

Doctrine and Covenants Revelation Sites



Liberty, Missouri

Liberty Jail

Sections 121, 122, and 123

March 1839

Scripture

"My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

"And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes.

". . . the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness."

Doctrine and Covenants 121:7-8, 36

". . . if the very jaws of hell shall gape open the mouth wide after thee, know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good.

"The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?"

Doctrine and Covenants 122:7-8

Doors through which Joseph and others passed at the commencement of their unlawful 4-month incarceration here.

Key Events

- Joseph Smith and several other Church leaders were captured by a mob in Far West, Missouri in late 1838. After brief incarceration in Richmond, the prisoners were brought to Liberty Jail in December 1838.
- While Joseph was imprisoned at Liberty Jail, vicious mobs were driving Church members from their homes in Missouri. The saints went to Illinois, where they found temporary refuge.
- The Prophet here wrote a number of letters containing some of the most poignant revelations found in scripture.
- The prisoners were liberated in early April 1839, and they fled to Illinois to be reunited with their families.



The prisoners were lowered into the cell through a hole in the floor. The jailer lived on the upper floor.



As the saints were being driven from the state of Missouri or killed, six of their leaders were confined in this small dungeon during the bitter winter of 1838-1839.

Words of Joseph Smith

“Know assuredly, dear brethren, that it is for the testimony of Jesus that we are in bonds and in prison. But we say unto you, that we consider that our condition is better (notwithstanding our sufferings) than that of those who have persecuted us, and smitten us, and borne false witness against us.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 123)

“Our circumstances are calculated to awaken our spirits to a sacred remembrance of everything . . . nothing therefore can separate us from the love of God and fellowship one with another . . . every species of wickedness and cruelty practiced upon us will only tend to bind our hearts together and seal them together in love.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 130)

“A frank and open rebuke provoketh a good man to emulation; and in the hour of trouble he will be your best friend; but on the other hand, it will draw out all the corruptions of corrupt hearts, and lying and the poison of asps is under their tongues; and they do cause the pure in heart to be cast into prison, because they want them out of their way.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 137)



The jail was reconstructed, and is now housed inside a visitor's center operated by the LDS Church.