



# BOOK OF MORMON CENTRAL

<http://bookofmormoncentral.org/>

---

Type: Magazine

---

## Improvement Era, Volume 23, no. 6 (April 1920)

Editor(s): Heber J. Grant and Edward H. Anderson

Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

---

  

---

# Improvement Era

Vol. XXIII

APRIL, 1920

No. 6



Organ of the Priesthood Quorums, the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations, and the Schools of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints  
Published monthly by the General Board Y. M. M. I. A., Salt Lake City, Utah



**W. E. FIFE CO.** 170 MAIN STREET **Furnishings and Hats for Men**

ASK YOUR DEALER FOR  
Z. C. M. I. FACTORY

# SCOUT SHOES

The ideal out-door Shoe for the boy scout, the mechanic, the farmer or the school boy.

Ask your dealer for Z. C. M. I. Factory Shoes and Overalls.



## Latter-day Saints Garments

APPROVED CORRECT PATTERN

Prepaid Parcel Post to any part of United States, 20c extra on each garment to Canada or Mexico.

These Approved Temple Garments are knitted and made right here in our own Utah factory, to your special order and measurements. Lowest prices on market. Mail your order to us now and say you saw it in the "Improvement Era."

LOOK FOR THE APPROVED LABEL, IN EVERY GARMENT

No.		
11	Light weight cotton.....	\$2.25
20	Light weight cotton bleached.....	2.50
60	Medium weight cotton.....	2.75
22	Medium weight cotton bleached.....	2.75
90	Heavy weight cotton.....	3.25
24	Heavy weight cotton bleached.....	3.75
50	Extra white double, bleached mere!.....	5.00
10	Medium weight wool mixture.....	5.00
16	Heavy weight wool.....	6.00
18	Extra heavy wool.....	7.00

Sizes from 32 to 44 bust, and 52 to 64 length, as desired. Longer than 64 in, or over 44 in. bust, each size 20c extra. Garments with double backs 25c extra per suit. We make any size desired.

Measure bust around body under arm; length, from center on top of shoulder down to inside of ankle. Orders for less than two garments not accepted.

Infant Shirts—Silkline and Lamb's Wool Shirts, \$1.00 each. State baby's age.

## MODEL KNITTING WORKS

FRANKLYN CHRISTIANSON, Manager

657 Iverson Street, Salt Lake City, Utah

Phone Hy. 516

## The Divine Answer

My soul's in doubt, amidst contending creeds;  
Give thou to me,  
O God, the wisdom that shall meet my needs!  
Make known to me  
The truth, I faint in tumults, words and war;  
Reach thou to me a helping hand afar.

Enough to know that in thy word is found  
The remedy:  
That he who asks, in knowledge shall abound  
Eternally.  
Thy voice shall never such a one upbraid  
But in thy favor bask all unafraid.

I venture, then, thy Presence to implore,  
This lovely morn;  
Whate'er the answer is for me in store,  
Or danger borne!  
Grant me my heart's desire: "Which church is right?"  
Show me the way, and save me from the night.

He cries for help, when demons' powers alarm,  
In dark despair;  
'Tis then God's light is seen to shield from harm,  
And in the air,  
In glory, Father and the Son appear,  
Commanding him the Savior Son to hear!

*Edward H. Anderson*





THE SACRED GROVE IN SUMMER

*Joseph Smith Farm, Palmyra, New York, showing the Sacred Tree said  
to be nearest the space where the Father and Son appeared to  
the boy Joseph*

# IMPROVEMENT ERA

---

Vol. XXIII

APRIL, 1920

No. 6

---

## The Messenger of Morn

---

*By Orson F. Whitney*

---

Earth rose from wintry sleep, baptized and cleansed,  
And on her tranquil brow, that seemed to feel  
The holy and confirming hand of Heaven,  
The warm light in a wealth of glory streamed.

Deep in the calm of woodland solitudes,  
Nature, deft handmaid of Divinity,  
With skill incomparable had set the scene  
For some glad change, some joyful happening,  
Told in the countless caroling of birds,  
Darting their mingled hues like tongues of flame,  
Gilding the springtime foliage and flowers.

Glad happening, in sooth, for ne'er before,  
Since burst the heavens when Judah's star-lit hills  
Heard angel choristers peal joy's refrain  
Above the mangered Babe of Bethlehem,  
Had Earth such scene beheld, as now within  
The bosom of that sylvan solitude,  
Hard by the borders of a humble home,  
Upon a fair and fateful morn was played.

Players—Immortal Twain and mortal one,  
A rustic lad, unschooled and lowly-born,  
Standing but fourteen steps upon life's stair;  
Boy and yet man, thinker of thoughts profound;  
Boy and yet man, dreamer of lofty dreams.

Not solemn, save betimes, when hovered near  
Some winged inspiration from far worlds—



Some master thought, sent down from mightier spheres  
 To lay on human hearts a spell divine;  
 Not melancholy—mirthful, loving life,  
 Brimming with health, and glad with wholesome glee.

Bowing to God, yet bending to no creed,  
 Adoring not a man-made deity,  
 That saved or damned regardless of desert,  
 Ne'er reckoning the good or evil done;  
 Loving and worshiping the God of old,  
 The God of Enoch and of Abraham,  
 The Christian God when Christian faith was pure,  
 The gracious God of reason, truth and right,  
 Longsuffering and just and merciful,  
 Meting to every work fit recompense,  
 Yet giving more, far more, than merit's claim;  
 Bowing to Him, but not to idols vain,  
 And shunning shameful strife where peace should dwell,  
 He holds aloof from those degenerate sects,  
 Bewildering Babel of conflicting creeds,  
 And pondering that promise of the past—  
 "To him who wisdom seeks, is wisdom given,"  
 Trusts the good word and puts it to the test.

What pen can paint the marvel that befell?  
 What tongue the wondrous miracle portray?  
 Whose dual Presence dimmed the noon-day beam,  
 Communing with him there, as friend with friend,  
 And giving to that prayer reply of peace?

E'en as when Moses, on the unknown Mount,  
 Strove 'gainst the rage of baffled Lucifer,  
 Who fain had guised him as the Glorious One,  
 To win the worship of that prophet pure,—  
 E'en so with Gloom he strove ere Glory dawned,  
 And black despair met bright deliverance.

Within the silent grove, sequestered shade,  
 While spirit hosts unseen spectators stood,  
 Watching the simple scene's sublimity,  
 Eternity high converse held with Time;  
 Heaven's sovereign Sire, through him both Sire and Son,  
 Forespeaking the Beginning of the End.

"No church the Christ's"—'twas thus the answer came—  
 "All sects and creeds have wandered from The Way.  
 Priestcraft in lieu of Priesthood sits enthroned;  
 Dead forms deny the power of godliness.

Men worship with their lips, their hearts afar,  
 None serve acceptably in sight of Heaven.  
 Wherefore, a Work of Wonder shall be wrought,  
 And perish all the wisdom of the wise."

So dawned the Dispensation of the End,  
 That foldeth all of Christ's, and maketh one.

Wherefore came down this chosen messenger —  
 Chosen on Earth, but chosen first in Heaven;  
 The martyred Seer who gave up life to lift  
 The Ensign unto Ephraim, God's first-born?

Hark to that call, whose clear, familiar tone  
 Was heard in ages, dispensations, past,  
 Was told to times and worlds that went before!  
 Call of the Spirit, answered by the Blood,  
 Voice of the Shepherd, by the sheep well known.

Now, Israel, to the Rock whence ye were hewn!  
 Roll, rills and rivers, to your Origin!  
 For He that scattered, gathereth his flock,  
 His ancient flock, and sets their pilgrim feet  
 On Joseph's mountain-tops and Judah's plains.

Time, mighty daughter of Eternity!  
 Mother of ages and of aeons past!  
 Assemble now thy children at thy side,  
 And ere thou diest, teach them to be one.  
 Link to its link, rebind the broken chain  
 Of dispensations, glories, keys and powers,  
 From Adam's fall unto Messiah's reign.

Six days thou, Earth, hast labored, and the seventh,  
 Thy Sabbath, comes apace! Night's sceptre wanes,  
 And in the East the silvery Messenger  
 Gives silent token of the golden Dawn.

Once more the Ancient Tidings among men;  
 Once more the Preparation and the Power:  
 Repent! repent! the Kingdom is at hand—  
 Make ready for the coming of the King!

His burden: hear it, nations! hear it, isles!  
 Ere falls that hour—Night's darkest ere the Dawn.  
 The Trial ends; the Judgment now begins;  
 Out, out of her, My people, saith your God!



# "A Marvelous Work and a Wonder"

*By President Heber J. Grant*

We celebrate the hundredth anniversary of a marvelous occurrence fraught with wondrous results, not only to those who lived in the day in which it took place, but to men and women of today; and its influence will continue to be felt for good in all the years that are to come.

The appearance of God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ to the boy prophet Joseph Smith is the greatest event that has taken place in all the world since the birth of our Lord and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. It was the most wonderful vision ever bestowed upon mortal man; for, while Jesus the Son had walked and talked with men both before and after his resurrection, I know of no record in which we are informed that both ever appeared together in a visit to the earth, as in this marvelous vision to Joseph Smith.

The event marks the beginning of "a marvelous work and a wonder," which was foretold by Isaiah the Prophet (29:13, 14) confirmed by Daniel (2:29-44), and further predicted by John the Revelator (14:6, 7). The personal visitation of the Father and the Son, choosing Joseph to be the leader of the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, marked the beginning of this work, and this was supplemented by the visitation of angels and other holy messengers, conferring upon Joseph the powers of the Priesthood, the authority to act in the name of God—to introduce the gospel of Jesus Christ by divine authority to mankind, and by divine direction to organize and establish the true Church of Christ in the latter days.

The vision was a reality and direct. When Joseph received it, men were loth to believe that it was possible for God or holy beings to speak to man on the earth. But after he had declared his message there followed, even up to this day, false "spiritist" communications, in many directions all over the land. This was doubtless the design of Satan, done to deceive the people. But note the difference between the right and the genuine, the wrong and the spurious. As far as I am aware, there has not been a single case of direct revelation or visitation from the spirit world, except through the authority of the Priesthood restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Alleged communications have been received without number, but almost invariably, these have been made through mediums, or mechanical devices, and as invariably have resulted in little or no particular good or purpose. Joseph Smith received his divine message direct from the messengers sent of God, and was not dependent upon a medium of any kind, either through person or by mechanism; there was nothing that stood between him and the messenger

who was sent of God to deliver, personally, the divine message which he had been intrusted to deliver to the Prophet, for the purpose of establishing the great work of the Lord and to further His purposes in the earth. Furthermore, each message delivered resulted in good to the human race. Joseph required no medium, but personally heard from the divine messengers, the glorious tidings that God desired to intrust to him, and which were necessary for the founding and building of God's "marvelous work and a wonder" in the latter days.

The greatest evidences of the divinity of the First Vision, as well as of the visitations of angels and other messengers to Joseph, the Prophet, that followed the First Vision, are the practical results that have come from the messages that were delivered and the authority that was conferred. The gospel in its purity, has been restored to the earth. The wonderful record of the ancient people of this continent, the Book of Mormon, was brought forth from its hiding place in the Hill Cumorah, containing a fulness of the gospel as taught by the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, upon this continent of America. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized on the 6th of April, 1830, in the town of Fayette, Seneca County, N. Y., and has prospered in temporal and spiritual, in moral and economic affairs, from the day of its organization, regardless of the persecution and obstacles that it has persistently encountered and overcome in its career of practically one hundred years. This Church is built upon the rock of revelation, through which means the constituted authorities thereof receive authority from God direct, to act in their callings and to enjoy the gifts and powers of the gospel. The mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is one of peace. It aims to prepare the people of the world for the second coming of Christ, and for the inauguration of that blessed day when the Millennium shall come and Christ shall reign as the King of kings, standing at the head of the universal brotherhood of man.

One writer has referred in a short review to some of the accomplishments of the Latter-day Saints, in the following words:

"From forty members, in 1830, the following of the Church today has grown to hundreds of thousands. In the beginning it had the Prophet Joseph alone to declare its doctrines, now it has missionaries in all liberal nations of the earth. It has prospered through the fire of severest persecution. Driven, peeled and scattered, their prophet and patriarch basely murdered for their testimonies, its members have rallied with each onslaught and pressed on with the work with greater force and power than before. It counts its martyrs by the score, its heroes and heroines by the thousands. Driven from their homes in Illinois, they were marvelously sustained by God in their wonderful exodus to the Rocky Mountains. In this wilderness of the West the rich blessings of the Lord have followed them in the establishment of one of the most prosperous, thrifty and happy commonwealths of our nation. To it have been gathered tens of thousands of the poor from the na-



tions of the earth to build up and beautify the latter-day Zion, virtually fulfilling the prediction: 'And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.' And this one: 'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.'

"Temples, schools, houses of worship, cities and villages have sprung up in the thirsty wilderness, and the result of the faith, the thrift and the labor of this peculiar people may be seen in their beautiful homes, gardens, fields, herds, and possessions, in the whole region of the great West: while the religious truths promulgated by them, without money or pay, are taking root, yea bearing fruit, not alone in their own midst but even among the heathen and, in every Christian land. Having discarded dead forms, the members of this Church worship from the heart, and point to a living faith, fully sustained by noble works. Their Church organization is unsurpassed, their government unequaled in modern annals. They build temples for the worship of God and for the performance of ordinances for the living and the dead, and the path of their persecutions, as well as the land which they now peacefully inhabit, is dotted by these holy structures. Everything about them points to the peculiar people that were to be established in the latter days—their whole career is a 'marvelous work and a wonder.'"—Anderson's *Brief History of the Church*.

This summary, which might be added to indefinitely, by facts and figures, can be demonstrated to be true by anyone who is willing to pay a visit to the cities and settlements of the Latter-day Saints, stretching from Canada on the north to Mexico on the south, in all the intermountain country of our great and glorious land, the United States, with thriving colonies in many foreign lands, and upon the islands of the sea. And it is not out of place to predict that the people of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will continue to thrive and prosper, spiritually and temporally, as long as they keep the commandments of God and walk in the way which he shall point out through his inspired servants holding the holy Priesthood. They are a people whose faith, teachings, thrift, and temporal and spiritual progress will be a blessing and an advantage to the whole nation. A people whom none need to fear, but on the contrary, bless and welcome, because they seek to do the will of the Lord, to treat all people in conformity with the principles of justice and righteousness, themselves loyal and law-abiding, obedient to the rules and regulations of the just governments of the earth, and the vitalizing gospel of Jesus Christ, established and restored through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith by visitation of God and his Son, Jesus the Christ who stands at the head of the great and marvelous work in which we are engaged. Their motto is "Truth and Liberty," and they would extend these to all mankind, and make all mankind partakers of the influence of peace and righteousness which accompany the true gospel of Jesus Christ—the only means by which peace and the brotherhood of man may be established in all the world.



*Sacred Grove, and lane from the barn, showing grove in the distance; also the creek where some of the early baptisms were performed, Palmyra, New York.*

## Joseph Smith's First Vision and Scripture Promises

*By President Anthon H. Lund*

This Spring it will be one hundred years since an event happened which was epoch-making in the faith of many thousands of people. This event took place in the Spring of 1820. A young boy, but little past fourteen years of age, was deeply concerned in regard to choosing the right church that taught the true principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This anxiety was caused by the great excitement that existed at that time in his neighborhood concerning religion. Each of the different denominations was claiming that its mode of worship was the only correct one, and that its members had the true gospel. As the teachings of each one of the sects were far from being in harmony with those of the others—in fact, contrary to them—the young boy was bewildered. He thought there could be only one accepted of God. This belief of his was confirmed by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesians (4:4-6), in which he says: “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and



through all, and in you all." Instead of unity the boy found diversity, contention, and confusion.

The important question to him was, Which sect has the true Gospel? He was a firm believer in the Bible, and he sought in this divine storehouse of truth, to find a solution. He read what James writes in the first chapter and fifth verse of his letter: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." The young man felt that he was greatly in need of wisdom, and that in this passage a disciple of Christ had given him a key to obtain the knowledge for which he hungered. He had full faith in the words of the inspired writer, and concluded to follow his instruction.

A short distance west of his father's house there is a small grove, which, from that which occurred there, has been called the Sacred Grove. We do not know the exact date, when the future prophet offered the prayer that opened the heavens, which had for so long a time seemed to be of brass; but he says it was in the Spring. He was seeking solitude, and as he had not prayed before, using his own words, he was, no doubt, shy to let any one know what he intended to do, or to see him kneeling, and the solitude he sought would not be obtained while the trees were bare; so, I would judge that the trees were clothed in their fresh, verdant attire; hence, some time in late April.

Elder Willard Bean, who has charge of the Smith farm, says that much snow falls in that part of New York state, and Winter is slow in yielding its grasp to Spring's warming and reviving influence.

It was about Christmas time, in company with President Joseph F. Smith and members of the party that went with him to the dedication of the Monument erected in memory of the Prophet Joseph Smith at his birthplace in Sharon, Vermont, that we visited the home of the Prophet's father. It was with feelings of reverence and almost awe that I entered the bedroom of the Prophet, for here he had communed with heavenly beings and received teachings to prepare him for the great work that he was destined to accomplish. After we had viewed the different rooms in the house where Joseph Smith had spent the years of his youth, the company crossed the road and took a path to the west. We crossed a rill, or brooklet, said to have been the place where a number of the early members of the Church had been baptized. A short distance from there we reached the Grove where the young boy offered his first prayer and received the glorious Vision which we look upon today as the beginning of the Dispensation of the Fulness

of Times. We selected a spot which we thought would be the most likely place for the purpose for which we had come. If not on the very spot, we knew it must be close to it, where Joseph had attempted to pray, but had been subjected to the power of the adversary, but then the Father and the Son appeared to him, and he received an answer to his question. We felt that we were standing on hallowed ground. All present joined in singing, "Joseph Smith's First Prayer." A heavenly peace pervaded our hearts; and, with grateful emotions, we offered thanks to our heavenly Father for the mission filled by our martyred prophet, and for the testimony we had received of his divine calling through the Holy Spirit.

We will quote the Prophet's own description of what was in reality the beginning of this marvelous work which the Lord said he was about to bring forth:

After I had retired to the place I had previously designed to go, having looked around me, and finding myself alone, I kneeled down and began to offer up the desires of my heart to God. I had scarcely done so, when immediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such an astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed to me, for a time, as if I were doomed to sudden destruction.

But, exerting all my power to call upon God to deliver me out of the power of this enemy which had seized upon me, and at the very moment when I was ready to sink in despair and abandon myself to destruction—not to an imaginary ruin, but to the power of some actual being from the unseen world, who had such marvelous power, as I have never before felt in any being—just at this moment of great alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me.

It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy, which held me bound. When the light rested upon me, I saw two personages whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spoke to me, calling me by name, and said, pointing to the other—"This is my beloved Son, hear him."

As soon as Joseph got possession of himself he asked the personages who stood above him in the light, which of all the sects was right and which he should join. He was answered that he must join none of them, for they were all wrong, and the personage who addressed him said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight: that those professors were all corrupt; that "they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; they teach for doctrine the commandments of men; having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof." He again forbade Joseph to join with any of them, and many other things did he say unto him that he could not write at that time.

When Joseph came to himself he found himself lying upon his back looking up into heaven. When the light departed he



had no strength, but soon recovered so that he could walk home. As he leaned up to the fireplace his mother asked him what was the matter with him. He answered: "Never mind, all is well—I am well enough off." He then said to his mother: "I have learned for myself that Presbyterianism is not true."

No doubt the adversary of mankind did not desire that this young person should learn the pitiful conditions of the world in regard to the true knowledge of God, and, therefore, did all to crush him, but help was near, and the enemy fled.

While he was under the adversary's influence, he said that thick darkness gathered around him. Abraham had a similar experience. On the same day, just before the Lord promised Abram that he and his seed should possess the land of Canaan, a deep sleep fell upon him, and "lo, an horror of darkness fell upon Abram." Great, however, was his joy when the Lord unfolded to him the great destiny awaiting his descendants.

When an angel was sent to the Prophet Daniel to inform him of coming events in the history of the world, the Prince of Persia, or the Prince of the air, had power to hold back the heavenly messenger twenty-one days until Michael came to his aid. These instances of the manifestations of the power of the adversary of man corroborate the experience of the young boy, and put the stamp of truthfulness on his words.

Hearing the precious words: "*This is my beloved Son, hear him,*" made plain to young Joseph that the Speaker was God, our heavenly Father; and that the other personage was Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The same testimony that Jesus was the Son of God was heard on the banks of the River Jordan, when Jesus was baptized by John, as he was coming up out of the water. It was heard when Jesus took Peter, James and John up on the mountain of the Transfiguration and was visited by Moses and Elias. A bright cloud overshadowed them and a noise out of the cloud said: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." It was also heard at Zarahemla in the Land Bountiful when Jesus appeared to the people on the American continent.

That which Joseph Smith saw and heard in his first Vision is contrary to the belief of the Christian world; and that which seems to us to be of the greatest importance is wholly denied by professors of religion. We will examine these points and compare them with what the Scriptures teach. To make them clear to our minds, we will limit them to three propositions, or questions:

I. Has God a body, parts, and passions, and was man created in his image?

II. Has there been a general apostasy, and have professors of religion taught for doctrines commandments of men?

III. Is belief in new revelation false?

I. That God has neither body, parts, nor passions is the general belief of the Christian world; but it seems to us that the Bible is very clear to the contrary in its statements concerning God, for it teaches that man was created in his likeness. "And God said let us make man in our image, after our likeness." "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." The young boy Joseph saw that man was indeed created in the image and likeness of God, and that the doctrine denying this was a doctrine devised by man.

John, the beloved apostle of the Savior, declares, "And this is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." This shows us how important it is to have the true knowledge of God, as it involves the question of eternal life.

Paul writes in the first chapter of his letter to the Hebrews, speaking of the Son, "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Here we learn that Jesus was the express image of the person of God, and sat down at the right hand of Majesty. God spake to Moses face to face. The Lord said: "With him [Moses] will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold." With his hand he shaded his glory in passing by Moses, and then allowed Moses to see his back parts.

The above shows that Jesus was the express image of the person of the Father, and that he had parts. As to passions, we read that God is a jealous God; that his anger was hot against Israel; that he is a merciful God; that he "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16.) David, speaking of the character of God, says: "The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity."

II. The Personage who spoke to Joseph told him not to join any of the sects; for they were all wrong.

From this we infer that the true gospel was not on the earth. Did the ancient prophets and apostles look forward to a time when there should come a general apostasy of the



Church? I will allude to some passages that indicate that the prophetic writers foresaw that such a condition would exist. In Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians, second chapter and first verse, he writes: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." We read in Amos 8:11: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord; and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord and shall not find it." I will quote two more passages bearing upon this subject. Rev. 13:7: "And it was given unto him [the dragon] to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." This includes all the inhabitants of the earth, and is, indeed, a sad statement of what John saw should come to pass. In the next chapter, however, he conveys a glad message. Rev. 14:6: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." This shows that the proclamation was to be universal—none to be exempt, for all were without the everlasting gospel.

That this preaching was not referring to the preaching of the apostles formerly is made clear in the next verse: "Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." The angel was to come before the last judgment.

No wonder that the testimony of young Joseph stirred up the professors of religion against Joseph, but he dared not deny or smooth down that which he had heard.

Even history bears out the truth of universal apostasy. The historian Hegesippus, who flourished "nearest the days of the Apostles," is quoted by Eusebius as saying in regard to the times of the first century after Christ and the beginning of the second century: "The Church continued until then as a pure and uncorrupt virgin; whilst if there were any at all that attempted to pervert the sound doctrine of the saving gospel, they were



**THE HILL CUMORAH**

*A painting in the Salt Lake Temple from sketches taken on the spot by Alfred Lambourne*



yet skulking in dark retreats; but when the sacred choir of the Apostles became extinct, and the generations of those that had been privileged to hear their inspired wisdom had passed away, then also the combinations of impious error arose by the fraud and delusions of false teachers. These also, as there were none of the Apostles left, henceforth attempted without shame to preach their false doctrines against the gospel of truth."

Mosheim tells us that both Jews and heathens were accustomed to a vast variety of pompous and magnificent rites and ceremonies in their religious service. And, as they considered these rites as essential parts of religion, they looked with contempt on the simplicity of the Christian worship. To meet this objection the Bishops thought it was necessary to introduce more rites and ceremonies, and they did so.

It is easy to see that the man-made ceremonies and rites would be taken to be as essential as those belonging to the Gospel, and when these latter were also changed then indeed the prophet's word came true: "The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant."

The Church of England frankly avers the fact of the apostasy, as set forth in the homily against the "Peril of Idolatry," first published about the middle of the sixteenth century: "So that the laity and the clergy, learned and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees of men, women and children, of whole Christendom—a horrible and most dreadful thing to think—have been at once drowned in abominable idolatry; of all other vices most detested of God, and most damnable to man, and that by the space of 800 years and more."

III. Is belief in new revelation false? That God will not reveal himself in our age is generally held by the religious denominations. Joseph, the young boy, having implicit faith in the word of God, proved the words of James were true. His prayer was heard; the Father and the Son appeared unto him. He saw them descending from heaven. They instructed him not to join any of the sects, because they were all wrong. He was astonished to find that when he told what he had seen and heard he was persecuted. He says: "Why persecute me for telling the truth? I have actually seen a vision, and who am I that I can withstand God, or does the world think to make me deny what I have actually seen? For I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do it, at least I knew that by so doing I would offend God, and come under condemnation."

After this first vision he received many other revelations for

the guidance of the Church. He was informed that this is the "dispensation of the fulness of times." As all other dispensations had been introduced by revelation from God, so also this was ushered in by heavenly beings revealing the mind and will of God to men. On the fifteenth of May, 1829, John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery and ordained them to the Aaronic Priesthood which held the authority to baptize for the remission of sins. A short time thereafter Peter, James, and John appeared to them and ordained them to the Melchizedek Priesthood, which gave them authority to officiate in all the ordinances of the Gospel. On the sixteenth of February, 1832, Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon received that glorious revelation called The Vision. They say: "And now after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony last of all, which we give of him, that he lives; for we saw him, even on the right hand of God, and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father."

I was trained in a Lutheran school. We had to repeat passages from Bishop Ballo's *Commentary* for school use after having committed them to memory. We learned much that was very good, but also some doctrines that I could not accept. I remember one passage, which, I know, was contrary to the testimony of Joseph Smith. I will quote it from memory: "If any one should say he had received new, divine revelation, we must not put any faith in such a declaration; for God has nowhere promised to give any more revelation for the enlightenment of man." To prove this he referred to Gal. 1:8-9. I opened my Bible and read: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." I saw that the learned bishop had not proved his contention. Paul had been converted by revelation. He told of the wonderful revelations he had received, and if Paul had meant what Bishop Ballo tries to prove, namely, that no more revelations should be given, what about the Revelation by John written years afterwards? I read that Elijah would come before the coming of the great and dreadful day, also that John saw an angel flying in the midst of heaven with an important message to all people.

In studying the first vision of Joseph and what he saw and heard, the Scriptures, history, and the fulfilment of the words of revelations received afterwards, all bear witness to the truthfulness of the young man and of the truths he enunciated.



# The Edict of a Century

By President Charles W. Penrose

The Nineteenth Century shines out in fadeless glory, distinct from all its predecessors as their superior for advancement in art, science, invention, novel activities, developments of old ideas and forces, discoveries that startled the world, and progress in all that aforesaid was counted as intellectual, practical and beneficial. It was a wondrous age, teeming with miracles, a splendid chapter of the world's history. But there was one event therein that will be eternally regarded as the most resplendent and important of all, when its reality and its results become universally known and understood:

In the early spring of the year 1820 there occurred something unique in the annals of time. The Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth, architect of the universe, center of life and light, with his beloved Son, the immortal Christ, the world's Redeemer, in the brightness of their glory, casting into shade the morning sunbeams of that beautiful day, manifested themselves to humble, trembling humanity. Not amid the thunderings of disturbed elements, in flame of fire or frowning cloud, in quaking earth or acclaiming heavenly hosts, to gaping crowds or proud professors or learned divines, but in a quiet grove near an obscure village of a sparsely populated part of western New York state, and to a mere boy, little over fourteen years of age, of the common names—Joseph and Smith, who knelt in earnest faith and prayer seeking to know which of all the clanging "Christian" sects had the true religion.

The story of this great revelation has been published far and wide but has never been told with greater effect than as given in simple form by the boy Prophet himself. The substance of it is that on beholding the two glorious beings he asked the momentous question; and one of them pointing to the other replied: "*This is my beloved Son, hear him.*"

The boy then received, through the Son, the information that the entire religious world was astray, and the injunction to go after none of the sects, for their teachings were but "the commandments of men." He was promised that in due time the fulness of the everlasting gospel should be made known to him.

This was something new indeed. Not only to the opening, remarkable century, but to all the preceding ages. Never before,

so far as history has recorded, was Deity thus fully manifested. The Father and the Son as distinct and separate personalities, spiritual, but tangible beings in human form, the Holy Spirit emanating from them as light and life and witness of their divinity to the soul of the inspired youth seeking after God! No mere immaterial, bodiless, incomprehensible abstractions were they or either of them, but real, actual beings, with form and feature and individuality, the Father and His Son each in the majesty and unity of exalted, perfected, and glorified humanity. The great truth was made plain that God did literally make man "in his own likeness" and that Christ Jesus was "the express image of his person."

Another great fact set forth was the utter departure of the whole world from the true Christian faith and worship, with the truth that "God is not the author of confusion" or contention or discord, as manifest throughout entire Christendom. The complete lack of Divine authority was also disclosed, showing that all administrations of ordinances in the name of the Holy Trinity were void and of no heavenly effect. The absolute need of a new divine dispensation was thus made palpable.

That wondrous vision was the opening scene of the great latter-day glory and "restitution of all things" predicted by the holy prophets. The world had departed from God. He condescended to come to humanity. Immortality descended and touched mortality. Not in man's ways did he proceed but in his own manner he acted. By his Son he created all things "in the beginning;" by his Son he opened the way for the world's redemption. By his Son as Jehovah he spake to the ancients, and revealed himself on Mount Sinai. By his Son he speaks today as he did a hundred years ago and calls upon the world to 'Hear him!'

Following that manifestation came numerous revelations of priceless worth and import. Such as: The uncovering of the golden plates, containing the ancient history of America, by the ministrations of the angel Moroni; the translation of the hieroglyphic engravings thereon "by the gift and power of God" given to Joseph Smith; the restoration of the Holy Priesthood (the Aaronic by John the Baptist, the Melchizedek by Peter, James and John) making legitimate the administration of baptism for the remission of sins, the confirmation by the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, the naming and blessing of children, ordinations to the sacred offices of Apostle, Patriarch, High Priest, Seventy, Bishop, Elder, Priest, Teacher, and Deacon; the full organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the further ministration of Christ himself, of Michael (or Adam), of Gabriel (or Noah), of Moses, of Elijah,



and of other prophets bearing the keys of divine power needed in "the dispensation of the fulness of times" opened by Deity in the spring of 1820.

Thus the true gospel, the one "strait and narrow way" to eternal life, has been sent forth to all nations, preparatory to the second advent of Messiah and the establishment of the Millennium of peace. All the ordinances and institutions of Christ's own Church with its signs and gifts and miracles and inspirations have been restored, and that which is sealed or loosed by this authority on earth is surely sealed or loosed in heaven. Salvation for the dead as well as for the living has been declared, by which the hosts of the departed who knew not the only way of salvation while in the flesh, can learn of it in the spirit sphere, and needful ordinances may be performed in their behalf by the living Saints who thus become "Saviors upon Mount Zion," and the justice and mercy of the Most High are maintained.

The future estates of mankind, in the "many mansions" of the Father's Kingdom, each soul being judged and given his due "according to his works," the universality, periods and distinctive conditions of a literal resurrection with the different degrees of glory to be enjoyed by the several orders of the worthy sons and daughters of God and the various rewards of corrective punishment for the wicked have been revealed in great plainness, displacing the senseless notion of centuries that a heaven of ceaseless praise or a hell of everlasting torment, was the common lot of the saved or the damned. The heavenly order of celestial marriage; that is, matrimony for time and all eternity, with ever-increasing progress in family joys and powers and posterity, has also been made known, instead of the man-made contract which ends at death and gives no hope for the eternal future.

The destiny of this globe as an orb that has "filled the measure of its creation" and is therefore entitled to the crown of everlasting life, and the presence of its Creator, with those immortal beings belonging to it who have been "obedient to law," as one of the ransomed and glorified worlds in affinity and communion with the highest constellations, is one more gleam of light from the stream that came from on high with the opening vision in the early spring of 1820 and has illumined the Church which Christ has set up, through all the experiences of a century. The past, with its pre-existent state of earth's inhabitants before they were born of the flesh, their perfect relations to Deity and each other, their future, dependent largely upon their own doings while in mortality, have been disclosed to those who "walk in the light" and are led by the Spirit of God. In all those things there is joy, and comfort, and hope, and ever-

increasing faith. And they have all come from God through revelation by "the voice of Jesus Christ," in the order declared by the Eternal Father a century ago. To the commandment, "Hear him," then given, the Prophet Joseph rendered implicit obedience, from the day that he first communed with Deity, to the end of his earthly career, when he, with his beloved brother Hyrum, together met a martyr's fate at Carthage, Illinois, on the 27th of June, 1844. No greater Prophet than he ever ministered among men. He finished the work given him to do when a boy. He faced the violent opposition of all sects and parties, put to silence the sneers and scoffs of the whole religious world, braved the fury of mobs and the tyranny of lawless civil and military forces, organized the grandest religious system ever offered to mankind, translated records by gifts unknown to science, uncovering the buried history of a hemisphere, advanced the principles on which the institutions and achievements of "Mormonism" have been built and accomplished, and obtained a fame that has spread to all nations, and will increase in appreciation as the centuries roll on.

The word of God to him in the sacred grove is going forth with force to mankind. It proclaimed the Sonship and Godhead of the Christ and gave the commandment to "Hear him." That edict is for the Latter-day Saints to obey. All the revelations to the Church have come from Jesus Christ. Read them in the Doctrine and Covenants, and in the Book of Mormon. The words "Hear him" are directed in the latter work to the Gentiles on this land as well as to the whole house of Israel. This nation is to be prospered and fortified and blest with liberty, if the people will "serve the God of the land who is Jesus Christ." This is the divinely ordained condition. And the day cometh when those who will not hearken to his voice will be rejected of God and cut off from his promise.

Great events are portending. The word of the Lord will be preached to "the ends of the earth." The duty to proclaim it rests upon his ordained ministers who have received the authority sent down from heaven to the Prophet Joseph Smith. It is here today and will not be taken again from the earth. It will prevail over every hostile power and continue its work until "every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is the Christ to the glory of God the Father." Then all creation shall obey the mandate "Hear him," for his is the only name given under heaven whereby mankind may be saved. Come then, O all inhabitants of the world! Receive now the divine word of a century ago, turn to Christ and "HEAR HIM!"



# Account of Joseph's First Vision

Compared with Biblical Records of Divine Manifestations

By J. M. Sjodahl

To a thoughtful reader of the historical account of the first vision of the Prophet Joseph, his extreme youth at the time he received that glorious manifestation suggests some such questions: Is it credible that God would choose a mere boy as his messenger? Does the Almighty ignore men who have laboriously accumulated the theological and philosophical wealth of the schools—men matured in thought and well moulded by experience—when he needs a special messenger? Would he send a child in preference to a Luther, a Knox, a Wesley, a Zinzen-dorff, a Jonathan Edwards, a Spurgeon?

If we scan the pages of sacred history for the answer to those important queries, we find that he does. We learn that at the most important epochs in human history, God has almost invariably selected young boys for his special messengers.

The life of Samuel is an illustration.

In the period between Joshua and Eli—for about 250 years—the voice of inspiration had been but feebly heard in the land, owing to the waywardness of the people. As a consequence, great political and religious changes were impending. The rule of the priesthood of God was about to be supplanted by kingly authority in accordance with the pagan pattern, and the state was to be divided and broken up. Calamities were to multiply. As the dark clouds gathered and lowered in threatening masses, the Lord decided to raise up a prophet to warn the people and interpret “the signs of the times” to them. His choice fell upon Samuel, who was a boy, twelve years of age, when he received his first vision.

In the life of the Prophet Jeremiah we have another illustration.

He, too, was called to the prophetic office at a time when great political and ecclesiastical catastrophes were approaching. He lived to witness the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the overthrow of the Jewish polity then existing. It was his special mission to warn the people. Jeremiah received his call when he was yet “a child” (Jer. 1:6), and the Lord assured him that he had been “sanctified” and “ordained” a prophet unto the nations even before his entrance into this world. (Jer. 1:5.)

The beautiful story of Daniel is another illustration of the same truth.

He was carried captive to Babylon when a boy between twelve and eighteen years of age. Three years later he received the divine revelation which enabled him to interpret the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, and which established him in his prophetic office, for which he had prepared himself by the faithful observance of the Word of Wisdom and the laws of God generally.

John the Baptist was another mighty prophet, raised up on the very eve of the Mosaic dispensation. He was dedicated to that calling from the beginning of his existence. We read of him that he was baptized in his childhood, and that, when he was eight days old, he was ordained by the angel of God unto the power with which he was especially endowed, namely, "to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews" and prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. (Doc. and Cov. 84:28.)

We might add to these illustrations of God's choice of special representatives, the accounts of Joseph in Egypt, of David, the shepherd boy, of Timothy, the beloved companion of Paul, and of our Lord himself who, at the age of twelve years, in the Temple halls, astonished the rabbis and doctors of law with his questions and answers. They all teach the same great truth—a truth which the boys especially should endeavor to have engraved upon their hearts. They show us that when great changes in the regular course of events of human history are about to take place; when the heavens are about to be shaken and the earth to tremble, and when the waves of the sea are to heave beyond their bounds; when the Lord needs a special messenger to warn men of what is coming, he invariably selects a young boy, a child, one who is pure and uncontaminated, free from prejudices, and of sterling character and virtues. Such a boy was Joseph Smith, who was called to the prophetic office on the eve of an old dispensation and the dawn of a new, as were Samuel, Jeremiah, and John the Baptist. The Prophet Joseph is in the same class as these. And thus his very youth is strong presumptive evidence of the divine origin and authenticity of the vision.

Further impregnable evidence appears when we compare the account of this vision with the records of some of the manifestations granted to other great prophets.

Isaiah saw the Lord enthroned in glory, but it is evident that the vision was accompanied by some effort of the powers of darkness to frustrate God's plans, for the prophet exclaimed: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips." (Is. 6:5.) He was rescued from this influence by a divine messenger. Daniel's experience by the river Hiddekel was similar. When he stood in the presence of a being from the



other side, he fell to the ground (Dan. 10:1-18), and there was no strength in him until he had been freed from the evil power. Even his companions were seized with fear, and fled. Saul, on the road to Damascus, in the presence of the divine light that appeared to him, fell to the ground, trembling and blinded. John, the Revelator, fell down as dead, when he saw his glorified Master on the Isle of Patmos. (Rev. 1:17.)

Such was the experience the Prophet Joseph had on that ever memorable day of his first vision. He felt himself in the grasp of some evil power, thick darkness fell upon him, and he feared that his last hour had come. It was then that he was saved by the appearance of the divine Personages in the heavenly light. And thus, the marvelous story of the Prophet Joseph's first vision, when compared with Scripture records, bears the imprint of truth on every line.

If a modern writer of fiction had composed a story of a heavenly vision, he would, in all probability, have embellished his paragraphs with details of the features of the "angels;" with descriptions of their robes, golden crowns, harps, and especially their wings, for these things went to make up popular notions a century ago, much of it having been borrowed from Dante's and Milton's poems. But the Prophet Joseph's narrative is not burdened with any such concepts. Rather, it is contrary to what a writer of popular fiction would have presented. It reads like a chapter of the Word of God, and it, therefore, comes to us with the irresistible force of truth.

Compare this story with the accounts extant of some alleged spiritual manifestations that have become famous.

Mohammed claimed that Gabriel visited him in a cave on Mount Hira and there gave him the revelations that were collected later and published as the *Koran*. Swedenborg, the founder of a sect that bears his name, in 1743 explained that "the eyes of his inward man" had been opened to see heaven, hell, and the world of spirits, and that he had been enabled to converse with deceased acquaintances and even with many distinguished men of antiquity. The modern Spiritualists have their mediums, their ouija boards, and other contraptions, through which, as they claim, they communicate with the world beyond the veil. Mrs. Eddy, the founder of "Christian Science," also has a strange account of how she was inspired to begin her work of healing.

All accounts of these, and similar, movements, are very different from the stories we have of true revelations and visions of divine origin, including that of Joseph's first vision. That story, as we have seen, bears irrefutable evidence, both external and internal, of truth.

# Joseph the Prophet

---

By Judge Charles H. Hart, of the First Council of Seventy

---

One hundred years have passed since the boy Joseph Smith declared he had been visited by two heavenly beings. The first vision was followed by many other spiritual manifestations reported by him, all of which have resulted in the birth and growth of a young, virile, vigorous Church of world-wide influence and aspirations. The Church thus launched has had a unique and striking history and has become "a marvelous work and a wonder."

After a century's test and scrutiny by a critical world, is the Church thus established still required to bear the burden of proof that Joseph Smith was a prophet, or may not unbelief be called upon to give some plausible explanation of the Prophet and his work? How is Joseph and the work inaugurated by him to be explained with inspiration or divine guidance left out of the account? Did he fabricate the religious experiences and visions reported by him? Was he a designing impostor? Was he sincere but misled by delusions or hallucinations? Or was he divinely inspired, a Prophet? Let each word and act of his come under the search light of truth and be put to the acid test. The entire record bears no evidence of insincerity. While, to begin with, many have sought to dispose of him and the work for which he stood by considering him as a wilful impostor, thoughtful and well informed people concede his sincerity but seek to account for him and what he did by supposing him innocently misled.

Josiah Quincy, in his noted book, *Figures of the Past*, published in 1882, said of him:

"The man who established a religion in this age of free debate, who was and is today accepted by hundreds of thousands as a direct emissary from the Most High,—such a rare individual is not to be disposed of by pelting his memory with unsavory epithets. Fanatics and impostors are living and dying every day and their memory is buried with them, but the wonderful influence which this founder of a religion exerted and still exerts throws him into relief before us, not as a rogue to be criminated but as a phenomenon to be explained. The most vital question Americans are asking each other today have to do with this man and what he has left us."

After describing Joseph as a fine-looking man, a remarkable individual, giving the impression of capacity and resource,



and endowed with the kingly faculty to direct others, he comments on Joseph's statesmanship in anticipating by eleven years the wisdom of Emerson in advocating the settlement of the slave question by the purchase of the slaves by sale of public lands. In conclusion Mr. Quincy writes: "I have endeavored to give the details of my visit to the Mormon Prophet with absolute accuracy. If the reader does not know just what to make of Joseph Smith, I can not help him out of the difficulty. I myself stand helpless before the puzzle."

The theory of Dr. Woodbridge Riley in his book, *The Founder of Mormonism*, so far as he has any persisting theory, is that Joseph was sincerely misled. George Trumbull Ladd, of Yale University, in an introductory preface to Mr. Riley's book, says:

"The rise and growth of 'Mormonism' is one of the most remarkable phenomena of the 19th century. It is deserving of thorough investigation, conducted from the point of view of the sociologist, the psychologist, or the student of politics or religion."

George Lansing Raymond, in his book, *The Psychology of Inspiration*, treats Joseph not only as sincere but as a true "psychic" to be classed with Joan of Arc, Jesus Christ, and others of accepted sincerity.

It is not to be wondered at that the best modern thought should concede Joseph's honesty. His words and acts attest fidelity. How is it that a court, or jury, is impressed with the truthfulness of the testimony of the witness and may believe him against the statement of many others? The very manner of telling the story and demeanor of the witness carry conviction. So with Joseph's story of his visions. What unprejudiced person can read his simple, candid narrative without believing him honest? It has all the evidence of an actual experience. If an invention, how did it happen that a fourteen-year old boy chose substantially the form of introduction which the Father has always used, according to the Hebrew scriptures, in introducing the Son? (*History of the Church*, Vol. 1, Chap. I and II.)

It should be noted that the answer Joseph got was not the answer he was looking for. He asked which of all religions was right. He assumed that some one or other must be. No preconceived whim or desire on his part could account for the answer he received. If an impostor, desirous of establishing a new church, he would not have antagonized all other churches by declaiming them all wrong. The very reply received by him indicates that it was not of human origin. It has required the passing of a century for man to more fully realize and learn how true the answer was. Such modern writers as Rev. Elvet

Lewis, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Dr. Edwin Davies Schoonmaker, in *Century Magazine*, for 1915, and Horace J. Bridges, in his book of 1916, entitled, *The Religion of Experience*, indicate how true the answer to Joseph was. Mr. Bridges uses much the same language when he says: "The church to be sure is corrupt, there is no single branch of it, from the Roman to the Quaker, which is not obnoxious to this censure. But to say this is only to say that the church is a human institution."

If the boy had not seen the vision and heard voices, why would he say to his mother, who was a Presbyterian, "I have learned for myself that Presbyterianism is not true"? Why would he lay the axe at the root of religious error unless he had been instructed as he claimed? In the same narrative he frankly confessed having fallen into errors, "and displayed the weakness of youth and the foibles of human nature." Had he been a pretender, would he have confessed having been led into temptation? Would he not have sought prestige by assuming or pretending a perfection he had not attained?

Those who assume that Joseph, although honest, was himself deluded, necessarily imply or assert that his visions were "subjective" and not "objective;" that is, that, while some vision may have passed before his mental gaze, and although he may have thought he heard voices, there was no reality to the sights or sounds, but they were only the products of a disordered mind. Such is the hypothesis of Dr. Riley above referred to. The weakness and error of such a theory is that there is overwhelming evidence that the manifestations were objective. If Joseph spoke of a first vision, he was to receive further directions. Such further directions came through a heavenly messenger. If such messenger, the angel Moroni, spake of a hidden record, as proof that the vision was not merely a phantasma of the mind, there was in the Hill Cumorah the stone cist in which the sacred relics were found, including the Urim and Thummim, the breastplate, and the golden plates. It is folly to suggest that the visions were imaginary or subjective, when these material things are in evidence. That he had plates of the appearance of gold upon which were what appeared to be ancient characters, is supported by the unimpeached and unimpeachable testimony of eleven witnesses besides himself and his mother. If Joseph did not obtain the golden plates in the manner stated, how did he come by them? A boy so circumstanced could not come by them in a worldly way without the fact being known. The late Elbert Hubbard wrote:

"But why and how people who believe that Moses found the tablets of stone carved by Jehovah, yet cavil and sneer at the metal tablets discovered by Joseph Smith, I cannot understand. It is just a matter of time



and distance, but time cannot make the false true. That which once happened can happen again. If God were God in the time of Moses, he is yet."

Again, these plates purport to contain a sacred history of prehistoric races on the American continent and of God's dealings with them; in other words, a volume of scripture. As an evidence that the vision and the plates and translation of the record by the gift and power of God are not subjective, or merely the emanation of diseased fancy, behold, here is a volume of ancient American scripture as the objective or tangible token. The vision, the plates seen and examined by many persons, are all the forerunners of, and closely connected with, the sacred record, the Book of Mormon. If Joseph the Prophet did not get this book in the manner represented, how did he get it, and where did it come from? Will anyone acquainted with the history of crime believe that an unlettered country youth could successfully forge a whole volume of scripture? If bright and skilful men find it very difficult and often impossible to forge a single word or even a syllable without detection, how could Joseph successfully fabricate the elaborate history and scriptural teachings contained in the Book of Mormon? Could he falsely pretend to be translating for a period of years without being detected? The attempt to connect Solomon Spaulding and Sidney Rigdon with the authorship of the Book of Mormon has failed. Who can plausibly account for the book other than upon the statement given by Joseph? If the visions or revelations were simply the result of a diseased or disordered mind, as Dr. Riley supposes, how comes it there is such unity running through Joseph's entire work? The instruction of the Angel Moroni, for instance, foreshadow the temple work which was not developed for many years after, and near the close of Joseph's ministry. The First Vision is a fitting prelude to the entire drama of the unfolding of so-called "Mormonism." It is the key to the arch of the restored Church.

It requires less credulity to believe that Joseph was inspired than to think that a boy of his age and experience could forge, so to speak, the whole stupendous structure and teachings of "Mormonism." To accept the Book of Mormon as fiction and not sacred history makes it necessary to explain how the author could know the many facts of ethnology and archaeology involved in the writing of that book, truths not known to science until later years. For instance, Joseph Smith describes the stone box or cist in which the records were found. At that time it was not generally known, if known at all, that the Aborigines of America were accustomed to use such cists in the burial of valuables. Such a stone box was discovered in the fall of

1906 on the farm of T. M. Edmondson, near Streetsville, in Peel county, about 22 miles west of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, as announced in *Records of Past Ages*, for March and April, 1909, pp. 75, 76. It is there stated that such cists had been found in Tennessee, Illinois, and at points on the Delaware river, and also in northern New Mexico.

After the skeptic has attempted to explain satisfactorily all the problems connected with the Book of Mormon there is another volume of scripture for him to account for, the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Let him explain how Joseph by worldly wisdom could produce, for instance, sections 1, 20, 29, 45, 59, 76, 84, 88, 89, 93, 101, 107, 132, and many others, perhaps equally wonderful.

As a result of the visions and revelations to Joseph Smith, the Church was organized. Such men as Professor Ely, of the Wisconsin University, and Vice-President Marshall, and others, pronounce the Church one of the most perfect and complete organizations.

If one considers the research required by man's learning to produce the three volumes of scripture which came through Joseph, he will realize that no boy, with Joseph's limited opportunities, could possibly have done the work without divine assistance. There are some matters that are not susceptible of successful fabrication. One is a volume of scripture. More difficult still, and less likely of attempt, would be the offer of a wilful deceiver to have his work of deception affirmatively attested by the Holy Trinity in the manner requested by the Book of Mormon, to "ask God, the eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost; and by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things."



# Origin of the First Vision

Proved by the Characteristic Theology of the Church, Including  
the Doctrine of the Godhead, Church Government,  
Salvation for the Living and the Dead

---

*By Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, of the Council of the Twelve*

---

When Joseph Smith went in the woods to pray, just one hundred years ago, he received a revelation of knowledge, truth and power, which has been of inestimable value and blessing to the world. What was revealed to him there was given for the overthrow of false creeds and traditions of the ages and led ultimately to the restoration of the everlasting gospel as revealed by our Redeemer during his ministry.

For hundreds of years the world was wrapped in a veil of spiritual darkness, until there was not one fundamental truth belonging to the plan of salvation that was not, in the year 1820, so obscured by false tradition and ceremonies, borrowed from paganism, as to make it unrecognizable; or else it was entirely denied. By heavenly direction and command of our Lord Jesus Christ, Joseph Smith restored all these principles in their primitive beauty and power. Let us briefly consider some of the many fundamental doctrines which were thus restored.

In the year 1820, when this glorious manifestation was received, the universal doctrine in the Protestant as well as the Catholic world, relating to the Godhead, in substance, was as follows:

There is but one only living and true God who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions. immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will. (*Presbyterian Confession of Faith*, Ch. 2).

The vision of Joseph Smith made it clear that the Father and the Son are separate personages, having bodies as tangible as the body of man. It was further revealed to him that the Holy Ghost is a personage of Spirit, distinct and separate from the personalities of the Father and the Son. This all-important truth staggered the world; yet, when we consider the clear expressions of holy writ, it is a most astounding and wonderful fact that man could have gone so far astray. The Savior said, "My Father is greater than I;" and he invited his disciples, after his resur-

rection, to handle him and see that it was he, for, said he, "a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." The apostles clearly understood the distinct entities of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to which they constantly refer in their epistles; and Paul informed the Corinthians of the fact that when all things are subjected to the Father, "then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

Joseph Smith beheld the Father and the Son; therefore he could testify with personal knowledge that the scriptures were true wherein we read: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." This was to be understood literally, and not in some mystical or figurative sense.

In the year 1820, the universal doctrine in the so-called Christian world was that the canon of scripture is full, that the heavens were closed against further revelation, and that it was folly to look for more. Joseph Smith's vision contradicted all this, for he saw the heavens opened and was ministered to by heavenly messengers sent from the Lord. Who was right, Joseph Smith or the teachers of men? Amos said: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (3:7). Joel said: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions" (2:28-29). Isaiah said: "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (40:5). "Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak" (52:6). All of these predictions pertain to the latter days, and prove that Joseph Smith is in harmony with the prophets.

Joseph Smith declared that in the year 1820, the Lord revealed to him that all the "Christian" churches were in error, teaching for commandments the doctrines of men. The religious teachers taught that they were in the way of light and truth, notwithstanding their many conflicting creeds. Amos said, speaking of the latter days: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord" (8:11). Paul said: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim. 4:3-4). "Let no man deceive you by any



means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition," etc. (2 Thess. 2:3). Again we find Joseph Smith in harmony with the Bible truth.

In this regard, however, the evidence of a departure from the true Church is so apparent that many religious teachers have been forced to recognize the fact. They endeavor, however, to justify themselves in the confusion on the ground that the Lord suffers his work to be marred by man. Note this apology for the conflicting conditions which prevail throughout the religious world:

The Church \* \* \* is a divinely organized body, the members of which are knit together amongst themselves, and joined to Christ their Head, by the Holy Spirit, who dwells in and animates it; it is a spiritual but visible society of men united by constant succession to those who were personally united to the Apostles, holding the same faith that the Apostles held, administering the same sacraments, and like them forming separate, but only locally separate, assemblies, for the public worship of God. This is the church according to the Divine intention. But as God permits men to mar the perfection of his designs in their behalf, and as men have both corrupted the doctrines and broken the unity of the church, we must not expect to see the church of Holy Scripture actually existing in its perfection on earth. It is not to be found, thus perfect, either in the collected fragments of Christendom, or still less in any one of these fragments; though it is possible that one of these fragments more than another may approach the Scriptural and Apostolic ideal which existed only until sin, heresy, and schism had time sufficiently to develop themselves to do their work." (*Smith's Bible Dictionary*, article "Church.")

So, also, the church of England in the *Sermons or Homilies* to be read in churches "in the time of Queen Elizabeth," has testified as follows:

"So that laity and clergy, learned and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees of men, women, and children of whole Christendom (an horrible and most dreadful thing to think) have been at once drowned in abominable idolatry, of all other vices most detested of God and most damnable to man, and that by the space of eight hundred years or more." (*Homily against the Perils of Idolatry*, page 253, ed. of 1890.)

In this manner the religious teachers have been forced to confess to the truth which Joseph Smith the Prophet declared the Lord revealed to him when he was but fourteen years of age.

Joseph Smith testified to the world that the Kingdom of God, like all other kingdoms, is governed by law; that order reigns there, and "all beings who abide not in those conditions are not justified." The religious teachers in the world teach that the Lord justifies, or permits, man to mar his work, and we are not to expect anything but confusion and division among his followers. The Savior commanded his disciples to be one, as he and his Father are one. Thus we see that

Joseph Smith is again in harmony with, while others are in opposition to, the teachings of our Lord.

The fact, so conclusively proved, that there has been an apostasy, shows the necessity of a restoration of the gospel. It is a remarkable fact that Martin Luther, John Knox, John Calvin, the Wesleys, and the other "reformers" who attempted to correct the evils of the Catholic church, did not think of this great truth. It was left for Joseph Smith to make the wonderful discovery. It is also strange that the "reformers" did not discover the necessity for the restoration of the Church as in primitive days with its divine authority, but assumed to take the authority upon themselves to organize churches and societies of their own. It was reserved for Joseph Smith to teach the world the necessity for these things. In the year 1820, the doctrine prevailed that apostles and prophets were no longer needed, that their mission ended with the establishment of the Church following the ministry of our Lord. They also taught that the gifts and blessings of the gospel manifest in primitive times were no longer needed. Joseph Smith revealed to the world that the organization of the Church was intended to be the same always, and endure to the end of time. Paul said that apostles and prophets were to continue in the Church "for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." Joseph Smith taught that all the offices, gifts and blessings were to continue in the Church and were necessary, while the religious world said that the gifts and many of the offices were abolished. Paul taught that all these are necessary, and that one part could not say to another, "I have no need of thee."

The scriptures say that no man should take honor unto himself to officiate, or minister, in the name of Christ. The religious teachers of the nineteenth century declared that he who felt called, was called to this ministry, without any direct revelation and command "as was Aaron." Joseph Smith said he received his divine calling by ordination under the hands of ancient prophets and apostles who were sent to him from the heavens for that purpose. Thus he was clothed with authority and power again to establish the Church upon the earth, that the gospel might be preached in all the world, as a witness before the end of unrighteousness should come. John testified that he saw "another angel fly in the midst of heaven,



having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Joseph Smith declared that the angel appeared to him and committed to him the keys of this ministry and commanded him to send forth the word unto all the world in fulfilment of this prediction. No one else ever thought of the necessity of this thing; for, if the heavens were closed, as man taught, how could there be any more appearing of angels?

The religious world said, at the time the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, that all infants should be baptized. The Lord taught Joseph Smith that baptism was for the remission of sins, and since little children could not sin, there was no call for them to repent. Hence they were redeemed through the blood of the Lamb. He taught that baptism of infants was an abomination in the sight of God because it denied the mercy of the Redeemer, who said: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Again, a great religious falsehood, in conflict with the mercies of the atonement of our Lord, was shattered. Moreover, the ministers of men taught that all those who died without a knowledge of the gospel—who never called upon the name of Christ nor believed in him—were eternally barred from the kingdom of God. The Lord taught Joseph Smith that all who died without a knowledge of the gospel would have the opportunity in the spirit world, for there the gospel would be preached to them and they would be given an opportunity. He taught that all who there received it, who were denied that privilege here, were heirs of the Celestial kingdom. The world taught no salvation for the dead. Yet this doctrine was clearly established by our Lord (John 5:25-29), and proclaimed by Peter, the chief apostle (I Peter 3:18-20; 4:6).

The Savior taught Nicodemus that a man could not enter the kingdom of God, unless he was "born of water and of the Spirit," which means baptism in water and baptism of the Spirit, by the laying on of hands. Peter, Paul, and the other apostles taught the same doctrine, which was largely denied as an essential doctrine, in the year 1820. Since a man must receive baptism in order to enter the kingdom of God, the Lord revealed to the primitive Saints the doctrine of baptism for the dead, which they practiced (I Cor. 15:29).

The Lord revealed the same principle to Joseph Smith, and through him established baptism for the dead in this dispensation for the salvation of all those who died without a knowledge of the gospel.

Malachi testified that the Lord would send Elijah the

prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, and he would turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest he come and smite the earth with a curse. Why Elijah should come, and the nature of his mission, are not even now understood in the world among those who believe that the visitation of angels has ceased and that the heavens are closed. It is true that in recent years men have risen claiming to be Elijah reincarnated, but such claimants have been utterly ignorant of the mission which Elijah was to perform. Joseph Smith has given the only consistent and reasonable view. He declared that in the year 1836 Elijah appeared to him in the Kirtland Temple and committed to him the keys of this power of turning the hearts of the children to their fathers. Oliver Cowdery, who was with him at that time, has likewise testified to that visitation. They have taught the world that the mission of Elijah was to restore the sealing power, by which ordinances of the gospel are performed in behalf of both the living and the dead in the Temples of our God, by which the dead may be saved as well as the living. It is the power to bind on earth and in heaven both the living and the dead from generation to generation in the great family organization which shall exist in the Celestial kingdom of our Father. And if this were not done, the earth would be smitten with a curse, for then the glorious plan of salvation would be frustrated and the souls of men would not be saved. It is a remarkable fact that since—and not before—the year 1836, when Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery made this announcement to the world, the hearts of the children have been turned to the fathers who are dead. Now there are hundreds of societies and thousands of individuals who are devoting their time to searching out the records of the dead, both in our own land and in lands beyond the sea. In the temples thousands are laboring “as saviors on Mount Zion” for the dead, performing for them every saving ordinance necessary for their exaltation in the kingdom of heaven, which pertains to this life and which they were not privileged to receive when living on the earth. This is a new doctrine to the world, but one that is destined to bring to pass the universal salvation of the human family, and the exaltation of all who are worthy to receive it whether they be living or dead. Thus Joseph Smith taught to the world the great love and mercy of our heavenly Father, who was pictured in the creeds of men as manifesting delight in the salvation of some and the eternal damnation of many others without any merited offense, simply because they were unfortunate enough not to have heard the name of Christ. Moreover, the Lord revealed



to Joseph Smith that in his mercy he would save, through the blood of his Only Begotten Son, all those who died without law, and that they should come forth" in the first resurrection and it would be tolerable for them." The heathen nations are to be redeemed and enter into the Terrestrial kingdom with a salvation beyond our mortal comprehension. Even the wicked, who have not "sinned unto death," shall be saved in the Telestial kingdom after they have paid their debt in hell, for even "they shall be heirs of salvation." The righteous, who keep the law and love the Lord are to become sons and daughters unto God and "all things are theirs \* \* \* and they shall overcome all things," and enter the presence of the Father to partake of the fulness of his kingdom. Such is the theology of the true Christian Church which the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith. How grand, inspiring, and glorious are such thoughts in comparison with the perverted doctrine which prevailed in the world in the year 1820!

The Lord taught Joseph Smith the doctrine of the eternity of the marriage covenant and the perpetuity of the family after death. This revelation has proved a wonderful, if not terrible, shock to the believers in the doctrine that at death a man and his wife are for ever separated and the family relationship comes to an eternal end. Yet there are very few, if they have natural feelings, who do not hope that the eternity of the family may prove to be a fact. It was part of the mission of Elijah to make known this truth, which is in full accord with the teachings of Paul, that man is not without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. (I Cor. 11:11.) However, all of these things are based on law, and must be done in order. No sealing will be of any avail unless it is done by authority of the holy Priesthood, which Joseph Smith received and conferred on others. For "no man shall come unto the Father," said the Son, "but by me, or by my word, which is my law."

Not only did Elijah appear to Joseph Smith and commit unto him the keys he held, but Moses came also and committed into his hands the keys of the gathering of Israel in these latter days. The doctrine of the gathering is clearly set forth in the scriptures, yet it remained for Joseph Smith to make this matter known. In fulfilment of the promise of the Lord to his ancient people, Elders were sent to the Holy Land, with authority to dedicate it for the return of the Jews and the house of Israel their fellows. May we not in truth believe that the Zionist movement and other efforts to restore the Jews to the promised land, are natural results of this visit of Moses to the Prophet Joseph Smith?

The world had no conception of the statements in the

Scriptures wherein Zion and Jerusalem are spoken of as two distinct places, until the Lord revealed it to Joseph Smith. He declared that America is Zion, a choice land above all other lands which was given to Joseph, son of Jacob, who was separated from his brethren. He, his father said, was like a bough near a well, whose branches run over the wall. So Joseph was blessed with a double portion, and America—Zion—became an inheritance for his children. To this land Ephraim is now being gathered, since the visitation of Moses, and the Jews are preparing to gather to Jerusalem. The great day of the Lord is near at hand when “out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”

To Joseph Smith the Lord revealed the Book of Mormon, which is the record of the house of Joseph whose children dwelt on this hemisphere. This book is the “stick of Joseph in the hand of Ephraim and the tribes of Israel his fellows,” spoken of by Ezekiel, which was joined by Joseph Smith, in fulfilment of this prophecy, to the stick of Judah, that they became one in his hands. And now that they are joined together, they have gone forth unto the ends of the earth as a witness unto all nations that the Lord is preparing to restore Israel again “from among the heathen, whither they be gone,” unto their own land.

All who have sincerely read the Book of Mormon have been impressed with the inspired contents of its pages. The promise is made in the book unto all who “ask with a sincere heart with real intent, having faith in Christ,” that he “will manifest the truth of it by the power of the Holy Ghost.” Thousands are prepared to testify that this is true, for they have received this knowledge through the power of the Holy Ghost. The Book of Mormon is the sacred history of the ancient inhabitants of the American continent, and contains the predictions of their prophets, the commandments of the Lord to them, and the history and destiny of those ancient peoples. It is the American volume of scripture, and is just as sacred and inspired as is the Bible, which contains the sacred records of the Hebrew race on the eastern hemisphere. No other book has been so sharply, bitterly, and relentlessly attacked as the Book of Mormon. Yet, like gold tried many times in the furnace, it has passed through all attacks unscathed. Every weapon raised against it has perished, and the wisdom of the self-righteous who have attacked it has come to naught. There is an inspiration and feeling of peaceful joy and satisfaction which accompany the sincere and prayerful reading of this book. Its doctrines and literary merit are in keeping with the writings of the Jewish prophets. The sincere student who is willing to put Moroni’s promise to the test is forced to say, “Surely this is the work of the Lord and not



the work of man, for no man could have written it." So likewise must testimony be borne of the revelations given to Joseph Smith, the youthful prophet of the nineteenth century, who was called of God and divinely commissioned to usher in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, in which Paul said, our Savior "might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him."

When we stop to consider that the Prophet Joseph Smith was but fourteen years of age when his first announcement of revelation from the heavens was declared, and that his ministry covered the brief space of only fourteen years from the organization of the Church until his martyrdom, at the age of thirty-eight years, what he accomplished for the salvation of man is wonderful to behold. He was not trained in the schools of his time, and he was considered by his enemies to be an unlearned man; yet, in the light of his life's labors we are forced to say indeed that what he did has proved to be "a marvelous work and a wonder." Thus through the weak things of the world have come forth strength and power which have broken down the mighty and the strong ones, whose wisdom has perished and whose understanding has been hid.



*Remodeled former home of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, in Kirtland, Ohio*





### JOSEPH SMITH MONUMENT, SHARON, VERMONT

*Dedicated Dec. 23, 1905, the centenary anniversary of the birth of the Prophet, by President Joseph F. Smith, in the presence of a large audience, many of whom had come from Utah and other distant states. It is of granite, 50 feet high, and stands on a foundation of concrete, twelve feet square. The shaft is 38½ feet high, a foot for each year of the Prophet's life—surmounted by a pyramid cap three feet high. The inscription reads: "Sacred to the Memory of Joseph Smith the Prophet. Born here, 23rd December, 1805. Martyred, Carthage, Ill., 27th June, 1844."*

# The Effect of Revelation on Man's Creed

*By David O. McKay, of the Council of the Twelve*

“As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,  
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,  
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,  
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.”

One hundred years ago Joseph Smith, a mere boy between fourteen and fifteen years of age, declared that in answer to prayer, he received a revelation from God. His declaration was simple, but positive; and he was surprised when men doubted the truth of his assertion. To him his claim was but the statement of a fact; to the Christian world, it was a lightning flash that shattered their religious structure, from turrent to foundation.

Two important elements in his first message were these: (1) That God is a personal being, and will communicate his will to men; and (2), that no creed in Christendom had the true plan of salvation. Indeed, all were an “abomination in the sight of God. The professors of them were corrupt, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.”

For boldness of assertion; for rejection of prevailing orthodoxy; as a challenge to professed ministers; this claim of a fair-haired, blue-eyed youth stands without parallel since the days of Jesus of Nazareth. Not even Luther's defiance, at Worms, is excepted; for his inspired effort, at first, was only to purify the church of corrupt practices; while Joseph Smith rejected the creeds as unauthoritative, and many of their doctrines as absolutely false.

And thus, by his simple declaration, he found himself alone in the religious world.

Alone—and unacquainted with the learning and philosophy of his day.

Alone—and unschooled in the arts and sciences.

Alone—with no philosopher to instruct him, no minister to guide him. In simplicity and kindness he had hastened to them with his glorious message; in scorn and derision they had turned from him saying that it was all of the devil; that there were no such things as revelations or visions in these days; that



all such things had ceased with the apostles, and that there would never be any more of them.

Alone—compelled to embark upon the ocean of religious thought, having rejected every known vessel with which to sail, and never having built one or even having seen one built himself. Surely, if an impostor, the bark he builds will be a crude one indeed.

If, on the other hand, that which he builds possesses an excellence and superiority over that which the learned men and philosophers had given to mankind during the preceding hundreds of years, the world will at least stand aside, and say in surprise, Whence hath this man his wisdom? It would seem that, though he was alone, he was alone only as was Moses on Sinai; as Jesus, on the Mt. of Olives and on other sacred places where he communed with his Father. As with the Master, so with the prophet; his instruction came not through man-made channels, but direct from God, the source of all intelligence. He said himself:

“I am a rough stone. The sound of the hammer and chisel were never heard on me until the Lord took me in hand. I desire the learning and wisdom of Heaven alone.”

When Joseph Smith taught a doctrine, he taught it authoritatively. His was not a question whether his thoughts agreed with men's thoughts or not; whether they were in harmony with the teachings of the orthodox churches or whether they were in direct opposition. What was given to him he gave to the world, irrespective of its agreement or disagreement, of its harmony or its discord with the belief of the churches, or the prevailing standards of mankind; and today, after the passing of one hundred years, we have a good opportunity of judging of the virtue of his teachings, and of concluding as to the source of his instruction. It is interesting, as well as profitable, too, to know how the advanced thought of today harmonizes with what he taught so authoritatively, a century ago. The guiding spirit of his life was manifest from the beginning of his ministry and confirms his wonderful declaration that God had spoken to him. In his own words it is this:

*“Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, although we may not see the reason thereof until long after the events transpire.”*

#### *General Principles*

The stand of the Church in regard to the first principles of the gospel, as given to Joseph the Prophet, is, from a Biblical point of view, invulnerable, and his claim most reasonable, that



divine authority to officiate in the ordinances is necessary. For many years professors of Christendom assailed the Church on its adherence to the essentiality of these principles, and ordinances—particularly on its claim that baptism by immersion is necessary to salvation but all attacks have proved futile. Of course, these principles, in one form or another, were taught by all the different sects, and yet, no one church taught all of them as being absolutely essential to salvation; and even had it done so, the Son of God, through Joseph Smith, denied its authority to administer them. Each succeeding year of the past century has tended only to vindicate the prophet's teachings in regard to these two great questions—the harmony of the doctrines of the Church with the Bible; and the necessity of divine authority to officiate in things pertaining to God.

But the inspiration and the boldness of the Prophet's teachings, and their subsequent effect upon the religious and philosophic minds, may best be seen by reference to some of the more advanced, and, I may say, obscure principles, of the plan of salvation. Take, for example,

#### *Predestination*

At the time Joseph Smith received his revelation, some of the creeds of Christendom were teaching that,

“Election to eternal life is not founded on foresight of faith and obedience, but is a sovereign act of God's mercy, whereby according to the council of his own will some men and angels are predestined into everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death;” and, “these angels and men thus predestined and foreordained are truly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished.” (*Westminster Confession.*)

The creed is well satirized by Burns, as follows:

“O Thou, wha in the heavens dost dwell;  
Wha, as it pleases best Thyself,  
Sends ane to heaven, and ten to hell,  
A' for thy glory,  
And no' for ony gude or ill  
They've done afore Thee!”

In direct contradiction to this false doctrine, the boy-prophet declared that “all mankind may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.”

He taught that,

“To every man is given an inherent power to do right or to do wrong. In this he has his free agency. He may choose the right and obtain salvation, or he may choose evil and merit abomination; but one man is not predestinated to do evil and another to do good.”

“Whosoever will come, may come, and partake of the waters of life freely: and whosoever will not come, the same is not compelled to come;

but in the last day, it shall be restored unto him, according to his deeds." (Alma 42:27.)

### *Creeds of Churches Modified*

Nearly half a century passed before the ministers of some of the churches became bold enough to so modify their creeds as to reject that paragraph on predestination; but they eventually did so. Here is one example:

The Presbyterians, in their General Assembly, May 22, 1902, adopted, by a vote of 600 to 2, the unanimous report of a Revision Committee which had been at work on the subject for two years. The *Outlook* (May, 1902), commenting upon the significance of this revision, summarizes as follows:

"The most important thing in this explanation is the definite declaration that the ordination vows of officers requires the adoption of the Confession of Faith *only as containing the system of Doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.*"

Thus any officer is left free to reject any part of the Confession of Faith which, in his judgment, is not taught in the Holy Scriptures. One of the particular parts rejected is named by the *Outlook* in these words:

"Following this broad statement are two overtures. The first *disclaims any fatalistic inference from the doctrine of Predestination, and asserts clearly that God loves all mankind and desires not the death of any sinner, and that no man is condemned except on the ground of his sin.*"

If any plainer revision of the Presbyterians' creed on the pernicious doctrine of predestination is needed, it can be found in the statement of Rev. Henry Van Dyke:

"The Presbyterian church, today (May 1902), does not believe that some men are created to be saved, and others to be damned; and to guard against misapprehension on the subject, it wishes to say clearly and unmistakably that God has not put any barrier between any human soul and salvation."

So Joseph Smith proclaimed before Henry Van Dyke was born, at the time, too, when every Presbyterian officer took a vow that God did predestine some to be saved and others to be damned.

### *Infant Baptism*

Closely allied with the doctrine of predestination was the equally false teaching that unbaptized infants were condemned to eternal punishment. Said the old school of Presbyterianism:

"Infants come into the world, not only destitute of knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, but with a nature inclined to evil and only evil."

The Prophet Joseph said:

“Little children are holy, being sanctified through the atonement of Jesus Christ.” (Doctrine and Covenants 74:7.)

Little children need no repentance, neither baptism.

“He that saith, That little children need baptism, denieth the mercies of Christ, and setteth at naught the atonement of him and the power of his redemption.” (Book of Mormon, Moroni 8:20.)

Three-quarters of a century later, creeds, the ministers of which had said the boy prophet’s revelations were from the devil, concluded that this doctrine, too, was right—devil or no devil.

The Westminster creed was modified by the Assembly, referred to above, to deny what it had declared for centuries, and to confirm the view expressed by the Prophet Joseph. It now declared that,

“All who die in infancy are chosen of God and saved by Christ through the spirit.” (Explanation of *Westminster Confession*, 1902.)

This is confirmed by Henry Van Dyke, who says:

“Presbyterians today believe that all who die in infancy are saved by Jesus Christ.”

#### *Pre-existence*

One hundred years ago, theologians seldom, if ever, referred to the doctrine of pre-existence of spirits, let alone accepting it as part of the solution of the eternal plan of redemption. When writers or philosophers mentioned it, it was designated the Platonic opinion; and those who favored it, as Platonists. This because Plato, with a spark of inspiration, taught that pre-existence, and the closely associated doctrine of “reminiscence,” are connected with the doctrine of immortality.

Even Wordsworth found it necessary to offer a half apology for referring to this doctrine in his inspired poem, “Ode to Intimations of Immortality.” In the light of poetic revelation he wrote:

“Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
The Soul that rises with us, our life’s Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar:  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home.”

Subsequently, when in the shadowy realm of popular opinion, learning that his doctrine “had given pain to some good and pious persons,” he protested that he “meant not to inculcate



such a belief" (pre-existence). However, with a glimmer of the light still in his mind, he adds: "But let us bear in mind that, though the idea is not advanced in revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of man presents an analogy in its favor."

Now, undoubtedly, the boy prophet had not even read Plato, and the presumption is that he had never read Wordsworth, or any other advocate of this phase of the Doctrine of Immortality; and yet, when God revealed it to him, note how unqualifiedly he declared the truth:

"I [Christ] was in the beginning with the Father, and am the first born; \* \* \* Ye were also in the beginning with the Father" (Doc. and Cov. 93:21, 23).

And again:

"Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these were many of the noble and the great ones." (Abraham 3:22.)

Though God has taught it to his children from the days of Adam down, yet one hundred years ago this was a bold, strange doctrine. And even today ministers of religion, if not entirely rejecting it, rather shy at it. But the leaven is working, and great minds, accepting the doctrine, are now proclaiming it in their theories of the immortality of man.

In discussing "The Permanence of Personality," Lodge, in *Science and Immortality*, says:

"This doctrine—the theory of a larger and permanent personality of which the *conscious self is only a fraction in process of individualization* \* \* \* as a working hypothesis, illuminates many obscure facts, and serves as a thread through an otherwise bewildering labyrinth. It removes a number of elementary stumbling blocks which otherwise obstruct an attempt to realize vividly the incipient stages of personal existence; it accounts for the extraordinary rapidity with which an individual proceeds; and it eases the theory of ordinary birth and death."

And then, after commenting upon the subject of "Dislocation of Memory," he continues:

"The analogy pointed to is that whereas we, living men and women, while associated with this mortal organism, are ignorant of whatever experience *our larger selves may have gone through in the past*—yet when we wake out of this present materialized condition, and enter the region of larger consciousness, we may gradually realize in what a curious though legitimate condition of ignorance we now are; and may become aware of our fuller possession, with all that has happened here and now fully remembered and *incorporated as an additional experience into the wide range of knowledge which our larger entity must have accumulated since its intelligence and memory began*. The transition called death may thus be an awakening rather than a sleeping; it may be that we, still, involved in mortal coil, are in the more dreamlike and unreal condition."

### *Hell*

When Joseph Smith as a boy attended any of the churches in his neighborhood, he undoubtedly heard the furies of hell pictured in thrilling eloquence. At any rate, in his day this place for the departed sinner was associated with—

“Red hot gridirons, attended by shrieking demons who kept the gridirons well filled with boiling victims; huge cauldrons full of boiling lead and brimstone, to be poured over new comers as the ceremony of welcoming them to the society of the lost; pestilential atmosphere laden with concentrated diseases, and men driven by demons to breathe this disease-laden air; horned and cloven-footed demons, goading their victims around circles, up and down steep heights, onward and onward, simply for gratification of their hatred, and to add to the sorrows of the lost.”

And to all this and much more must be added “dreadful shrieks issuing from dungeons and prisons into which special victims were thrown for special enormities.”

And to such horrors many men and women were predestined, there to burn and burn, and never to be consumed forever and ever!

That is the doctrine of the damned which Joseph Smith heard from man.

This is what he heard from God:

“The only ones on whom the second death shall have any power; yea, verily, the only ones who shall not be redeemed in the due time of the Lord \* \* \* are the sons of perdition, who deny the Son after the Father has revealed him:

“Wherefore, he saves all except them.” (Doc. & Cov. 76:30-48.)

The Lord revealed to him all the different degrees of glory in which men receive judgment in accordance with the deeds done in the body, and he

“Saw the glory and the inhabitants of the telestial world, that they were as innumerable as the stars in the firmament of heaven, or as the sand upon the sea shore,

And heard the voice of the Lord, saying—these all shall bow the knee, and every tongue shall confess to him who sits upon the throne for ever and ever;

For they shall be judged according to their works, and every man shall receive according to his works, his own dominion, in the mansions which are prepared.” (Doc. and Cov. 76.)

“He will judge them not according to what they have not, but according to what they have; those who have lived without law will be judged without law, and those who have a law will be judged by that law, we need not doubt the wisdom and intelligence of the Great Jehovah. He will award judgment or mercy to all nations according to their several deserts, their means of obtaining intelligence; the laws by which they are governed.” (*Times and Seasons*, Vol III, p. 759.)

### *Modern View of Christendom*

The modified view of modern Christendom is probably best expressed in an article entitled, “What Has Become of Hell?”

by Rev. George W. Shimm, and printed in the *North American Review*, 1900. After asserting that all churches had practically ceased to speak of Hell as a place of eternal punishment, he concludes:

"It cannot be that all the redeemed in the future will be equally happy, and that all the lost will be equally wretched; for there are varying degrees of capacity. There must be infinite grades of happiness there, as there must be vast difference between those who are driven into outer darkness.

"When men's eyes are opened, they may see that the loss of what they might have been and their degradation through sin, is indeed the visitation of penalty. Judgment consists quite largely in deprivation. Such a judgment has begun here, and it points to the awful issues of the future, when the days of earthly probation shall have ended.

"Men are condemned by themselves. They must recognize at some period that they prepared themselves for their own place and for their own condition."

And so we might refer to Tithing, Organization of the Church, the principles of Co-operation, and even the United Order, and show what a marked change of sentiment has taken place in regard to them during the last half century; but space will not permit.

The world will not admit, nor do we ask it to admit, that all these modified views regarding man's place in the universe have been brought about solely by the influence of the Prophet Joseph Smith. God's Spirit is ever ready to guide away from error the sincere seeker after Truth; and undoubtedly, hundreds of honest men and women have rejected in their hearts the errors pointed to above without ever having known the truths as revealed to the Prophet. However, the marks of his influence upon religious thought are manifest upon every hand, and whether men acknowledge it or not, the Light that came from heaven a century ago is dissipating the darkness that has enthralled the minds of men for ages.

As we look through the vista of one hundred years and see the boy prophet standing alone in the midst of a tempestuously religious world, declaring that God had spoken to him, and that there was not an authorized Church of Christ upon the earth; when we know that to make good his claim, he must give to the world something superior to that produced by the philosophy of the ages and the best wisdom of man; when we realize how impotent he was to do this, if dependent upon his own learning and wisdom,—we cannot help but conclude, since he has given to the world something which has stood the acid test of time and criticism, and which stands today in brilliancy and sublimity, superior to anything proclaimed by human wisdom, that surely he was indeed the Chosen Prophet of the Latter Day.



# A Theophany Resplendent

---

*By James E. Talmage, of the Council of the Twelve*

---

The spring of 1820 stands recorded as a time of transcendent import in the chronicles of both heaven and earth. For many centuries the human mind, heart, and soul, had been beclouded by false precept and darkening dogma respecting Deity. Through apostasy and its inseparable ignorance mankind had actually lost the knowledge of God. This dire condition had been foreseen and predicted by holy prophets, apostles and seers, and by the Lord Christ himself.

By human search alone man cannot find God. The knowledge of Deity and Divine attributes once lost by the race can never be recovered save through a new revelation from the heavens.

When, at the season named, the pure-hearted, truth-seeking lad, Joseph Smith, sought seclusion in the grove to pray for guidance in a matter that he considered of vital importance to his soul, he moved to action the supreme powers of both good and evil.

Evil first vented its rage upon the youthful suppliant, he was buffeted by Satanic fury, and all the agencies of darkness conspired to terrify and deter. Feeling that without the intervention of a mightier power he would be utterly destroyed, he called all the more earnestly upon God for aid. Let the lad's own words tell the wondrous story:

"Just at this moment of great alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me.

"It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name, and said, pointing to the other—*This is my beloved Son. Hear Him.*"

The question about which Joseph had been most troubled, and for answer to which he had sought the Lord in obedience to scriptural precept and promise (see James 1:5), was as to which of all the contending sects and churches of the time was the Church of Christ. The Beloved Son, Jesus the Christ, instructed him to refrain from joining any of the sects, as their

teachings were the precepts of men, at best but a form of godliness devoid of the power thereof.

The Scriptures extant hold no record of a theophany, or personal manifestation of Deity, so glorious as was this. On three earlier occasions, each marking the inauguration of a distinctive dispensation of Divine purpose and authority, had the Voice of the Eternal Father been heard, attesting the Godship of Jesus Christ. These were severally:

- (1) At the time of our Lord's baptism in Jordan.
- (2) At His transfiguration.
- (3) When, as a resurrected and glorified Being, He ministered to the descendants of Lehi on the American continent.

In all these manifestations, the Father was heard but not seen, so far as Sacred Writ avers. In the latest attestation of the Son's authority by the Father the Two stood side by side.

It is consistent with the distinguishing supremacy of the Last Dispensation—the Dispensation of Fulness—into which all authority and powers of earlier dispensations are to be gathered and restored, that its beginning should be signalized by Divine disclosures of surpassing purport and significance.

The appearing of the Eternal Father and His Son Jesus Christ to Joseph Smith, in the spring of 1820, marked the end of a long era of apostasy and ignorance, except as unbelief or sin yet enthralls the individual soul.

Through that transcendent event, the knowledge of the personality of both Father and Son was again given to man.

The plain and ennobling truth that God is literally in the physical form and image after which man has been created was established anew.

Thereby, also, was the fact reaffirmed that in His dealings with the human race the Father operates through Jesus Christ the Son. "Hear Him" was the Father's commandment to Joseph, and through Joseph to the world. In harmony therewith stands the testimony of Christ given of old: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me (John 14:6).

The theophany of 1820 demonstrated that the Church of Christ was not existent upon earth, and furthermore that for its reestablishment a special delegation of power and appointment was requisite.

It marked the ushering in of the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, of which the olden prophets had spoken, and which shall continue until the Lord Jesus Christ returns to earth to inaugurate the Millennium of consummation and peace.





THE JOSEPH SMITH HOME NEAR PALMYRA, NEW YORK



# The Church Will Prevail

*By Osborne J. P. Widtsoe*

It is as natural as that the rising sun should appear in the east to spread its glory gradually over the world, that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints should prosper and progress, to come ultimately to possess the earth. It was no vain vision of the ancient prophet's which led him to declare, "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. \* \* \* And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Nor was it a vain imagining of the Master's that led him to assert, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." There are, indeed, certain fundamental principles of righteousness upon which the privileges of possession are based. The non-observance, or the violation of those principles, brings about disaster. The strict observance of those principles assures success. And the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will grow and gain possession as surely as the sun doth rise, if only it remain true to the genius of its inspiration.

One hundred years ago, the prophet-boy, Joseph Smith, beheld a heavenly vision. This was the first of many visions and revelations—direct communings with the Eternal Powers. The prophet-boy grew to be a prophet-man. Always the line of direct revelation was open. For a quarter of a century he lived in continual communication with God. No other man in the history of the world has ever passed through a course of preparation, training, and achievement at all comparable with his. His teachers were of heaven, his instruction was God-inspired, and his mission divinely directed. He revealed to man a noble, celestial philosophy of life, and he established in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, an institution of economic, social, and spiritual solidarity. The work achieved by the great American Prophet during the short period of his active ministry lies beyond the limited powers of mere mortal man. It is a fit subject for years of research, and volumes of recorded study. It is, in fact, inexhaustible. One thought alone, however, inspires the present writing. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will prevail. It cannot fail on the foundations laid by the Prophet Joseph Smith. "The God of Heaven set up a king-

dom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

But what are some of the foundation principles laid by revelation through the Prophet Joseph Smith that will make this prediction secure?

First, "Mormonism" stimulates to high and lofty endeavor: to the abundant production of the things that best support life, to the mastery of the forces of nature, and to pure and righteous living. While it is declared that man exists that he may have joy, it is by no means understood that man's joy is to be gained solely from physical or worldly pleasures. Indeed, while "Mormonism" encourages the seeking of wholesome recreation, it condemns the so-called pleasures of the world, and places a morally righteous interpretation upon the word joy. "Mormonism" inspires the desire to work, to do. It is distinctly a spur to energy—not to the dissipation of energy in fruitless pleasures, but rather to the direction of energy into righteous, productive channels. Real joy is derived from work and the conscious effort to attain the ultimate good. As the straying force that makes the wondrous display of lightning is chained by man and made to do useful service, so the straying energies of men are directed by the gospel of Jesus Christ and made to produce abundantly for the salvation of the children of God. The Saints are therefore admonished not to idle away their time, nor to deny their talents that they be not known. And it is specifically decreed that the idler shall not eat of the food produced by the laborer, nor wear the garments prepared by him.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the rich are condemned, who hoard up their riches and refuse to give help to the poor and to continue the life of productivity; and the poor man is likewise convicted of sin, who will not labor with his own hands, "whose eyes are full of greediness," "and whose hands are not stayed from laying hold upon other men's goods." Those only are blessed "who are pure in heart, whose hearts are broken, and whose spirits are contrite, for they shall see the kingdom of God coming in power and great glory unto their deliverance; for the fatness of the earth shall be theirs."<sup>2</sup>

In its history, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has observed closely this principle of productivity and inspiration to endeavor. It was ordained, for example, that the land of Zion should not be obtained by the Saints except by purchase or by blood; "and if by purchase, behold you are blessed; and if by blood, as you are forbidden to shed blood, lo,

<sup>1</sup>Doc. and Cov. 60:13; 42:42.

<sup>2</sup>Doc. and Cov. 56:16, 17, 18.

your enemies are upon you \* \* \* and but few shall stand to receive an inheritance.”<sup>3</sup> This passage cannot be mistaken. The land of Zion was not to be obtained by robbery or by bloodshed. It must be worked for—paid for with the results of productive labor, and built up by industry. The Saints failed—and their failure was due in part to their neglecting to observe the conditions on which they were to gain possession of the earth. On the other hand, when the pioneer bands reached the end of their migration westward, the wise leader, Brigham Young, who understood fully the genius of the Prophet’s mission, set his devoted followers to work tilling the soil, and applying their hands to the labor that should produce the substance of life. When he was told that there lay gold and precious metals hidden in the mountains that walled his people in, Brigham Young replied that he hoped it would remain there, and urged the people more vehemently to secure the land and to cultivate it. Others have come in to open up the veins of the everlasting hills. Some have gained wealth and some have become rich, but many thousands more have been laid away in paupers’ graves, as empty and poor as the sinkholes they have made in the mountains. Meanwhile, the Saints have continued in the main to practice the teachings of the inspired prophets. They have built up an agricultural, industrial community. Their business is to produce the goods needed by man in his complex life upon the earth. And they are urged to produce, not merely to acquire, wealth, with which they may afterwards live at ease; but they are urged to produce more that they may still produce more; and to use their wealth for further production to be used in the salvation of men—the economic and spiritual uplifting of the human race. Wealth is declared to be an unworthy object in itself; but everyone is encouraged to acquire wealth that he may the better help in the salvation of the race. And the Saints have been prospered. They have gained possession of land, and have learned to till it. They have been obedient, meek. “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”

Not industry and productive energy alone, however, will gain possession of the earth. Coupled with intelligent industry must be the meekness that includes all righteousness—the meekness that causes one to bow in humility and obedience before the least expressed will of God. It is natural that man should work to gratify his physical wants. Such a desire is a spur to energy, an incentive to productive industry. Moreover, it stimulates man to master and to overcome the natural forces

---

<sup>3</sup>Doc. and Cov. 63:29, 30.



that stand between him and his achievement, or that may be harnessed and made to serve him in the achievement. But withal, to retain what one has gained, one must deal righteously and learn to love one's neighbor as oneself. To hold possession, one must have gained possession in righteousness, and one must continue to deal righteously forevermore. That meekness which is after God's own heart permits of no deviation from the straight and narrow way. The righteously productive man loves honesty, humility, charity, and patience, eschews evil, cleaves unto chastity and temperance, and would rather do hurt to himself than to his neighbor. Here, then, may be formed the first reason why the Church established by the Prophet Joseph Smith will come ultimately to inherit the earth: Its devotees are spurred to productive industry and they are meek.

Secondly, "Mormonism" stimulates to intellectual growth. After his bodily wants are satisfied, man strives to gratify his desire to know. It has been so since time began; it is so now; it will continue to be so through the countless eternities yet to be. This desire to know stimulates to greater endeavor. It is a further spur to energy. It uncovers the hidden forces of the universe and gains mastery over the elements. It makes production relatively easier, and permits more time again for mental endeavor. That institution only can be said to be established on the foundations of progress, which urges its followers to intellectual activity and growth. And therefore, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints cannot but inherit the earth. The Saints are not to be permitted to live in ignorance. For this reason the leaders were instructed early to prepare text-books for the use of the children.<sup>4</sup> For this reason Church members were themselves urged to study and learn, to become acquainted with good books, with languages, with peoples, and to obtain a knowledge of history, and of countries, and of kingdoms, of laws of God and man, and all this for the salvation of Zion."<sup>5</sup> And for the same reason, that Zion may be saved or prospered—and thus come to inherit the earth—the Saints have always been exhorted to teach diligently that everyone may become better instructed "in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the laws of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God." This teaching is to be comprehensive—"of things both in heaven and in the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and

---

<sup>4</sup>Doc. and Cov. 90:15; 55:4.

<sup>5</sup>Doc. and Cov. 93:53.

the judgments which are on the land, and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms." Moreover, it is to prepare the Saints for that possession which is inevitably theirs through their faithfulness and diligence, that such devotion to learning is urged.<sup>6</sup> And that the desire to know should thus be an incentive to progress in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is readily understood when one reads that, "The glory of God is intelligence, or in other words, light and truth;" that "it is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance;"<sup>7</sup> and that, "Whatever principles of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection; and if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come."<sup>8</sup>

These principles are beautiful in theory. They are not limited to theory, however, in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The house of worship and the house of learning go hand in hand in the communities of the Saints. When new territory is opened for settlement, the Saints build first the public house of worship or the Church, then the school house. The Church school system has pioneered the way in the intermountain West. It is maintained today as at least the equal of any other system of schools of like grade. It is fostered by the Church in the hope that it may grow in efficiency until it shall become in very deed second to none in all the world. In the meantime, the influence of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the far-reaching effects of the doctrine he presented, have helped to shape the destinies of thousands of ambitious young men, and thus of the Church. Education and special training have been sought the world over. The educators and the learned men in the Church have been inspired by the revealed attitude towards education to seek learning in the best universities in the world. All that is best in the world is being brought home, and to it is being added, not only the results of our own activity in the field of knowledge, but also the revealed word of God. And the interest of the Gospel re-established by the American Prophet is not limited to those fields of knowledge commonly misnamed practical. All that is good is recognized as of practical value, and as helping in the growth and development of man—in the helping of man to gain possession of the earth. Hence, literature is encouraged and fostered, music is highly developed, art is cared for with the tenderness of a mother. In the temples built to the Lord, the

---

<sup>6</sup>Doc. and Cov. 88:78-80.

<sup>7</sup>Doc. and Cov. 93:36; 131:6.

<sup>8</sup>Doc. and Cov. 130:18, 19.

best that art can produce in mural decoration and in paintings, in sculpture and in architecture, is sought and secured. If it is objected that we have not yet produced much of world greatness, the answer comes quickly and soundly that we are still young, that we have spent our best efforts to this moment in conquering the desert, that we are still pioneers in a new world, but that—under the divinely revealed incentive to knowledge and intelligence—we have already accomplished something, perhaps more than any other community in the same time under similar circumstances. And thus, because the Gospel that the Prophet Joseph Smith revealed stimulates, not only to material productivity and righteous living, but also to intellectual growth and aesthetic development, the Church which he founded is as sure to prosper and persist as is the sun to continue in its beaten way.

Thirdly, "Mormonism" stimulates to social service. Jesus himself has declared the law of Christian love to be "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The greater part of the Sermon on the Mount, many of the parables, and much of his general teaching are devoted to the expounding of man's duty to his fellowmen. It may be said that his own life was a glowing example of the practice of the law of love, and that this law was the very heart of his teaching. All the duties of man to his neighbor are based on the law of love. And this sympathetic impulse, the desire to do—to do for others—is likewise an important incentive to progress, without which no one can hope to inherit the earth. In "Mormonism" as revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the law of Christian love is again made fundamental to progress, achievement, and possession. Charity and love, with faith and hope, qualify a man for work.<sup>9</sup> No one can assist in the great work of saving mankind "except he shall be humble and full of love."<sup>10</sup> And it is the duty of the children of men to live together in love."<sup>11</sup> Moreover, to the great Prophet was repeated the commandment to love, with certain other commandments, revealing the fact that the law of Christian love comprehends the law of social interaction. Declared the Lord, "Wherefore I give unto them a commandment, saying thus: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy might, mind, and strength; and in the name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Thou shalt not steal; nor commit adultery, nor kill, nor do anything like unto it. Thou shalt thank the Lord thy

<sup>9</sup>Doc. and Cov. 4:5.

<sup>10</sup>Doc. and Cov. 12:8.

<sup>11</sup>Doc. and Cov. 42:45.



God in all things.”<sup>12</sup> Surely, whoso observes this commandment has learned to serve his fellowmen.

“Mormonism” stimulates, moreover, to render extra service. In the parable of the unprofitable servant, the conclusion is drawn—when the servant has waited upon the master at supper, after a long day’s work has already been done—“So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, “We are unprofitable servants: we have done [only] that which was our duty to do.” Plainly, the law of Christian love requires extra service. And “Mormonism” trains more effectively than does perhaps any other religious creed, or than does any other form of community organization, for the high ideal of efficient social life. Every Latter-day Saint is taught to render efficient service as a citizen of the kingdom of God. Every Latter-day Saint is urged to render efficient service as a citizen of the country in which he lives. Efficient citizenship is a watchword of modern Israel. And efficient citizenship can be attained only through observance of the law of love. “Thou shalt not speak evil of thy neighbor, nor do him any harm,” declared the Prophet.<sup>13</sup> Every man shall seek “the interest of his neighbor, and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God.”<sup>14</sup> And in harmony with the human law that when a man has found the religion that seems to him to be the best, “he would be forced to become an advocate of that religion,”<sup>15</sup> modern revelation makes it incumbent upon its devotees to spread the glad tidings of good news among their neighbors. “Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned, to warn his neighbor.”<sup>16</sup> And the state of the perfect neighbor is further expressed thus: “See that ye love one another; cease to be covetous, learn to impart one to another as the gospel requires; cease to be idle; cease to be unclean; cease to find fault one with another; cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated; and above all things, clothe yourselves with the bonds of charity, as with a mantle, which is the bond of perfectness and peace.”<sup>17</sup> Thus does the doctrine promulgated by the truly great prophet, Joseph Smith, urge men and stimulate them to gratify the de-

<sup>12</sup>Doc. and Cov. 59:5-7.

<sup>13</sup>Doc. and Cov. 42:27.

<sup>14</sup>Doc. and Cov. 82:19.

<sup>15</sup>Thomas Nixon Carver, *The Religion Worth Having*, p. 6, Houghton, Mifflin Co., New York, 1912.

<sup>16</sup>Doc. and Cov. 88:81.

<sup>17</sup>Doc. and Cov. 88:123-125.

sires of the sympathetic nature—to live the perfect law of Christian love. These are the basic incentives to human progress: The desire to work, the desire to know, the desire to do. In the Church established through the inspired genius of the Prophet Joseph Smith, these are fundamental. “Mormonism” stimulates to a truly productive expenditure of energy with high ideals of right living; it stimulates to lofty intellectual and aesthetic endeavor; and it urges social service and the practice of the law of love. Is it not to be expected that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will ultimately inherit the earth as surely as the sun will rise, if only the Church remain true to the genius of its inspiration?

In conclusion, two points need briefly to be mentioned to strengthen further the position here presented. It has been said that association is the law of human progress. Some will have it that association in equality is the law of human progress—meaning by equality, presumably, equal rights and privileges before the law. It is notable that Joseph Smith was a mighty advocate of association. Less than half a year had passed, after the organization of the Church, when the Prophet declared, “Wherefore the decree hath gone forth from the Father, that they [the Saints] shall be gathered in unto one place upon the face of this land;”<sup>18</sup> and throughout the revelations, the people are urged to gather in the land of Zion. Gathering, assembling for association, became thus an important principle of the restored Gospel. Through the practice of it, thousands of people left their homes and assembled in a new place with others of the same faith. And this association of like-minded people made it possible to put forth a concerted effort to produce, to learn, and to serve. It is, indeed, the doctrine that has given numerical strength to the Church, made possible its achievements, supports its present prosperity, and assures its ultimate triumph as a productive Church. If it is true that that religion is best “which (1) acts most powerfully as a spur to energy, and (2) directs that energy most productively,”<sup>19</sup> it cannot be doubted that “Mormonism,” since it stimulates all the incentives to human progress, and puts in operation further the law of association, is to be accepted as the best religion—a living monument to the divine inspiration of the Prophet Joseph Smith. True, the doctrine of the gathering to the headquarters of the Church is no longer preached. Yet, the doctrine of gathering is an active principle. Wherever there is a branch or an organization of the Church, the people assemble in social intercourse, and in worship. Moreover, they are associated in

<sup>18</sup>Doc. and Cov. 29:8.

<sup>19</sup>Thomas Nixon Carver, *The Religion Worth Having*, p. 13.

the common aims, purposes, ideals of the Church. Concentration alone is no longer necessary; it has been accomplished, and serves its purpose. The same principle of association serves now in the outspreading organizations. Moreover, in their association in the Church, the people are equal. The Church is a democratic institution. The ideal is equality "that you may be equal in the bands of heavenly things."<sup>20</sup> And thus, again, since the law of association binds the people together, it is only natural to expect that the Church will ultimately triumph.

But the crowning feature, which makes it impossible that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints should fail, is the fact that it is founded solidly on the rock of revelation, and reposes implicit faith in the doctrine of continual revelation: "Deny not the Spirit of revelation, nor the Spirit of prophecy, for wo unto him that denieth these things."<sup>21</sup> It is well that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is securely founded in economic and social principles. It is well that modern revelation stimulates productive energy and insists upon right living; that it stimulates intellectual growth and fosters the arts and sciences; that it stimulates social service and makes for active, efficient citizenship in the governments of men. It is well also that it operates in the basic law of association, gaining strength from the assembling into one place of people of like faith and ambition. But while it is well it is not enough. Steadily to maintain the narrow way throughout the generations, there must needs be communion with the director of all. Where there is no revelation, the people perish; they wander from paths of rectitude; they deny even that which has given them life. This, then, is the sum of all: Not alone because the doctrines revealed through Joseph the Prophet spurs the energies of man to work, and to know, and to do; nor yet alone because it is based on the law of association, will it thrive and prosper; but because there is added hereto the still more basic principle of faith in God and his power to guide man by continued revelation—as times and seasons and countries shall require—will ultimate triumph be achieved. The far-reaching extent of the work of the Prophet Joseph Smith can not be declared; the monument he has erected to his memory cannot be measured. But this much is certain: It is as natural as that the rising sun shall appear in the east to spread its glory gradually over the world, that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints should prosper and progress to come ultimately to inherit the earth.

---

<sup>20</sup>Doc. and Cov. 78:5.

<sup>21</sup>Doc. and Cov. 11:25.





## Joseph Smith the Modern American Prophet

*By B. H. Roberts*

Joseph Smith by birth, and more especially by reason of the many things he revealed concerning the land of America, her past and her future, is by pre-eminence the American Prophet. He is not the "boy prophet;" I dislike that term. He is not the "Prophet of Palmyra;" he is the Prophet of the dispensation of the fulness of times; if localized at all he must be known as the "American Prophet."

*America the Land of Eden and of Zion*

That this is true, let me a little show it. A line in one of our hymns runs:

“For in Adam-ondi-Ahman,  
Zion rose where Eden was.”

What is the meaning of this? It means that the Prophet taught that the American continents are not the New World, but the Old; that Eden was here in America. Adam-ondi-Ahman, the place where Adam dwelt after being driven from Eden, the Prophet declared to be in Missouri, in the valley of the Grand River. He represents a gathering together there of the patriarchs of the antediluvian age, and tells how they blessed Adam, or “Michael,” the “Ancient of Days;” and Adam rose among them and blessed the patriarchs, his posterity, and told what should befall them to their latest generations. (Doc. and Cov., Sec. 107.)

Among the Patriarchs Enoch was pre-eminent for righteousness. He, in this western hemisphere, founded a city, sanctified it, and called it “Zion,” the abode of the pure in heart; “for this is Zion”—wherein that word relates to a people—“the pure in heart.” Hence “Zion rose where Eden was,” here in America. But in the course of time “Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.” (Gen. 5.) That is, according to Paul, God translated him, that he should not see death (Heb. 11); and it came to pass that Zion was not, for God received it up into his own bosom and from thence went forth the saying, “Zion is fled.” (Book of Moses, Ch. vii.)

Then after the flood, the Lord led to these western continents the Jaredite colony from the Euphrates valley; and sixteen centuries later the Nephite colony from Jerusalem. In each case the Lord declared to the peoples so led to the western world that it was “a choice land above all other lands.” The Savior, in the most glorious manner, after His resurrection from the dead, visited these blessed Western Continents and declared that here should be built a Holy City by the united efforts of the house of Israel, chiefly the descendants of the Patriarch Joseph, of Egyptian fame, and the Gentile races who have right to an inheritance in the land; and the City should be called “Zion,” a “New Jerusalem”—the “Zion” from which “the law should go forth,” as the word of the Lord should go forth from Old Jerusalem. Because of the future establishment of this City of Zion upon these western continents, as also on account of Enoch’s Zion, they are called the “Land of Zion.”

*The Constitution of the United States Inspired of God*

Joseph Smith also taught that the Constitution of the United States was a God-inspired instrument. "It is not right," he represents the Lord as saying, "that one man should be in bondage to another;" and hence the Constitution should be maintained for the preservation of the rights, and the protection, of all flesh, "according to just and holy principles, that every man may act in doctrine and principle, pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency which I [the Lord] have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment. And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose."

So Joseph Smith's disciples hold the Constitution of the United States to be inspired of God. I think sometimes, however, that we do not realize all that this truth means. We are apt to think of things in mass, and do not take the time to analyze them. What does it mean to say that the Constitution of the United States is an inspired instrument? Undoubtedly, it means primarily that God recognizes the right of the people, in their political capacity, to govern themselves. It expresses the divine belief, so to speak, in the capacity of man for self-government. It means that the people in their political affairs are sovereign; for this is the chief thing which distinguishes the American government from other political systems of government. We are not always happy in our forms of expression. We do not make our terminology always meet our ideas. In spite of the fact just alluded to—viz., the people are sovereign, we talk of, and pray for, "those who rule over us," meaning presidents, cabinet officers, senators, governors, and the like; but these are not "rulers," they are the people's servants, elected for a limited time to administer government according to law, under the provisions of our Constitution; but they serve, they do not rule. The people are sovereign, and the people alone are rulers, and they appoint or elect their servants. Moreover, this Constitution provides for the freedom of the press; for freedom of speech; for freedom and independence of the individual. It guarantees religious liberty, hence a free church, as well as a free state, each independent of and separate from the other. The government is an indestructible Union, composed of indestructible States. To hold that the Constitution, which provides for these things, is inspired of God is to hold that each of these separate things, as well as the thing in mass, is ordained of God by the hands of wise men whom he raised up to establish this system of government; and to deny to the people the enjoyment of these several



rights; to undertake, by any means whatsoever, to thwart the realization of government by the people, to attempt to defeat the expression of their will, or make it result different from what their untrammelled judgment would have it, is to make an infraction upon the things that have been ordained of God.

In the above quotation concerning the system of government established by the Constitution of the United States being inspired of God, we may discern the purpose of God in the establishment of such a government. That purpose is that every man may become directly and personally responsible to God for his actions in matters relating to civil government—"that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment." The principle is, however, more fully developed in the Book of Mormon than in the quotation here considered. The incident which develops the principle occurs in the reign of the first Mosiah, and at a period that corresponds with the latter half of the second century B. C. The old king proposed to his people a revolution in the form of government by which monarchy should be abandoned and a republican form of government established in its place. In urging this revolutionary measure the good king said:

"It is not common that the voice of the people desireth anything contrary to that which is right; but it is common for the lesser part of the people to desire that which is not right; therefore this shall ye observe, and make it your law, to do your business by the voice of the people. And if the time comes that the voice of the people doth choose iniquity, then is the time that the judgments of God will come upon you, yea, then is the time he will visit you with great destruction, even as he has hitherto visited this land. \* \* \* And I command you to do these things in the fear of the Lord; and I command you to do these things, and that ye have no king; that if these people commit sins and iniquities, they shall be answered upon their own heads. For behold, I say unto you, the sins of many people have been caused by the iniquities of their kings; therefore their iniquities are answered upon the heads of their kings. And now I desire that this inequality should be no more in this land, especially among this my people; but I desire that this be a land of liberty, that every man may enjoy his rights and privileges alike, so long as the Lord sees fit that we may live and inherit the land; yea, even as long as any of our posterity remains upon the face of the land."

In order that this element of moral responsibility may be brought into civil government, however, it stands to reason that every individual must be free and untrammelled in the exercise of his political duties, including the casting of his vote. Each in-

dividual must have an equal voice in the government. Every man must be a sovereign in the civil institution, and his vote must represent the voice and judgment of a free man, a vote unawed by influence, and uncoerced by any power whatsoever. Less than this would convert the whole scheme of government by the voice of the people into mockery. Under a system of government by the people, in order to retain the element of moral responsibility of the people in civil affairs, there must be no appeal but to the intelligent judgment of the individual. Each man's act must be the act of a free man; and those who would corrupt the electorate of a government where the people rule, or sway it by any other force than by an appeal to reason, would destroy this element of personal, moral responsibility in civil government, and in the case of those of us who accept this book from which I am quoting—if we would appeal to any other force than to that of reason or resort to any species of coercion, *we would be setting ourselves against an order of things that God has ordained.*

Adherence to these principles is pure Americanism. This is constitutional morality. This is both the principle and the policy that will most inure to the perpetuation of our free institutions. This is the sheet-anchor of our safety as a nation—our surest guarantee of God's favor. The man who promulgated this doctrine of individual, personal responsibility to God in the affairs of civil government, where the people rule, is worthy to be numbered among the greatest of American statesmen, American teachers, American prophets.

It means a great deal, this idea that the Constitution of the United States is inspired of God.

#### *America Fortified of God Against Other Nations*

Not only did the Prophet teach the doctrine that the United States Constitution was inspired of God, but he tells us through the Book of Mormon that God has fortified this land against all other nations. I will quote you the passage. The Lord said to Lehi:

“Behold, this land shall be the land of thine inheritance, and the Gentiles shall be blessed upon the land. This land shall be a land of liberty unto the Gentiles, and there shall be no kings upon the land who shall raise up unto the Gentiles. And I will fortify this land against all other nations, and he that fighteth against Zion [these continents of the western world] shall perish, saith God; for he that raiseth up a king against me shall perish, for I, the Lord, the King of Heaven, will be their King, and I will be a light unto them forever that hear my words.”

This guarantee, however, this fortifying this land against all other nations, is upon a certain condition: the condition that

the "God of the land, who is Jesus Christ," shall be honored by the people thereof. On this head I want to quote a passage from a certain American statesman, that I can easily believe was one of the God-inspired men appointed to assist in the maintenance of true constitutional principles, as others were inspired to found the Constitution. I refer to the great statesman of nationalism, Daniel Webster, who, before the New York Historical society, in 1852, in his last public address, said:

"Unborn ages and visions of glory crowd upon my soul, the realization of all which, however, is in the hands and good pleasure of Almighty God; but, under His divine blessing, it will be dependent on the character and the virtues of ourselves, and of our posterity. If classical history has been found to be, is now, and shall continue to be, the concomitant of free institutions, and of popular eloquence, what a field is opening to us for another Herodotus, another Thucydides, and another Livy!

"And let me say, gentlemen, that if we and our posterity shall be true to the Christian religion—if we and they shall live always in the fear of God, and shall respect his commandments—if we and they shall maintain just, moral sentiments, and such conscientious convictions of duty as shall control the heart and life—we may have the highest hopes of the future fortunes of our country, and if we maintain those institutions of government and that political union, exceeding all praise as much as it exceeds all former examples of political associations, we may be sure of one thing—that, while our country furnishes materials for a thousand masters of the historic art, it will afford no topic for a Gibbon. It will have no decline and fall. It will go on prospering and to prosper.

"But if we and our posterity reject religious instruction and authority, violate the rules of eternal justice, trifle with the injunctions of morality, and recklessly destroy the political Constitution which holds us together, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us, that shall bury all our glory in profound obscurity. Should that catastrophe happen, let it have no history! Let the horrible narrative never be written! Let its fate be like that of the lost books of Livy, which no human eye shall ever read; or the missing pleiad, of which no man can ever know more, than that it is lost, and lost forever!"

Such were the sentiments of this patriotic statesman; but the beautiful and flowing periods in which he expresses his thought, are in no respects better or stronger, or more patriotic than the rugged utterances of Joseph Smith, in whose utterances throughout our sacred books, there is a wealth of pure American sentiment that is the basis of a patriotism that shall yet exceed all praise.



These several declarations by the prophet Joseph Smith, respecting America, by which so much light is shed upon her past, and her future glory; the characterization of her modern free governments, wherein there shall be no toleration of kings; the great doctrine of personal responsibility existing where free government based upon the consent of the governed obtains; the prophetic guarantee of the perpetuation of free institutions with the favor of God upon the land and upon the people, on the condition that the people adhere to righteousness and honor Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in their hearts and lives—all this in relation to America, contributed in the teaching and prophecies of Joseph Smith, makes him pre-eminently the American prophet.

## The Vision\*

A Sacred Historical Cantata, for Tenor Solo, Women, Men and Mixed Choirs and Orchestra

*Words and Music by Evan Stephens*

(Dedicated to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints)

Written and composed especially for the centennial of *The Vision* given to the boy prophet Joseph Smith, in which the Father and the Son appeared in person, restoring to earth the everlasting gospel, and opening "The Dispensation of the Fulness of Times." (Time of performance, 45 minutes.)

Written at the special request of President Heber J. Grant and Presiding Bishop Charles W. Nibley, Dec. 20, 1919—Jan. 8, 1920, at "Pine Lodge," Salt Lake City, Utah.

### No. 1.—Prelude, "Morning Gently Wakes"

*Women's voices.*

Morning gently wakes the songsters of the grove,  
With its gentle touch of living light and love:  
And with whisp'ring breezes stirring at their wings  
Bids the choirs give voice to all they feel and sing.  
Join in harmony the rustling of the leaves,  
As they wave their welcome to the rising sun,  
While in eastern skies a victory bright he cleaves  
Through the mists of night: his resurrection won.

Bend, with graceful arcking, O ye forest trees;  
Bend, and greet with courtly grace this royal morn,  
With whose heavenly light the night of man shall cease,—  
With whose rays anew the world again is born.

\*Copyright by Heber J. Grant, for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. All rights reserved.

*Men's voices.*

And ye stars of morn, that modestly withdraw,  
 Stay, and join again, as once in that great song  
 When the sons of heaven shouted as they saw  
 Man redeem'd from sin, in happy, joyous throng.

*Women's voices.*

And, O earth, that hast in sin and darkness lain,  
 Hidden deep from His revealed word and smile,  
 While thy sons and daughters filled with doubts and pain  
 Turned and wandered from the light of truth awhile:  
 Wake thy myriad sounds from all created things,  
 Bid them tune to themes of joyous songs divine,  
 Shake to life from silence all thy trembling strings  
 As the *morn* of morns o'er all creation shines.

*Full chorus.*

And thou, *Grove*, how blest are all thy hallow'd shades,  
 Blest and consecrated for all time to come.  
 Blest each leaf and flow'r, thy moss or waving blades,  
 And the insects that within thee make their home.  
 Thou'rt the chosen spot of all upon the land  
 Where the Father and the Son shall both descend  
 To restore to sweet communion God and man:  
 Where the night of mortal error is to end.  
 Here the trusting youth, on bended knees, shall call  
 To the Father to reveal his holy will.  
 Here the sacred answer from his Son shall fall;  
 Here the sacred promises of old They shall fulfil.

(“Morning gently wakes the songsters of the grove,” etc., repeating the first twelve lines of the poem in full chorus to end of the prelude.)

## No. 2. “My Soul is Athirst”

*Solo (Joseph):*

My soul is athirst—athirst for knowledge:  
 Knowledge of God—the living God.  
 Where can I find it?  
 Where can I find it?

The learned and the wise cry out:  
 “Lo, *here* is Christ, lo, *there* is Christ.”  
 The multitude turn here and there for guidance,  
 But there is none. *Strife* instead of *peace*:  
*Hatred* in place of *Love*,  
*Darkness* instead of *Light*!

*Chorus, heard in the distance, during the solo.*

We are sinners poor and needy,  
 Ever wand'ring in the night:  
 Ever straying, ever doubting,  
 Groping blindly for the light.  
 Hasten, Lord, thy Spirit send us:  
 Show thy face, and wond'rous might.

*Solo with chorus (Joseph and “Powers of Good”).*

My soul is athirst—athirst for knowledge,  
 Knowledge of God—the living God.  
 Where can I find it?  
 Where can I find it?

## No. 3. "Seek and Ye Shall Find"

*Male chorus ("Powers of Good").*

"Seek, and ye shall find,  
Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

## No. 4. "If Any of You Lack Wisdom"

(James 1:5)

*Recitative (Joseph, as if reading).*

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God,  
That giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not,  
And it shall be given him."

## No. 5. "To the Sweet Shelter of the Grove"

*Aria (Joseph).*

To the sweet shelter of the grove,  
Where mortal footsteps never rove,  
There will I go.

There will I supplicate, and prove  
(Craving His favor and His love)  
If I may know:

Know that He *liveth*, and can *hear*  
Even a *child* who need not fear  
On Him to call:

Know that He answers mortal pray'rs,  
Know that He loveth me, and cares  
For mortals all.

## No. 6. "O Sweet Simplicity and Trust"

*Chorus ("Powers of Good").*

O sweet simplicity and trust!  
The boy bends lowly in the dust.  
Up through the grove and vaulted sky  
His voice ascends to God on high,  
Upborn by simple *faith*.

And, "nothing doubting," void of fear,  
He asks for *Wisdom*—guidance clear—  
What path to take to find His grace,  
To do His will, and *see His face*.  
His *Father* and his *God*.

## No. 7. "Wisdom I Lack"

*Solo (Joseph).*

Wisdom I lack, my Father and my Lord;  
My gracious Savior, guide me by *thy word*.  
Out of the strife encircling me around,  
Out of the darkness gloomy and profound,  
Lead me to *peace* and *light*.

Which is the path that leads, O Lord, to thee?  
Which is the path that sets the doubter free?  
Thou bid'st me ask, and promise I shall find:  
Answer me now, my gracious *God*, and kind:  
Thy *child*, I come to thee.



*Chorus of Angelic Narrators ("Powers of Good").*  
*"The Powers of Darkness."*

But see!  
 The powers of darkness round about him rush!  
 They overcome! His pleading voice they hush!  
 Lord, send him aid! His fainting soul revive,  
 Yet, unafraid, his terrors to survive.

*(Joseph) Feebly*  
 Out of the strife encircling me around,  
 Out of the darkness, gloomy and profound,  
 Lead me to peace and light.

*Chorus (Narrators). Ladies' Voices.*  
 And now!  
 Brighter than noon-day sun,  
 Glows, through the air and sky,  
 A pillar pure, of light!

*Male Voices.*  
 And there  
 The Father and the Son,  
 Descending from on high,  
 In splendor bright!

*All.*  
 The powers of darkness flee!  
 The trusting boy beholds  
 Two Beings, pure and bright.  
 While he,  
 Still there, on bended knee,  
 His quest once more unfolds,  
 And pleads again for *light*.

*Solo (Joseph).*  
 "Which is the path that leads, O Lord, to thee?  
 Which is the path that sets the doubter free?  
 Thou bid'st me ask, and promise I shall find,  
 Answer me now, my gracious Lord, and kind,  
 Thy *child*, I come to thee.

*Chorus (Narrators in Unison, pp.)*  
 The Father's gracious voice  
 In tender tones replies:  
 "Joseph, *this is my Beloved Son,*  
*Hear him.*" (A Silent pause. In harmony) And O! rejoice!  
 The Blessed One who died,  
 And victory won,  
 Answered the prayer of faith  
 In words of clear intent,  
 Of power and love.

No. 8. The Message—He Speaks: "They Have All Gone Astray"

*Chorus (Men Narrators in Unison).*  
 He speaks!  
 They all have gone astray,—  
 Astray from Truth and Light.  
 Join none of them, for lo,  
 In God's most holy sight

Their creeds, false and impure,  
 Abominations are:  
 And men, who teach for hire,  
 Mislead their hearers far.  
 The godliness they claim  
 Is but a form, and vain,

### No. 6. O SWEET SIMPLICITY.

Chorus.

*cres.*

*pp* O sweet sim - plic - i - ty, sweet sim - plic - i - ty and trust! The boy bends

*Met. ♩ = 84.*

*pp* *cres.* *f* *pp*

low - ly, lowly in the dust; Up thro' the grove and vault - ed sky His

*pp* *f*

*cres.* *f*

voice ascends to God on high - Upborne by simple faith.....:

*f* *dim.*



*pp* *cres.*

And, nothing doubting, void of fear, He asks for wis - dom - guidance

The first system of the musical score. It features a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The vocal line begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and a crescendo (*cres.*) marking. The lyrics are: "And, nothing doubting, void of fear, He asks for wis - dom - guidance".

*cres.*

clear—What path to take to find His grace, To do His will, and

The second system of the musical score. It continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a crescendo (*cres.*) marking. The lyrics are: "clear—What path to take to find His grace, To do His will, and".

*dim.*

see His face—His Fa - ther and his God.

The third system of the musical score. The vocal line has a decrescendo (*dim.*) marking. The lyrics are: "see His face—His Fa - ther and his God." The piano accompaniment also has a decrescendo (*dim.*) marking.

Its power they deny,  
 And holiness they feign.  
 Commandments made of men  
 They teach for doctrines true:  
 Draw near me with their lips,  
 Their hearts af-: I view.



Join none of them, but seek,  
 As thou this day hast done,  
 The Father's holy will.  
 With prayerful heart, and meek.  
 Keep what thy faith has won—  
 The heavens open still.

(Pause. During which soft music dies away, representing the heavenly Beings receding heavenward.)

No. 9. "As the Youth in Wonder Gazed"

*Chorus (In harmony).*

And as the youth in holy wonder gazed,  
 The light withdrew, and soon he, all amazed,  
 Found himself gazing at the distant sky—  
*Distant—but nearer than it was before.*

For lo! The *Master* left an *open door*  
 To close no more: those portals hung on high  
 Through which "A Mighty Angel" soon should fly  
 And bear the "*Everlasting Gospel*" unto men,  
*Restored, to be withdrawn no more. Amen!*

No. 10. "O Blessed Communion"

*Chorus or Trio (Women's voices).*

O blessed communion, 'tween mortals and heaven,  
 Light and revelation again have been won,  
 To guide us and save us, this hour has been given,  
 Through loving, a wondrous mercy of Father and Son.

O blest dispensation in which we are living  
 When Christ and the Father descended to earth,  
 To bear the glad tidings to mortals, and giving  
 This last dispensation its glorious birth.

O blessed communion, whereby we may enter  
 Where the Holy Spirit our footsteps may guide,  
 And lead to where knowledge and certainty center,  
 In everlasting progress and love to abide.  
 O blest dispensation, etc., etc.

No. 11. Postlude—"The Voice of God is Heard Again"

*Chorus (Congregation and Chorus).*

The voice of God is heard again,  
 The silence has been broken,  
 The curse of darkness is withdrawn,  
 The Lord again hath spoken.  
 Rejoice, ye living!—And, ye dead,  
 Rejoice! for your salvation  
 Begins anew this happy morn  
 Of *final* dispensation.

No. 12. Finale—"Shout Ye Hosanna"

*Solo (With full Chorus).*

Shout ye Hosannas! Shout again!  
 Till all creation blending  
 Shall join in one great, grand Amen  
 Of anthems never ending.  
 Amen.

# Influence of the Gospel for Good through the Doctrine of the Gathering

*By Richard R. Lyman, of the Council of the Twelve*

According to the original scriptural promise, the Lord has taken "one of a city, and two of a family" and brought them "to Zion" (Jer. 3:14).

Since "every tree is known by his own fruit" (Luke 6:44), let us examine some of the results of the latter-day gospel.

The God of heaven is to "set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed" (Daniel 2:44). If this kingdom has not been established, then it is to be established at some time in the future.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the forerunner of this kingdom, as we believe, which was to be set up by the God of heaven never to be destroyed; it was not to be left to other people, but should break into pieces and consume all other kingdoms; and, as the scriptures say, it should "stand forever" (Daniel 2:44). Otherwise, what does the scripture mean? which reads:

"But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.

"And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Micah 4:1, 2).

It has been claimed that our Church is but a small one. Granted; but it is powerful. Many attribute the effectiveness of the work of the Church to the perfection of its organization. A little reflection will show that organizations, however perfect, do not necessarily mean effective work.

Recently an eastern educator, a member of the Methodist church, in commenting upon the effective work of our Church, remarked that with the same sort of organization his great church, with its twelve million members, could accomplish marvels.

"Do you think it is the organization," said one of our professors, "that gives the L. D. S. Church its strength? You see that power-plant," he continued; "there is the pipe line, there are the water wheels, there are the electric generators; and throughout this whole inter-mountain country is a network of

wires constituting the distribution system. All these, together make a wonderful organization. But this organization, all this mechanism and construction, amount to nothing without the water on the wheel. How many men are there in your church who are willing to go into the world at their own expense and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ as the Methodists believe it?"

"I am not sure that there is one," said the visiting educator.

"It is that missionary spirit in our Church that accounts for its power. It is this spirit that is the water on the wheel. With the Latter-day Saints the preaching of the gospel seems to be a living desire. And this is as it should be, for the divine command has been given to the people to whom the gospel has been revealed that they must teach it 'to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people' (Rev. 14:6). 'And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come'" (Matt. 24:14).

This divine command keeps thousands of missionaries continuously in the field. A natural love for preaching and teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ has "established in the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills," "the house of the Lord" (Micah 4:1).

"Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matt. 7:16). Judge these preachers and their message by the results of their efforts. They have gone with the glad tidings of great joy into practically all the nations of the world, and many honest hearts have accepted their message.

Many have accepted the message when they were in humble circumstances; or have embraced the gospel when, for so doing, they were derided by their friends and cast out by their kindred. Once they obey this prompting "to gather," and begin to put forth effort to reach the land of Zion, these converts are transformed, not instantly, for it may take years, and sometimes much of the lifetime; but finally the blessing comes. Success, prosperity, culture, education—these are the blessings that have come to those who have accepted this modern gospel.

A few examples: William Spry was a boy in England. He heard this gospel message and accepted it. With means extremely limited, he began his struggle to come "to Zion." Little did he think when, as a boy, at the age of eleven, he landed with a company of emigrants in New York City, that he would live to spend six years of his life preaching this same gospel; that in the community where he lived he would be elected to many important county offices; that he would have the honor of representing his community in the legislative halls of the state; and that during eight years of his life he would have the honor of serving as the governor of the state in which he lived.



Fiction rarely presents a more surprising experience and transformation than that which came to this boy of eleven as a result of his accepting the message.

Another of the governors of Utah, Honorable John C. Cutler, is also one who, in the days of his boyhood, accepted this newly revealed religion. In England he began his employment at the age of twelve. For his first year of service he received \$100, while his expenses were about \$150. During the second year he received enough to meet all his expenses. From that time until the present, wise and successful in business, he has made it the rule of his life "to live within his means."

As a boy, he had great admiration for his grandfather, who left to each of his grandchildren approximately \$2500; an ambition of his boyhood was to do as well by his own descendants.

This young man drove an ox team across the plains. When he reached the Salt Lake Valley, he began harvesting potatoes, carrots, and other farm products on shares. From this humble beginning, through several public offices, John C. Cutler has risen until, honored by being elected governor of the state, he, too, has been an important factor as director in many large and most successful business undertakings in this inter-mountain country. Today he is the president of one of our strongest banking institutions. Let the message he accepted be judged by its results.

From old Scotland comes another notable example, in the person of Charles W. Nibley, Presiding Bishop of the Church, railroad magnate, large lumber dealer, and sugar king. In poverty for eleven years, the Nibley family, of which Charles W. Nibley was one of the children, saved and skimped to get means enough to bring them on their way towards "Zion." The savings of eleven years were gone when the family reached Rhode Island. Five more years of struggle brought means enough to the family to complete the journey.

By industry, perseverance, and most of all by faith, Charles W. Nibley has achieved an eminence which suggests the tales of the fairies.

Bishop Nibley attributes the success that has come to him to the willingness of his parents to listen to the promptings of the still small voice, that told them unmistakably that the gospel is true. At the annual reunions of his numerous posterity the bishop invariably speaks of the great gratitude which they all owe to the eternal Father.

While the three men above mentioned have, because of the blessings the gospel bring, been more successful than many others who have accepted this message, yet the whole history of the Church and its people is, with hardly a single exception,

a record of new opportunities presented, renewed efforts made, and unusual faith, stability of character, and success achieved. The Church organization brings Church members into a close and helpful association with one another—so that each naturally is assisted in his life's work by all the others. Naturally, such conditions greatly increase the chances of success.

“Ye shall know them by their fruits” (Matt. 7:16).

Between the lives and successes of the people here and the promises and prophecies of Holy Writ, there is a striking similarity.

## The Vision Beautiful

*By Susa Young Gates*

The world of man looked out with unseeing eyes into past and future glories when the Vision was vouchsafed to the youthful prophet in the early spring day of 1820. But if it meant much to men, with all their hold upon the earth and its fulness, what was the effect upon the women of the world? That wonderful appearance in the Grove, at Palmyra, held in its heart, like the half-opened calyx of a rose, all the promises of future development for woman, foreshadowed by that revelation given to Moses concerning the creation when he saw “man” created in the express image of his Maker, “male and female created he them.” There was to be no bond and free in Christ Jesus, but all were to be free. Therefore, the Vision held the bright promise of equality and freedom for women. The divine Mother, side by side with the divine Father, the equal sharing of equal rights, privileges and responsibilities, in heaven and on earth, all this was foreshadowed in that startling announcement of the Son: “They were all wrong! They draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me!” In an age-long darkness and apostasy, woman had been shackled because of her very virtue, tender sympathy, and patient desire for peace.

Men had trafficked and struggled with one another during the long centuries, outside the sanctuary, since the walls had fallen upon their religious ruins. But man had held woman by the wrist, had controlled her religiously, financially, and civilly. What rights and what privileges she enjoyed through those dark ages of superstition and oppression after the Master's vision had closed upon mankind with the crucifixion, were hers through sufferance of her male guardians and possessors.

Can you conceive, then, what the Vision meant to woman?



It meant in civil, religious, social and finally, financial matters, the right of choice; it meant woman's free agency, the liberation of her long-chained will and purpose.

She has erred in her judgment at times, since that day of prefigured release in the Grove at Palmyra. So has her husband, her son, and her brother. But, O! the wonder and joy of that Vision! Today, and since that day, in this Church and Kingdom, as was divinely ordained, together men and women stumble along, now climbing, and now slipping on the steep hillside. Joined by the clinging hands of their little children, both are facing the rising sun of the coming day of peace and power. When the key was turned in the opening portal of sky and earth to admit men once again in life's sacred courts, men were endowed with the power and majesty of the Holy Priesthood; and all its blessings, gifts, and powers are shared and shared alike by man and his true mate. He of right enters into his Priesthood heritage, while the Gate Beautiful opens wide to admit all of us women into the glories of the Court of the Women! Nor are we there confined! Side by side, men and women climb the golden stairs, pass Solomon's Porch, the Altar of Sacrifice, the symbolic tables and glowing candle-branches, into the Holy Place; and as we go together into the Holy of Holies we voice the hymnal of our sex—

“When I leave this frail existence,  
When I lay this mortal by,  
Father, Mother, may I meet you  
In your royal courts on high?  
Then, at length, when I've completed,  
All you sent me forth to do,  
With your mutual approbation,  
Let me come and dwell with you.”





# Some Effects of the Gospel on Human Lives

---

*By Dr. John A. Widtsoe, President of the University of Utah*

---

How does a religion affect the lives of those who practice it? This is the most searching question concerning any religion.

Perhaps the most noticeable and remarkable effect of "Mormonism" upon the lives of its followers is the rapid and large unfolding of the latent powers inherent in man. Faithful membership in the Church, including the systematic study of its laws, results in a steady growth in intelligence and the power to use that intelligence in the daily affairs of life. The members of the Church have been drawn from every country and condition of life. Rich and poor; learned and unlearned; skilled and unskilled, have come under the influence of the restored gospel. The weak have become strong; the strong have become mighty, and the Church has become able, in spite of the heterogeneous origin of its members, to build a homogeneous body capable of accomplishing great tasks. The European peasant has acquired a patriarchal understanding; the weaver, the coal miner, and the mechanic, have been used in positions of leadership in politics, finance, or religion; and the men of wealth or learning have found amplified opportunities for expressing their strength.

The body of bishops within the Church, approaching one thousand in number, is perhaps the best illustration of the power of the gospel to remould men into a larger stature. The bishops have been called from every ordinary human pursuit. Among them are farmers, mechanics, merchants, bankers, lawyers, doctors, teachers, capitalists, rich men and poor men; men who have scarcely seen the inside of a school, and college graduates possessing the best learning of the land. Yet, as a body, chosen, first of all, because of their devotion to the cause, they are, in their power to serve the people and to carry on the work in their charge, of remarkable uniformity. Something has occurred within each individual life to wipe out artificial distinctions of learning, wealth or pursuit, until the bishops meet and mingle on a common plane of understanding and efficient service.

To an astounding degree the same is true of all the mem-

bers of the Church. Every person has largely found himself. As duties come, they are performed well—in many cases far beyond ordinary expectations. Frequently, men of large devotion, though of the humblest extraction and most meagre preparation, have developed powers, of kingly quality, with which they have become able to satisfy their noble instincts. As such lives are studied, the conviction is established that, inherent in the system of faith established by Joseph Smith, is a kindling quality, by which men are made able to use more completely the powers with which they have been endowed.

Naturally, though such is the effect of the gospel upon the lives of its honest practitioners, there is no dead level among the "Mormon" people—no monotonous equality of gifts or attainments. At the best, each man is made better able to express his strength, be it great or small and the size of life's structure is always determined by the foundations that are laid.

Joseph Smith, the Prophet, exemplified in his life the large power to use one's gifts that comes from gospel contact. The Prophet grew up under hard and somewhat unlovely circumstances. His educational opportunities were exceedingly meagre. He was truly unlettered. During his boyhood and youth and young manhood, he was obliged to earn his living by manual labor. Joseph Smith, by all earthly standards, was not placed in the path to power.

Very soon, however, after the First Vision, a change came over the boy. His family, of good intelligence, and some of them of fairly good school training, accepted teachings and directions from the boy. Men and women of diverse conditions and powers, came under his influence and yielded to his superior power. As he proceeded to organize the Church, men of learning and much earthly experience gathered around him, but always was the youthful Prophet greater than any of his followers. Year by year he grew in power—as religious leader, builder of cities, or political and spiritual philosopher—until, towards the close of his short life he was recognized by friend and foe as a man of remarkable strength. Contrast the shrinking boy who, one hundred years ago, timidly looked about in the sacred grove to make sure he was alone before addressing himself to God, with the masterful man, imprisoned in a Missouri jail, who commanded his armed jailors to cease their filthy and blasphemous talk. The detailed life of the Prophet is well known, and drives the student to the conclusion that his mighty power was won from the education that the gospel gave him.

The development of individual power is probably the

greatest direct effect of the gospel upon the lives of its followers. From the possession of this larger power are drawn many of the other qualities that distinguish the "Mormon" people.

The gospel impels men to use their powers wisely. For example, the members of the Church are nearly all imbued with a desire to acquire the largest possible bodily, mental and spiritual health. Consequently, wise physiological living, high morality, simple honesty, and firm obedience to law, together with correct habits of life, in which work and play are commingled, characterize these Latter-day Saints. The gymnasium, the social center, and the Church, are often on the same block, sometimes in a connected building, and all under Church supervision.

The gospel awakens also an intense desire for intellectual advancement. It is a principle of "Mormonism" that the intelligence which a man develops here will go with him into another world of unending progress. "The glory of God is intelligence." The development of intelligence is therefore sought by every legitimate means, by conversation and travel, by the reading of books and periodicals, and by attendance at schools and colleges. This love of intelligence is rapidly making the "Mormon" people a body of high school and college graduates.

But the gospel requires that men serve one another. The plan of salvation is universal. Only as all of the human family are won to truth does the plan approach consummation. The conception of this large brotherhood of man has been so driven into the structure of the Church members that it colors all their acts. The missionary system well illustrates this thought. Men and women are called from their ordinary walks and sent into the world, at their own expense, to preach the gospel. It is a severe test, but if a person survive it, and most of them do, he will henceforth look upon his fellow man as a brother to be loved, helped and cherished.

Further, an understanding of the Plan of Salvation makes a man desirous of securing a fuller understanding of God and the spiritual world. The doctrine of the coherence of the past, present and future, presents a unified scheme of human progress. This life is but a continuation of a life before this, and a preparation for a future life in which individual action will be untrammelled. Under this doctrine, the duties of the day are performed with their spiritual values in mind; and a new courage to labor and to learn is born daily within the human heart.

Out of the doctrine pertaining to man's relationship to



man and God, comes a common sense view of things. Man, a pre-existent being, is on earth with his brethren, all children of God, to learn and to progress, and destined to continue to grow, if the human will is rightly used, throughout all time. God is a personage of transcending power and intelligence, the controller of the earth and man, of life and death. There is no mystery beyond that of truth yet to be gained. Man's main concern is to live well his earth life; and thus to prepare for the coming life. His God is a God of light, not of mistiness. The field of the unknown is great, but as new truth is won, it will come as added light. There is no place for spiritism or any other form of mysticism in the life of the Latter-day Saint. This explains, in part, the rapid growth of men and women within the Church. Mysteries are as underbrush, hindrances to progress; remove them, and the path of progress is clear.

Joseph Smith's impelling desire, when he went into the grove to pray, one hundred years ago, was to know the truth for himself. Every member of the Church has had his equivalent first vision. He knows the truth for himself. If he is deceived he cannot blame it on someone else. Consequently, the membership of the Church is made up of independent, fearless units, who are anything but the priest-ridden body described by enemies of the Church. This explains many of the so-called peculiarities of the "Mormon" practice of religion. The effect of this individual certainty upon human lives is naturally of tremendous importance. It gives great stability to the Church itself.

All this, and much more than the space allowed for this article to be written, results in making men happy. The Latter-day Saint who lives his religion finds his powers steadily unfolding. He is impelled to use his strength wisely for his own and his neighbor's good, and for the advancement of an eternal plan of progress in which he is a colaborer with God. He learns to love light and to eschew imitations of truth which depend upon mysticism and incompleteness for their success. He knows for himself that the system to which he yields allegiance is true.

Such a man finds daily progressive contentment, though life's struggle be strenuous. Even from earthly defeat he arises a conqueror.

This may be the severest test. Does a religion give peace of mind, and make even the eager unrest for progress a source of joy? Such a religion conforms to the plan designed by God for his children.

The "Mormon" people have won such contentment. Rest-

less they may be, in their daily tasks, as are other people, but, whether behind the plow, in the office, or in the market place, there is a song of joy in their hearts, for they know the truth for themselves; their powers are expanding, they have the will to serve themselves, their fellow men, and their God, and they see clearly, if distantly, the meaning of life and the destiny of man.

Such are some of the effects of the work initiated by the First Vision, upon the lives of those who believe the Vision to be true.



#### MEMORIAL MONUMENT AND COTTAGE, SHARON, VERMONT

The cottage was completed during the year following the dedication of the monument, on the hundredth anniversary of the prophet's birth, Dec. 23, 1905, and the surrounding grounds, now beautifully improved, attract thousands of visitors annually. The cottage contains a number of portraits of the Smith family, also pictures of their places of residence, from Essex, England, 1635, to Carthage, Illinois, 1844. The hearthstone of the old home has been preserved, and occupies in the new cottage the precise place it did in the old home, where the prophet was born.

# The Church in the Mission Field

*By Andrew Jenson, Assistant Church Historian*

During the past century, since Joseph Smith received his first Vision, all parts of the world have become known to humanity, and the conditions, religiously, politically, socially and morally, existing in different lands and climes, have been thoroughly investigated by elders of the Latter-day Saints who have visited all parts of the world; and now in the light of one hundred years of research and thorough investigation we should know whether the boy Prophet did or did not tell the truth in regard to the condition of the religious world, when he practically declared that none of the Christian sects then in existence represented the true Church of Christ.

Soon after the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, April 6, 1830, the elders of the Church began to preach the gospel, as it had been restored through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith, who had received much divine instruction during the ten years that intervened between his first vision and the establishment of the Church. During the next few years the elders visited nearly every state in the Union, where they came in contact with all the modern sects and denominations which at that time were found or had representatives in North America, and they came to the conclusion that as far as the United States was concerned there was no Church organization that resembled the one originally organized by Jesus Christ in Palestine.

In 1836 Parley P. Pratt, who by that time had been chosen as one of the twelve apostles of the Church, went as a missionary to Toronto, in Canada. There he found John Taylor and others who were earnestly seeking after truth. They had formerly been Methodists, but not finding the creed of that great denomination satisfactory, they were now independent of any sectarian organization and holding Bible meetings of their own. In one of these meetings, John Taylor read from the Acts of the Apostles the account of Philip preaching the gospel to the Samaritans, and of Peter and John coming down to visit them from Jerusalem. "Now," said Mr. Taylor, "where is our Philip? Where is our receiving the Word with joy when we believe and are baptized? Where are our Peter and John? Where are our apostles? Where is our Holy Ghost by the laying on of



hands? Where are our gifts of the Holy Ghost? Echo answers where?" After further investigation it was found that conditions in Canada were practically the same as in the United States; no true Church of Christ could be found within the limits of the British dominion.

In 1837 Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, Willard Richards, Joseph Fielding and others were sent to England as the first Latter-day Saints missionaries called to labor in a distant foreign country; they commenced their missionary labors in Preston, Lancashire. Here they found James Fielding (a brother of Joseph Fielding, one of the missionaries), who had withdrawn from the Methodist church and had collected quite a congregation in Preston. These people (among them Robert Aitkin) were diligently contending for "that faith which was once delivered to the Saints," but had been unable to find the true Church of Christ in England. Most of them afterwards became converts to "Mormonism."

In 1839 Alexander Wright and Samuel Mulliner, and later, the same year, Apostle Orson Pratt commenced successful proselyting work in Scotland where the adherents of John Knox constituted a great part of the population. They were Scotch Presbyterians who had incorporated into their creed many sublime truths, but who nevertheless had erroneous doctrines and lacked the organization of the original Christian church in its main features. Many people in Scotland subsequently became true and faithful members of the Church whose representatives brought them the fulness of the gospel.

In 1840 John Taylor and others commenced missionary labors in Ireland and in 1841 actual proselyting work was also commenced in Wales, but neither the Catholics in Ireland, nor the Protestants in Wales, could sustain any consistent claim of being successors of the original Church established by Christ.

In 1841, also, Orson Hyde, who had been called on a special mission by the Church to Jerusalem, visited Holland where he became acquainted with followers of the Dutch Reformers and afterwards he spent several months in Regensburg, Germany, investigating conditions, while studying the German language. But while the Reformed Church of Holland and the Lutherans of Germany had many beautiful doctrines of Christianity, they had strayed away from the original faith in many points, and consequently could not represent the true Church of the Savior.

Continuing his journey, Apostle Hyde found himself in Palestine where the Roman Catholic Church was contending with the Greek Catholic Church, and a number of others who represented several Protestant denominations were contending

with the ministers of the older churches. But they all seemed to have lost the love of the gospel, had changed the ordinances which existed in the primitive church, and had engendered in their hearts bitterness of feeling and hatred toward one another, so much so that it had become necessary for the Turks to protect, with armed force, the individual rights of the contending Christians. Hence, sad as the contemplation is, not even in the Holy Land, the cradle of original Christianity, was to be found any organization which resembled in discipline or doctrines the original church. Nor were these contending Christians willing to listen to the testimony of Elder Hyde concerning the restored gospel. All that he could do was to offer up a sincere prayer on the Mount of Olives, dedicating the land for the gathering of the Jews.

In 1844 Noah Rogers, Addison Pratt, and Benjamin F. Grouard arrived as the first Latter-day Saints missionaries on the South Pacific Islands. Here they found representatives of the London Missionary Society contending with Catholic priests about Christianity, thus bewildering the native Polynesians, who in their simplicity listened to the story of the mission of the Prophet of Nazareth. When the true gospel was preached to these uneducated natives, thousands of them embraced it, and to this day the Church has had faithful members in the Society Islands and neighboring groups.

In 1849 missionaries were called in Salt Lake City, Utah, to open up new missions in continental Europe, among non-English-speaking people. Thus Apostle John Taylor with others were called to France, Lorenzo Snow and others to Italy, and Erastus Snow and others to Scandinavia. Elder Taylor found considerable opposition to his preaching in France where he commenced operations in 1850. Most of the French people were Roman Catholics and cared not, apparently, for the genuine gospel of Christ. Lorenzo Snow found almost the same conditions prevailing in Italy, though he and his fellow-missionaries there succeeded in making a few converts among the Waldenses, in the valleys of the Alps. In Denmark, Erastus Snow found that Lutheranism had been established as the state religion, the same as in Germany, but there were a few sincere Baptists who had suffered much persecution on account of their religion before religious liberty had been established in the land. Some of these were willing to receive further light from Apostle Snow and his companions, and they became the first converts to the true gospel in Denmark, in 1850.

Elder John E. Forsgren was the first missionary in Sweden; he was universally rejected by his countrymen, most of whom were adherents to Lutheranism, but in due course of time many

of the Swedes accepted the restored gospel, becoming convinced that neither the Lutherans nor the other Christian denominations in Sweden represented the true faith.

In Norway, where the first missionaries commenced operations in 1851, many of the people received "the Word" with joy, but the Lutheran clergy caused all the first "Mormon" missionaries to be imprisoned, and the civil authorities, under ecclesiastical influence, were forced to deny the "Mormons" the protection that the so-called Dissenter Law extended to certain denominations which had cut loose from the dominant church of the land. Subsequently many of the Norwegians became members of the true Church and are now found with their posterity among Zion's most faithful sons and daughters.

When Lorenzo Snow and his companions met with so little encouragement in Italy, Elder Thomas B. H. Stenhouse, one of Brother Snow's missionary companions, turned his attention to Switzerland, where he found the Roman Catholics in the majority in the French cantons and the Lutherans in the German cantons, but there were also many adherents to the doctrines of John Calvin. Many of the Swiss people, who became convinced that none of the churches represented in their land before was the Church of Christ, later became followers of the true Church of Jesus Christ.

In 1850 George Q. Cannon and others, landed as the first Latter-day Saint missionaries in Hawaii, where they found that Calvinism had been preached to the natives, but not with any success morally. In the course of a few years many of the natives saw the difference between false, theoretical Christianity and true, practical Christianity, and embraced the latter.

When John Murdock and Augustus Farnham arrived as the first Latter-day Saints missionaries in Australia, in 1851, they found the Episcopalians, or members of the Church of England, in the majority, but most of the people in that new country were not religiously inclined; hence most of them would neither accept the true gospel of Christ nor become loyal to any of the Christian sects.

When Joseph Richards and William Willis, in 1851, landed in India as the first "Mormon" missionaries there they found the great bulk of the native millions divided on the question of the truth of Mohammedanism and Buddhism, and the so-called Christians contending as to the truth of the Episcopalian form or the different Protestant forms of Christianity.

In 1851, when Parley P. Pratt and Rufus C. Allen endeavored to open up a mission in Chili, South America, they found Catholicism prevailing and the people unwilling to accept any other form, and a similar condition was found by Gudmundsen



and companion when they (also in 1851), as representatives of the Church of Jesus Christ, arrived in Iceland. The people there were Lutherans and desired to continue as such.

When Elders Jesse Haven, Leonard I. Smith, and William Walker, in 1853, arrived in the Cape of Good Hope as Latter-day Saints missionaries, they found the Church of England the dominant church in that colony. A number of other sects were represented, but only a few would accept the true gospel.

In 1854 Augustus Farnham and William Cooke arrived as the first missionaries of the Church in New Zealand. There they found the adherents of the Church of England with headquarters at Christchurch contending with the Presbyterians, with headquarters at Dunedin, and the hatred and bitterness of feeling ran so high between the two factions that it was almost prohibitive for a Church of England member to stay unmolested in Dunedin, and *vice versa*, for a Presbyterian to stand any show of equal rights in Christchurch. The influence brought to bear upon the Maoris of New Zealand by these contending Christians was such that no confidence had been established.

I consider it unnecessary to refer to similar conditions found by Latter-day Saints missionaries, when opening missions on the island of Malta in 1852, in Gibraltar in 1854, in Holland in 1861, in Australia in 1865, in a number of Turkish provinces in 1879 and following years, in Samoa in 1888, in Tonga in 1893, in Japan in 1901, and in other localities. The missionaries of the true Church found in all these places internal religious contentions but universal appreciation toward the true gospel of Christ.

Suffice it to say, in conclusion, that after our elders have visited nearly every land and clime in the whole world and have investigated the religious conditions among Christians, Jews, Mohammedans, and Pagans, they have become absolutely convinced that the statements made by the boy prophet Joseph Smith in western New York, early in the spring of 1820, are true. The boy prophet could not possibly have known the condition of the world as he explained it; but the great Master, the founder of Christianity, knew, and he told the praying boy the facts which one hundred years of careful investigation and experience have proved to be true.

# Joseph Smith

## An Oration

*By Nephi Jensen, President of the Canadian Mission*

The Master said, "I came not to bring peace, but a sword." Carlyle evidently had in mind the same thought when he wrote, "Every fact is a battle." The bigger the "fact," the greater the "battle." Truth is the biggest fact in the world. Its clashing with error is the irresistible conflict of the ages.

Every great leader of men is in a measure a personification of truth. The degree of the truth he lives and teaches is the measure of the stir he will make in the world. Christ was "the Truth." His words and works made the shallow, spiritless defenders of old and venerated error rave and gnash their teeth.

When a timid reformer with his insipid sentiment, half error and half truth, comes in contact with the thought and opinions of his time he makes no great disturbance, but when a bold prophet of God, like Joseph Smith, with his bowels full of truth, and the flame-breath of the Almighty upon his lips, announces his deep facts about God, man, and eternity, all the forces of error are lashed into a fury, the wicked frown, the mob raves, and the paid teachers of painted half-truth let loose "the dogs of war" and persecution.

The very roar that went up when the boy Joseph Smith announced his first vision proclaims the divinity of his mission. For a name that "thunders so loud in the index" must be attached to something more than human.

What is in the homely name Joseph Smith that the mention of it should make the wicked rave and the righteous rejoice? Why does it provoke curses from the high priests of error, and call forth praises from humble Saints? Why does it divide humanity into two distinct classes, those who bitterly hate him and those who ardently love him?

The right answer to these questions is the biggest fact in the history of the nineteenth century. It is not found in the word "delusion." The dim eyes of deception never saw as clearly as Joseph Smith did the great fundamentals of religion. Hallucination never founded a perfect church organization and gave to the world a great philosophy of religion. Mental aberration never banded together tens of thousands of men and

women of varied tastes, temperaments and intelligences, and sent them forth to sacrifice all for the salvation of the human race.

Nor can this great prophet's message be driven out of the court of the world's thought and opinion by shouting, "Impostor." His mark upon his age is too deep to be erased by the tongue of slander. "A false man," says Carlyle, "cannot even build a house." And yet Joseph Smith laid the foundation of a Church and erected a superstructure thereon so perfect, in adjustment and practical workings, that it has called forth unstinted praise from even those who hate his name. He bequeathed to this Church a legacy of truth and faith that has nerved his followers with courage to conquer deserts, and fired them with a self-forgetting devotion that impels them to give all for the salvation of mankind. Did a delusion ever give thousands of men and women the fortitude to face the slander and slurs of the wicked and the madness of mobs? Did a "fraud" ever redeem deserts and build sanctuaries of learning in a wilderness? Did a religious falsehood ever put the love of God and man in the human heart? Did perjured stories of revelations from God ever send men out to give their time and money freely to bring souls to Christ? Did pure-hearted women ever pay the homage of their tears at the shrine of a lie? Did true men ever give their hearts' blood for a theological fake?

The explanation of the power of Joseph Smith's name is not found in the epithets "delusion" or "impostor." It is found only in the word "truth." And what a flood of truth he poured into a shallow world of "cold hearts and hastening feet."

His career commenced in 1820, when he was given a vision of the Father and the Son. That year Herbert Spencer was born. The names of both these men have been heard around the world. The one is the synonym of doubt; the other stands for superfaith. The one was the high priest of evolution; the other was a prophet of a living belief. They both strove to find the same thing, the knowledge of God. Herbert Spencer used the key of reason, and Joseph Smith the key of faith. Herbert Spencer sought to find God through an endless analysis of the crust of things. Joseph Smith went by prayer right into the presence of God. Herbert Spencer ended his long life saying, "God is unknowable." Joseph Smith, when only a boy of fourteen, saw the Maker of all, and heard the Voice that had stilled the storm and stayed the wave.

In the age that Huxley glibly talked about an "absentee God," and learned theologians bowed at the shrine of a rhetorical image, Joseph Smith re-discovered the true and the living God. In the teeth of the age-old doctrine of a God "without body, parts, and passions," this bold prophet declared that the



Lord of heaven is a tangible personage of tabernacle, in whose exact image and likeness man was made. He boldly brushed aside the Nicene Council's "congeries of words," descriptive of the Trinity, and plainly averred what the Bible clearly teaches, that the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost are three distinct personages, but one in mind and purpose. While the faithless priests of shallow creeds were standing afar off, calling to God in the cold words of learned theological formulas, Joseph Smith re-announced the warm, pulsating truth contained in the Lord's prayer, "Our Father which art in heaven."

His first vocal prayer was the first real faith cry that had gone up from this cold, superstitious world since the dense darkness of the middle ages had driven truth from the altar and living belief from the human heart. It marked the beginning of an epoch. It was the beginning of the real modern spiritual renaissance.

That prayer was the greatest act of a human soul since paganism killed virile faith and turned the simple religion of Jesus Christ into an empty show. The boy who prayed that day in the silent woodland had a heart as deep as truth, and lifted high as heaven. He had the faith that defies fate. Around him were the sophisticated theologians with their hearts full of doubts and their heads full of theological abstractions, wrangling about empty forms and dead ceremonies. All the notions, customs, creeds, and dogmas of the time, denied the possibility of a real answer from God. But in spite of doctrines, dogmas, and doubts, he believed in him who said, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." The living faith of this boy pierced the blue dome through which no word had passed for seventeen centuries, and called to the earth the Majesty of heaven.

When this boy walked out of that sacred grove, that day, he was greater than the most learned theologians and profoundest philosophers. He knew the key to the knowledge of God. He had a power greater than that possessed by a potentate. He held in his heart the most powerful thing in the universe, the omnipotent faith that makes the powers of heaven the servants of men.

Before Joseph Smith saw that vision, in answer to a prayer inspired by a specific Bible promise, the Bible had for centuries been a mere fetish. It had been a dead letter, containing the decrees and promises of God to another age. He put spirit and life into the dead letter by demonstrating that God would do today the very things he promises in his book. By the magic touch of this prophet's faith, the Bible became in fact and

truth the Book of God, a compendium of his veritable promises to all men of all ages and all climes.

At a time when the theologians of all creeds and churches said that the Bible contained all that God intended to reveal to man, Joseph Smith, by divine inspiration, translated the Book of Mormon from the gold plates which contained the record of God's hand-dealings with his "other sheep," the ancestors of the American Indians. Before he knew that John the revelator had predicted that in "the hour of God's judgment" an angel would "fly in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell upon the earth," Joseph Smith declared that these gold plates had been revealed to him by an angel. In less than a century after he had given the Book of Mormon to the world, as the gospel brought to the earth by an angel, about half a million people had accepted the message. These zealous followers of Joseph Smith have translated the Book into fourteen different languages, and they are sending the message it contains to every "nation, kindred, tongue and people." (Rev. 14:6.) Thus was literally fulfilled a Bible prophecy, the meaning of which had not been discovered by the most profound students of the scriptures.

Pursuant to divine revelation he organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which is an exact duplicate of the one the Messiah established eighteen centuries before. This Church has in it every officer which the Christ placed in his primitive Church, from the council of the twelve apostles, high priests, seventies, elders, and evangelists down to the minor officers, priests, teachers and deacons. These officers are endowed with the holy Priesthood, which has come down to them through men who had received it by actual ordination from Peter, James, and John who came to this earth in the nineteenth century for the express purpose of imparting the Priesthood. In this Church are present the real gifts of the Holy Ghost: prophecy, revelation, visions, healings, gifts of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues.

While Egyptian was an absolutely dead language, unknown to even the foremost scholars, Joseph Smith, by the light of inspiration, translated from Egyptian the lost Book of Abraham. The prophet's explanation of the Egyptian figures in the facsimiles printed in the Book of Abraham have been proved to be correct. In the accomplishment of this work of translation alone, Joseph Smith affixed the broad seal of divinity upon his work.

Through divine inspiration he was given the true prophet's foresight. Twenty-eight years before the outbreak of the American civil war, he predicted that a war would commence with

“the rebellion of South Carolina,” that the “southern states” would “be divided against the northern states,” and that the southern states would “call upon Great Britain” for assistance; and that this struggle would “terminate in the death and misery of many souls.” Every detail of this prophecy became tragic history in the death-struggle between the southern and northern states of the American Union. Over a million graves in the American Union today attest the true prophetic power of this most remarkable man.

In the place of spirituality, he found sentimentality. The preachers talked eloquently about the Pentecostal, cloven tongues of fire, but never dreamed that people living eighteen hundred years after Peter preached and “pricked the hearts” of sinners, could enjoy the Spirit which testifies, reveals, and prophesies. While the divines were still graphically describing the great things God had done for his people of old, Joseph Smith fervently testified of the great things God is now doing for his people of today. He re-affirmed the promises of old and demonstrated their validity.

He answered the question, “From whence came man?” in the way in which the poet and philosopher is now beginning to answer it. In the words, “Man is that he might have joy,” he gave the best and truest explanation of the purpose of man’s existence. While the theologians were still saying that man was merely a son of the sod, he declared man to be actually and in truth the son of God, destined in the “eternal years of God,” to overcome, improve, develop, increase in intelligence, wisdom, goodness, power and glory until he becomes perfect, “even as God in heaven is perfect.”

He exploded the infinitely cruel doctrine of eternal punishment, that arbitrarily consigns to the eternal, unquenchable flames all non-Christians, and gives wings and harps to all, good or bad, who simply speak the words, “I believe on Jesus.” He re-affirmed the declaration of John, that man will be “judged according to his works.”

He dispelled gloom from the tomb. He denied the narrow dogma that man’s hope of salvation is interred with his bones; and taught the beneficent doctrine of salvation for the dead.

He gave to the word heaven a new meaning. He took out of it the impossible notion of winged angels everlastingly playing on harps, and declared heaven to be a place where the truest human ties are inviolate, and the gentlest memories of this life are mingled with the joys and glories of the life that has no end.

He gave to the world the most salutary, hygienic rules, contained in a divine revelation known as the “Word of Wis-



dom," which prohibits the use of tea, coffee, tobacco, intoxicating drinks, and the excessive eating of meat. Subsequent to the proclamation of this revelation, scientific investigations have demonstrated the great value of these wholesome rules of practical living. The observance by the followers of Joseph Smith of these and other laws given by this prophet has reduced their death rate to 8.3 persons per thousand annually as compared with the rate of 13.5 persons per thousand in the United States at large.

His niche in the ages is secure. His mighty fact is already commencing to thunder louder than the mendacity of his misguided enemies. The story of his triumphant faith is the most thrilling incident in modern annals. It gives hope, light, and life. It is the beacon that lights the way across the dark chasm which ages of ignorance and superstition have placed between man and God. Tens of thousands of true-hearted men and women who have heard this story of all-conquering faith have gone in quest of the knowledge of God with a sincerity and fervor so genuine that they have received that witness of God's Spirit which has made them so certain of God's existence, the divinity of Christ's mission, and the reality of the future life, that the besetting evils of this world have lost all power over them.

What a man he was! He was a seer. With the white light of God's Spirit he saw the past of nations now covered with the dust of ages. He was a prophet. By the inspiration of the Holy Ghost he saw tomorrow and tomorrow's morrow. He was a teacher. He gave to the world, at its most enlightened period, a sane, sensible, original, and comprehensive religious philosophy which has successfully weathered the opposition of the learned and the persecution of the wicked for nearly a century. He was an organizer. By the aid of divine inspiration he established a Church so perfect in organization and internal workings that it commands the praise of even those who despise it. He was a leader of men. By the magic power of his pure character, genuine sincerity, and deathless integrity to truth and God, he gathered about him, as his aids and lieutenants in the work of righteousness, a coterie of men of the highest probity and the greatest native intelligence.

He belongs to the ages. The trumpet call of his mighty faith-fact will yet reverberate through all lands and climes, and turn a doubting world back to God. All who heed the clear, shrill out-tringing of this deep, certain note of hope will forever honor this true prophet of God. As long as men aspire to fervent faith, love, truth, and honor God, they will hold in eternal veneration, the name of this great and good man who discovered faith taught the truth, and glorified God.

# Joseph Smith as a Statesman

---

## I.—JOSEPH SMITH, A RELIGIOUS LEADER

This year completes a century since the Prophet Joseph Smith received his first vision. It would appear that the date is sufficiently distant for us to obtain a proper perspective of the man, his teachings and his work. In the seven lessons or studies included in this series, an effort will be made to evaluate the Prophet Joseph Smith as a statesman in the larger sense. The first lesson will concern itself with Joseph Smith as a religious leader.

### *Position of a Religious Leader*

To be a great religious teacher and leader is undoubtedly the greatest achievement that can be attained by man, and to compare a man's teachings and works with the best religious standards, is the severest test to which they can be put. Often we envy the rich their possessions, but generally their names and possessions perish with them, and seldom do their lives or their teachings influence the world or the character of men for good. As a proof of this, it is only necessary to point out that the names of only one or two rich men survive in history, whereas a large number of religious men have impressed themselves upon human history. The greatest influence exercised in determining the life and works of nations have been the religious teachings of the prophets and leaders. So that the greatest statesman is the man who bases his teachings and messages on religious conceptions.

### *Great Religious Leaders*

The greatest religious teacher of all times is Jesus Christ, but being the Redeemer as well as a religious leader, it is hardly fair to compare others with him. Yet for nearly two thousand years, his life has been a living example for mankind, and hundreds of millions of human beings have been influenced to lead better lives by what he taught and did. The teachings of his Sermon on the Mount are of such a nature that if men and

---

\*This is a series of seven lessons for the weekly joint meetings of the M. I. A. composed of all members above Junior age, which meetings are to be held in all the associations, from April 1 to the June conference, 1920.

nations lived up to them, wars, bloodshed and famine would immediately disappear from the earth, and men would live together in peace and in consideration of each other's welfare. Naturally the influence of the Savior of the world was the farthest reaching of any religious teacher. Others, however, not so great as the Christ, have exercised a tremendous influence upon the lives of men. For example, Moses, prophet, teacher and lawgiver, has influenced every legislature possibly that has ever convened, since his day. By many, Moses is regarded as the greatest lawgiver of all times. However, be that as it may, when he met the Lord on Mount Sinai and received the Ten Commandments, he handed down to men, the greatest code of laws ever put into force. They were and are the foundation and cornerstones of all other codes of law enacted by legislatures and parliaments ever since. They have stood the test of thousands of years without change and are as well suited to the activities of men today as they were when first given. It is impossible to measure the effect of the works and teachings of a great religious leader like Moses. The Ten Commandments, like Christ's Sermon on the Mount, we study from the cradle to the grave and they constantly influence our lives for good as well as giving us comfort and light on our way.

#### *Protestant Religious Leaders*

If we turn from the pages of sacred history to profane history, we find a proof of the great influence of religious men upon the people as witnessed by the rise of churches through teachings of Luther, Calvin, Knox and Wesley. When these men turned away from the Catholic Church and established Protestantism, thousands of their countrymen followed them, and their teachings have endured until the present time and their followers number hundreds of thousands.

#### *Mohammed, Buddha and Confucius*

For a moment let us turn from the splendid Christian examples and consider the lives of Mohammed, Buddha and Confucius. These men founded new religions and their followers today include such great nations as China, Japan, India and many other nations of Asia. Their converts are numbered by hundreds of millions and their influence upon mankind will undoubtedly endure forever and is immeasurable.

The foregoing are undoubtedly sufficient examples of what can be and has been accomplished by great religious leaders, and how much of their work is permanent for good. In their respective countries these men have not only partaken of the nature of religious leaders, but in the broadest sense they are to



be regarded as constructive statesmen who have had a vision as to what their countries should do and the effect of the religious life and works upon the welfare of the nation, and have attempted in the broadest sense to carry these policies into effect.

### *Work of Joseph Smith*

Our question now turns to the work of Joseph Smith. It is just one hundred years since he received his first vision, and ninety years since the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized by this youth. If he had been any ordinary boy, controlled by ordinary influences, he would have become disheartened, discouraged, and would have discontinued the work, for from the very beginning he encountered the most strenuous and violent opposition. To the human understanding it is truly incomprehensible how a boy of fourteen could have stood up against the ridicule and persecution that were heaped upon him and directed against him, and go forward with his mission. Still he persisted, maintaining earnestly and sincerely that God had called him to the work and that it was his duty in spite of all opposition to carry it forward, even though it resulted in death. The persistency of his purpose and the spirit of his personality after a while won for him a hearing of a very few. In ten years from 1820 to 1830 he had found only a few persons who were willing to join with him in the organization of a new church. After the organization, new converts were made more rapidly and the new organization began to assume greater importance and its leader, the Prophet Joseph, to attract more attention, for it is only too true in religion as well as business and politics, that people notice men who reach the top and succeed in their undertakings.

### *The Prophet Sends Missionaries*

The Prophet, through revelation, sent missionaries to the different parts of the United States and Great Britain to preach the gospel. In many parts they were very successful in making converts who began to gather at first at Kirtland, Ohio. Persecution drove the leader and many of his followers from here to Independence, Missouri, and finally before the prophet's death, back to Illinois.

### *Persecution and Many Join Church*

During the strenuous organizing and proselyting period, thousands joined the Church, and at the same time many left the organization. As a whole, however, the increase in numbers and strength was very rapid, until, by 1840, the organiza-

tion in the minds of its opponents was assuming formidable proportions. Through it all, persecution was continuous and strong, even breaking out in mobocracy and murder, so that men did not join the Latter-day Saints or accept the leadership of Joseph Smith with an idea of obtaining ease, comfort or affluence, but only through a firm conviction of the divinity of his leadership and mission. During it all and through it all, he was the acknowledged religious leader, upon whom all the faithful relied and it was due to the fact that he was a divinely inspired prophet, leader and an outstanding and upstanding man whose vision as to the future was great and dependable. In his own words, "I secured followers because I possessed the principle of love," a necessary attribute of a great religious leader. At the time of his death, the figures as to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are not available, but perhaps twenty-five to thirty thousand is a very conservative estimate. At all events, it shows a remarkable growth.

#### *Accomplishment of Joseph Smith*

To those who are skeptical, through prejudice or for other reasons, of the statement that Joseph Smith is one of the greatest American religious leaders, if not the greatest, it may be profitable to make a short comparison. The number of converts he made during his life was many times greater than those made by Jonathan Edwards, Henry Ward Beecher or Bishop Brooks, not to mention the tens of thousands of converts to the "Mormon" system since his death, for which he is indirectly if not directly responsible. The aforementioned men are regarded as great religious leaders. They, however, followed along the beaten paths of established religions, while Joseph Smith, before making many converts, had to found a church and declare its principles. He suffered opposition in practically everything he undertook to do and accomplished his work in spite of it. In addition to doing his religious work, he colonized new lands, built cities, and prepared the way for the founding of a great western commonwealth. No other great American religious leader can show such a record or begin to compare with him in actual accomplishments.

#### *The Prophet's Christian Conduct.*

Irrespective of whether men agree or disagree upon the achievements of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the facts are that he established a good, vigorous Church, which has increased in strength from its beginning and which is more thrifty and prosperous now than ever before. He gathered people from all

parts of the earth and organized and prepared them for the great westward exodus. His undertakings and accomplishments are without parallel in American life. Finally he suffered a martyr's death and yet through it all he attempted to treat his enemies with love and Christian kindness, and rather than suffer bloodshed he preferred that the Saints relinquish all their earthly possessions and move to the western wilderness.

The life of man, however, at the longest is very short, and this was doubly true of the Prophet's life, which was cut short by his being martyred, and a man's personal teachings cannot extend very far except as he writes them down where they can live forever. In this way mainly can a great religious leader make his influence permanent. It would be impossible to select from the Doctrine and Covenants and other Church works the numerous splendid sayings and teachings of the Prophet Joseph, it is even sometimes difficult to determine which is the best, and in the short space allotted to this lesson, only a few quotations can be used. They are selected from the Prophet's speeches and from the revelations contained in the Doctrine and Covenants. Their value can be appreciated by comparison with the teachings of other religious leaders which it is hoped the reader will make.

### *Teachings of the Prophet.*

"The cause of human liberty is the cause of God."

"All men will be raised from the grave by the power of God, having spirit in their bodies and not blood."

"All children are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ."

Asked how he governed the people, the prophet answered,

"I teach them correct principles and they govern themselves."

"Seek not for riches but for wisdom, and behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich. Behold he that hath eternal life is rich." Doc. and Cov. 6:7.

"And if you have not faith, hope and charity, you can do nothing." Doc. and Cov. 18:19.

"Contend against no church, save it be the church of the devil." Doc. and Cov. 18:20.

"Let every man esteem his brother as himself, and practice virtue and holiness before me." Doc. and Cov. 38:24.

"Thou shalt not speak evil of thy neighbor nor do him any harm." Doc. and Cov. 42:27.

"Thou shalt not be idle; for he that is idle shall not eat the bread nor wear the garments of the laborer." Doc. and Cov. 42:42.

"If thy brother or sister offend thee, thou shalt take him or her between him or her and thee alone; and if he or she confess, thou shalt be reconciled." Doc. and Cov. 42:88.

The foregoing are some of the principles that the Prophet Joseph Smith instilled into his followers. He saw with a prophet's vision and a statesman's acumen, that the religious life and inspiration were the greatest influences in the development of a



genuine citizenship. He saw that through this influence his followers would become devoted citizens of the country of which they were a part. The statesmanship of his teachings was illustrated in the recent world war where the devotion of his followers was tested in going forth to battle in full faith in their religion and with unquestioned integrity in the nation. No conscientious objectors, no slackers, whether for men or money, were found among the "Mormons," and the statesmanship of Joseph Smith in instilling in his followers a religious respect for the laws and the divinity of the institutions of their country was put to the greatest test and vindicated.

He saw that religion was the great force working for happiness and betterment of humanity, and that it was the only safe foundation for community life, and that governmental stability lay in religious training and in a firm faith in God. Statesmen the world over realize the truth of this fact today as never before.

### *Questions.*

- (1) Why is the position of religious leader so important?
- (2) In what way have religious leaders influenced the world?
- (3) How did the boy Joseph Smith have so much power?
- (4) What are your reasons for claiming Joseph Smith a great religious leader?
- (5) How did the prophet exhibit the principle of love?
- (6) How does religious feeling affect citizenship?

## II.—JOSEPH SMITH, A HOME BUILDER

### *Importance of Home*

The home is the foundation of the nation and of society. All great races, nations and peoples in all ages have driven their roots deep into the soil, and agriculture, in the broadest sense, has always been the predominating industry. All great statesmen in every age have used every means possible to establish their people on the soil and give them ownership of the land. At the present time, modern nations are very solicitous about the welfare of primary industries, and agriculture in particular. Under the primary industries, we include agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and mining. Mining in this particular has special reference to coal and iron. The late world war has shown the nations not only how their superiority in war, but their very existence is dependent upon the success of these primary industries, and if they are not well developed within the boundaries of a nation, that nation becomes dependent upon other nations, and is compelled by means of military and naval forces to keep open the avenues of trade.

*Importance of Agriculture*

A moment's reflection brings clearly before the mind the necessity of a national policy that will support agricultural productivity. Human beings must have food, clothing and heat in order to exist in the temperate zones. Without such supplies, they will perish in a very short time. Food, clothing and fuel come from the soil. Grains and vegetables cannot be produced in any other manner than by seeding and cultivating the earth. When man has done his work and nature has completed her task, the grains may be ground by the mill and treated by manufacturing processes to make them suitable for food, but the soil must do its work first. Likewise in the case of heat, much fuel is obtained from the forests of the earth. Of course, coal, among modern nations, is the great heat and power producer, but it also must be dug out of the earth and, broadly speaking, without it a vast majority of factories would be shut down for want of power and cities thrown into darkness for want of light. The work of the factory, so to speak, is to carry forward the work of the farm and forest, by taking the raw material produced on the farm and in the forest and transforming these products into commodities suitable for the use of man. Foods, clothing and fuel, therefore, are the first lines of defense and are essential to the physical welfare of men and women. But they are not the only essential things.

As man studies nature, he comes more and more to know God. Apparently, in the world's history, this study of God has been carried forward in the great deserts and wildernesses and in the country, with more success than in the cities. Many religions like Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism, originated in the country. So in the study of human history from every standpoint, the country holds a predominant place.

*Cultural Side of Agriculture*

Agriculture, however, is not alone valuable because it supplies us with food and clothing, for it has likewise a cultural side. Almost every science known to man is involved in its processes, and the agriculturist can keep in better touch with the fundamental forces of nature than a man engaged in any other activity. So that many of the great fundamental principles involved in science have been studied and developed on the farm. Men may live without schools and without books but they cannot live without an understanding of nature and its products, so that most of the nations, including our own, are making strenuous efforts to improve rural life and to encourage rural people to remain on the farm. In order to do this, large appropriations are made by parliaments and legis-

latures for the upbuilding of the industry. The preservation of the rural communities and of agriculture is a national, social, economic and religious problem.

*Avoids Large Cities.*

Holding in mind this large view of rural life, it will be interesting to know how the Prophet Joseph Smith viewed it. Many sects originated in his day and the leaders together with their followers, lost themselves in the large cities of the nation and became unknown. The Prophet Joseph might likewise have led his followers into the large cities where they, too, would undoubtedly have lost their identity, but he realized the value of the country and the stabilizing influence of land ownership upon the life and character of the individual, and as a consequence his converts were advised to settle upon the land and as far as possible become possessed of homes and farms.

The Church was organized in 1830, and the first place of settlement was Kirtland. Here the Saints began to obtain land and established themselves upon it. Within a short time, persecution grew so strong that they were compelled to move and they located at Independence, Missouri. The Lord, by revelation, had designated Missouri as the gathering place and the New Jerusalem of the Saints. Doctrine and Covenants, Section 45:64-66, reads as follows:

64. "Wherefore I, the Lord, have said, gather ye out from the Eastern lands, assemble ye yourselves together, ye elders of my Church; go ye forth into the Western countries, call upon the inhabitants to repent, and inasmuch as they do repent, build up churches unto me.

65. "And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you,

66. "And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the Saints of the most high God."

Several months before the expulsion from Kirtland, the Saints began to gather at Independence and buy land as the Lord had commanded. Section 101:70-71, reads:

"Which saith, or teacheth, to purchase all the lands by money, which can be purchased for money, in the region round about the land which I have appointed to be the land of Zion, for the beginning of the gathering of my Saints.

"All the land which can be purchased in Jackson county, and the counties round about, and leave the residue in mine hand."

*Land and Home Owners in Jackson County*

They were rapidly building homes when persecution again overtook them. In 1833 and '34 they were expelled from Jackson county, Missouri, so that a little more than two short



years were all that was allowed them to buy and improve their lands, yet at the time of their departure, they owned between two and three hundred thousand dollars' worth of land and about a million dollars worth of property. The Latter-day Saints still hope to return to Jackson county, Missouri, and repossess their lands. When they do, however, it will not be in the manner in which they were dispossessed, but by the orderly processes of purchase for full value, and then legally, and as the owners desire to sell.

### *Home Owners in Illinois and Utah*

The Saints were finally driven from Missouri into Illinois. Upon arrival there they began immediately to acquire lands and cultivate them and to build homes. In this they were very successful, and when they were driven from Illinois in 1846, Brigham Young in a communication dated October 1, 1845, to General Hardin and others, says, "We have some hundreds of farms and some two thousand or more homes for sale in the county (Hancock)," showing that the Latter-day Saints had been very diligent in building homes during the few years that they had been permitted to live in the state of Illinois. From Illinois the Saints came to Utah. Brigham Young had succeeded Joseph Smith as the leader, but the same spirit permeated the Church organization. Brigham Young knew the Prophet's estimate of planting the people on the soil and establishing them in their own homes and he was in full sympathy with it. Just as soon as Salt Lake Valley was reached and the food supply was provided for, assignments of lots were made and every family as soon as possible made an earnest effort to build a home of its own, even if it was nothing more than a log house or an adobe hut. A small farm of five or ten acres in extent, in the "Big Field" of eight thousand acres, was awarded to every family and as rapidly as the Mormon settlers arrived, they were assigned a lot and a piece of farm land. In the spring of 1848, less than a year after their arrival, upwards of 400 log houses and adobe huts had been built inside the "Old Fort," over five thousand acres had been brought under cultivation, thus carrying out without delay the spirit of the Prophet Joseph in reference to the ownership and cultivation of the soil.

### *Days of '49 in Utah*

The difficulty, however, was not yet over. The days of '49 were at hand, when thousands of gold seekers, crossing the plains and the mountains to reach the gold fields of California, stopped at Salt Lake to replenish their food supply. Soon the

spirit of gold digging grew strong among the Saints, and many of them desired to go to California to acquire a fortune, on the Pacific Coast. Again the spirit of the Church from the very beginning spoke through Brigham Young, and the Saints were strongly advised to remain here and hold on to their lands. Most of them followed the advice, and the development and settlement of Utah became an assured fact. The wisdom of this advice was soon demonstrated, for the great majority of the men who went to dig gold in California, lost their health in sluicing gold in the cold mountain waters and found the returns for their efforts very small. The great profits of the gold digging industry went primarily to the traders and speculators. It must not be understood that the Church leaders were opposed to mining, but they felt that the time for mining in Utah was not opportune and they wanted to make sure of the success of their great undertaking and establish first a commonwealth and the most important industry, and likewise provide themselves with food against any emergency. Never was the spirit of the prophet and the judgment of Brigham Young better vindicated than in the advice to the Saints to keep their land. It took a great many years to demonstrate its truth and to realize the value of Utah farm lands, but the last twenty years have shown that the family that owns its own home and possesses a good farm, has the means of providing itself with a good, substantial living and in addition has something to pay for the education of its children. As a result of these teachings and this policy, the Latter-day Saints as a whole are a community of home building people, and tenancy except as a temporary means, has found little support among them. This policy has given to the settlement of the Saints a strong economic stability and instilled into the young people the idea of early marriages and the establishment of a home, vindicating in its entirety the statesmanship of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

#### *Questions*

- (1) How important is the home?
- (2) What is the importance of agriculture?
- (3) How is agriculture and science related?
- (4) How would large cities likely have affected the Church?
- (5) Why was it desirable for the Saints to become land owners?
- (6) How did the days of '49 affect the Saints?

### III.—JOSEPH SMITH, AN ADVOCATE OF LAW AND ORDER

#### *Two Classes*

Ever since Cain slew his brother Abel for a real or imaginary wrong, there have been two divisions of the human family,

one contending that the wrongs of human society should be adjusted according to the orderly processes of law, and the other class contending that all wrongs, imaginary or real, should not wait for an orderly process, but should be adjusted by violent action, and that the advocates of this doctrine should constitute the body to determine what is right or wrong. Both classes are to be found in all countries and in all ages. One makes for order and progress and the other for destruction. Every advance step that civilization has made, has been through the efforts of the class that stands for and in favor of orderly procedure. Of course, there are extraordinary occasions when governments are tyrannical and oppressive that the people are justified in rising up in revolution and changing the system. Such occasions, however, are rare in human history and cannot arise when the people control the governments and can correct any wrong through the orderly process of the ballot box. The means of revolution can only be justified under the tyranny of a despotic ruler or government. Every free government like our own can be changed by its people in an orderly, constitutional and legal way by the voters so that there can be no justification for revolutionary methods. Those who desire a change need only to convert a majority of the people to their point of view, and the change can be brought about without doing violence to any of the established institutions. This is true even though the change is unreasonably radical. Yet there are a considerable number of people all over the world at the present time who are not willing to await the time when they can convert people to their point of view, but they want an immediate change and the adoption of their ideas, even though the advocates constitute only a small minority of the population, and would enforce their ideas upon the majority by violence, even by bloodshed if necessary. Some of the proposed changes they desire to make are very far reaching and would abolish the right of individuals to a very great extent, without even waiting to ask them if they are willing, or without going through the process of taking a vote. Personal rights, the right of free speech, the right of trial by jury and the establishment of representative government, have been a long time in coming into existence and have been acquired only at the cost of much bloodshed and many bitter struggles extending over centuries. The right of private property is likewise an institution of long growth and the result of ages of experience and numerous experiments. Undoubtedly this right has often been abused, but on the whole it has been of unqualified benefit in the progress of the race. These radical reformers would abolish it over night, and even imprison the owners and



deprive them of their civil rights, because they had been so fortunate as to acquire a small amount of property. Just at present every government has to contend with the activities of this class. A good example of this class in the United States is found in the Industrial Workers of the World, commonly called I. W. W.'s.

### *Latter-day Saints Not Law Breakers*

The Latter-day Saints, have on many occasions been accused, by those unacquainted with the facts, of being law breakers and it has been attributed to the influence of their religion. The truth of the matter is that the Latter-day Saints are unusually strong in favor of law and order, and the best evidence of this statement is the fact that the revolutionary propaganda, now advocated in different parts of the world, finds few or no supporters among the "Mormon" people. This is due primarily to the fact that the religion believed in and practiced by them and established by Joseph Smith, teaches obedience to law and order.

### *Religion Against Lawlessness*

Article Twelve of the Articles of Faith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints says: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers and magistrates, and in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law." A more explicit statement in favor of obedience to government cannot be found. In fact in the creeds of few churches is found such a definite statement as this.

### *Church Writings Against Lawlessness*

Reinforcing this article of faith, is a revelation given by the Lord to Joseph Smith on Feb. 9, 1831, in which are enumerated several offenses for which the offenders should be turned over to the laws of the land. Sec. 42:79, 84-86. Again, in another revelation recorded in Section 101, 76-80, the Lord says:

76. "And again I say unto you, those who have been scattered by their enemies, it is my will that they shall continue to importune for redress, and redemption, by the hands of those who are placed as rulers, and are in authority over you,

77. "According to the laws and constitution of the people which I have suffered to be established, and should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to just and holy principles. \* \* \*

79. "Therefore, it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another.

80. "And for this purpose have I established the constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood."

In these verses the Lord clearly indicates that the constitution of the United States is an inspired document, and this being true, how could the people claiming to be inspired by the Lord, stand out and violate constitutional laws when they were justly enforced?

In verses 85 to 88 of the same section, the Lord advises the Latter-day Saints that they shall importune the judges and governors and the president that justice might be done them, but in no case and in no place does he advocate violence for the attainment of their rights. In a revelation given August, 1831, the Lords says: "Let no man break the laws of the land, for he that keepeth the laws of God hath no need to break the laws of the land." Doc. and Cov. 58:21.) This declaration is sufficiently clear and explicit to leave no doubt in the minds of those who are conversant with conditions to understand what spirit governs the Latter-day Saints. But for fear that there are those who are not familiar with the facts, a review of a few of the events in the early history of the Church and the life of the Prophet Joseph will possibly clear away some misconceptions.

In the second lesson, we called attention to the fact that the Lord, in a revelation, advised the Saints upon entering Jackson county, to purchase the land that they desired. In no instance did he suggest that they take it without compensation, but advised that it be acquired in a legal way and for full value received. This should be a sufficient answer to those who believe that it is perfectly proper to confiscate people's property without compensation.

#### *Driven Out of Jackson County*

The Saints left Kirtland on account of persecution and went to Jackson county, Missouri, where through diligence and thrift they acquired large tracts of land and considerable other property. Persecution developed against them, and even though the Saints were much stronger than they were in Kirtland, and undoubtedly if they had resorted to armed resistance might have protected their life and property to a great extent, under the counsel of the Prophet Joseph, they endeavored to follow a more peaceful course. Joseph Smith counseled them to obey the laws of the state, and even when other settlers in Missouri had decided to drive the "Mormons" out by violence and to confiscate their property, they were very loath to do anything except to apply to the lawful authorities of the county for protection. Any reader of the indignities heaped upon the Saints at this time, would certainly feel that they had sufficient reason to protect themselves by every means possible

But a contrary course was pursued and on Sept. 28, 1833, President Joseph Smith, addressed a communication to Governor Daniel Dunklin of Missouri asking for protection and the enforcement of the laws of the state so that the difficulties existing between the Latter-day Saints and the original settlers could be adjusted in the courts. This was certainly a most reasonable request and one well within the constitution of the state of Missouri and the constitution of the United States. The governor, however, referred the petition to the attorney general who was at that time absent from the capital, causing thereby a long delay in a situation which required immediate attention. A reply was not received from the governor until October 26, almost a month after the petition had been presented. The reply suggested that the Saints refer their difficulties to the circuit judge for consideration, and in case the court failed to act, the governor promised to help. Upon the receipt of this communication, the courts were appealed to, but the judge even refused to issue a warrant on complaint. During all this delay the mob was upon them, murdering, looting and destroying their property. In this situation, to be deprived of the protection of the law, it is easily understood why the Saints should undertake to defend themselves by armed force. Then it was that Lieutenant Governor Boggs organized the mob into a militia under Colonel Thomas Pitcher and the Saints were put in a position of resisting the military forces of the state. This was an unsatisfactory situation for them to be in, and when Col. Pitcher promised the Saints full protection, they surrendered their arms. No sooner, however, had they given up their arms, than the militia fell upon the Saints, murdering several of them and stealing their property. Under these circumstances, they were compelled to leave Jackson county until such time as they felt their lands and other property would be legally restored to them. From Jackson county they went to Clay county and to other parts of the state. The same bitter feeling, however, had spread pretty much over Missouri, and in a short time a committee of the citizens of Clay county, called upon them and demanded that they leave. During all this long interval the suffering Saints had appealed to the courts and to the governor and even to the president of the United States for redress and the restoration of their property, but their appeals went unheard.

Joseph Smith under these trying circumstances, advised the Saints to be obedient and do whatever they could under the law to obtain their rights. In a revelation given to Joseph Smith, June 22, 1834, the Saints were advised to seek peace: "And again I say unto you, sue for peace, not only the



people that have smitten you, but also to all people." (Doc. and Cov. 105:38.) This certainly is the embodiment of Christian teachings as applied to the practical affairs of life.

### *Driven Out of Clay County*

On June 22, 1836, the committee of the citizens of Clay county, governed largely by the prejudices that were shown by the people of the state, requested them to leave the county. President Joseph Smith was in the east looking after the affairs of the Church when this demand was made. A committee of the citizens called upon a committee appointed by the "Mormons" to represent them, and in the course of their conversation they said, "We do not contend that we have the least right under the constitution and laws of the country to expel you by force." This was certainly a strange admission for them to make, and the question naturally arises: then, under what right did they demand them to leave except by brute force? The committee of the Saints realizing the seriousness of the situation, entered into an agreement with the citizens promising to leave Clay county and they faithfully kept their agreement though entered into by force.

### *The Prophet Advises Peace*

The prophet in the east, hearing of the Saints' suffering, wrote a letter to them advising every possible peaceful solution, and at all hazards to protect the women and children. After several unsuccessful attempts to settle in other parts of Missouri, the Saints were compelled to move out of the state and into Illinois. In the new state, Nauvoo was made the central point of settlement, and it looked for a while as if they would enjoy peace, but the mobocratic spirit broke out again and the situation became critical. Upon the organization of Nauvoo into a city, the state of Illinois had granted a charter in which the city was authorized to establish and maintain companies of soldiers. In accordance with this provision the city council authorized the organization of the Nauvoo Legion, and in 1844 there were something like 2,000 well trained soldiers in the organization. In a meeting just before the death of the prophet, they pledged themselves, to protect him and the Saints, but upon the request of Governor Ford and upon the advice of Joseph Smith, June 24, 1844, the legion was dissolved and disarmed. The prophet could now see that the situation was critical in Nauvoo and in the hopes that further trouble might be avoided until such time as the Saints could move westward, he, Hyrum Smith, John Taylor, Willard Richards and a few other friends, crossed the Mississippi into Iowa. His plan was to proceed to

the Rocky Mountains and there prepare for the Saints. He thought that his absence from Nauvoo would relieve the situation and prevent further persecution. Upon the call of his people; however, he returned and surrendered to the officers of the law. Various charges were made against him, and the governor of Illinois, promised him protection and a fair trial, neither of which he received. The story of his imprisonment in Carthage is so well known that it is unnecessary to recite it here. It must be borne in mind that Joseph Smith, as he had done repeatedly before, surrendered, to submit his case to the courts of the state of Illinois. He was putting in practice, at extreme peril, what he had taught his people, and while doing so was murdered. His example of fortitude and loyalty to the institutions of his country made a deep impression upon the Latter-day Saints and remains with them today. He, therefore, could not be accused of being a violator of the law, but was the victim of the violators of the law.

During the life of Joseph Smith he was arrested and tried, some fifty times, but each time he was acquitted. Surely if he had been a law breaker the courts, often controlled by his enemies, would have been able to find him guilty of some offense at one time or another, but in each instance they failed and he was acquitted. It is easy to commend the forces of law and order when they work for our protection and benefit. It, however, takes a great statesman to stand for law and order even when administered by our enemies and to our detriment. It is a recognition of the great fundamental idea that individual welfare must be sacrificed for the benefit of the community and the general principles of law, lest we all perish by mobocracy. It takes a great man and a great statesman to get this view as did the Prophet Joseph. For such was the large view held and taught by Joseph Smith and put into practice during his life and at the expense of his life.

### Questions

- (1) What two classes of citizens are found under all governments?
- (2) What are the teachings of the religion of the Latter-day Saints in respect to law and order?
- (3) How did Joseph Smith by his conduct show that he wanted to act in a legal way?
- (4) How were the Saints required to secure their lands?
- (5) Why did the Saints leave Jackson and Clay counties?
- (6) In the face of persecution what was the prophet's advice?
- (7) On what grounds did Joseph surrender to the state authorities of Illinois?

*(To be continued in May Era. See next page)*

*Notice to M. I. A. Joint Classes.* These lessons will be continued in the *Era*, until the series of seven are printed. Following are the titles of the remaining four: 4. Joseph Smith, a Candidate—His Platform. 5. Joseph Smith, a Nationalist. 6. Joseph Smith, a Practical Sociologist. 7. Joseph Smith, a Patriot.

*Elder A. Earl Worlton*, writing from Albany, New York, recently, says: "All who read the *Era* in this section of the country think it a most excellent magazine for the furtherance of truth."

*Frank O. Jones*, Secretary of the Netherlands mission, writing from Rotterdam, Holland, November 25, says: "We appreciate the *Era* very highly. It is full of snappy articles, easily understood, not monotonous and long-drawn, interesting and extremely beneficial to all who read them, old and young alike. After reading the *Era*, we distribute the magazine among those of our Dutch friends who understand the English language. They are quite as anxious as the elders are to get them. We wish the *Era* success."

## Improvement Era, April, 1920

Two Dollars per Annum

*Entered at the Post Office, Salt Lake City, Utah, as second class matter  
Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of  
October 3, 1917, authorized on July 2, 1918*

Address, Room 406 Church Office Building, Salt Lake City, Utah

**Heber J. Grant,**  
**Edward H. Anderson,** *Editors*      **Edward H. Anderson,** *Business Mgr.*  
**Moroni Snow,** *Assistant*

### CONTENTS

The Sacred Grove in Summer .....	<i>Frontispiece</i>
The Divine Answer. A Poem .....	<i>Edward H. Anderson</i> 467
The Messenger of Morn. A Poem .....	<i>Orson F. Whitney</i> 469
"A Marvelous Work and a Wonder" .....	<i>Prest. Heber J. Grant</i> 472
Joseph Smith's First Vision and Scripture Prom- ises. Illustrated .....	<i>Prest. Anthon H. Lund</i> 475
The Edict of a Century .....	<i>Prest. Charles W. Penrose</i> 484
Account of Joseph's First Vision .....	<i>J. M. Sjodahl</i> 488
Joseph the Prophet .....	<i>Judge Charles H. Hart</i> 491
Origin of the First Vision .....	<i>Elder Joseph Fielding Smith</i> 496
Former Home of Joseph Smith, in Kirtland, Ohio.....	504
Joseph Smith Monument, Sharon, Vermont .....	505
The Effect of Revelation on Man's Creed .....	<i>Elder David O. McKay</i> 506
A Theophany Resplendent .....	<i>Dr. James E. Talmage</i> 514
The Joseph Smith Home, Near Palmyra, N. Y.....	516
The Church Will Prevail .....	<i>Osborne J. P. Widtsoe</i> 517
Portrait of Joseph Smith, the Prophet .....	526
Joseph Smith the Modern American Prophet.....	<i>B. H. Roberts</i> 526
The Vision. A Cantata .....	<i>Evan Stephens</i> 532
Influences of the Gospel for Good Through the Doctrine of the Gathering .....	<i>Elder Richard R. Lyman</i> 539
The Vision Beautiful .....	<i>Susa Young Gates</i> 542
Some Effects of the Gospel on Human Lives.....	<i>Dr. John A. Widtsoe</i> 544
The Church in the Mission Field .....	<i>Andrew Jenson</i> 549
Joseph Smith. An Oration .....	<i>Nenhi Jenson</i> 554
Joseph Smith as a Statesman. I-III.....	560





**DARK BARRE GRANITE**

## America's Most Distinguished Material For Memorials

"Used in such famous memorials as the Joseph Smith at Sharon, Vermont; the Hyrum Smith at Salt Lake City; the Philip D. Armour at Chicago; the "Uncle Joe" Cannon Family memorial at Danville, Ill.; the U. S. Senator Gordon at Los Angeles, Cal.; and thousands of others.

"See your dealer for further information, or write for free booklet, "The Rock of Ages."

**Boutwell, Milne & Varnum Company,**  
Dept. O., Montpelier, Vermont.

"QUARRIES AT BARRE, VT.,  
THE GRANITE CENTER OF THE WORLD"

## Fruit Trees Are Ready Now

For your selection we have just the most desirable varieties of Apple, Apricot, Cherry, Pears, Plums, Prunes and small fruits of all types. All stock in prime condition, fresh and vigorous. Let us prove that our Mountain Grown Trees and Shrubs are hardier.

Seed and Nursery Catalog Free. Write for it today.

### PORTER-WALTON CO.

SEED AND NURSERY SPECIALISTS

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

AFTER THE FIRE EVERYBODY ASKS

## Was It Insured?

Can you answer YES?—in the

### HOME FIRE INSURANCE CO.

HEBER J. GRANT & CO.

*General Agents*

22 Main Street, Salt Lake City, Utah

## DESERET BOOK COMPANY

6 Main St.



44 E. So. Temple

*Successors to*

**Deseret News Book**

**" Store "**

**S.S. Union Book Store**



# *The Man of Tomorrow*



*What One Thing  
Can You Do  
Better Than all of  
Your Associates?*

**\$1.50  
Postpaid**

The answer to this question is one of the scores which will help you in selecting your life's calling.

If you can be a better lawyer or a better farmer than anything else, BE IT. But don't be a "round peg in a square hole."

"The Man of Tomorrow," a new book on vocational guidance, will help you to choose wisely.

**DESERET BOOK  
COMPANY**

6 Main St.



44 E. So. Temple



DELIVERED EVERYWHERE

*Keeley's*  
*Best by Test*

*Ice Cream*

Special Attention Given to Parcel Post Candy Orders

55 S. Main, 260 S. State, 160 S. Main, Candy Dept. at Walker's

**M**

ANY of our American boys at the front wore Overalls made in SCOWCROFT'S Never-rip Overall factory. The Government took our entire output for several months. We now have one hundred fifty Utah boys and girls manufacturing

SCOWCROFT'S Never-rip Overalls

SCOWCROFT'S Never-rip Mechanic Suits

SCOWCROFT'S Never-rip Khaki Pants and Coats

SCOWCROFT'S Never-rip Riding Pants

SCOWCROFT'S Never-rip Allovers for Children

SCOWCROFT'S Made-Rite Work Shirts.

When you are buying any of the above items, ask for Scowcroft's Never-rips. Take no others. Solid comfort in every pair. No scimping. "Ask the man who has worn a pair."

**JOHN SCOWCROFT & SONS CO.**

*Manufacturers*

OGDEN, UTAH

**LIFE INSURANCE**

**PROTECTS YOUR FAMILY IF YOU DIE  
PROTECTS YOU IF YOU LIVE**

Ask about our plan which helps you to accumulate an estate at the same time you are protecting your family.

*We want good agents in every town*

**Beneficial Life Insurance Company**

Heber J. Grant, Pres. Vermont Bldg., Salt Lake Lorenzo N. Stohl, V. Pres. & Mgr.

ASSETS MORE  
THAN TWO and  
ONE-HALF  
MILLION  
DOLLARS