
An Appendix

D&C 133: Introduction

At the November 1–3, 1831, elders’ conference held at the John Johnson home in Hiram, Ohio, the Prophet Joseph Smith dictated to Sidney Rigdon a preface for the Book of Commandments. The preface was first printed in *The Evening and the Morning Star* in March 1833 in Independence, Missouri. Since then, the preface has been printed as chapter 1 in the 1833 Book of Commandments and as section 1 of the Doctrine and Covenants since an 1835 printing.

Near the close of the elders’ conference on November 3, 1831, Joseph Smith learned that “there were many things which the Elders desired to know relative to preaching the Gospel to the inhabitants of the earth, and concerning the gathering; and in order to walk by the true light, and be instructed from on high.” The prophet “inquired of the Lord and received the ... important revelation, which has since been added to the book of Doctrine and Covenants, and called the Appendix” (D&C 133).¹ This revelation was intended as an addendum or appendix to the revelations printed in the Book of Commandments. The preface and the addendum were to be bookends. Elder John A. Widtsoe explained, “The ‘Appendix’ supplements the introduction” [D&C 1].²

Whereas the preface summarizes the Lord’s message to the world and prepares readers for the revelatory content of the Doctrine and Covenants as he declares his voice is “unto all men” (D&C 1:2), the coming of the Lord is nigh (v. 12), and prophecies in this latter day scripture will be fulfilled (vv. 37–38), the appendix tells of the heavens and the earth at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. From the appendix we learn that at the Second Coming Jesus “shall suddenly come to his temple” (D&C 133:2). He will come in the fulness of his glory—a glory that is so great that the sun will be hidden, the moon will withhold its light, and the stars will be hurled from their places in the heavens (vv. 46–53). The brightness of

¹ History, 1838–1856, volume A-1 [23 December 1805–30 August 1834], 166. Joseph Smith Papers.

² G. Homer Durham, ed., *The Message of the Doctrine and Covenants* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1969), 17.

the Savior's glory will cause mountains to "flow down at His presence" (vv. 40, 44; Micah 1:4) waters to boil (D&C 133:41), and nations to tremble (v. 42).

There are still questions that remain unanswered about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. A few of these questions are found in the Primary Children's song "When He Comes Again":

I wonder, when he comes again,
Will herald angels sing?
Will earth be white with drifted snow,
Or will the world know spring?

I wonder if one star will shine
Far brighter than the rest;
Will daylight stay the whole night through?
Will songbirds leave their nests?

I'm sure he'll call his little ones
Together 'round his knee,
Because he said in days gone by,
"Suffer them to come to me."

I wonder, when he comes again,
Will I be ready there
To look upon his loving face
And join with him in prayer?

Each day I'll try to do his will
And let my light so shine
That others seeing me may seek
For greater light divine.

Then, when that blessed day is here,
He'll love me and he'll say,
"You've served me well, my little child;
Come unto my arms to stay."³

³ Mirra Greenwood Thayne, "When He Comes Again," *Children's Songbook of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2002), 82.