

Prayer for Covenant:

Heavenly Father, it is I whom you named David, asking you in the name of Jesus Christ for your mercy and grace to be with those of us who seek to become your people. We hope to repent and return to your path and no longer be condemned and rejected as a people because of those who went before.

Take pity on us all and have mercy for us, as we acknowledge and accept the condemnation and rejection of the latter-day gentiles, and petition that we may overcome it.

We are mindful that in 1832 the gentile saints were condemned for vanity and unbelief because they treated lightly the things they had received and they were warned by you that they would remain under condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments, not only to say but to do.

You commanded the gentiles that they bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom and if they failed to do so there remained a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon those who claimed to be the children of Zion.

They failed to bring forth the required fruit and were judged and scourged, and then violently driven out of Jackson County, Missouri.

You explained there were jarrings, and contentions, and envyings, and strifes, and lustful and covetous desires by them; therefore by these things they polluted their inheritances.

But they did not repent, and in their pride they threatened to wage a war of extermination against the Missouri citizens, heedless of your warnings.

But it was you who used the Missouri citizens as your hand of judgment to scourge the condemned saints, in your attempt to persuade them to repent and no longer treat lightly your word.

They still saw no Divine purpose behind their distress, and railed against their Missouri persecutors.

Despite their suffering, they were not sufficiently humbled to repent, instead they breathed out threats and expressed hope to gain vengeance against the same Missouri mobs to whom you had given power to afflict the gentile saints to inspire them to repent.

Because of the hardness of their hearts, the gentile saints were again mobbed and slain and in 1838 altogether driven out of the State of Missouri, with Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith and other leaders cast into prison and condemned to die.

But you were merciful, and did not suffer Joseph, Hyrum or any of those imprisoned with them to be killed.

In your mercy, the surviving saints and the imprisoned leaders were able to obtain refuge in Illinois, whose people welcomed the saints, and a season of peace followed.

In 1841 you mercifully extended another opportunity to the gentile saints to repent and return, and you approved Joseph's offering and acknowledgements of the past failures of the saints when he petitioned you on their behalf.

You found the prayers of Joseph and the gentiles were acceptable before you and you granted to the saints another chance for you to recover them as your people.

As you stated to the former gentiles, there is not a place found on earth that you may come to and restore again that which was lost unto us, or which you had taken away, even the fullness of the priesthood.

You offered and intended for a house to be built unto your name in which you deigned to reveal to your people things which have been kept hidden from before the foundation of the world, things which pertain to the dispensation of the fullness of times.

You gave to them sufficient time to build a house unto your name warning them to complete the work or their baptisms for the dead would be unacceptable.

In those days you warned the people you will not perform the oath which you make, neither fulfill the promises which they expect at your hands, or in other words you would remove your covenant, if they failed to do what you commanded.

And you foretold what you would do unto the people if they neglected to do the work assigned them.

You warned: For instead of blessings, we, by our own works, would bring cursings, wrath, indignation, and judgments upon our own heads, by our follies, and by all our abominations, which we practice before you.

You foretold that at the end of this appointment our baptisms for our dead shall not be acceptable unto you; and if the gentiles did not do the things you commanded, at the end of the appointment we would be rejected as a church, with our dead, said the Lord our God.

But the secret works of darkness multiplied, and the gentile follies did not end, and they practiced secret abominations in violation of your commandments and in defiance of your warnings.

The wickedness of the gentile saints dismayed the people of Illinois who had welcomed them, and provoked the anger of their indignant neighbors, who then implemented your judgments against the rebellious saints.

The former gentile saints were driven into the wilderness, and relocated into a desolate land, where they suffered hunger, cold and sickness.

In that isolation the gentile leaders were emboldened to openly practice abominations and wrongly teach the people to call them sacraments, as they reigned with blood and horror over the people.

Secret murders, open defiance, and the slaughter of over 200 men, women and children fixed the anger and opposition of the entire United States who were moved by your will to curtail the barbarism of the gentile saints.

Even today the gentile saints justify lying to others as part of their religion believing you will vindicate them in their dishonesty. They seek deep to hide their counsel from others, and now deny your judgments against their ancestors, claiming you have never rejected them.

They have, as you foretold, spoken both good and evil of your prophet Joseph. They ascribe many of their wicked practices to Joseph, who correctly told their ancestors that, “they never knew [him]”—for indeed the gentile saints have grown distant from you because of their willful rebellion, pride, foolishness and blindness.

We acknowledge that we must distinguish ourselves from them, admit the errors of the past, and in the depths of humility seek to be reclaimed as yours.

The neglect and rebellion of the saints during Joseph’s day and thereafter included how they have treated the scriptures, carelessly inserting numerous errors and transcription problems into the Book of Mormon and other commandments and revelations.

The original Book of Mormon translation manuscript was placed in the cornerstone of the Nauvoo House where water and mold destroyed over 70% of the text.

This was a similitude to the restoration provided by you through Joseph.

Just as the original manuscript was allowed to decay, with only approximately 28% surviving, so likewise the restoration has also decayed.

Using that remnant of the original translation we have confirmed there were numerous transcription errors made when Oliver Cowdery copied it for the printer.

We know that EB Grandin’s Print Shop also made errors, and the punctuation was supplied by John Gilbert, which changed the meaning of the text.

We know there has been over a century of debate caused by the errors in understanding the text solely due to the way in which the text has been punctuated.

We have labored to make corrections and to recover a truer meaning, but are required to use our best conjecture to sort out the many textual dilemmas we now face.

We have inquired of you and prayerfully sought guidance on even small issues out of respect for your words.

Joseph Smith revised the printed copy in 1837 and again in 1840 to try to eliminate errors and make the text more correct.

Most importantly we know that you have, by revelation, recently supplied corrections to some of the writings in the Book of Mormon quoting you, for which we are grateful.

We have labored over the text of the Book of Mormon to try to remove as many of the mistakes in the text as we can discover, but know that our efforts fall short of perfecting the text.

The other revelations given through Joseph Smith have also not been maintained and transmitted to us in their purity.

Many originals have been lost, and some of what we have from Joseph are copies of copies, and many were later recorded by others using their recollections of your revelations to him.

We have used brackets and re-punctuated the texts as we have worked with them, all in an attempt to show respect for your holy texts. We ask that you accept this work and the punctuation and allow us to remove the brackets.

We have also determined to update some words that were in use and understood by earlier people, but whose meaning has been lost or so changed as to render the language foreign to modern usage. We ask for your approval to update the wording so as to clarify the language for modern readers.

Mindful of how mistakes can be made, we have attempted to gather only those revelations which are authentic, attested to have come directly from Joseph in a reliable transmission, and which likewise involve general principles applicable to us rather than a personal revelation to an individual.

We are mindful of the criticism of David Whitmer, who thought the recording and use of Joseph's revelations was never wise and, therefore, we ask to be corrected in anything we have gathered and ask to be instructed by you to discard what ought to be discarded, and inspired to keep only those things which should be kept.

We were not responsible for neglecting your warnings, for treating lightly the Book of Mormon and former commandments, nor for failing to do as you asked, but have inherited that legacy and acknowledge that we also suffer under your condemnation as our inheritance.

We also have been left with a copy of a copy of a revelation recorded July 12, 1843 that is not in the handwriting of a scribe of Joseph's, and which we believe to have been altered from its original form before it was publicly disclosed.

That revelation has been the source of a great deal of mischief, sorrow, ungodly conduct, violence and adulterous lusts among those who accept the published version of that revelation among the various Mormon factions.

We first attempted to edit it to make it more consistent with your other commandments and revelations, but have ultimately concluded to remove it altogether because we cannot fix it.

We ask that if there are any commandments, principles or precepts involving the marriage covenant you would be willing to reveal to us to become part of our record, we would receive it with gratitude and rejoicing.

We desire as a people to repent and remove the condemnation and to overcome your rejection, and to be true and faithful to your commandments.

All those involved have labored to avoid and eliminate the interpolations and uninspired emendations of others, however well they may have meant.

If it is not from you or of you we do not want to acknowledge it as scripture, and therefore we have labored to present this to you in the hope we have shown respect for your word and not the works of men.

We acknowledge that you have inspired and guided this work by your Spirit.

We acknowledge we are imperfect and, despite your inspiration and assistance, we know there are faults and weaknesses with us and therefore we ask for your mercy to cover our weakness.

We have attempted to be unified in this work but have sometimes disputed with one another, and therefore ask to be forgiven for our own contentions as we were laboring beside one another.

I confess my own failure in securing a replacement for the former section 20. You required a unified statement of principles for us to adopt, and I asked others to provide such a document.

I have understood that you required that to be developed by others, and not myself, and therefore I have refrained from any involvement.

Despite three attempts by representatives of twenty-three fellowships there remains disputes and no agreed statement of principles has been composed and accepted by the people, as you directed.

Forgive those who have worked unsuccessfully. I ask that you look at the earnest desires of those involved and forgive this failure.

I would ask that we not be required to provide a statement of principles, but the people be left to govern themselves according to their varying circumstances, needs and desires.

We are mindful of the duties expected by you for any people who would claim to be yours, and ask that our weaknesses be forgiven and our own follies and errors be corrected and not condemned.

We as a people present the result of our labor to you as our best attempt to preserve and recover the scriptures provided to us in the restoration through Joseph Smith at the beginning of the dispensation of the fullness of times.

As you began to roll forth a restoration through Joseph and others, we ask you to now continue that work and to allow your revelations, work, covenant, and blessings to roll forth with us, and things kept hidden be uncovered and a fullness be given to us as a people.

It is written that those who will not harden their hearts will receive a greater portion of your word, until they know the mysteries of God in full.

It is also written that those who will harden their hearts will receive a lesser portion of your word, until they know nothing concerning the mysteries of God.

We seek to leave behind a hard heart, and to be open to receiving a greater portion of your word, and to know of your mysteries and obtain your grace for us as a people that we may become yours.

Though only a remnant of the original Book of Mormon manuscript has survived, and though only a remnant of the original faith you established through Joseph has likewise survived, we ask to be reconnected as a people to you, by covenant, to make us yours, connected to a living vine, restored as a people and numbered with Israel.

We seek as a people to honor you and to keep your commandments so that a living body of your disciples may again exist on the earth.

We desire that we may rise up through your grace and mercy so that you will perform your oath and vindicate your promises to the fathers concerning a faithful latter-day body of gentiles to be numbered with the remnant of Jacob; that your kingdom may come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

O Lord, remove our blindness, forgive our sins and weaknesses, give to us a new heart that we may become children of the Most High God.

We acknowledge our unworthiness. We are descended from rebellious and wayward ancestors and know that without your mercy we will remain in an awful state, unprepared for the return of our Lord in glory.

The scriptures foretell of a latter-day recovery of your people, and of natural fruit returning to your vineyard. We seek to be part of that, so you may value us as yours and preserve us against the coming season of harvest.

We have added only things to the scriptures as we have understood to also have come from you and would be pleasing to you.

We ask that you accept these books as yours, so that people of faith may then rely upon this work as your word to this generation; as a standard for governing ourselves, as a law and as a covenant, to establish a rule for our faith, and as the expression of our religion, so we may have correct faith and be enabled to worship you in truth.

If this body of writings are not acceptable, we ask that you guide us further so we may correct, remove, or add whatever you would require for the writings to become acceptable for a covenant and law, a rule of faith, as a correct expression of the religion that honors you, so we may be in possession of correct faith and be enabled to worship you in truth.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, in faith believing that with you all things are possible. Amen.