



CHAPTER 36

Zion's Camp

February–June 1834



While people in Missouri were making the Saints leave their homes, Joseph Smith was nearly 1,000 miles away in Kirtland, Ohio. He prayed to know how to help the Saints in Missouri.



In a revelation, Jesus told Joseph that some of the men in the Church should go to Missouri to help the Saints. Joseph Smith was to be their leader. The Lord wanted 500 men to go.

Doctrine and Covenants 103:22, 30–36



Joseph obeyed the Lord. He told the Saints that 500 men should go to the land of Zion in Missouri. But after a few weeks, only 100 had said they would go.



The 100 men left Kirtland and began the long journey to Missouri. The group was called Zion's Camp. The men often walked 35 miles a day despite being very hungry, thirsty, and hot. They camped together at night.



On the way, 100 more men joined them. But there still were not as many men as the Lord wanted.



Members of the camp traveled 1,000 miles. Some of them said the trip was too hard. They complained and argued. They blamed Joseph Smith when there wasn't enough good food. They said he wasn't a good leader. Joseph told these men that they must repent, or they would get sick and die.



Many of the men in the camp were righteous. They helped Joseph and obeyed God's commandments.



At last Zion's Camp got near Jackson County, Missouri. They camped by a river.



Members of a mob had spied on the camp and knew where it was. At night the mob came close to the camp and planned to attack it.



God protected Zion's Camp by sending a big storm. The wind blew trees down. Large hailstones fell from the sky, and lightning hit trees. The river flooded the

land. One man in the mob was killed by lightning, and other men in the mob were hurt by the storm. No one in Zion's Camp was hurt.



The men in the mob were afraid and ran away. They did not hurt anyone in Zion's Camp.



Three days after the storm, the Lord gave Joseph Smith a revelation. He said the Saints would have to wait to build the city of Zion. They needed to become more obedient, giving, and united. They also needed to learn more about the things the Lord required of them.

Doctrine and Covenants 105:1-6, 9-13



The Lord also told the men of Zion's Camp that they should not fight against the Missouri mobs. Some of the men were upset about this. They felt that the trip would not be worthwhile if they did not fight to help the Saints in Missouri.

Doctrine and Covenants 105:14-19



A few days later, many men in Zion's Camp got very sick. Fourteen of them died. The Prophet told the men that the

sickness would go away if they would humble themselves and repent. This promise was fulfilled.



At the end of Zion's Camp, Joseph Smith met with the Saints in Missouri and chose men for a high council. A few days later, he and many of the men in Zion's Camp started back to Kirtland.



Although the men of Zion's Camp did not help the Saints in Missouri, the camp was still valuable. It helped prepare Brigham Young and others for leadership in the Church. They were able to prove whether they would be obedient and make sacrifices for the Lord's work. A few months later, many of those who were faithful were called as leaders in the Church.