An Impressive Letter from the
Pen of Joseph Smith

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Because of rivalry and jealousy among the Missouri Saints, the Prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Newel K. Whitney were appointed to sit in council with them in April 1832. (D & C 78: 9-10.) This was the second visit by Joseph Smith to the Missouri area.

After grievances were amicably settled, the three brethren returned to Kirtland by stage via St. Louis and Vincennes, Indiana. At a point between Vincennes, Indiana, and New Albany (near Greenville) they had a run-away when the horses became frightened. Joseph and Sidney jumped out of the coach unhurt; but when Bishop Whitney attempted to jump, his coat caught and threw him into the wheel. His leg and foot were broken in several places. Joseph and Newel stayed at Mr. Porter's Public House at Greenville for four weeks, and Elder Rigdon returned to Kirtland. While attending Brother Whitney as he recuperated from his injuries, Joseph Smith was poisoned. He vomited so profusely that he dislocated his jaw. He replaced it himself and then made his way to the bedside of Newel K. Whitney where Newel administered to him and he was healed instantly. The Prophet Joseph Smith indicated that the effect of the poison was so powerful it caused much of the hair of his head to be loosened. He was grateful to be alive, however, and said, "thanks be to my Heavenly Father for his interference."

Sometime in the four weeks while Newel K. Whitney was bedfast, Joseph Smith wrote an intimate letter to his wife, Emma.¹ His impressive account of his struggle for repentance and his assurance of his own forgiveness is touching; it is one of the most authentic glimpses of the Prophet's repentance and effort for worthiness.

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¹This letter was discovered by James R. Harris in 1960 in the possession of the Chicago Historical Society, who graciously supplied us with a copy of the letter. See DHC 1:271-2 for the instance of writing.
Dear Wife

I would inform you that Brother Martin has arrived here and brought the pleasing news that our Family's were well when he left them which Greately Cheered our hearts and [re]vived our Spirits we thank our hevenly Father for his goodness [ ] unto all of you

us and [ ] Martin arrived on Satterday the Same week he left Chagrin haveing a properous time we are all in good heath Brother Whitneys leg is gaining and he thinks he Shall be able to to perform his about Journy so as to get home [ ] as soon as the 20th. my Situation is a very unpleasent one although I will endeaver to be Contented the Lord asisting me I have visited a grove which is Just back of the town almost every day where I can be Secluded from the eyes of any mortal and there give vent to all the feeling[s] of my heart in meditation and prayr I have Called to mind all the past and moments of my life and am left to morn [ ] Shed tears of sorrow for my folly in Sufering the adversary of my Soul to have so much had in times past ul power over me as he has [ ] but God is mercif [ ]
June 6th, Greenville, Ohio, 1832

Dear Mr. Young,

I would inform you that Brother Martin has arrived here and brought the pleasing news that our families were well when he left them which greatly pleased our hearts and caused our spirits to thank and praise the Lord for this good news. All of you and Brother Martin arrived on Saturday the same night he left Chicago. During a prosperous time we are all in good health. Brother Martin says as Zyring and in three days he shall be able to get together the Youngs as to get home tomorrow. My situation is a very unpleasant one although I will endeavor to be contented. I have recently a grave and anxious event which is fast drawing near. I have been asked to return to the town almost every day where it can be secluded from the eyes of any whatever and that I gave vent to all the feelings of my heart in meditation. I have been trying to mind all these past and present events of my life and am left to manage the duties of the Lord for my family in declining the authority of my soul. To give as much power and me as the Lord that God is mighty.
and has forgiven my Sins and I rejoice that he
Sendeth forth the Comfeter unto as many as
believe and humbleth themselves before him
lost
I was grieved to hear that Hiram had ∧ his
little Child I think we Can in Some degree
Simpathise with him but we all must be
of the Lord
reconcled to our lots and say the will∧be done
∧ her husband
[ ] Sister Whitney wrote a letter to [ ]∧which
which was very cheering [ ] and being unwell
at that time and filled with much anxiety
∧
it would have been very Consaling to me to
have received a few lines from you but as you
did not take the trouble I will try to be conte
∧ned with my lot knowing that God is my
friend in him I shall find comfort I have
given my [ ] life into his hands I am prepared
to go at his Call I desire to be with Christ
I Count not my life dear to me only to do his
will I am not pleased to hear that William
Mclelin has come back and disobayed the voice
of him who is altogether Lovely for a woman
I am astonished at Sister Emaline yet I cannot
belive she is not a worthy sister I hope She
∧ find
[ ] will ∧ him true and kind to her but have
no reason to [ ] expect it his Conduct merits the
disapprobation of every true follower of Christ
LETTER FROM JOSEPH SMITH

My dear Sir:

and I rejoice that the Lord hath permitted the Comforter unto as many as believe and humble themselves before him. I was pleased to hear that Harriet had left little while I think she was in some degree unwell. I sympathize with her. But we all must be prepared to pass into that vast and deep mystery, in which we are sojourning. She was not well, suffering much at that time, and being much distressed the prospect of you not having received a letter from you but as you did not take the trouble I will try to be content with my lot, knowing that God is my friend in Him I shall find comfort. I have given my life into his hands, I am prepared to go to the ball, I desire to be with Christ, if I cannot not my life dear to me, only to do his will, I am not pleased to hear that William McLean has come back and disposed the voice of him who is altogether lovely, for a reason I am astonished at sister Thomas, yet I cannot help the wish is not a worthy sister. I hope she will return true and hand to her best love. I have no reason to expect it. His conduct must be disappointment of many true followers of Christ.
but this is a painful subject I hope you will excuse my warmth of feeling in mentioning this [ ] Subject and also my inability in conveying my ideas in writing. I am happy to find that you are still in the faith of Christ and at Father Smiths. I hope you will comfort Father and Mother in their trials and Hiram and Jerusha and the rest of the Family tell Sophronia I remember her and Kalvin in my prayers my respects to the rest. I should like to see little Julia and once more take her on my knee and converse with you on [ ] all the subjects which concerns us things I cannot is not prudent for me to write. I omit all the important [ ] things which could I see you I could make you acquainted with tell Brother Will[ ] that I and Brother Whitney will arrange the[ ] business of that farm when we come. Give my respects to all the Brothers Br— Whitny Family [ ] tell them he is cheerful and patient and a true Brother to me. I subscribe myself your Husband the Lord bless you peace be with so Farewell until I return

Joseph Smith Jr.
LETTER FROM JOSEPH SMITH

But this is a painful subject. I hope you will receive my sentiments of feeling on mentioning the subject and also my inability in conveying my ideas in writing. I am happy to find that you are still in the faith of Christ and at Father Smith's I hope you will comfort Tabitha and Mother in their trials andASN and Joseph and the rest of the family. Let me know I remember her and her son in my prayers my respects to the rest. I should like to see little Julie and once more take her on my arm and compose with you on all the subjects which concern us. Things I cannot is not hard for me to write. I omit all the important things which could I see you I could make you acquainted with talk Brother Will be that I and Brother Whitney will arrange the business of that form when we come your my respects to all the Brothers. Whitney and the rest of the family. Tell them he is cheerful and patient and a true Brother to me. I love myself your husband the Lord bless you place he will do. Farewell until I see you again.