In 1839, the Latter-day Saints left Missouri. Joseph bought land and moved to a log house in Commerce, a town on the banks of the Mississippi River. The land was wet and swampy and covered with trees and bushes, but Joseph felt inspired to stay there.

Through the blessing of the Lord, this place could be a pleasant place for the Saints to live.

Joseph told the Saints to drain the land and build up a city. They changed the name of the city from Commerce to Nauvoo.

What does “Nauvoo” mean?

It means “a beautiful situation or place.” It also means a place of rest.

Many Saints got sick from the unhealthy conditions around them. Joseph and Emma helped the other Saints. Even when Joseph felt sick, he visited and healed many people.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ? Yes, I do.

Arise from this bed and be made whole.
Nauvoo grew into a busy and beautiful place. Soon it had many houses and stores, and plans for a university and a grand hotel. Most importantly, Joseph instructed the Saints to build a temple.

To protect the city, the men formed a military group called the Nauvoo Legion. They chose Joseph to be their leader.

Later, Joseph also served as the mayor of the city.

The Saints loved their city and their Prophet. After Joseph died, the Saints called Nauvoo “The City of Joseph.”

This is the loveliest place, and the best people, under the heavens.

Adapted from Joseph Fielding Smith, Essentials in Church History (1950), 218–225, 250, 299, 309. See also Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith (Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society course of study, 2007), 18, 379–81, 391, 425, 435.