

SEPTEMBER 14, 2021, (Class #2) GATHERING BACK TO ZION



**The laying of the foundation of the Stone Church was by Divine will,
creating many blessings for generations to come.**

Prior to 1870, in the month of February, a Mr. Daniel Bowen heard a voice out of heaven saying, **“Look south, there is a piece of land in Independence for you.”** With his wife’s support, Daniel traveled from his home in Stewartsville, MO. down to Independence of Jackson County. Once arriving and obtaining a realtor, he silently prayed asking God for guidance, “When passing the Temple Lot, and talking with the agent about a piece of land across the road north therefrom, the Spirit witnessed to me that I should purchase there. I did so, and felt satisfied that God had a purpose in directing me; but what that purpose was I did not know though it was a beautiful piece of land, upon which you could stand and see Kansas City, ten miles away.” (Autumn Leaves, Vol. 1 no. 11, November 1888, Lamoni, IA: 505)

Mr. Bowen returned home to Stewartsville and a few years passed with saints returning to the center place of Zion, the City of Independence in Jackson County, Missouri. The RLDS saints began returning to “Zion” shortly after two other remnants from the grueling Nauvoo, Ill. period had already arrived. Granville Hedrick in 1860 and Alpheus Cutler in 1864 brought their followers with them to return and settle. From a Brochure on the History of the Stone Church

In March of 1870, Saints began to gather into Independence, **D&C 57:1a Hearken, O ye elders of my church saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the Saints: 1b wherefore this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion.** Henry Etzenhouser and his wife, believing in this revelation, arrived in Independence, MO, with their eight children. They were eager for the RLDS saints to return to this sacred place. In August of 1871, Joseph III received a curt letter from Brother Etzenhouser urging the President Prophet of the RLDS Church to permit the return of the saints to the center place. He states, **“...Is Zion down in Kansas? Or up in Iowa? ...This is the only place now appointed for the gathering of the saints.”** True Latter Day Saints Herald, Vol. 18, no. 19, October 1, 1871.

The John W. Brackenbury family, one of the first families to gather back to Independence, MO, were strong believers in the "Gathering to Zion." John's father, Joseph Brackenbury, a missionary had died in the mission field. John's widowed mother, with her family of little ones, came to Jackson County, MO, to a small farm in Zion, only to go through all the troubles of the church. John was a just a child when the saints were driven out of Jackson County. He, along with his widowed mother, his brothers and sisters, were a part of the miserable campers in the willows by the Missouri river, driven out in November 1833. "Story of the Church", Inez Smith Davis, pg. 50.

One small description of the abuse suffered is as follows: "And thus, during the greatest cold of the last winter, were men, women and children, aged, sick and helpless, driven out from shelter, and, half-clothed, unfed, robbed of teams and horses even, forced to make their way as they could to other States." Church History, Vol. 2, pg. 347

Why would these saints risk their lives to return to an area that had violently expelled them out of its borders a mere three decades before? They believed in the revelation given by Joseph Smith Jr., (father of Joseph III), on December 16, 1833 that states, **"Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered, they that turn and come to their inheritances; they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy; to build up the waste places of Zion."** D&C 98:4g From a Brochure on the History of the Stone Church

In 1879, the saints built a brick church where they could meet, but it too quickly became very evident that they needed to build a larger building where all of the RLDS saints could gather for church and could continue to grow in number. . . . The building committee fasted and prayed asking God for assistance in what they should do.

That night, Daniel Bowen would be awakened. His granddaughter Daisy Bowen Brown reports his experience: "Around three or four a.m. the next morning, a bright light appeared. . . . He realized he was not alone. Then he heard the heavenly messenger's voice saying, **'Daniel, I brought you to Missouri; I told you where to buy land. Now my saints need a new church and I want some of the land to put it on.'** Soon the room was dark. . . . [He] got up and dressed and went to Brother Joseph Luff's home, got him out of bed and told him what had happened. He also said that when the saints got ready to build their new church, Zerelda [his wife] and he would give them the property to build it on." (Richard A. Brown) From a Brochure on the History of the Stone Church

Joseph Smith Jr. Comments on Zion = Church History, Vol. no. 1, pg. 515

Joseph Smith Jr. said: "Whether or not the majority of His people are responsive to His urging to gather, the gathering will take place. God has a plan for the gathering of His people from the beginning. No power can thwart that gathering." He also said: "That the work of the Lord would roll on and the gathering of the House of Israel take place in spite of earth and hell." D&C 45:6c **And they shall behold blood and fire, and vapors of smoke; and before the day of the Lord shall come, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon be turned into blood, and stars fall from heaven; 6d And the remnant shall be gathered unto this place; and then shall look for me, and behold I will come.**

LORD'S REIGN IN ZION

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days *That the mountain (Kingdom) of the LORD's house* Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it.



First Epistle to The Reorganized Church Given by Joseph Smith III In July 1861, Young Joseph issued his first Epistle, that he might further facilitate the work of Gathering

In the name of the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, I now call upon all scattered Saints, upon all the broad earth, to arise and shake off the sleep that hath bound them these many years, take on the armor of the just, calling on the name of the Lord of hosts for help, and unite once more for the emancipation of the honest in heart from the power of false doctrine and the shackles of sin.

In the name of bleeding Zion, I call upon all those who have been wandering in by and forbidden paths, and have been led astray by wicked and designing men, to turn from their scenes of wickedness and sins of conveniences—to turn from their servitude to Satan, in all his seductive devices; from vice in every phase, and from the labor of sin, wages whereof are ever death—unto their true delightful allegiance to the principles of the gospel of peace—to the paths of wisdom—to the homage of that God that brought the children of Israel out of bondage; to turn and remember the new covenant, even the *Book of Mormon*; to lay hold anew upon the rod of iron which surely leads to the tree of life; to remember that those who live to the Lord keep his commandments, and that the promises are unto the faithful, and the reward unto those that endure unto the end.

And in the name of the Lord of hosts, I call upon all the inhabitants of the earth to repent, believe and be baptized for the time cometh when the judgments of God are to be poured out upon all nations, and the besom of God's wrath shall smoke through the land; when men shall know that there is a God in Israel, and he is mighty to punish or to save; that the prayers of those under the altar have been heard, and a swift retribution is to come, when the despoiler will be despoiled; when those who denied justice shall be judged, and the measure meted unto others shall be meted unto them; when the prisoner shall go free, the oppressed be redeemed, and all of Israel shall cry, 'Glory to God in the highest be given, for he is long-suffering and slow to anger, has risen and shall bring again Zion.' Amen and Amen.

President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,
Nauvoo Illinois, July 19, 1861"

From that time the Saints began to gather in from all places. "Story of the Church" Inez Smith Davis, pg. 419-420

Zinser On Gathering to Zion Today

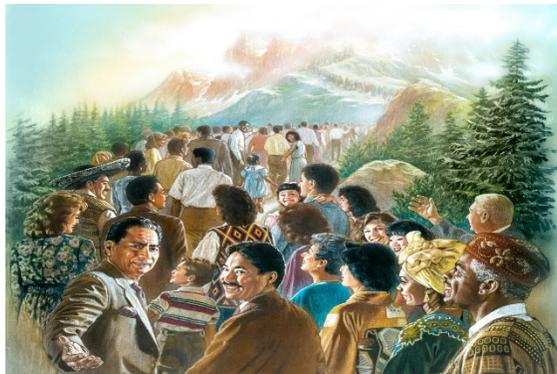
In “The Word of Christ” Chapter 30, the Gathering to Zion = Ray Zinser said: “The words of Christ calls for the gathering of his believers to the Center Place of Zion, to center stakes and to regions round about to build the Kingdom of God on earth The Kingdom of God on earth requires the pure in heart but it equally requires the pure in heart to gather together to the Center Place of Zion so that a society of believers can come together. . . . ‘whose fellowship would be so moving, whose faith would be so sure, whose wisdom so profound that the Kingdom of Heaven would be established.” R. Edwin Brown, Graceland College Worship 1950. This society of Zionics believers must be gathered together geographically in the Center Place of Zion in order to develop the kind of society where one heart and one mind and dwelling in righteousness will provide for the accomplishment of the objective of the Kingdom of God.”

Significant Aspects of Gathering to Zion

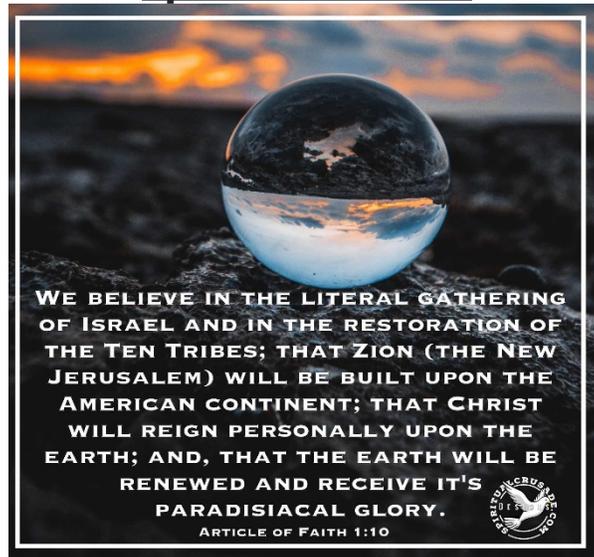
1. Gathering of Attitudes = There are specific attitudes related to the gathering = and Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom, otherwise, I cannot receive her unto myself; Sec. 102:2c, Sec 85:18a-d-b, 59:2a, 100:6a, 94:5c, 58:6c, John 15:13,
2. Gathering by Spiritual Power = Sec. 44:2a, 92:2a, 102:3e, 100:3d, 43:4 a-d,
3. Gathering by Consensus = Sec. 25:1b
4. Selective and Priority in Gathering = Sec. 58:3b, 45:12c, 28:2c-d,63:9e
5. Types of Gatherers = Three are listed, Process, Voluntary, Crisis = Sec 72:5b, 85:2, 104:5a-b, 45:13a, 108:4a,
6. Geographical Location =The ultimate purpose of the geographical gathering is to receive the Lord Jesus in His glorious return to the earth. He is to come to a specific gathering of people in a specific geographical location = Sec. 108:5a-g

Richard Neil = Message given 2012

To My People: Prepare the Center Place for The Gathering of the Nations



Epitome of Faith



Church History Vol. 2, Pg, 569-570

We believe in God the Eternal Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.

We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression.

We believe that through the atonement of Christ all mankind may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.

We believe that these ordinances are, 1st, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; 2nd, Repentance; 3rd, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; 4th, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

We believe that a man must be called of God by "prophecy, and by laying on of hands" by those who are in authority to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.

We believe in the same organization that existed in the primitive church; viz.: Apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc.

We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, etc.

We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.

We believe all that God has revealed, all that he does now reveal, and we believe that he will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes. That Zion will be built upon this continent. That Christ will reign personally upon the earth, and that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisaic glory. We claim the privilege of worshiping [worshipping] Almighty God according to the dictates of our conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.

We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.

We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul, "we believe all things, we hope all things," we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.

Respectfully, etc.,

JOSEPH SMITH

-Times and Seasons, Vol. 3, pp. 709, 710.