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## Joseph Smith, the Prophet

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**Abstract:** The Reality of Joseph's Vision—Joseph Smith's Name Will Never Perish—The Prophet Joseph Smith—Prediction of Joseph Smith Fulfilled—Joseph Smith the Boy—Joseph Smith a Restorer—Plural Wives of Joseph Smith, the Prophet—What Does the Martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Teach Us—Divine Authority of Joseph Smith and His Successors—God's Guiding Hand Seen in Church History

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## CHAPTER XXV.

### Joseph Smith, the Prophet.

THE REALITY OF JOSEPH'S VISION. Our critics say it was an apparition that the Prophet Joseph saw, but he did not say so. He said the personages who appeared to him were real men, and there is nothing more improbable in his statement than in the recital in the Bible of the conception and birth of Christ, and of John the Baptist. To us has come the account of the birth, life and work of Christ, and there is nothing in the narrative to cause us to believe it more readily than that story of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Christ walked and talked and counseled with his friends when he came down from heaven over 1900 years ago. Is there any reason why he could not come again, why he should not visit this earth once more and talk with men today? If there is I should be glad to hear it.

The thing I want to impress upon you is that God is real, a creature of flesh and bones the same as you are and I am. Christ is the same, but the Holy Ghost is a creature of spirit.

If Joseph Smith's teachings were untrue, then those of the Great Nazarene fall to the ground, for they are one and the same. You can't philosophize the truths of the gospel away, nor explain them by saying the prophet was a victim of apparitions, for they are real, tangible facts behind which stand a great mass of proof as good as has ever been offered to substantiate any statement. It is a comfort, a blessing, a delight to me, and I pray that it may ever be so to you.—*Logan Journal*, March 14, 1911.

SERVICE OF JOSEPH SMITH. Our faith in Jesus Christ lies at the foundation of our religion, the foundation of our hope for remission of sins, and for exaltation after death,

and for the resurrection from death to everlasting life. Our faith in the doctrines that have been restored through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith confirms and strengthens us and establishes beyond a question or doubt, our faith and belief in the divine mission of the Son of God. Joseph Smith was the instrument chosen of God and endowed with his authority to restore the holy priesthood, the power of God to bind on earth and in heaven,—the power of the priesthood by which men may perform ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ for the salvation of mankind. Through Joseph Smith the gospel of repentance, baptism in water for the remission of sins, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and by fire, have been restored, and the knowledge that Jesus is the Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, is made manifest through the Spirit of truth. We are obligated to this humble servant that the Lord chose to lay the foundation of this work for the ordinances of the gospel of the Son of God, then and still unknown to the world, by which we may become united together as families, as kindreds, under the bonds of the new and everlasting covenant, for time and for all eternity. We are obligated to the Prophet Joseph Smith, as an instrument in the hand of the Lord, for the knowledge that we possess of the work which is necessary to be done in the house of God, for the salvation of the living and the redemption of the dead, and for the eternal union of souls who are united in this life by the power of God, under the bond of the everlasting covenant. We are indebted, or obligated at least, to the Prophet Joseph Smith as the instrument in the hands of God, for the knowledge we now possess that a man cannot be exalted into the presence of God and the full enjoyment of his glory, alone. It was not designed for the man to be alone, for the man is not without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord—*Oct. C. R.*, 1916, p. 3.

JOSEPH SMITH'S NAME WILL NEVER PERISH. God

lives, and Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world. Joseph Smith is a prophet of God—living, not dead; for his name will never perish. The angel that visited him and declared God's message unto him, told him that his name should be held for good and for evil throughout the world. This prediction was made in the days of his youth, before the Church was organized, and before there was any prospect of that which has since been accomplished. The declaration was made, notwithstanding it then seemed an absolute impossibility; but from the day it was spoken until this moment, and from now on until the winding-up scene, the name of Joseph Smith, the prophet of the nineteenth century, has been, is being, and will be heralded abroad to the nations of the earth, and will be held in honor or contempt by the people of the world. But the honor in which it is now held by a few will by and by be increased that his name shall be held in reverence and honor among the children of men as universally as the name of the Son of God is held today; for he did and is doing the work of the Master. He laid the foundations in this dispensation for the restoration of the principles that were taught by the Son of God, who for these principles lived, and taught, and died, and rose from the dead. Therefore I say, as the name of the Son of God shall be held in reverence and honor, and in the faith and love of men, so will the name of Joseph Smith eventually be held among the children of men, gaining prestige, increasing in honor, and commanding respect and reverence, until the world shall say that he was a servant and Prophet of God. The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Peace on earth, good will to man, is the proclamation that Joseph the Prophet made, and that is the same as his Master, the Lord Jesus Christ, made, to the world. That is the mission we are trying to fulfil, and the proclamation we are seeking to make to the world today. It is the mission that these young men have been chosen to proclaim, and be

witnesses of to the nations of the earth. It is their duty to see to it that this proclamation and this gospel of peace and good will shall be sent to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, under the whole heavens. God bless Israel, is my earnest prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1907, pp. 125-6.

THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH. Brother Woodruff, in the course of his remarks, made the assertion that Joseph Smith was the greatest prophet that has ever lived, of whom we have any knowledge, save and except Jesus Christ himself. The world would say that he was an imposter; and the Lord said that his name should be had for good and for evil among all the nations of the earth; and this much, at least, so far as his name has become known, has been fulfilled. This prediction was made through the Prophet Joseph Smith himself, when he was an obscure youth, and when there was but little prospect of his name ever becoming known beyond the village where he lived. It was at an early period of his life, and at the beginning of the work that this prophecy or revelation was given, and it has been truly verified. Today there is not another man, perhaps, who has figured in religion, whose name is so wide-spread among the nations, as that of Joseph Smith. In connection with the work of which he was the instrument in the hands of God of laying the foundation, his name is spoken of in nearly every civilized nation upon the globe, for good or for evil. Where it is spoken of for good, it is by those who have had the privilege of hearing the gospel which has come to the earth through him, and who have been sufficiently honest and humble to receive the same. They speak of him with a knowledge which they have received by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, through obedience to the principles which he taught, as a prophet and as an inspired man. They speak to his praise, to his honor, and they hold his name in honorable remembrance. They revere him, and they love

him, as they love no other man, because they know he was the chosen instrument in the hands of the Almighty in restoring the gospel of life and salvation unto them, of opening their understandings of the future, of lifting the veil of eternity, as it were, from before their eyes. Those who have received the principles which he promulgated know they pertain not only to their own salvation, happiness and peace, spiritual and temporal, but to the welfare, happiness, salvation and exaltation of their kindred who have died without a knowledge of the truth.

The work in which Joseph Smith was engaged was not confined to this life alone, but it pertains as well to the life to come, and to the life that has been. In other words, it relates to those who have lived upon the earth, to those who are living, and to those who shall come after us. It is not something which relates to man only while he tabernacles in the flesh, but to the whole human family from eternity to eternity. Consequently, as I have said, Joseph Smith is held in reverence, his name is honored; tens of thousands of people thank God in their heart, and from the depths of their souls, for the knowledge the Lord has restored to the earth through him, and therefore they speak well of him and bear testimony of his worth. And this is not confined to a village, nor to a state, nor to a nation, but extends to every nation, kindred, tongue and people where the gospel, up to the present, has been preached—in America, Great Britain, Europe, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and upon the islands of the sea. And the Book of Mormon, which Joseph Smith was the instrument in the hands of God of bringing forth to this generation, has been translated into the German, French, Danish, Swedish, Welsh, Hawaiian, Hindustani, Spanish, and Dutch languages, and this book will be translated into other languages, for according to the predictions it contains, and according to the promises of the Lord through Joseph Smith, it is to be sent unto

every nation, and kindred, and people under the whole heavens, until all the sons and daughters of Adam shall have the privilege of hearing the gospel as it has been restored to the earth in the dispensation of the fulness of times.

The world presume that we have not received a knowledge of the truth. Those who are in ignorance in regard to the character, life, and labors of Joseph Smith, who have never read his revelations or studied or investigated his claims to divine authority, and are ignorant of his mission, revile him, sneer at his name, and ridicule his claims to prophetic inspiration, and call him an impostor in his day, except by a few who hearkened to his instruction, and believed his testimony. The great majority of mankind then living who knew of Christ, deemed him an impostor, and considered him worthy to be put to death; precisely the same feeling existed towards Joseph Smith.

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Let us return to the Prophet Joseph Smith. He was accused of nearly everything that was vile, by his enemies, who, as is well known by the Latter-day Saints, were generally entirely ignorant of his true character and mission. What did Joseph Smith do? Was human blood found upon his hands? No, verily no. He was innocent. Was he a slanderer and vilifier? No, verily, he was not. Did he wrongfully and unjustly accuse men of wickedness? No, he did not. Did he institute an order of things that has proved injurious to the human family? Let the people who have become acquainted with his doctrines, and with the institutions which he established upon the earth, and his own life's labor, answer.

He was born December 23, 1805, in the state of Vermont. His parents were American citizens, as had been their ancestors for generations. In the spring of 1820, he received the first supernatural or heavenly manifestation.

He was then fourteen years of age. Ordinarily we do not expect a very great deal from a boy who is only fourteen years of age, and it is not likely that a boy of that tender age could have become very vicious or wicked, especially when he was born and reared on a farm, apart from the corrupting vices of great cities, and free from contact with the debasing influence of vile associations. It is not likely that he spent many idle moments during the working years of his life, up to fourteen years of age; for his father had to labor for his living and earn it from the soil by the labor of his hands, being a poor man with a large family to support.

In 1820, as I have said, Joseph Smith received a revelation in which he claimed that God had declared that he was about to restore the ancient gospel in its purity, and many other glorious things. In consequence of this, Joseph Smith became very notorious in the neighborhood where he resided, and people began to regard him with a great deal of suspicion. He was at once called an impostor, and a few years later he was styled by his enemies, "old Joe Smith." His fame became known throughout the United States. He was called a "money digger," and many other contemptuous things. If you will look at his history, and at the character of his parents, and surroundings, and consider the object of his life, you can discover how much consistency there was in the charges brought against him. All this was done to injure him. He was neither old nor a "money digger," nor an impostor, nor in any manner deserving of the epithets which they applied to him. He had never injured anybody, nor robbed anybody,—he never did anything for which he could be punished by the laws under which he lived.

When he was between 17 and 18 years of age, he received another heavenly manifestation, and some great and glorious things were revealed to him, and for four years subsequently he received visits from a heavenly messenger.



He did not claim he was in communication with wicked men or demons from the lower regions. He claimed he was in communication with Moroni, one of the ancient prophets who lived upon this continent. He was a good man when he lived here, and it is not likely that he had become wicked since he went away. This personage, he claimed, revealed to him the mind and will of the Lord, and showed him the character of the great work that he, in the hands of God, was to be instrumental in establishing in the earth when the time should come. This was the labor that was performed by the angel Moroni, during the four years intervening between 1823 and 1827. In 1827 he received from the hands of the angel Moroni, the gold plates from which this book (Book of Mormon) was translated by him through the inspiration of the Almighty, and the gift and power of God unto him. I heard it read when I was a child. I have read it many times since, and I have asked myself, scores of times, have you ever discovered one precept, doctrine, or command, within the lids of that book, that is calculated to injure anybody, to do harm to the world, or that is in contradiction to the word of God as contained in the Bible? And the answer invariably came, No, not one solitary thing; every precept, doctrine, word of advice, prophecy, and indeed every word contained within the lids of that book relating to the great plan of human redemption and salvation is calculated to make bad men good and good men better.

Did Joseph Smith during the three years intervening between 1827 and 1830, while he was laboring with his hands for a scanty subsistence, dodging his enemies, and trying to evade the grasp of those who sought to destroy him and prevent the accomplishment of his mission, struggling all the while against untold obstacles and depressing embarrassments to complete the translation of this book, have much

chance of becoming wicked or corrupt? I do not think he had. When he had finished translating the Book of Mormon he was still only a boy, yet in producing this book he developed historical facts, prophecies, revelations, predictions, testimonies and doctrines, precepts and principles that are beyond the power and wisdom of the learned world to duplicate or refute. Joseph Smith was an unlearned youth, so far as the learning of the world is concerned. He was taught by the angel Moroni. He received his education from above, from God Almighty, and not from man-made institutions; but to charge him with being ignorant would be both unjust and false; no man or combination of men possessed greater intelligence than he, nor could the combined wisdom and cunning of the age produce an equivalent for what he did. He was not ignorant, for he was taught by Him from whom all intelligence flows. He possessed a knowledge of God and of his law, and of eternity, and mankind have been trying, with all their learning, wisdom and power—and not content with that, they have tried with the sword and cannon to extirpate from the earth the superstructure which Joseph Smith, by the power of God, erected; but they have signally failed, and will yet be overwhelmed by their efforts to destroy it.

Again, the world say that Joseph Smith was an indolent person. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized April 6, 1830. Joseph Smith was martyred in Carthage, Illinois, on the 27th day of June, 1844—fourteen years after the organization of the Church. What did he accomplish in these fourteen years? He opened up communication with the heavens in his youth. He brought forth the Book of Mormon, which contains the fulness of the gospel; and the revelations contained in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants; restored the holy priesthood unto man; established and organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, an organization which has no parallel in all

the world, and which all the cunning and wisdom of men for ages has failed to discover or produce and never could have done. He founded colonies in the states of New York, Ohio, Missouri and Illinois, and pointed the way for the gathering of the Saints into the Rocky Mountains; sent the gospel into Europe and to the islands of the sea; founded the town of Kirtland, Ohio, and there built a temple that cost scores of thousands of dollars; he founded the city of Nauvoo in the midst of persecution; gathered into Nauvoo and vicinity some 20,000 people, and commenced the building of the temple there, which when completed cost one million dollars; and in doing all this he had to contend against the prejudices of the age, against relentless persecution, mobocracy, and vile calumny and slander, that were heaped upon him from all quarters without stint or measure. In a word, he did more in from fourteen to twenty years for the salvation of man than any other man save Jesus only, who ever lived, and yet he was accused by his enemies of being an indolent and worthless man!

Where shall we go to find another man who has accomplished a one-thousandth part of the good that Joseph Smith accomplished? Shall we go to the Rev. Mr. Beecher, or Talmage, or any other of the great preachers of the day? What have they done for the world, with all their boasted intelligence, influence, wealth, and the popular voice of the world in their favor! Joseph Smith had none of their advantages, if these are advantages. And yet, no man in the nineteenth century, except Joseph Smith, has discovered to the world a ray of light upon the keys and power of the holy priesthood, or the ordinances of the gospel, either for the living or the dead. Through Joseph Smith, God has revealed many things which were kept hidden from the foundation of the world in fulfilment of the prophets—and at no time since Enoch walked the earth has the Church of God been organized as perfectly as it is today, not excepting the dispensation of

Jesus and his disciples,—or, if it was, we have no record of it. And this is strictly in keeping with the objects and character of this great latter-day work, destined to consummate the great purpose and designs of God concerning the dispensation of the fulness of times.

The principle of baptism for the redemption of the dead, with the ordinances appertaining thereto, for the complete salvation and exaltation of those who have died without the gospel, as revealed through Joseph Smith, is alone worth more than all the dogmas of the so-called Christian world combined.

Joseph Smith is accused of being a false prophet. It is, however, beyond the power of the world to prove that he was a false prophet. They may so charge him, but you who have received the testimony of Jesus Christ, by the spirit of prophecy, through his administrations, are my witnesses that they have not the power to prove him false, and that is why they are so vexed about it. In my humble opinion many of our enemies know that they lie before God, angels and men, when they make this charge, and they would only be too glad to produce proof to sustain their accusations, but they cannot. Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God. He lived and died a true prophet, and his words and works will yet demonstrate the divinity of his mission to millions of the inhabitants of this globe. Perhaps not so many that are now living, for they have in a great measure rejected the gospel, and the testimony which the elders of this Church have borne to them; but their children after them, and generations to come, will receive with delight the name of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the gospel which their fathers rejected. Amen.—Discourse delivered in Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City, Oct. 29, 1882. *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 24, 1884, pp. 8-16.

PREDICTION OF JOSEPH SMITH FULFILLED. As the time remaining is so short, I think I could not do better than de-

vote it to continuing the subject dwelt upon by Brother Cannon.

The Doctrine and Covenants, as well as the Book of Mormon, contains indisputable evidence of the divine calling and mission of Joseph Smith. For instance, I will refer the congregation to the revelation given December 25, 1832, in relation to the great war of the Rebellion, with which all are more or less familiar (Doc. and Cov. 87). A portion of that revelation has been literally fulfilled, even to the very place indicated in the prediction where the war should commence; which, as was therein stated, was to terminate in the death and misery of many souls.

Again, in the revelation given in March, 1831, to Parley P. Pratt and Lemon Copley, the following remarkable prediction is found:

“But before the great day of the Lord shall come, Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose. Zion shall flourish upon the hills and rejoice upon the mountains, and shall be assembled together unto the place which I have appointed” (Doc. and Cov. 49:24, 25).

Who, let me ask, unless he was inspired of the Lord, speaking by the gift and power of God, at that remote period of the Church's history, when our numbers were few, when we had no influence, name or standing in the world—who, I would ask, under the circumstances in which we were placed when this prediction was made, could have uttered such words unless God inspired him? Zion is, indeed, flourishing on the hills, and is rejoicing on the mountains, and we who compose it are gathering and assembling together unto the place appointed. I now ask this congregation if they cannot see that this prediction (which was made many years before the idea prevailed at all among this people that we should ever migrate and gather out to these mountain valleys) has been and is being literally fulfilled? If there

were no other prophecy uttered by Joseph Smith, fulfilment of which could be pointed to, this alone would be sufficient to entitle him to the claim of being a true prophet.

Again, in the revelation given February, 1834, this remarkable promise and prophecy is found:

“Verily I say unto you, I have decreed a decree which my people shall realize, inasmuch as they hearken from this very hour, unto the counsel which I, the Lord their God, shall give unto them. Behold they shall, for I have decreed it, begin to prevail against mine enemies from this very hour, and by hearkening to observe all the words which I, the Lord their God, shall speak unto them, they shall never cease to prevail until the kingdoms of the world are subdued under my feet, and the earth is given unto the Saints, to possess it for ever and ever” (Doc. and Cov. 103:5-7).

Is there a person within the sound of my voice, or anywhere else upon the face of the wide earth, who can say that this promise has failed, that this prediction is not founded in truth, that so far it has not been fulfilled? I stand before this vast congregation, and am at the defiance of any human being to say that this was not pronounced by the spirit of truth, by the inspiration of the Almighty, for it has been fulfilled, and is being fulfilled, and that, too, in the face of opposition of the most deadly character; and what remains will be fulfilled literally and completely. And it is the fear in the heart of Satan that this will be the case that causes him to stir up his emissaries to oppose the kingdom of God and seek, if possible, to destroy this great and glorious work. For it is a living fact, a fact that fills the hearts of the righteous and God-fearing with unspeakable joy, and the hearts of the wicked and ungodly with consternation and jealous fear, that this work of God, this work of redemption and salvation in which we are engaged, is moving forward and is destined to continue in its onward march until the kingdoms of the world shall be subdued and brought

under the law of Almighty God. And that this will come to pass, I can assure you, the enemy of all righteousness comprehends as well as we do. Yes, he knows that this will eventually be the case, better than many who profess to have received the Holy Spirit in their hearts; and, therefore, he is diligently seeking to stir up the hearts of the wicked to fight against the Saints of God, until they are discomfited, and Zion is free.

These predictions concerning the triumph of the cause of God over the wicked who contend against them, were uttered by Joseph Smith in his youth, in the early rise of the Church when, to all human appearance, their fulfilment was absolutely impossible. At that time there were but few who could believe, that dared to believe the truth of these predictions. The few, comparatively, that did believe when they heard, were those whose minds had been enlightened by the Holy Spirit of promise and who, therefore, were prepared to receive them. As these predictions have been fulfilled, so those not yet fulfilled will come to pass in the due time of the Lord; and as this latter-day work has so far grown and assumed force and power in the earth, so it will continue to do, and there is no power beneath the celestial kingdom that can prevent its growth, or the consummation of all that has been predicted concerning it.—*Apr. C. R., Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 25, 1884, pp. 97-101.

JOSEPH SMITH, THE BOY. To me there is a sweet fascination in the contemplation of his childhood and youth. I love to contemplate the innocence and the artless simplicity of his boyhood. It bears record that he was honest, that he was led by the Spirit of God to perform his wonderful mission. How could a child at his age be impelled by other than honest motives in the accomplishment of his high and holy calling? What he did he was led to do by the inspiration and guidance of his heavenly Father, of this I feel assured.

He was much like other children; his play was like that of his companions: his thoughts, like those of most children, were innocent, and consequently he was incapable of the knavery and connivance that his enemies declared he practiced. Though poor, his parents were honest and good; they delighted in the truth, and it was their honest desire to live according to the best light within them. Love and good will to all found expression in their hearts and actions, and their children were imbued with like sentiments. They were firm believers in God, and trusted in his watchcare over his children. They had frequently received manifestations of his loving kindness, in dreams, visions, and inspirations, and God had healed their little ones, in answer to prayer, when they were nigh unto death. It was in such an atmosphere that the boy was reared. Joseph was a remarkably quiet and well-disposed child who gave his parents little or no trouble. As early as the age of eight, he gave proof that besides being thoughtful, easily governed, and of sweet and loving disposition, he possessed the foundation principles of a good character—filial affection, patience, endurance, courage.

Concerning his spiritual manifestations, is it reasonable to suppose that there could have been premeditated deceit on the part of the boy, and such a boy, in his simple statement of what he saw and heard? No; neither could the answer which the heavenly messenger gave to him, have been composed in the child's own mind. Joseph Smith's testimony concerning his heavenly manifestations, in later life, was as simple, straight-forward, plain, and true, as it had been in childhood; the fidelity, courage, and love implanted in and characteristic of his life in boyhood neither faltered nor changed with maturity. His wisdom came in revelations of God to him.

One marked illustration of his character was his love for children. He never saw a child but he desired to take it up



and bless it, and many he did so bless, taking them in his arms and upon his knee. I have myself sat upon his knee. He was so fond of children that he would go far out of his way to speak to a little one, which is to me a striking characteristic of true manhood. He had a like true love for the human race. I know, and have known from my childhood, that he was a prophet of God, and I believe in his divine mission with all my heart; and in the authenticity and inspiration of the revelations which he received, and the Book of Mormon which he was instrumental in bringing forth.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 21, December, 1917, p. 167.

JOSEPH SMITH, A RESTORER. I think it is wrong to count Joseph the prophet one who fought old forms, in the sense that he established new principles and doctrines. He fought existing religious forms, it is true, but he merely became the means, in God's providence, to restore the old truths of the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ, the plan of salvation, which is older than the human race. It is true, also, that his teachings were new to the people of his day, because they had apostatized from the truth—but the principles of the gospel are the oldest truths in existence. They were new to Joseph's generation, as they are in part to ours, because men had gone astray, been cast adrift, shifted hither and thither by every new wind of doctrine which cunning men—so-called progressives—had advanced. This made the Prophet Joseph a restorer, not a destroyer, of old truths. And this does not justify us in discarding the simple, fundamental principles of the gospel and running after modern doctrinal fads and notions.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 15, June, 1912, p. 737.

PLURAL WIVES OF JOSEPH SMITH, THE PROPHET. I can positively state, on indisputable evidence, that Joseph Smith was the author, under God, of the revelation on plural marriage. On this subject, we have the affidavit of William Clayton, private secretary of Joseph Smith, that he wrote

the revelation as it was given through the lips of the prophet, and that he himself sealed to Joseph Smith as a plural wife, Lucy Walker, at Joseph Smith's own residence, on May 1, 1843. This lady is still living, in Salt Lake City, and is willing to testify at any moment to this fact. Following are some of the names of young ladies who were sealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith in Nauvoo, as testified to under oath by themselves—this during the lifetime of the prophet: Eliza R. Snow, Sarah Ann Whitney, Helen Mar Kimball, Fanny Young (sister to Brigham Young), and Rhoda Richards (sister to Willard Richards who was with the prophet at his martyrdom in Carthage jail). All these noble women have testified, under oath, giving names and dates, that they were sealed, during his lifetime, to the Prophet Joseph Smith. These facts have been published in Jenson's *Historical Record*, and in the *Deseret News*, in years past; and I know, by the established and virtuous character of these noble women, that their testimonies are true.

A careful reading of the revelation on plural marriage should convince any honest man that it was never written by Brigham Young, as it contains references to Joseph Smith himself, and his family, which would be utterly nonsensical and useless if written by President Young. The fact is, we have the affidavit of Joseph C. Kingsbury, certifying that he copied the original manuscript of the revelation within three days after the date on which it was written. I knew Joseph C. Kingsbury well. Furthermore, the revelation was read by Hyrum Smith to a majority of the members of the High Council, in Nauvoo, at about the time it was given, to which fact we have the sworn statements of the members of the High Council.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 5, October, 1902, p. 988.

WHAT DOES THE MARTYRDOM OF JOSEPH AND HYRUM TEACH US? What does the martyrdom teach us? The great lesson that “where a testament is there must also of

necessity be the death of the testator" (Heb. 9:17) to make it of force. Moreover, that the blood of martyrs is indeed the seed of the Church. The Lord permitted the sacrifice, that the testimony of those virtuous and righteous men should stand as a witness against a perverse and unrighteous world. Then, again, they were examples of the wonderful love of which the Redeemer speaks: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). This wonderful love they manifested to the Saints and to the world; for both realized and expressed their conviction, before starting on the journey to Carthage, that they were going to their death. They might have escaped; in fact, had but a few days before made the start for the Rocky Mountains, but were recalled by the groundless fears of false friends who made the accusation that they were fleeing from dangers that were equally as great towards the peace and happiness of the members of the Church as they could possibly be towards themselves.

Satan said to Job: "All that a man hath will he give for his life." Of the true servant, and where perfect love abides, that is not true! Joseph and Hyrum Smith returned and calmly went to their death, feeling that their lives were of no value to themselves if unvalued by their friends, or if they were needed as a sacrifice for the protection of their worthy followers. Their courage, their faith, their love for the people were without bounds, and they gave all that they had for their people. Such devotion and love left no doubt in the minds of those who enjoyed the companionship of the Holy Spirit that these good men and true, were indeed the authorized servants of the Lord.

This martyrdom has always been an inspiration to the people of the Lord. It has helped them in their individual trials; has given them courage to pursue a course in righteousness and to know and to live the truth, and must ever be held in sacred memory by the Latter-day Saints who

have learned the great truths that God revealed through his servant Joseph Smith.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 51, June, 1916, p. 381.

DIVINE AUTHORITY OF JOSEPH SMITH AND HIS SUCCESSORS. I bear my testimony to you and to the world that Joseph Smith was raised up by the power of God to lay the foundations of this great latter-day work, to reveal the fulness of the gospel to the world in this dispensation, to restore the priesthood of God to the world, by which men may act in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and it will be accepted of God; it will be by his authority. I bear my testimony to it; I know that it is true.

I bear my testimony to the divine authority of those who have succeeded the Prophet Joseph Smith in the presidency of the Church. They were men of God; I knew them; I was intimately associated with them, and as one man may know another, through the intimate knowledge that he possesses of him, so I can bear testimony to the integrity, to the honor, to the purity of life, to the intelligence, and to the divinity of the mission and calling of Brigham, of John, of Wilford and of Lorenzo. They were inspired of God to fill the mission to which they were called, and I know it. I thank God for that testimony, and for the spirit that prompts me and impels me toward these men, toward their mission, toward this people, toward my God and my Redeemer. I thank the Lord for it, and I pray earnestly that it may never depart from me—worlds without end.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 14, Nov., 1910, p. 74.

GOD'S GUIDING HAND SEEN IN CHURCH HISTORY. In connection with this thought it may be proper, consistent and timely, for me to remark that each individual member of the Church assembled here this morning is a free man or a free woman, possessing to the utmost degree all the qualifications and characteristics of freemen, independent with

reference to individual action and choice, of every other man and of every other woman present. This being a fact, which is a fact, the unanimity exhibited on the part of the audience, with reference to the actions that have been taken, vindicate the belief and the assertion which I make, that the members of this congregation are certainly in harmony with the will of the Father. They are united; they see eye to eye; their sympathy is with one another and with the cause they represent. Their hearts are in the work in which they are engaged, and that because of their choice, because they have fully weighed all matters connected with their standing in the Church, and with regard to the course which they have taken today; they have, voluntarily, without coercion, without compulsion, without any restraint, except the restraint of their own consciences, shown that they see eye to eye, that they are one and are therefore entitled to be acknowledged of the Master as his own and as of him. I believe that there is not a freer, more independent nor a more intelligent people to be found anywhere in the world, who are more independent in choosing the course which they pursue, in the work that they perform and in everything that they have to do with, than the Latter-day Saints.

There is not a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in good standing, anywhere in all the world today that is not such by reason of his independence of character, by reason of his intelligence, wisdom and ability to judge between right and wrong and between good and evil. There is not a member of the Church of Jesus Christ anywhere, in good standing, living a proper life, that would not hold up his hand against evil, against wrong, against sin, against the transgression of the laws of God against unrighteousness or vice of any kind, with as much freedom and independence and with as firm determination as any other man or woman in the world.

I am thankful to have the privilege, this moment, of ex-

pressing this my view and firm belief and my knowledge of the real character of the Latter-day Saints throughout the world. And, when I say Latter-day Saints, I mean members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints founded by God, through the instrumentality and agency of the Prophet Joseph Smith, who was chosen of God and ordained and qualified and authorized to lay the foundations of the Church of Jesus Christ, never more to be destroyed nor left to other people, never more to cease but to continue until the purposes of God should ripen and be accomplished for the salvation of the children of men and for the redemption of the living, and of the dead who have died without a knowledge of the plan of life and salvation. In stating this I state the results of my experience in associations with such men as those who laid the foundations of the Church of Jesus Christ, from the Prophet Joseph Smith down to this moment.

As a child I knew the Prophet Joseph Smith. As a child I have listened to him preach the gospel that God had committed to his charge and care. As a child I was familiar in his home, in his household, as I was familiar under my own father's roof. I have retained the witness of the Spirit that I was imbued with, as a child, and that I received from my sainted mother, the firm belief that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God; that he was inspired as no other man in his generation, or for centuries before, had been inspired; that he had been chosen of God to lay the foundations of God's Kingdom as well as of God's Church; that by the power of God he was enabled to bring forth the record of the ancient inhabitants of this continent, to revive and to reveal to the world the doctrine of Jesus Christ, not only as he taught it in the midst of the Jews, in Judea, but as he also taught it and as it was also recorded in greater simplicity and plainness upon this continent, among the descendants of Lehi. As a child I was impressed, deeply,

with the thought, and firmly with the belief, in my soul that the revelations that had been given to and through Joseph the Prophet, as contained in this book, the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, were the word of God, as were the words of the ancient disciples when they bore record of the Father and of the Son. That impression made upon me in my childhood has followed through all the vicissitudes of more than sixty years of actual and practical experience in the mission field, throughout the nations of the world, and at home in the midst of the authorized servants of God, who officiated in the name of the Father and of the Son to propagate, to build up, and to push forward the work inaugurated by the instrumentality of the boy Joseph Smith.

In my childhood, too, I was instructed to believe in the divinity of the mission of Jesus Christ. I was taught by my mother, a Saint indeed—that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; that he was indeed no other than the Only Begotten of God in the flesh, and that, therefore, no other than God the eternal Father is his Father and the author of his existence in the world. I was taught it from my father, from the Prophet Joseph Smith, through my mother who embraced the gospel because she believed in the testimony of Joseph Smith, and she believed in the honor, integrity and truthfulness of her husband; and all my boyhood days and all my years in the world I have clung to that belief; indeed, I have never had any serious dubiety in my mind, even in childhood; and when I could only imperfectly understand things with reference to the divinity of the mission of the Son of God, I accepted it as being true in the sense in which only it can be true; for in no other than the literal sense, as it is described in the scriptures of divine truth and in the testimonies of the prophets, can it be true that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I believe it. I have believed it all my life; but I owe to the Prophet Joseph Smith the fixed and unalterable confirmation of that belief, until it has come to be,

in my soul, a knowledge of the truth; and in so far as I have continued in the word of the Lord, I believe, I have been led to know the truth. I believe that I possess that freedom that comes from a knowledge of the truth, which teaches all men righteousness, virtue, honor, faith, charity, forgiveness mercy, longsuffering patience and devotion to that which is good, and abstinence from that which is evil.

“The truth will make you free.” Free from what? From error, free from doubt, and uncertainty, free from unbelief, free from the powers of darkness, free from the possibility of being tempted beyond your strength; but to resist error and to shun even the appearance of sin. This truth makes a man a Latter-day Saint. This knowledge of the truth makes you free to worship God and to love him with all your heart and mind and strength, and to do the next best thing—to love your neighbor as nearly as you possibly can as you love yourselves.

The truth that I have received teaches me that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, teaches me to accept without recourse, other than the full and free acceptance of that truth, that God Almighty, the Father of Jesus Christ, the Father of our spirits, the maker of heaven and earth, condescended to come down to this our mother earth, in person, in company with his beloved Son, and show themselves to Joseph Smith. I believe it. The truth has made me feel that this must be true. It cannot be error, for the Lord God Almighty could never build the structure that he has built upon the testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith, if it had been founded in error or untruth. This people never could have combined and adhered together, never could have been united, never could have seen eye to eye, never could have been one, in order that they might be acknowledged of God as his own, if we had been building upon error. If our foundations were laid in untruth and in unrighteousness this could not be. But the Lord is at the bottom of this. Joseph



Smith was not at the foundation of it. He was not responsible, only so far as he was obedient to the will of the Father. God is responsible for this work. The Lord Almighty has made the promises concerning this work, not Joseph Smith, not Hyrum Smith. No other man has made true promises with reference to the future of Zion and to the building up of the kingdom of God in the earth, except God inspired him to do it. Not of himself has man ever done anything of the kind. The Lord is at the bottom; the Lord is at the top; the Lord is all the way through this work, and every fibre of it is in his keeping and is moved by his magic power and by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit. That is my testimony to you.

I believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ, because more than ever I come nearer the possession of the actual knowledge that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, through the testimony of Joseph Smith contained in this book, the Doctrine and Covenants, that he saw Him, that he heard Him, that he received instructions from Him, that he obeyed those instructions, and that he today stands before the world as the last great, actual, living witness of the divinity of Christ's mission and his power to redeem man from the temporal death and also from the second death which will follow man's own sins, through disobedience to the ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thank God for Joseph Smith. I believe in his mission, having accepted this great truth and his narration of it.

The greatest event that has ever occurred in the world since the resurrection of the Son of God from the tomb, and his ascension on high, was the coming of the Father and of the Son to that boy Joseph Smith, to prepare the way for the laying of the foundation of his kingdom—not the kingdom of man—never more to cease nor to be overturned. Having accepted this truth, I find it easy to accept of every other truth that he enunciated and declared dur-

ing his mission of fourteen years in the world. He never taught a doctrine that was not true. He never practiced a doctrine that he was not commanded to practice. He never advocated error. He was not deceived. He saw; he heard; he did as he was commanded to do; and, therefore, God is responsible for the work accomplished by Joseph Smith—not Joseph Smith. The Lord is responsible for it, and not man.

I am happy to express to this audience my knowledge of the successors of Joseph Smith. They reared me, in part, so to speak. In other words, with them I journeyed across the deserts, by the side of my ox-team, following President Brigham Young and his associates to these barren wastes, barren as they were when we first entered this valley. I believed in him then, and I know him now! I believed in his associates, and I know them now; for I lived with them; I slept with them; I traveled with them; I heard them preach and teach and exhort, and I saw their wisdom which was not the wisdom of man but the wisdom of Almighty God. When President Young set his foot down here, upon this desert spot, it was in the midst of persuasion, prayers and petitions on the part of some Latter-day Saints who had gone forward and landed upon the coast of California, that beautiful, rich country, semi-tropical, abounding in resources that no inland country could possess, inviting and appealing for settlers at that time, and just such settlers as President Brigham Young could have taken there—honest people, people who were firm in their faith, who were established in the knowledge of truth and righteousness, and in the testimony of Jesus Christ, which is the spirit of prophecy, and in the testimony of Joseph Smith which was a confirmation of the spirit of Christ and of his mission.

These people pleaded with President Young: “Come with us,” they said, “and go to the coast. Go where roses bloom all the year round, where the fragrance of flowers

scents the air, from May until May; where beauty reigns; where the elements of wealth are to be found, and only need to be developed. Come with us."

"No," said President Young, "we will remain here, and we will make the desert blossom like the rose. We will fulfil the Scriptures by remaining here."

I heard him tell one of the Battalion boys who came back from California with a little buckskin sack of gold nuggets, and who shook them in the face of President Young, and said to him: "Look what we could get if we were to go to California! The land is full of gold;" but President Young pointed his finger (I was there and saw and heard it), and he said: "Brother——, you may go to California, if you will. Those who want to go there can go, but we will remain here; and I want to tell you that those who remain here and obey counsel, in a few years will be able to buy out every one of you who go to California—ten-fold over."

(Bishop George Romney: "That is true; I know the man.")

Why, bless your soul, what did President Young know about Utah, at that early day? We did not know that there was even a lump of coal in existence in the land. I myself passed the first fall and winter after our entrance into this valley hauling wood out of Mill Creek canyon and Parley's canyon; and during that fall and winter I hauled forty loads of wood with my oxen and wagon out of these canyons. Every load I cut and hauled diminished the supply of wood for fuel for the future; and I said to myself: What will we do when the wood is all gone? How will we live here when we can't get any more fuel, for it was rapidly going. I followed that pursuit until it took me three days in the mountains with my ox-team and wagon, to get a load of wood for winter fuel; and what were we to do? Yet President Young said, "This is the place."

Well, ordinarily, our judgment and our faith would

have been tried, in the decision of the president, if we had not implicit confidence in him. If we had not known that he was the mouthpiece of God, that he was the real and legitimate successor of the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we would have doubted his wisdom and we would have faltered in our faith in his promise and word; but no, we believed him, and we stayed; and so far as I am concerned, I am here yet; and I propose to remain here as long as the Lord wants me to stay. And what has developed?

Our good friends from the east used to come out here in the early days, and upbraid us. They said: "Why, it is the fulfilment of the curse of God upon you. You have been driven away from the rich lands of Illinois and Missouri into a desert, into a salt land."

"I said: "Yes, we have salt enough here to save the world, thank God, and we may find use for it by and by."

Well, before the wood gave out entirely in the mountains, we discovered coal up here in Summit county, and then we began to discover it all along the mountains here, and we kept on discovering it, until at last we have learned that we have coal enough in Utah to furnish fuel for the whole world for a hundred years, if they want to come and get it. We have it right here, any amount of it; and they haven't got that in California; they come up here to get their coal.

We have discovered that this country was really the gold-mine country of the world; that here abounded silver as well as gold in greater abundance than in California. We have discovered now that some of our mountains here are practically made of copper, and men are hewing copper out of the mountains by millions of tons, so to speak, and coining it in the way of business into money; and thank the Lord, we do not have to go to Liverpool for the salt we use in making butter. We have it right here, just as good and

pure as the best they can fetch from England or anywhere else in the world; and this salt land has proven to be a boon, a consolation and a blessing beyond all power of description.

When the army came out here, in 1858, we wanted some bullets to go out and meet General Johnston and his forces that were coming in—not to kill them; we did not want the bullets to kill them; we just wanted the bullets to scare them with. Some of the boys went out here into the mountains with a pick and shovel, and they dug up lead, impregnated somewhat with silver. They brought it in, improvised a little furnace and ran out a few tons of lead. I had the honor of being associated with that little company of men, and I brought home with me some thirty or forty pounds of lead that we just quarried out of the hill with a pick and shovel.

When I rode up to the office here, to report to President Young my return from my mission of over three years, the army was approaching, and he said to me: “Well, Joseph, have you got a horse?”

I said, “Yes, sir.”

“Have you got a gun?”

I said, “Yes, sir.”

“Have you got any ammunition?”

I said “No, sir.”

“Well,” he said, “you report to Brother Rockwood, at the commissary office and he will furnish you with ammunition, and you take your gun and go out to the front.”

So I went home and sat up all that night, running bullets out of my mountain lead; reported the next day to Brother Rockwood, received a chunk of Mother Gadbury’s cheese and some crackers, and started on my horse, with a brother-in-law, for the front. I spent part of the winter of 1858, and all of the spring and a portion of the summer of 1859, guarding Uncle Sam’s troops; and we never hurt one of them, not one. We never molested a single individual of them; but we hedged up their way and they camped out at

Fort Bridger all winter long, and we sent them salt to save them; and they rejected it, because they were afraid there was something in the salt, more than the savor of it. But I assure you the salt was pure and good.

Now, just before that time, I was a farmer. I had to plow my land and farm it, but I did not have a spear of grass or hay to feed my team, and how was I going to do my spring work? This valley produced mighty little hay at that time. I hitched up my team, my brother and I, and we drove sixty miles to the north and bought a couple of loads of wild grass hay, and carted that hay down sixty miles to feed our teams in order to plow our land. I used to think, how in the world are we going to live in Utah without feed for our teams. Just then the Lord sent a handful of alfalfa seed into this valley, and Christopher Layton planted it, watered it, and it matured; and from that little beginning, Utah can now produce a richer crop of hay than Illinois or Missouri can do. So the hay question was settled and the coal question was settled. Then the question of producing food from the land. Why, it was a marvel. One good man cultivated his little farm for thirty years, without a change, and raised from fifty to sixty bushels of wheat per acre each year on his farm, during that entire period. So the soil is rich, and everything is favorable for Zion here where President Young determined that he would stay; if we had not stayed here, it is clear we would have been overwhelmed and swallowed up by the multitudes who rushed to California.

Now, my brethren and sisters, I know whereof I speak with reference to these matters, for I have come down through every atom of it, at least from the expulsion from the city of Nauvoo; in February, 1846, when I stood upon the bank of the river and saw President Young and the Twelve apostles, and as many of the people of Nauvoo as had teams or could possibly migrate, cross the Mississippi

river on the ice. The river froze within a day or two, because of heavy frost, which enabled them to cross as they did, and thus the first real marvel and manifestation of the mercy and of the power of God was manifest, in making a roadway across the Mississippi a mile wide at that place by which our people could go on their journey to the West. I saw them go. My brother was with them, and I wondered if I would ever see him again. We remained there in Nauvoo until September, 1846, when the city was besieged, at the mouth of the cannon and musket, and my mother and her family were compelled to take all that they could move out of the house—their bedding their clothing, the little food they possessed, leaving the furniture and everything else standing in the house, and fled across the river, where we camped without tent or shelter until the war was over. The city was conquered, and the poor people that were left there were compelled to seek shelter somewhere else. From that moment on, I have been in the conflict. I have seen it and experienced it all the way through; and I am satisfied with my experience.

I bear record to you of the divinity of the work in which you are engaged, and I bear record to you and testify that it has been the power of God, not that of President Young or of his associates, that has kept the people together and united them. By that power you have been able to come here this morning and with one united voice, and uplifted hands, sustain in the positions to which they have been chosen the men who have been called and appointed and ordained by virtue of authority from God, to preside over you and teach you things that are good to be taught and good to be known and observed, which will bring life and salvation to those who will hearken and be obedient.

The Lord bless you; the Lord bless the pure in heart throughout the world. May the Lord have mercy upon the suffering nations that are afflicted by this terrible calamity

of war. May he save the poor and the needy and the honorable among the children of men, to come eventually to a knowledge of his truth, that they may be saved in his kingdom.

Much could be said. Joseph Smith taught the building of temples. I can scarcely quit. Joseph Smith was the instrument in the hand of God in revealing the ordinances of the house of God that are essential to the salvation of the living and the dead. Joseph Smith taught these principles, and his brethren to whom he taught them have carried out his views. They have put his doctrines to the test. They have obeyed his counsel, and they have honored him and his mission and sustained him as man has never been sustained by any other people under God's heavens. So we will continue to sustain Joseph the prophet, and his work that he has accomplished among the children of men, and we will abide in the truth forever, by the help of God; even so, Amen.—*Sermon, Salt Lake Assembly Hall, July 8, 1917.*