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Joseph Smith's Ancestry/"Uncommon Man"

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Joseph Smith's Ancestry

Asael Smith was among those who lived while the momentous events preceding the Restoration of the gospel unfolded. As the grandfather of Joseph Smith, Jr., Asael was among those of whom Brigham Young spoke when he told about the Prophet and his progenitors.

The Lord had his eye upon him, and upon his father, and upon his father's father, and upon their progenitors clear back to Abraham, and from Abraham to the flood, from the flood to Enoch, and from Enoch to Adam. He has watched that family and that blood as it has circulated from its fountain to the birth of that man. He was foreordained in eternity to preside over this last dispensation.³

Asael was born in Topsfield, Massachusetts in 1744. He married Mary Duty in 1767. Their son Joseph, Sr., the third of their eleven children, would become father of the Prophet and would also serve as the first Church patriarch. President Joseph F. Smith, President George Albert Smith, and President Joseph Fielding Smith, as well as all seven of the Church patriarchs, are numbered among Asael's descendants.

Deeply spiritual, Asael wrote to his family, "Sure I am my Savior, Christ, is perfect, and never will fail in one circumstance. To him I commit your souls, bodies, estates, names, characters, lives, deaths and all—and myself, waiting

when he shall change my vile body and make it like his own glorious body.”⁴

Asael predicted that “God was going to raise up some branch of his family to be a great benefit to mankind.”⁵ He “died in the fall of 1830, believing that his grandson Joseph was the long anticipated prophet and that he had heralded in a new religious age.”⁶

Uncommon Man

In this promised land
of Pilgrims and Puritans,
Smiths are plentiful.

Under the watchful eye
of the Almighty,
Asael forges
his family's future
on the anvil
of independence,
industry, integrity.
Like Israel of old,
he nurtures beginnings
of a vast posterity.
For seven sons,
four daughters,
he fashions hinges
of faith that will
swing wide the doors
of a new dispensation.

Anticipating descendants'
preeminent call,
he commits to Christ
his children "... names,
character, lives,
deaths and all,"
and lives to see the Seer.

Asael Smith, father,
grandfather to Joseph,
prophets, patriarchs—
uncommon men.

And thus prophesied Joseph, saying: Behold, that seer will the Lord bless; ... And his name shall be called after me; ... And he shall be like unto me; for the thing, which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand, by the power of the Lord shall bring my people unto salvation (2 Nephi 3:14–15).