

Letter, [Hiram Township, OH](#), to [William W. Phelps](#), "[Zion](#)" [[Independence](#), Jackson Co., MO], 31 July 1832; retained copy; handwriting of [Frederick G. Williams](#); signature of JS; seven pages; JS Collection, CHL. Includes docket and notations.

Set forth below is a translation of a letter from Joseph Smith to his Brother William Phelps after his return home from his stay in Greenville, IN. In the letter, Joseph Smith speaks in detail about his stay in Greenville. The translation is to be used for historical purposes. The actual unedited letter can be found at the reference above with the entire collection of Joseph Smith papers.

Brother William [W. Phelps]

I have received your letter dated 30th June and proceed this morning to answer it. I sit down to dictate for Broth Frederick [G. Williams] to write but cannot write my feelings, neither can tongue, or language paint them to you. I only can observe that I could wish, that my heart, & feelings thereof might for once be laid open before you, as plain as your own natural face is to you by looking in a mirror; Verily I say my only hope and confidence is in that God who gave me being in whom there is all power who now is present before me & my heart is naked before his eyes continually he is my comforter & he forsaketh me not in the seventh trouble and in the mean time I have learned by sad experience there is no confidence to be placed in in man that the spirit of man is as cold as the northern blast and had I not considered the great care and multitude of business which is crowding upon your mind.

I could not have excused the cold and indifferent manner in which your letter is written, true you have expressed fellowship, but the spirit which I enjoy, the feeling of my soul enquires does this letter give me the important information which I stood in need of at the present critical moment from your hand concerning yourself your family & business & the faith & fellowship & prosperity of the brethren in Zion & let your own heart and the integrity of your own soul answer this question & excuse the warmth of feeling of your unworthy yet affectionate brother in the Lord traveling through affliction and great tribulation, you informed me that you wrote a few lines to bear up our strength in the glorious labor wherewith our savior hath been pleased to call us, I rejoice exceedingly for the little strength & information God has been pleased to give me through your letter— viz— to hear that our brethren from this place & Nelson have arrived safe in Zion and as I trust without accident this is the mercy of our God, but in the discharge of my Duty, must inform you that they left here under this displeasure of heaven for several reasons now what I write I write without sparing any (or the feeling of any) knowing that God will bear me up in what I write, I will give you some of the reasons, firstly making a mock of the profession of faith in the commandments by proceeding contrary thereto in not complying with the requirements of them in not obtaining recommends secondly, that the church should proceed to receive William E. McLellin into their fellowship & communion on any other conditions, then the filling his mission to the South countries according to the commandment of Jesus Christ, I cite your minds to these saying he that loveth Father or Mother wife & Children more than me is not worthy of me thus said the Lord.

Thirdly the unorganized & confused state in leaving here, and the evil surmising which were among them & neglect of duty & more than this I do not wish to mention, now therefore the buffiting of the adversary be upon all those who are iniquitous persons and rebellious, I would inform them they do not have my right hand of fellowship, but I will leave this subject for will not my God and your God do right, I return to your letter you informed me slightly that you heard of the accident to broth [Newel K.] Whitney at Greenville [Indiana].

A question how did you hear, did any of you receive letters written by any of us informing you of the critical situation we were placed in, if so how did you treat them if not so have you written to us to give us that information which would be calculated to relieve the mind of its painful anxiety concerning you, whether that fellowship and brotherly love continued among you towards us which you professed when we left you, it is true we received a letter from brother John Carl [Corrill] by the hand of Brother [Sidney] Gilbert after we arrived home from Indiana who had arrived here before us, but what did it contain, it gave us this intelligence, that the Devil had been to work with all his inventive imagination to reward us for our toils in traveling from this country to Zion amidst a crooked & perverse generation leaving our family's in affliction amidst of death upon the mercy of mobs & of brethren who you know sometimes are found to be unstable unbelieving, unmerciful & unkind, and in this trying situation to keeping the commandment of God we took our lives in our hands and traveled through every combination of wickedness to your country for your salvation & for our travel & our toils, suffering & privations as I said before we learned by Broth Johns letter that the Devil had set to work to reward us by stirring up your hearts (I mean those who were engaged in this wickedness) by raking up every fault, which those eyes that are filled with beams could see in looking for motes in the eyes of those who are laboring with tender and <prayerful> hearts continually for their salvation, and not being content with bringing up those things which had been settled & forgiven & which they dare not bring to our faces but many with which we were charged with were absolutely false & could not come from any other source than the father of all lies & this is the thanks & the reward the advisory sought to reward us by the instrumentality of those who should have been our staff & after our detention on the road I often times wandered alone in the lonely places seeking consolation of him who is <alone> able to console me, while my beloved Brother Whitney (who is without gile) poured out his soul with much weeping upon his pillow for you or for Zion while I in <the> lonely places communed with him who is altogether lovely witnessed your case & viewed the conspiracy with much grief and learned the displeasure of heaven and viewed the frowns of the heavenly hosts upon Zion & upon all the earth, and my Brethren I would inform you that I do not fellowship the letter which was written to me by Brother John & neither the spirit thereof, I do not plead guilty of the charges made against me in that letter. I have not given occasion of offence to the brethren or sisters in Zion, neither of Jealousy, or evil surmising. I have ever been filled with the greatest anxiety for them, & have taken the greatest interest for there welfare. I am a lover of the cause of Christ and of Virtue chastity and an upright steady course of conduct & a holy walk, I despise a hypocrite or a covenant breaker, I judge them not, God shall Judge them according to there works, I am a lover even of mine enemies for an enemy seekith to destroy openly, I can pray for those who despitefully use and persecute me, but for all I can not hope, and now I conjure and exhort mine accusers and the hypocrite in Zion in the love of Christ yea in the name of Jesus of Nazareth to remember the covenant which they have made

with God, and to me & repent of there iniquities and give satisfaction to the innocent whom they have injured I appeal to your consciences, and if appealing to your consciences by all the ties which bind man to man which are stronger than death will not open your eyes & let you see the state & standing which you are in and bring you to repentance I then appeal to a higher court even the court of heaven the tribunal of the great God & there I & my Brethren (I mean Broth Sidney [Rigdon] & Newel) will meet you to be weighed in the balance and there the innocent shall not suffer and the guilty go unpunished for the Lord God Almighty will do right I bear you record that myself Bro Sidney & Newel as far as anything that I know have ever maintained the purest desires for your welfare and do still our object in going to zion was altogether to keep the commandments of the most high, when Bro Sidney learned the feelings of the Brethren in whom he had placed so much confidence for whom he had endured so much fatigue & suffering & whom he loved with so much love his heart was grieved his spirits failed & for a moment he became frantic & the advisory taking the advantage, he spoke unadvisedly with his lips after receiving a severe chastisement resigned his commission and became a private member in the church, but has since repented like Peter of old and after a little suffering by the buffeting of ~~the~~ Satan has been restored to his high standing in the church of God, now this is a warning to all to whom this knowledge may come, and he that thinks he stands, let him take heed least he fall, tell Bro Edward [Partridge] it is very dangerous for men who have received the light he has received to be a seeking a sign, for there shall no sign be given for a sign except as it was in the days of Lot. God sent angels to gather him & his family out of Sodom while the wicked were destroyed by a devouring fire behold this is an example; but I must return to your letter again you complain that there have already [p. 4] to[o] many disciples arrived there for the means, tell brother Edward to remember Ananias & Sophria, remember also that your own wickedness hedge up your own ways, you Suffer your children; your ignorant & unstable Sisters, & weak members who are acquainted with your evil hearts of unbelief to write wicked and discouraging letters to their relatives who have a zeal but according to knowledge and prophecy[s]y falsely which excites many to believe that you are putting up the Indians to slay the Gentiles which exposes the lives of the Saints every where you observe that God has been merciful, very true then never forget to revere his holy name for ever, that circumstances are as well with you as they are, you requested me to preserve all the original copies of the commandments, my reasons for not sending the remainder, & also the Vision I think will give you satisfaction towards me I have much care and tribulation calculated to weigh down and destroy the mind and in times past they have been snatched from under my hand as soon as given I will send them to you as soon as possible, but I will exhort you to be careful not to alter the sense of any of them for he that adds or diminishes to the prophecies must come under the condemnation written therein, you mention concerning the translation I would inform you that they will not go from under my hand during my natural life for correction, revise or printing and the will of [the] Lord be done therefore you need not expect them this fall, Brother Frederick in [is] employed to be a scribe for me of the Lord— we have finished the translation of the New testament great and glorious things are revealed, we are making rapid strides in the old book and in the strength of God we can do all things according to his will the rage of the enemy is abating in this region of the country and while God is remembering mercy unto us and making us mighty to the pulling down the strong holds of Satan, having sent down the Angel of God to trouble the waters that a few more sick folk may be healed he is stretching forth his hand in awful Judgment upon all the

face of the earth, we have information which may be relied upon that the cholera is cutting down its hundreds in the city of New York per day also is raging in Boston Charleston Rochiste [Rochester] Albany & Buffalo and in all the large citys in the eastern counties we have Just received a letter from sister Elmira Scoba [Almira Mack Scobey] who is now at Detroit to visit her friends she states that the cholera is raging in that city to an alarming degree, hundreds of families are a fleeing to the country and the country people have become alarmed and torn up the bridges and stopped all communication and even shot peoples horses down under them who attempt to cross the river on any express two steam boats loaded with troops for the Indian expedition while going up [the] Detroit river the cholera made its attack upon the soldiers about fifty died the rest disbanded (about six hundred in number) and the last account we have of them they could find no quarters among the inhabitants and were a dying in the sheds and fields and nobody to bury them while between us and you the Indians are a spreading death and devastation wherever they go no force has as yet been brought sufficient to stand before them frequent cases of the cholera occurs on steam boats and <other[r]> water crafts on the Lakes the dysentery and the Cholera Morbus are the prevailing diseases as far as our information extends and is so malignant that it baffles the skill of the most eminent Physicians we have news from our brethren who have gone to the east God is with them pulling down the strong holds of Satan two brethren are here from ~~the east~~ New Hampshire & one from Vermont who are Elders and worthy young men who were brought in by the hands of Bro Lyman Johnson & Orison [Orson] Pratt who are like Peter & John building up the cause of God wherever they go and healing the sick they have baptized better then sixty since they left here we also here [hear] from many others whose good success in gaining converts to the redeemers [p. 6] cause is a proof of there faithfulness in the high calling I would exhort Bros Oliver [Cowdery] & John to be ware of seducing spirits and stand firm in the liberty wherein they have been set free and never be weary in well doing which is also my exhortation to all those in Zion that love the appearing of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. I went to Kirtland last week and held a meeting on the Lords day and found the brethren strong in the faith and enjoying the sweet influence of the holy spirit cheering their hearts and enlarging their understandings and binding their souls together that nothing but death can break asunder we found the brethren in the enjoyment of tolerable health except Sister Elliott whom the Doctors had given over & Bro Sidney second daughter but we're restored by the prayer of faith, Father [John] Johnsons family & mine are enjoying tolerable health in so much we cannot complain. Sister Sarah Jackson came to live with us yesterday you have the prayers of us all daily and I think I can say almost hourly and in this day of calamity the saints & sinner hearts are almost failing them for fear and are crying to whom shall we go or whether [whither] shall we flee O my God spare Zion that it may be a place of Refuge and of safety.

I have a particular request to make of Bro John Whitmer that is as soon as you receive this letter for him to ascertain the exact number of Disciples that have arrived in Zion & how many have received there inheritance and the state and standing of each branch of the church and of this intelligence communicate to us as soon as it can be done by letter such as is not wisdom to publish in the paper, I exhort Bro John [Whitmer] also to remember the commandment to him to keep a history of the church & the gathering and be sure to shew him self approved whereunto

he hath been called. This is a copy of a letter written to Broth Wm Phelps July 31— 1832 from Hiram except a few words on the wrapper by way of exhortation complementary.

Joseph Smith Jr.