



Type: Book Chapter

Emma Entertains in Kirtland/"Emma's Table"

Author(s): Sharon Price Anderson

Source: *Praising the Prophet: Joseph Smith and the Restoration in History and Verse*

Published: Orem, UT; Time-Lines Etc., 2005

Pages: 47-49

Emma Entertains in Kirtland

Many times during the Restoration, Joseph and Emma relied on the generosity of others for their sustenance. In 1829, as Joseph and Oliver Cowdery worked on the translation of the Book of Mormon, they ran out of provisions and left to find work. When Joseph Knight learned of their need, he took lined paper, grain, potatoes, tea and a barrel of mackerel to Emma, who wept with gratitude.

Six years later Joseph and Emma were living in Ohio when a man named Michael H. Chandler brought some Egyptian mummies and rolls of papyrus to Kirtland so that Joseph could decipher the hieroglyphics. One of the rolls contained the writings of Abraham and would become the Book of Abraham. Another contained the writings of Joseph of Egypt.

As people learned about the artifacts they came to see them. On 29 October 1835, Bishop Edward Partridge, William Phelps, and Bishop Newel K. Whitney, along with Newel's wife and parents, saw the artifacts and then had dinner with Joseph and Emma. Joseph later dictated an account of the evening.

We were called to supper. While seated at table we indulged in a free interchange of thought, and Bishop Whitney observed . . . that perhaps in about one year from this time they might be seated together around a table on the land of Zion. My wife observed she hoped it might be the case, that not only they, but the rest of the company present, might be seated around her table on the land of promise.³¹

Emma's Table

Barely staving off starvation,
Emma has served
scant meals, lean as fear.
While Joseph translated
words of gold, they survived
days of poverty with
mackerel and potatoes,
generously provided.

This evening Emma
entertains guests in Kirtland.
Pleasant company partakes
liberally of friendship,
indulges in ideas and insights
scrolling from antiquity.
The delicious repast reaches
into a future full of faith.
A year from now, she hopes,
they all might gather around
her table in the land of Zion.

Emma does not consider
persecution that could thin
threadbare courage or foresee
the struggle to feed her family
and refugees fleeing from Far West.

She does not see privation's path
that stretches to Nauvoo
and beyond before reaching
that promised place where
she and her husband will
someday preside as king and queen
over a feast of fat things.

Tonight dark eyes sparkle.
She smiles graciously.

*... thou art an elect lady, whom I have called... . And the office
of thy calling shall be for a comfort unto my servant, Joseph Smith,
Jun., thy husband, in his afflictions, with consoling words, in the
spirit of meekness (D&C 25:3 & 5).*