

Zion's Camp, Far West etc.

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11:04 AM

We are now in Clay County Missouri and it is winter of 1833. After the night the stars fell the saints are taken into the homes of slaves in Clay County. The plantation owners realize that the saints know how to work and hire them to do labor. Parley P. Pratt and Lyman White go to tell Joseph that Zion has fallen. Joseph's reaction was "oh that I had been with them to suffer as they have suffered." He then prays to the Lord to see what he can do. He wanted to "redeem Zion" and place them back on their lands. He is given 2 options - 1) redeem Zion by purchase, go to Jackson County and buy them all out. 2) redeem Zion by blood. The poor were the ones who came into the church most readily therefore redeeming Zion by purchase was less than feasible by those in the church. Therefore, Joseph comes to the conclusion that they will redeem Zion by blood. Joseph asks the Lord how he can guarantee victory- he was told that if he raised 500 men that he would be guaranteed victory. Joseph goes back to the Lord and negotiates down to 200 men to guarantee victory, not one man less. Joseph goes to the High Council, asks for approval and requests volunteers... gets 5 men. Holds a large general meeting and asks who would be willing to march 800 miles to redeem Zion... he gets 35 more men. His conclusion is that he will leave with 40 men. But before he leaves he calls men on missions all the way as far as Michigan, if there are men 18-45 among the converts they should come and meet them along the trail. The most famous of these converts that catches Zion's camp is Wilford Woodruff. When Joseph gets within a day of Missouri there are 207 men in Zion's Camp. With these 40 men working their way towards Zion the newspaper men are writing articles about Zion's Camp. The reporters exaggerated a fair amount- 10,000 armed men, leagues of angels, pillar of fire, going to arm the indians etc. Joseph becomes a target for gunslingers. Joseph decides to use a pseudonym during the camp to keep himself safe- Squire Cook. There were groups of twelve with a leader to report to Joseph. Brigham Young said that it was the greatest honor ever bestowed upon him by men. These were the days that he said were never to be forgotten. Joseph instructed the leaders to tell their men to do three things: 1) pray morning and night, 2) make sure each man keeps the commandments 3) don't let any man murmur.

A Typical Day on the March-

5:00am- Bugle call, everyone up. Make breakfast, generally consisting of cornmeal and salt bacon. Chew the bacon until it goes white to keep the saliva going in their mouth. There wasn't enough time to stop and eat all day and often they would have the same meal for dinner.

All along the way Joseph would stop and remind everyone to do these things or else a plague will come which will prevent them from redeeming Zion. Within a day of Jackson County they stop at a place called Fishing River. When they get there 12 men come in with flags of truce. The men say that they have decided that they were willing to allow the church to purchase Jackson county. The county fathers, say they are authorized to purchase all of the LDS lands and property on the condition that no saints will ever go back to Jackson County. The county fathers are very upset and say they're going back to contact Lilburn W. Boggs, they threaten to raise up the Jackson and Clay County militias to kill all of the saints in Clay County (1300 saints) and Zion's Camp. On their way back they were caught in a hailstorm that kills seven on them on the river. Joseph wakes up the next morning and 64 in the camp are deathly ill with cholera. Cholera is worse than the parasites that missionaries get. Joseph goes from man to man to rebuke the disease with the priesthood. Joseph also gets cholera every time he gives a blessing. He asks the Lord why he can't bless them, because he is told that some of them have murmured and haven't prayed therefore Zion cannot be redeemed by this group of men. Several have died while he is gone and he tells them that Zion cannot be redeemed at this time. The men who remain faithful through Zion's Camp become the leaders. Joseph goes to see the saints at Clay county. He tells the saints that the only saints that are by them in Missouri are him and those who are there with him. The Clay County saints volunteer to organize a second Zion's camp, but the Lord says no because they did not continue as they had commenced. What they had failed to do was build a temple.

The people in Clay County are told that Zion will not be redeemed for a season. They decide to buy land

in Clay County and work together there. When we start buying lands and moving up in the social strata the Clay county people decide they don't like the Saints either. They didn't want to burn them out. They had a county vote that decided that the Saints should move to hell... the next best place was Wisconsin. Alexander Donophan heard about this and heard that some of the Saints had fought in the war of 1812 and were patriotic people. He said they should create a new county- Caldwell County - to be set up as a Mormon Reservation- just like the Indian Reservations are today. In the meantime, we turn to Joseph back in Kirtland, he is asking for money for the poor and bleeding in Missouri. He receives thousands of dollars from the saints in Kirtland which he sends to the presidents of the stake president David Whitmer and his counselors W.W. Phelps, and John Whitmer (church historian). These men do not disburse the money, but instead establish Far West in Caldwell County. They establish it in the same manner. They purchase it in their own names, and then tell the saints that if they want to move to Far West they can come, the closer they want to live close to the temple they have to pay for it. Joseph at this time is escaping from the KSS and works his way to Far West. When he gets there he looks it over and sees that is a town of 5000 people and discovers that there is a spot in the center for a temple. He sees that the middle is very prosperous and that the people on the outskirts are very poor. He finds that the Stake Presidency owns all of the major shops, and farms in town, but they have people managing it. He finds that the people haven't even heard of any of the money that was sent to Zion. Joseph goes to the stake presidency and they have a meeting. Joseph requests to see the books, he wants to see what happened to the money that has gone to the poor in Zion. They tell him that he is not the president of the church in Missouri, that they are. He tells them that he will hold a court on them. They then meet together afterwards to decide if Joseph has jurisdiction in Missouri, they decide to give him 1000 dollars each to preserve their membership in the church. Joseph is nonplussed- he says that "court is in session." Court was held in Far West on David Whitmer- 13 counts against him, Oliver Cowdery - loses his membership because he sold his lands of inheritance which they were commanded not to do, Thomas B. Marsh, Orson Hyde, John F. Boynton. All of these trials are in Far West and Joseph is holding trials almost daily. Joseph feels like he needs a year to put the church back together. He goes to the Far West High Council and asks them to vote whether or not the church could support Joseph's family for a year or if he needed to farm to support himself, their vote came back no. There were less revelations in that time because he had to support himself, he was living in the outskirts of the town among the poor. When it was dinner they would gather at the table with no food, and Joseph would pray that someone in the town of Far West would be impressed to bring them something to eat. They would then place whatever was brought on the table and bless the food and the individual that brought the food and all of their generations that they would never want for a piece of bread. One example was a man named John Tanner, and none of his descendants in our class know of anyone in their extended family who had a problem with hunger.

Within this high council each man at some point went through a period of extreme poverty when they had to literally beg for their survival. "Judge not that ye be not judged" ... especially if you decide to vote against the prophet of the Lord.