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Booklet of Joseph Smith Clark

My dear relatives:

I am very grateful for this occasion. I appreciate the honor you have paid me by calling the family together for a reunion in recognition of my having reached the 90th milestone on my life's journey.

I am happy to meet so many of you here today, and welcome you to this reunion. Many of you will remember how delighted our beloved father was to have us mingle together on such occasions as this, and how he hoped we would continue to do so to renew our love and friendship for each other and not only to cement more closely our family ties, but to renew our faith and loyalty to the Church which he held so dear and to which he consecrated so much of his life.

Ours is one of the first families in the Church. Our progenitors were among those who laid the foundation for the building up of the Kingdom of God in these the last days -- the dispensation of the fullness of times. They early preached the restored word. They went through the drivings and the mobbings. They gave of their means and their lives to help build up a Zion to the God of Israel who had revealed himself anew to the children of men.

Father, when but a boy, gave to the Prophet his last few dollars to help finish the Nauvoo temple and received from the Prophet the promise that he would never want for means. He heard the Prophet speak his farewell words when he went as he said, "like a lamb to the slaughter." He saw the mantle of Joseph fell upon the shoulders of Brigham. And when doubt and uncertainty were in the minds of some, even members of his own family, as to where was the rightful leader, where was to be found the right to follow, father never faltered but declared, "Where you find the majority of the General Authorities of this Church, there you find the truth. I am going with Brigham Young and the Saints to the Valley of the Mountains."

And so after many trials and hardships he was able to fit himself out and early in the second year of the entrance of the Saints into this valley he came with his family. Here he set his feet firm in the conviction that this was the place. Here he established the roots of his family tree and became the patriarch and founder of the Clark family here in the west. Here he labored to transform a desert into fruitful fields. Here he mingled with the General Authorities of the Church, was a true and personal friend to many of them, had them frequently in his home, broke the bread of friendship with them, accepted gladly and willingly any call they made of him for service, was loyal to their wishes and faithful to their teachings. He was never found criticizing the Priesthood, he was never found complaining against the Church or the doctrines taught by the brethren. I have heard him say on more than one occasion that if there was any doubt in his mind about the acceptance of any principal advanced, he always reserved his judgment, waited patiently till time justified its truth. I pass that on

to you, and particularly to you younger ones here, as a wise and judicious thing to do. If in your schooling or in your association with learned men there seems to be ideas advanced that appear to be in contradiction to the teachings of the Church, do not immediately denounce the Church or voice criticism of the Authorities who teach them, but reserve your judgment, wait patiently and future years will no doubt justify their truth and bring to you an inner satisfaction in such justification.

Being among the oldest of father's children, it was my good fortune to be associated with him for a long period of years. Ezra James, the eldest boy, was sent on a mission to Europe in 1865. Timothy, the next oldest, who was a member of the Militia, was called South with his company to protect the Saints from the Indians. Naturally then to me fell the responsibility of aiding father in his