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### Kingdom of Heaven

The Kingdom of Heaven, one of the most unusual groups in Mormon history, was established by William W. Davies (b. 1833). Davies was a British Methodist who converted to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and migrated to Utah in 1847. He became dissatisfied with the church leadership, and in 1861 joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Saints of the Most High, founded by the prophet Joseph Morris (1824–1862). Davies was present at the Morrisite settlement on the Weber River in June 1862 when Morris was killed by the militia. In subsequent years he associated himself with the Church of the First Born (Prophet Cainan) and migrated to Montana. Eventually he settled at Deer Lodge Valley, where a number of the followers of George Williams (1814–1882; also known as the Prophet Cainan) resided.

When Williams moved to Montana in 1868, Davies had departed. In 1866 Davies had a vision that convinced him that he had been chosen as an instrument through which God would speak His will to humanity. He was directed to begin the millennial Kingdom of Heaven near Walla Walla, Washington. With 40 followers, Davies migrated there in 1867, purchased 80 acres, and established a communal life. The group was joined over the next few years by a few additional converts, including John Livingston, one of the original apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Saints of the Most High.

In the Kingdom of Heaven, reincarnation and the designation of the true identity of some of the more illustrious residents became central to the life of the group. Davies claimed to be Michael the Archangel, a reincarnation of Adam, Abraham, and King David. Following the birth of his son Arthur on February 11, 1868, Davies revealed that he (Arthur) was Jesus Christ returned. Soon after the announcement, the size of the community doubled. A second child, David, was revealed to be none other than "God, the Eternal Father of Spirits." Both children were believed to be incarnate members of the Godhead, which, among various factions of the Morrisites, consisted only of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

The colony survived for a decade, but a series of events in 1879–1880 led to disaster. First, Davies's wife died. Then, in the winter of 1880, both of the divine children died of diphtheria. The disgruntled members of the community turned on Davies; one sued him and received a \$3,200 judgment. The Kingdom's land was sold to satisfy the judgment and court costs. The loss of the land effectively destroyed the Kingdom of God. Davies moved to Mill Creek, Washington, with a few followers, remarried, and proclaimed that the daughter born to his second wife

was the reincarnation of his first wife. A short time later he abandoned all semblance of rebuilding the Kingdom and moved to San Francisco, where he died in obscurity.

#### Sources:

Anderson, C. Leroy. *For Christ Will Come Tomorrow: The Saga of the Morrisites*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1981.

### LDS Scripture Researchers

Also known as the Believe God Society and Doers of the Word, the LDS Scripture Researchers was a small group headed by Sherman Russell Lloyd, a music teacher in Salt Lake City. Members believed that the present age is the time for the promised return of Joseph Smith, Jr., in the flesh reincarnated. He was believed to be a member of their group. While accepting the basic Mormon scripture, they also read the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. The group was organized under the authority of the one spoken of in Third Nephi 20:23, who would come forth with fabulous information. The group published several pamphlets.

### United Outcasts of Israel

The United Outcasts of Israel was a small, short-lived Mormon group that emerged in the 1950s under the leadership of Noel B. Pratt, a descendant of Parley Pratt, a first-generation leader of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Noel Pratt left that church and joined the polygamy-practicing Church of the First Born of the Fullness of Times soon after its founding in 1955. In 1957 he became the editor of *The Rolling Stone*, a periodical for the Church of the First Born. However, by the end of 1958 Pratt's opinion of the church's founder, Joel LeBaron, had changed dramatically, and in the December 1958 issue of *The Rolling Stone* he attacked LeBaron and his brothers, who were working with him. As a result, Pratt was excommunicated from the church. With a small following, he founded the United Outcasts of Israel, headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia.

Pratt emerged as the champion of a barter system of economics and advised people to put all of their money into tangible assets, especially in real estate. He founded a credit association, a bank, and a political party to further embody his ideals. Then, as quickly as he had emerged, Pratt quit, for reasons not altogether clear, but possibly from a lack of support. In November 1960 he announced, "My records and books are burned, as a testimony that I no longer shall seek to set myself up as a light unto the world." The United Outcasts of Israel was dissolved.

Within a year, however, Pratt developed a new cause, the restoration of Native Americans—in his view the present outcasts and rightful heirs of Israel—to their proper place in the world. In this regard he founded American Indians Restoration Enterprises, an organization dedicated to the organi-

zation of American Indians into a self-governing body. In that effort he published a new edition of the Book of Mormon under the title *The Indian Bible*. In the introduction he presented the book as a history of Native Americans. He suggested that in the near future Native Americans would be restored to their white skin and would subsequently build a great city centered on a temple to the Great Spirit. In so doing the Indians would save the present white people from self-destruction. Like the United Outcasts, American Indian Restoration Enterprises lasted only a few years.

Pratt pursued at least two further efforts to find a following. In the mid-1960s he emerged in Independence, Missouri, and called attention to his preaching through advertisements in the local newspaper. His presence was noted because of his prediction that the leadership of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would be killed by lightning. His prediction was not fulfilled, and he returned to a period of obscurity. In the mid-1980s he emerged in Salem, Massachusetts, as the head of Praetorian Press. After several years, the Press was relocated to Maine.

#### Sources:

Pratt, Noel B. *An Apology of Conscience*. N.p.: Author, 1959.

Shields, Steven L. *Divergent Paths of the Restoration*. Los Angeles: Restoration Press, 1990.

## POLYGAMY-PRACTICING

### Church of the First Born

When Joel LeBaron (d. 1972), founder of the Church of the First Born of the Fullness of Times, claimed Patriarchal Priesthood for himself, his brother, Ross Wesley LeBaron, rejected Joel's claim in favor of himself. He thus left his brother's church and formed the Church of the First Born. The statement of beliefs published by Ross LeBaron emphasized belief in Michael, the Eternal Father, and in his Son, Jesus Christ, and in Joseph Smith, the witness and testator. The Church of the First Born, said to be established originally by Adam and restored in Joseph Smith, firmly held a belief in One Mighty and Strong to come. LeBaron discontinued the church in the early 1980s.

#### Sources:

LeBaron, Ross. *The Redemption of Zion*. Colonia LeBaron, Chih., Mexico: Church of the First-Born, [1962].

LeBaron, Verlan M. *The LeBaron Family*. Lubbock, TX: Author, 1981.

### Perfected Church of Jesus Christ Immaculate Latter-Day Saints

Among the most unusual of the polygamy-practicing churches was the Perfected Church of Jesus Christ Immaculate Latter-Day Saints, founded by William C. Conway, D.D., of Redondo Beach, California, who claimed to be "the scribe and goodwill ambassador