Section 65

Joseph’s history says that section 65 came to him in early October 1831 as he was living with the Johnsons in Hiram, Ohio, and that he regarded it as a prayer. An early copy of section 65 in the handwriting of William McLellin sheds more light on it. The revelation is linked to the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew 6 and particularly the meaning of verse 10: “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”

Section 65 teaches us to pray for the ideal government. We look for a literal, earthly fulfillment of Isaiah’s declaration, “The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us” (Isaiah 33:22). This short revelation also reminds us how thoroughly biblical Joseph became as he read that sacred text by the light of the Holy Ghost. In the 6 verses of section 65 there are clear references to Isaiah, Daniel, Matthew, and the Revelation of John.

Section 65 elaborates a prophecy of Daniel, who saw “the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever” (Daniel 2:44). Daniel compared this kingdom to a rolling stone that would eventually fill the earth. Some of the early Saints envisioned a snowball effect, but


Joseph clarified Daniel’s meaning. The stone, Joseph said, “is stationary like a grindstone. It revolves.” He taught that it grew as “the Elders went abroad to preach the gospel and the people became believers in the Book of Mormon and were baptized.” In this way “they were added to the little stone. Thus they gathered around it so that it grew larger and larger.” Joseph prophesied that in this way the stone—the kingdom of God—would fill the earth.³

In 1838 Judge Austin King charged Joseph Smith with treason and confined him in jail at Liberty, Missouri, for believing what he taught about Daniel’s prophecy. Parley Pratt wrote that Judge King “inquired diligently into our belief of the seventh chapter of Daniel concerning the kingdom of God, which should subdue all other kingdoms and stand forever.” The Saints testified that they believed the prophecy, and Judge King instructed his clerk, “Write that down; it is a strong point for treason.” The Saints’ attorney objected. Is the Bible treason?⁴ The next time he was charged with treason came a month after he set up “the kingdom of Daniel by the word of the Lord” and declared his intent to “revolutionize the whole world.” Joseph’s life was ended abruptly by a lynch mob shortly after that.⁵

However, the work of God’s kingdom rolled on. It will continue to do so “till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear.”⁶ That, at least, is the prayer of section 65. “May the kingdom of God go forth that the Kingdom of Heaven may come” (D&C 65:6) so that he who is entitled may reign as King of Kings (Rev 17:14).

A revelation of Joseph the Seer, 300th year on the 4th of Matthew 10 verse.

Harken and be a scribe as one sent down from the mouth of the mighty and powerful, when going forth as unto the ends of the earth, ye who shall be sent forth according to the way of the Lord, make his path straight. The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto men on the earth, and from hence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone is hewn from the mountain, without hands shall it roll forth, and from hence shall be filled the whole earth. Ye shall carry the gospel for the way of the Lord, prepare ye the supper of the Lord, make ready for the coming of the Lord. He shall come hale unto this people. Make known his wonderful works among the people, but also to the Lord, that his kingdom may go forth upon the earth. The inhabitants thereof may receive it to be prepared for the day to come in that the son of man shall come down from heaven clothed in the brightness of his glory to meet the kingdom of God as set up on the earth. Wherein the kingdom of God go forth, that the righteousness of heaven may come, that whom he seeth may be glorified in heaven and earth. His kingdom may be extended, and the honor, power and glory be given to him.