

Section 116

Shortly after Joseph moved to Far West, Missouri, in March 1838, the Lord commanded him that “other places should be appointed for stakes in the regions round about” (see section 115). Anticipating that large numbers of Saints would gather to the area from Ohio, Canada, and elsewhere, Joseph and other leaders set off to explore Daviess County “for the purpose of . . . making Locations & laying claims for the gathering of the Saints for the benefit of the poor.”¹ Near Lyman Wight’s home, Joseph revealed section 116.

Orson Pratt inserted the words “Spring Hill is named by the Lord Adam-ondi-Ahman” when he included this statement in the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. The original entry in Joseph’s journal, made by his secretary George Robinson, reads: “Spring Hill a name appropriated by the bretheren present, But afterwards named by the mouth of [the] Lord and was called Adam Ondi Awmen, because said he it is the place where Adam shall come to visit his people, or the Ancient of days shall sit as spoken of by Daniel the Prophet.”²

Section 116 links the past with the future, sacred history with prophecy. Adam-ondi-Ahman is a place Adam and Eve went after being expelled from Eden’s garden. They offered sacrifices and blessed their posterity there. Joseph learned by revelation in

¹ “[Journal, March–September 1838](#),” p. 42, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed December 2, 2020.

²See Daniel chapter 7.

1831 that Adam, prior to his death, gathered his posterity in a valley called Adam-ondi-Ahman and blessed them and they blessed him. The Lord appeared to them and promised Adam that he would preside over a multitude of nations. Adam rose and, though aged, prophesied what would happen to his posterity (D&C 78:15–16 and 107:53–56).

Section 116 identifies the specific site of that impressive occasion and says that the site will host a future meeting. Adam, or the Ancient of Days, as Daniel called him, will again gather his righteous posterity there, possibly for the sacrament and stewardship meeting prophesied in section 27.

Approximately fifteen hundred Latter-day Saints settled at Adam-ondi-Ahman in 1838. They planned a temple. They laid out a stake in obedience to section 115. They obeyed the law of consecration in obedience to section 119.³ They were driven from the land later that year when Missouri governor Lilburn Boggs issued an executive “extermination” order that effectively enabled Missourians to steal the land by preventing the Saints from asserting their preemption rights. Even so, because of section 116, the Church has quietly acquired and preserved the sacred site.

³ Robert J. Matthews, “Adam-ondi-Ahman,” *BYU Studies* 13:1 (1972): 27–35; Leland H. Gentry, “Adam-ondi-Ahman: A Brief Historical Survey,” *BYU Studies* 13:4 (1973): 553–76.