hyrum Smith (age forty-four), Associate President and Patriarch of the Church, dramatically ended the founding period of the LDS Church. On June 27, 1844, they weremobbed and shot while confined at Carthage Jail in Hancock County, in western Illinois. Climaxing more than two decades of persecution across several states, this event gave them an enduring place as MARTYRS in the hearts of Latter-day Saints.

Nauvoo in 1844, gathering place for the Saints on the Mississippi River, contained elements of both greatness and dissension. Almost overnight, it grew from a village of religious refugees and new converts to the point where it rivaled Chicago as the largest city in Illinois. With Democrats and Whigs both vying for the Mormon vote, Nauvoo was granted one of the most liberal city charters in the state, an independent military force, and a strong judicial system (see NAUVOO CHARTER). However, as in Missouri during the 1830s, natural rivalry with older citizens in neighboring towns like Carthage (the county seat) and Warsaw (the next largest port city) turned to jealousy and hatred as Nauvoo's economic and political power grew (see NAUVOO ECONOMY; NAUVOO POLITICS).

These tensions coalesced around Joseph Smith. In addition to being prophet and President of the Church, he also served as mayor, commander of the NAUVOO LEGION state militia, justice of the peace, and university chancellor. Non-Mormon fears of this concentration of powers were intensified by the Church's belief in the theocratic union of spiritual, economic, and political matters under the PRIESTHOOD. This and other "unorthodox" doctrines, such as continuing revelation, temple ordinances for the living and the dead, new scripture, and plural marriage, further intensified political and economic rivalries.

Illinois anti-Mormons, perhaps assisted by old enemies from Missouri, joined with a handful of determined Mormon defectors within Nauvoo. Several had held high Church positions and, when excommunicated, fueled efforts to destroy Joseph Smith and the Church.