

# THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH

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## THE INCOMPARABLE JOSEPH SMITH

IT IS A WARM DAY-JUNE 29, 1844.

A boat approaches a horseshoe bend in the Mississippi River. On that bend is a city. A traveler on the boat seeks to find the city on his map, but the map, printed a few years previously, shows no such city. On inquiry, he is told that the city is Nauvoo. A brief stop is to be made.

At the docking, the traveler becomes curious as to why long lines of people wait to enter a large home on the river front. Being in no hurry, he informs the boat's captain that he is going to remain in Nauvoo, perhaps overnight.

As he approaches the end of the line, it becomes apparent that these are grief-stricken people. The ladies and many men are weeping.

"Excuse me," he says, approaching a mourner, "but what are these lines for?"

The mourner looks up in amazement: "You mean you don't know?"

"I'm a stranger here," he says. "I just arrived on the boat."

"Oh," replies the mourner. "We are waiting to view the bodies of Lieutenant General Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum who were killed two days ago."

"Lieutenant General Smith?" the visitor says questioningly.

"Yes, he was the Lieutenant general of the Nauvoo Legion, an army of 5,000 men."

"How many others were killed with them?" asks the visitor.

"None, That is probably the main reason why Joseph died. He believed that his enemies wanted his life alone, and if he had to die, he thought that the lust for blood would be satisfied without the rest of us being killed. He wanted his brother Hyrum to live, but Hyrum insisted on remaining at his side."

"How did the trouble begin that led to their death" asks the traveler.

"Well, the public reason given was the destruction of the press of the Nauvoo Expositor," replies the mourner. "The newspaper was owned by Joseph's enemies, and they published slanderous and inflammatory articles and lies seeking to build hatred against Joseph Smith. So an order to close the paper was issued by the city council and the mayor, Joseph Smith."

"Joseph Smith was also the Mayor of this city?"

"Yes."

"This must be a very new city," says the traveler. "It isn't even on my map."

"Yes, it is new. Just six years ago this was nothing but a swamp."

Shaking his head in disbelief the traveler says, "It is a beautiful city. I noticed as I came up the river that the farms and corrals are outside of town."



"Yes, this is the way Joseph planned the city."

"Joseph planned this city?"

"Yes, so that the people, mostly farmers, could have the advantages of city life - so that we might associate together and learn from each other."

The traveler then comments on the wide, straight streets and the well-built houses and wonders what the large building under construction is to be. The mourner informs him that it is the temple and that Joseph had designed it to be the dominant landmark in the city.

"Joseph Smith designed the temple!" the stranger exclaims. He then remembers: "You were telling me what led to his death."

"Oh, yes, the Expositor incident." says the mourner. "But the trouble began a long time ago, even before Joseph translated the ancient record."

"He was a translator?" repeats the visitor. "What happened to the translation of this ancient record."

"It has been published. It is called the Book of Mormon."

"Has he published any other books?" asks the stranger.

"Oh, yes, as president of the Church...."

"President of the Church?" exclaims the visitor.

"Yes, president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Almost everyone here in Nauvoo is a member of the Church. As president he published the Doctrine and Covenants and...."

"What kind of book is that?" asks the amazed traveler.

"It is a book of revelations that were given to the Prophet Joseph Smith...."

"The Prophet Joseph Smith!"

"Yes. God the Father and his resurrected son Jesus Christ appeared to him and conversed with him in his youth. In fact, it was after Joseph, full of joy and enthusiasm, told his neighbors he had seen a vision that the persecution first began. Not only was Joseph persecuted, but also all of his followers were. Why, some of the people you see here have been driven from homes in New York, Ohio, and Missouri. In Missouri none of us were paid for our losses. Joseph tried to obtain redress but was refused. That's the principle reason why he became a candidate for the presidency of the United States."

"A candidate for the presidency of the United States!" cries out the bewildered stranger.

The mourner continues: "It was four days ago that Joseph bid a reluctant farewell to his family, looked longingly at the temple and then at his farm, and said. 'This is the loveliest place and best people under the heavens.' He then rode toward the county seat at Carthage to turn himself over to his enemies. He said, 'I am going like a lamb to the slaughter, but I am as calm as a summer's morning.' He was promised protection and a fair trial, but two days ago, on June 27, a band of over a hundred men with blackened faces stormed the jail. A few moments later, Joseph and Hyrum lay dead."

"How old was he?" asks the traveler.

"Thirty-eight years old," says the mourner.

The visitor looks on in disbelief and thinks to himself: "Lieutenant general, translator, author, mayor, prophet, Church president, city planner, architect, presidential candidate - what manner of man was this Joseph Smith?"

(Leon Hartshorn, "The Incomparable Joseph Smith," (New Era 2:14-15 Jan. 1972).

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"The things of God are of deep import; and time and experience and careful and ponderous and solemn thoughts can only find them out. Thy mind, O man, if thou wilt lead a soul unto salvation, must stretch as high as the utmost heavens and search into and contemplate the darkest abyss and the broad expanse of eternity -- thou must commune with God!"

--Joseph Smith

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"The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles, and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that he died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it.

-- Teachings of Prophet Joseph Smith

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TNT- Today not tomorrow

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To think comes from the mind, to feel comes from the heart, judge from the mind after consulting with the heart.

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Be still and know that I am God

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Service and character are all we can take from this world.

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The right thing for the wrong reason is treason.

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There is no death only a change of worlds.

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The best ideas haven't been thought of yet.

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# JOSEPH SMITH - THE MAN, THE PROPHET, AND THE IDEAL HE EXEMPLIFIED

## A Poet Once Said of Joseph

Once in the world's history we were to have a Yankee prophet, and we have had him in Joe Smith. For good or for evil, he has left his track on the great pathway of life; or, to use the words of Horne, "knocked out for himself a window in the wall of the nineteenth century, whence his rude, bold, good, humored face will peer out upon the generations to come.

John Greenleaf Whittier, Millennial Star,  
X Oct 1, 1948, P. 302.

## Description of the Prophet Joseph Smith

George Q. Cannon's Description of Joseph: "His head, crowned with a mass of soft wavy hair, was grandly poised. His face possessed a complexion of such clearness and transparency that the soul appeared to shine through. He wore no beard, and the full strength and beauty of his countenance impressed all beholders at a glance. He had eyes which seemed to read the hearts of men.

(Cannon, George Q., Life of Joseph Smith, the Prophet. pp. 19-21)

Parley P. Pratt's Pen Portrait of Joseph: President Joseph Smith was in person tall and well built, strong and active; of a light complexion, light hair, blue eyes, very little beard, and of an expression peculiar to himself, on which the eye naturally rested with interest, and was never weary of beholding. His countenance was ever mild, affable, beaming with intelligence and benevolence; mingled with a look of interest and an unconscious smile of cheerfulness, and entirely free from all restraint of affectation of gravity; and there was something connected with the serene and steady penetrating glance of his eye, as if he would penetrate the deepest abyss of the human heart, gaze into eternity, penetrate the heavens and comprehend all worlds. He possessed a noble boldness and independence of character; his manner was easy and familiar. (Autobiography of Parley P Pratt, pp. 45-46, Third edition.)

"Joseph Smith, the president of the church, prophet, seer, and revelator, in thirty-six years of age, six feet high....weighing two hundred and twelve pounds." (Millennial Star, III, (May, 1842), p. 8.)

Joseph Smith had "a tall, well-built form, with the carriage of an Apollo, brown hair, handsome blue eyes, which seemed to dive down to the innermost thoughts with their sharp, penetrating gaze, a striking countenance, and with manners at once majestic, yet gentile, dignified - yet exceedingly pleasant."

(Journal History, October 29, 1833).

"But the prophet's most remarkable feature is his eyes. Not that it is very large, or very bright, very thoughtful or very restless, or even very deep in its expression or location; for it is usually neither of them. The hue is light hazel and it is shaded, and, at times, almost veiled by the longest, thickest light lashes you ever saw belonging to a man. The brows are also light and thick indeed precisely of that description called beetle-brow."

(Edwin F. Parry, Stories about Joseph Smith, p. 158-160).

Wandle Mace described the Prophet as: "A fine looking man, tall and well-proportioned, strong and active, light complexion, blue eyes, and light hair, and very little beard." (Journal of Wandle Mace, 1809-1890, BYU).

In the Young Women's Journal, XVI, p. 547, Joseph is described as a "large man, tall and fair....his eyes were blue, and his hair a golden brown...."



## THE PROPHET'S LOVE FOR SPORTS

Physically, the prophet was a powerful man. "He was as quick as a squirrel and as strong as a mountain lion," said Lyman L. Woods, "but he was as gentle as a lamb." Said another, "He was about six feet tall, sound bodied," very strong and quick - no breakage about his body." (Young Women's Journal, XVII; p. 539-540).

He enjoyed sports. He loved the young people and was able to win many over by his physical ability. He was a champion of every sport that he tried. Wrestling and pulling sticks were his favorite sports.

### "The Wrestler"

On the frontier, where Joseph spent much of his life, the measure of a man was largely determined by his strength and ability. Wrestling was a common sport and on many occasions the prophet engaged in it either for sport or to meet the challenges forced upon him. While visiting Ramus, Illinois, he wrote in his Journal, "I wrestled with William Wall, the most expert wrestler in Ramus, and threw him." Another such instance was related by Major Joseph McGee of Gallatin, Missouri, who said, "I saw Joseph Smith throw John Brasefield, the champion wrestler of the country, the first two falls out of a match of three. He was a powerful man." Those who knew the prophet gave similar reports. Said Enoch E. Dodge, "I have seen him run, jump, wrestle and pull sticks many times, and was always winner." (Young Women's Journal XVII, p. 544).

While the Prophet and others were imprisoned in Missouri, they were sent to Davies County under guard and turned over to a group of the strongest and roughest men in that county. The reputed champion wrestler of Davies County challenged the Prophet to a wrestling match, which Joseph at first declined to engage in because he was a prisoner and felt that he could not participate in such activities under the circumstances. But, after being encouraged by the guards and after the man had promised not to get angry if he should be thrown, the Prophet consented. The Davies County Wrestler sought to use all the trickery known to him in his effort to throw the Prophet, but he failed. Finally, Joseph made his first real attempt and threw his antagonist flat on his back in a puddle of water. This made the Missourian angry, even though he had agreed to restrain himself, but his associates interfered and there-after subjected him to much ridicule over the matter.

(Autobiography of Andrew Jenson, p. 164-165).

### "Pulling Sticks"

Pulling sticks was another sport in which the Prophet often engaged. The contestants would sit upon the floor facing each other, with a sturdy stick between them, and then see which one could pull the other up from his seated position. But in such tests of strength, said Benjamin F. Johnson, "he never found his match." Joseph recorded one such example in his journal: "In the evening, when pulling sticks, I pulled up Justice A. Morse, the strongest man in Ramus, with one hand."

On another occasion, the Prophet was traveling away from Nauvoo when an attempt was made to kidnap him and to carry him to Missouri, to be turned over to his former persecutors. But the Prophet's enemies were frustrated when certain brethren intercepted the kidnapping party and issued legal procedures against them, whereupon the two hostile bands found it necessary to travel together to Nauvoo. Upon his return the Prophet spoke to the Saints, declaring:

"I am well....I am hearty....I feel as strong as a giant.  
I pulled sticks with the men coming along, and I pulled  
up with one hand the strongest man that could be found.  
Then two men tried, but they could not pull me up.

(D.H.C. Vol. 5, p. 466)



## PROPHET'S WRESTLING ABILITY

### "Powerful Man"

Warren Waste, reputedly the strongest man in the Western Reserve, witnessed a test of the Prophet's strength, will, and courage. As one of a mob that dragged Joseph from his bed in the middle of the night, Waste had boasted that he alone could take the Prophet out of the house. But as he and others were undertaking their fiendish designs, Waste had hold of one foot when the Prophet gave him a kick that sent him sprawling off the steps. The imprint made in the ground by his head and shoulders could still be seen the next morning. With his boastful spirit cooled, Waste recovered himself and cried, "Do not let him touch the ground, or he will run over the whole of us." He afterwards said that the Prophet was "the most powerful man" he had ever had hold of in his life."

(Millennial Star, XXVI, p. 834-835).

Joseph Smith went out of his way to encourage wholesome fun and amusement. While out raising money to free his friend, Orrin Porter Rockwell, from an unjust imprisonment in Missouri, the prophet came to a large crowd of young men occupied in wrestling. Among them was a bully from the neighboring town of La Harpe, Hancock County, Illinois, who had thrown everyone who wrestled with him. Said Calvin W. Moore, who was present:

### "Wrestling Incident"

"When Joseph came to the crowd he told them what he wanted, passed around the hat, raised what money he could and then went into the ring to take part with the young men and boys in their games."

Then one young admirer of the Prophet said, "Brother Joseph, here is a big fellow from La Harpe (who had thrown every young fellow in the crowd) who has boasted that he can throw you. Why don't you give him a try?" So the Prophet said, "I will be glad to accomodate him." Then the La Harpe young man made a rush at the Prophet. Joseph side-stepped, whirled around him, snatched him by the seat of the pants and collared him. He then dumped him into a wet muddy ditch. The Prophet then reaching out his hand and smiling his most contagious smile said, "You must forgive me for this, but when I'm with the boys, I make all the fun I can for them."

(Parry, Stories about Joseph Smith, P. 27-29)

## WHY JOSEPH PARTICIPATED IN SPORTS

The development of friendship and sociability was another worthy goal sought by the Prophet through the use of sports. When his brother Hyrum reproved him for playing a game of ball with some young men in Nauvoo, stating that such conduct was not becoming to a Prophet of the Lord, Joseph replied, "Brother Hyrum, my mingling with the boys in a harmless sport like this does not injure me in any way, but on the other hand it makes them happy and draws their hearts nearer to mine; and who knows but there may be young men among them who may sometime lay down their lives for me."

(Parry, Stories About Joseph Smith. p. 97)

One time an admirer of the Prophet said, "I've seen the Prophet wrestle, run and jump, but I have never seen him beaten. In all he did he was always manly and almost God-like."

## JOSEPH'S ATHLETIC ABILITY

Another admirer said: "He could come up to a six-foot bar and leap over it.... with ease." In his own journal he wrote; "On arriving at Crane's, I jumped out of the buggy, and instead of going through the gate or climbing the fence,



walked up and jumped over the fence without touching it." (DHC, vol. 5, pp 456.) On another occasion in his journal, the Prophet wrote: "I wrestled with William Wall, the most expert wrestler in Ramus and threw him." (DHC, vol. 302.) He stood up for correct principles and would not be intimidated, even to the use of his physical strength in his defense. On an occasion of this nature he writes in his journal: "Josiah Butterfield came into my house and insulted me so outrageously that I kicked him out of the house, across the yard and into the street." (DHC V. 5, p. 316).

Two other experiences in the life of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, indicate his willingness to stand up for principle:

"Defended Right Principles"

Mr. Bagby, the collector, came up in the midst of our conversation, and when asked about it denied always been ready to pay all my taxes when I was called upon; and I did not think it gentlemanly treatment to sell any of my lots for taxes; and I told him that he was continually abusing the citizens here. Bagby called me a liar, and picked up a stone to throw at me, which so enraged me that I followed him a few steps, and struck him two or three times. Esquire Daniels H. Wells stepped between us and succeeded in separating us. I told the Esquire to assess the fine for the assault, and I was willing to pay it. He not doing it, I rode down to Alderman Whitney, stated the circumstances, and he imposed a fine which I paid, and then returned to the political meeting. (DHC, Vol. 5, p. 524)

Even when the Prophet was a young boy he had the courage and determination to defend truth:

"Whipped a Wife Beater"

"A man who whips his wife is a coward. When I was a boy, I once fought with a man who had whipped his wife. It was a hard contest; but I still remembered that he had whipped his wife; and this encouraged me, and I whipped him till he said he had had enough. (DHC, Vol. 5, p. 215)

SPORTS PARTICIPATION AN OBJECT LESSON

The Prophet often applied his physical exercises and sports toward the accomplishment of wholesome purposes. After wrestling with the boys and playing ball with them he would say: "Well, come on fellows, get your teams. Let's go out and get some wood for the poor people in Nauvoo." Thirty-nine teams went out into the woods with one hundred and fifty young men. They brought back thirty-nine loads of wood for the poor people in Nauvoo.

On another occasion after participating in sports with the young men, the Prophet said: "Come on boys. Let's go and build widow Jones a house." In a very short period, Widow Jones had a home.

Apparently the Prophet's playing, wrestling, and pulling sticks with the boys, upset some of the saints. To their complaints the Prophet gave a parable of a prophet and a hunter:

There was a prophet sitting under a tree when a hunter came along. The prophet noticed that the hunter had his bow and arrow in his hands. He asked the hunter if he always kept the bow string tight. The hunter replied, "no." Then the prophet asked, "Why?" The hunter said, "Because it would lose its strength and elasticity." The prophet said, "The same is with me. If I kept my mind stretched up all the time. I would lose my effectiveness as a prophet.

(Parry, Stories about Joseph Smith, p. 28)



## SUNDAY SPORTS - PROPHET'S COURAGE

The Prophet's love for sports added an interesting dimension to his personality. Often after a heated discussion with ministers over doctrinal points, the Prophet would say, "Gentlemen, let's lay the scriptures aside for a moment and I'll challenge you to jump at the mark with me." Often these men of the broadcloth were offended to think that a man who claimed to be a prophet of the Lord would stoop to such boyish sports. One such occurrence transpired on the Sabbath to the dismay of the ministers. The ministers had apparently forgotten that the Prophet Elijah was the swiftest foot racer in ancient Israel of his day, and that Jacob was somewhat of a wrestler himself. (Ivan J. Barrett, Joseph Smith, the Extraordinary, p. 9)

## FEARLESS COURAGE

However, this strength of body the Prophet possessed was combined with an indomitable will and a supreme courage in doing right. He and his brother Hyrum were said to be "as brave as lions". (Millennial Star, III (September, 1842), p. 84.) In a letter to James Arlington Bennett, Joseph described himself in the following terms: "I never knew what it was, as yet, to fear the face of clay, or the influence of man." (DHC, V, p. 157.)

Because of his fearless courage the Prophet often strengthened his brethren and carried them through trials and difficulties that might otherwise have been insurmountable. When a mob force of some 3,500 was approaching Far West, shortly before the Saints were driven from Missouri, Lieutenant-Colonel George M. Hinkle, Commander of the Mormon forces, ordered a retreat, "Retreat!" exclaimed Joseph Smith. "Why, where in the name of God shall we go?" Then turning to the men around him he said, "Boys, follow me! A band of about two hundred men went with him out on the open prairie to face the force of 3,500. While they prepared for a showdown, the Prophet sent word to the enemy by one of their messengers, saying "Go tell your general for me that if he does not immediately withdraw his men, I will send them to hell!" The mob charged only to retreat in disorder and confusion before the Mormon lines. (Parry, Stories About Joseph Smith, the Prophet, p. 72-73)

### "Man of Action"

Another incident which illustrates the Prophet's fearless courage occurred near the end of his earthly career when the powers of the devil in the form of persecution were coming upon the Saints. A threat from the mob had reached the Prophet; "We are going to drive the Mormons to hell, this time, sure." Yet this great leader with the mildness of a lamb and the courage of a David said to his frightened followers: "Never mind, my brethren, if they drive us to hell, we'll turn the devil out and make a heaven of it."

(George Q. Cannon, The Life of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, p. 380)

### "Richmond Incident"

Another example of the Prophet's courage to speak out occurred while the Prophet was a prisoner in Gallatin. One of the leaders by the name of Peniston was abusing one of the captive brethren. Joseph gave a rebuking glance upon him and roared like thunder, "Peniston, your heart is as black as your whiskers." Peniston threw his hand over his beard, which was as black as a crow, and rushed from the room, fearing and quaking in every limb. (George Q. Cannon, p. 288). However, the foremost example of the Prophet's courage to speak out in defense of himself and his brethren occurred in the Richmond Jail. This classic example of his boldness and fearlessness illustrates how dynamic his personality was and the tremendous influence he had on those associated with him. Regardless of his own personal danger he courageously rebuked those who unrighteously offended or abused his followers. The tedious night in the Richmond Jail, when the



rabble guards of Colonel Price painted their hearts and ears with abusive talk, obscene jests, horrid oaths and filthy language as they recounted each of their villainous deeds committed against the Prophet's friends at Far West, could not be heard in silent acquiescence. Parly P. Pratt writes: "Dynamic Courage"

"In one of those tedious nights we had lain as if in sleep till the hour of midnight had passed, and our ears and hearts had been pained, while we had listened for hours to the obscene jests, the horrid oaths, the dreadful blasphemies and filthy language of our guards. Colonel Price at the head, as they recounted to each other deeds of raping, murder, robbery, etc., which they had committed among the "Mormons" while at Far West and vicinity. They even boasted of defiling by force wives, daughters and virgins, and of shooting or dashing out the brains of men, women and children.

I had listened till I became so disgusted, shocked, horrified, and so filled with the spirit of indignant justice that I would scarcely refrain from rising upon my feet and rebuking the guards; but had said nothing to Joseph, or any one else, although I lay next to him and knew he was awake. On a sudden he arose to his feet, and spoke in a voice of thunder, or as the roarings of a lion, uttering, as near as I can recollect, the following words:

"SILENCE, ye fiends of the infernal pit. In the name of Jesus Christ, I rebuke you, and command you to be still; I will not live another minute and hear such language. Cease such talk, or you or I die THIS INSTANT!"

He ceased to speak. He stood erect in terrible majesty. Chained, and without a weapon; calm, unruffled, and dignified as an angel, he looked upon the quailing guards, whose weapons were lowered or dropped to the ground; whose knees smote together, and who, shrinking into a corner, or crouching at his feet, begged his pardon, and remained quiet till a change of guards. (Autobiography; P. P. Pratt, pp. 210-211.)

#### MAN OF ACTION

The Prophet was always first to act when in the midst of difficulties. John Taylor informs us that Joseph the Prophet "in the midst of difficulties was always the first in motion.

##### "Run Away Horses"

An example of this is when he and Judge Elias Higbee were traveling by stage coach to Washington D.C., in the hopes of obtaining help from President Martin Van Buren regarding the evils committed against the Saints in Missouri. While traveling by stage coach to Washington, they tripped through a mountain area, and the drivers left the team to get some liquor at a mountain tavern. While he was gone, the horses became frightened and ran down a narrow, steep winding road. The Coach was crowded with passengers; some of whom were members of Congress. There were also three women in the coach. The Prophet tried to calm his fellow passengers, but could not. One woman was so frightened that she tried to throw her baby out the coach window. Then the Prophet opened the door and securing his hold on the side of the swaying coach, and exerting his great strength, he climbed up into the driver's seat. It was only a matter of moments that he brought the maddened, stampeding horses to a halt. The passengers lavished the Prophet with their thanks and praise. Members of Congress suggested that such a heroic deed be mentioned in the halls of parliament. However, when they learned that their hero was Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet, "he heard no more of their praise, gratitude, or promises of reward." (Cannon, pp. 311-312)



## NEVER BE DISCOURAGED - DON'T BE A QUITTER

### "Fighting Prophet"

Another admirable quality in the personality of Joseph Smith was his "never-say" spirit and his optimism and courage. Joseph Smith was a fighting prophet. As his biographer has said; "He thrived on opposition." We all know of his many defeats which could have been his justification for being discouraged, but he never gave up. He once told his cousin, George A. Smith, "Never be discouraged; if I were sunk in the lowest pit in Novia Scotia, with the Rocky Mountains piled on me; I would hang on, exercise faith, keep up good courage, and I would come out on top. This battling never-say-die spirit in the Prophet drew great men and women to him in his day and thrills the heart of every righteous soul today. (Evans, Joseph Smith, An American Prophet, p. 5)

This fighting prophet of Jesus Christ thrived on opposition. He even gloried in persecution. On one occasion he compared himself to a rough stone rolling down a high mountain. The only polishing he got was "when the roughness was rubbed off from coming in contact with the opposition of priestcraft, religious bigotry, perjured executives, mobs and corrupt men and women with all hell knocking off a corner here and a corner there." The Prophet gave the challenge, "Come on ye persecutors! Ye false swearers! All hell boil over! ....For I will come out on top at last." (DHC Vol. VI, p. 408). Joseph faced forty-six law suits in his life according to Brigham Young, but he never "faltered, never flinched, or lacked power to perform his duties" and no charge was upheld against him because he broke no law of the land.

## JOSEPH SMITH WAS NOT A COWARD -- HE LOVED

### "Prophet Loved People"

Joseph Smith was no coward. Fear was a stranger to him. It was he who said that a coward could not be saved in the Kingdom of God. He would go right a long with the saying, "God hates a coward." There is no fear or cowardism in love. Joseph possessed the pure love of Christ. With this power to love that the Prophet always displayed it would be very easy to understand why so many of the Saints flocked around him. It is for this reason that he had such a great influence on so many lives, giving the individual self-assurance and confidence in himself. The Prophet always showed love for the Saints, especially for the little children. Many stories exist of his finding little children stuck in the mud, and then picking them up, wiped the mud off their feet, kissed their cheeks and took them into his store and gave them candy. One little child who enjoyed such an experience with the Prophet said, "Was it any wonder I loved that good and noble man of God." Margaret McIntyre Burgess tells a story about the tender love of the Prophet:

Joseph's wife, Emma, had lost a young babe. My mother had twin baby girls. The Prophet came to see if she would let him have one of them. Of course, it was rather against her feelings, but she finally consented for him to take one of them, providing he would bring it home each night. This he did punctually himself and also came after the baby each morning.

One evening he did not come with her at the usual time and mother went down to the Mansion to see what was the matter; and there sat the Prophet with the baby wrapped up in a little silk quilt. He was trotting her on his knee and singing to get her quiet before starting out, as the baby had been fretting. (Parry, Stories About Joseph Smith, p. 25-27).



(Wrestling)

Joseph Smith held tremendous power over others because of his ability to inspire men. "Men and women did eagerly whatever he wished them to do." The Prophet said, "Let's do this" not "Go do it." The Prophet's rule in living the Commandments of God was: When the Lord Commands, Do It. (DHC, Vol. II, p. 170) Because of this attitude, he had a tremendous ability to instill self-confidence and self-assurance in those around him. An example of this ability to instill self-confidence occurred in the life of a young nineteen year-old admirer of the Prophet named Philemon Merrill, who with a group of other loyal followers rescued Joseph from the hands of two sheriffs named Reynolds and Wilson who intended to abduct him to Missouri. While on their journey back to Nauvoo, the following occurred:

"Strength of Samson": While on this journey and resting in a little grove of timber where the ground was well-sodded, one of the lawyers for Reynolds and Wilson began to boast of his prowess as a wrestler. He offered to wager any sum that he could throw any man in the State of Illinois at side-hold (wrestling). Stephen Markham, (A Mormon), a side-hold wrestler, told the lawyer that he would not contest for money but would try a bout for fun. They grappled and the man threw Markham, when a great shout arose from Joseph's enemies, and they began to taunt the Prophet and his friends. Joseph turned to Brother Philemon G. Merrill, a man from Nauvoo and said: "Get up and throw that man!" Merrill was about to say that side-hold was not his game, but before he could speak the Prophet commanded him in such a way that his tongue was silenced. He arose to his feet filled with the strength of a Samson. Merrill lifted his arms and said to the Lawyer, "Take your choice of sides." The man took the left side with his right arm under; when the company all declared that this was not fair as he had a double advantage, Merrill felt such confidence in the word of the Prophet, that it made no difference to him how much advantage his opponent took and he allowed the hold. As they grappled Joseph said, "Philemon, when I count three, throw him!" On the instant after the word dropped from Joseph's lips, Merrill, with the strength of a giant, threw the lawyer over his left shoulder and he fell striking his head upon the earth. Little wonder it is reported that "awe fell upon the opponents of the Prophet, and there were no more challenges to wrestle during the journey." (Cannon, Joseph the Prophet, pp.448-449).

Another incident of Joseph's love for wrestling illustrates his consideration for those who need his help after an accident occurs:

"Considerate After Wrestling Accident"

In June, I met with an accident, which I shall mention: The Prophet and myself, after looking at his horses and admiring them that were just across the road from his house, we started thither, the Prophet at the same time put his arm over my shoulder. When we had reached about the middle of the road, he stopped and remarked: "Brother Coray, I wish you were a little larger, I would have a little fun with you." I replied, perhaps you can as it is - not realizing what I was saying - Joseph was a man of over 200 lbs., while I scarcely 130 lbs., made it not a little ridiculous for me to think of engaging with him in anything like a scuffle. However, as soon as I made this reply, he began to trip me; he took some kind of a lock on my right leg, from which I was unable to extricate it, and throwing me around, broke it some 3 inches above the ankle joint. He immediately carried me into the house, pulled off my boot, and found, at once, that my leg was decidedly broken; then got some splinters and bandaged it. A number of times that day he came to see me, endeavoring to console me as much as possible. The next day when he happened in to see me after a little



conversation, I said: "Brother Joseph, when Jacob wrestled with the Angel, and was lamed by Him, the Angel blest him; now I think I am also entitled to a blessing!" To that he replied: "I am not the Patriarch, but my father is, and when you get up and around I'll have him bless you." He said no more for a minute or so, meanwhile looking around earnestly at me; then said, Brother Coray, you will soon find a companion, one that will be suited to your condition, and whom you will be satisfied with. She will cling to you, like the cords of death; and you will have a good many children." (Howard Coray, Private Journal, 1840, Church Historian's Office)

#### THE PROPHET'S CONSIDERATION AND GENEROSITY

The following story, told by Mary Frost Adams, also illustrates the consideration Joseph Smith had for others:

##### "Gave Horse Away"

While he was acting as mayor of the city, a colored man named Anthony was arrested for selling liquor on Sunday, contrary to the law. He pleaded that the reason he had done so was that he might raise the money to purchase the freedom of a dear child held as a slave in a southern state....Joseph said: "I am sorry Anthony, but the law must be observed, and we will have to impose a fine." The next day Brother Joseph presented Anthony with a fine horse, directing him to sell it, and use the money obtained for the (freeing) of the child." (Young Woman's Journal, XVII, p. 538)

Joseph was described as always having "a smile for his friends and was always cheerful." (Life of Mosiah Hancock, p. 3) "With his most familiar friends he was social, conversational, and often indulged in harmless jokes." (Juvenile Instructor, XXVII, p. 56-57). Joseph taught that "Friendship is one of the grand fundamental principles of Mormonism; (it is designed) to revolutionize and civilize the world, and cause wars and contentions to cease and men to become friends and brothers." (DHC Vol. V, p. 517)

#### CONCLUSION: HE IS A PROPHET

Men with such a rare blend of admirable qualities as Joseph Smith possessed seldom appear on the scene of history. His physical appearance was commanding and inviting to look upon. His personality was charming and magnetic and dynamic. He was a MAN OF ACTION. While he possessed the strength of a giant, he had the agility of a chipmunk. Yet he was gentle and easy to approach, even by those in lowly stations. His keen penetrating eye was ever alert and discerning; and when truth was revealed, he manifest fearless courage in following it and defending it. Joseph Smith stands out as a man among men and is the type of person young people in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints love to hear about and pattern their lives after.

Greatness of the Prophet as recognized by Non-Mormons: An editor of the religious news for the Toronto Star, recently (1968) stated: "No matter what anyone might think of him, Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, was one of the most dynamic and creative men of the 19th century. In fact, he is one of a half dozen of the greatest men of that era." (Church News, March 2, 1968, p. 6).

A Russian historian visited the United States for something over a year studying the history of great Americans and American institutions. As he was about to board his ship to return to his native land, newspapermen interrogated him. One of them asked him this question" "IN YOUR STUDY OF GREAT AMERICANS DURING THIS PAST YEAR WHICH OF THEM DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE GREATEST?" His answer is most startling. He said: "YOU HAVE ONLY HAD ONE TRULY GREAT AMERICAN, ONE MAN WHO GAVE TO THE WORLD IDEAS THAT COULD CHANGE THE WHOLE DESTINY OF THE HUMAN RACE -- JOSEPH SMITH, THE MORMON PROPHET." (William E. Berrett, "The Life and Character of the Prophet Joseph Smith," from Speeches of the Year, BYU, April 21, 1964, P. 2).

Josiah Quincy, Mayor of Boston, visited the prophet, who at that time lived in Nauvoo. In his book The Figures of the Past made the following observation about Joseph Smith:

It is by no means improbable that some future textbook, for the use of generations yet unborn, will contain a question something like this: What historical American of the nineteenth century has exerted the most powerful influence upon the destinies of his countrymen? And it is by no means impossible that the answer to the interrogatory may be thus written: JOSEPH SMITH, THE MORMON PROPHET. (Josiah Quincy, Figures of the Past, p. 376)

Yes! The Prophet Joseph Smith was truly a great man. He was a humble man. He was a prophet of Jesus Christ. His life has been summarized in the following words: Here is a man who was born in the stark hills of Vermont: who was reared in the backwoods of New York; who never looked inside a college or high school; who lived in six States; no one of which would own him during his lifetime; who spent months in the file prisons of the period; who, even when he had his freedom, was hounded like a fugitive; who was covered once with a coat of tar and feathers, and left for dead; who, with his followers, was driven by irate neighbors from New York to Ohio, from Ohio to Missouri, and from Missouri to Illinois; and who, at the unripe age of thirty-eight, was shot to death by a mob with painted faces, "Yet this man became mayor of the biggest town in Illinois and the state's most prominent citizen, and commander of the largest body of trained soldiers in the nation outside the Federal Army; he was the first person since George Washington to hold the rank of Lieutenant-General; he founded the largest city in the state of Illinois up to that time, established a university and aspired to become President of the United States. Truly one of his followers described him in these terms, "I never saw another man like Joseph."

Wilford Woodruff knew the Prophet well and stated that he "came as near following the footsteps of the Savior as anyone possibly could." All his life Joseph the Prophet experienced financial hardships. He was seldom without need of material assistance. During the 1841 October Conference held in Nauvoo, the Prophet gave the amount of his possessions on the earth. They were few in number. He possessed the following items:

His old Charley (a horse) given him in Kirtland, two pet deer, two old turkeys and four young ones, the old cow given him by a brother in Missouri, his old Major (a dog), his wife, children, and a little household furniture; and this is the amount of the great possessions of that man whom God has called to lead his people in these last days. (DHC, Vol. 4, p. 437-438).



Joseph, a Prayerful Man: The Angel Moroni enjoined the Prophet at age 17 "Forget not to pray; that thy mind may become strong...." Daniel Tyler, 18 at the time, heard the Prophet pray in an assembly of the Saints in Kirtland, kneeling before them: "He addressed His Maker as though He was present listening as a kind father would listen to the sorrows of a dutiful child. There was no ostentation, no raising of the voice, but plain, conversational tone, as a man would address a present friend. It appeared to me as though in case the veil were taken away, I could see the Lord standing facing His humblest of all servants I had ever seen."

Joseph the Prophet. The Prophet when speaking of his own prophethood once said: "If any person should ask me if I were a prophet, I should not deny it...." (DHC Vol. V, p. 215-216). Josiah Quincy, after some days visiting and observing in Nauvoo carefully noted the power and influence of Joseph Smith, and the devotion his followers had for him. Before he left he couldn't resist saying to the Prophet:

"PROPHET"

General, it seems to me that you have too much power to be safely entrusted to one man." And Joseph, the Inspirer of Men replied: "In your hands or that of any person, so much power would, no doubt be dangerous. I am the only man in the world whom it would be safe to trust with it. REMEMBER, I AM A PROPHET." (Quincy, Figures of the Past, p. 334-335)

Leg Operation: Joseph Smith had the inheritant qualities even as a young lad to be a Prophet of Jesus Christ and Our Heavenly Father, the Great Elchim. In his youth he demonstrated the characteristics of courage, strong-mindedness, and determination to live according to conviction. Let's face the truth, the Prophet's reputation is founded on deeds of courage. The best story about the greatness of the Prophet in his youth is told best by his mother and it serves to illustrate the type of boy he was when approximately 9 years old:

"COURAGE" "WHEN A BOY"

Joseph, our third son, having recovered from typhus fever, after something like two weeks' sickness, one day screamed out while sitting in a chair, with a pain in his shoulder....we immediately sent for a doctor. He (the doctor) said it was his opinion that this pain was occasioned by a sprain. But the child declared that could not be the case....(this the doctor ignored) and....he annointed his shoulder with some bone linament, but this was no advantage to him, for the pain continued....(After two weeks) a large fever sore gathered between his breast and shoulder. (The doctor) lanced it, upon which it discharged fully a quart of matter. As soon as the sore had discharged itself the pain left it, and shot like lightning down his side into the marrow of the bone of his leg and soon became very severe. (He cried out), "Oh, father! How can I bear it! The pain is so severe. His leg soon began to swell and he continued to suffer the greatest agony for the space of two weeks longer.

After efforts to relieve the pain by making incisions in his leg to the bone, his doctors decided to amputate his leg at the knee. But his mother persuaded the doctors to try once more to save the leg.

"COURAGE TO REFUSE LIQUOR"

The principal surgeon....ordered cords to be brought to bind Joseph fast to a bedstead....upon which Joseph said very decidely, "No, Doctor, I will not be bound, for I can bear the operation much better if I have my liberty." "Then," said Dr. Stone, "will you drink some brandy?" "No," said Joseph, "not one drop." "Will you take some wine?" "No," exclaimed Joseph, "I will not take one particle of liquor, neither will I be tied down; but I will tell you what I will do - I will have

my father sit on the bed and hold me in his arms, and then I will do whatever is necessary in order to have the bone taken out." Then, looking at me, he said, "Mother, I want you to leave the room, for I know you cannot bear to see me suffer...." Then looking up into my face, his eyes swimming in tears, he continued. "Now, Mother, promise me that you will not stay, will you? The Lord will help me, and I shall get through with it." The surgeons commenced operating by boring into the bone of his leg....after which they broke it off with a pair of forceps....When they broke off the first piece, Joseph screamed out so loudly, that I could not forbear running to him. On my entering the room, he cried out, "Oh, Mother, go back, go back; I do not want you to come in - I will try to tough it out, if you will go away."

(Lucy Mack Smith, History of Joseph Smith, p. 54-58)

The operation was successful. This remarkable story from the youth of the future Prophet clearly shows the stuff he was made of. He was the type of person the Lord needed to serve as a strong-minded, determined, courageous, fighting prophet. Out of his suffering and experiences with sorrow, this great servant of God developed a tremendous capacity to LOVE PEOPLE. One one occasion the Prophet was with his cousin, George A. Smith, and they were trying to see a gentleman. While waiting for this man the Prophet, without any warning, threw both arms around his cousin, and said, "George, I love you as I love my own life." George was so overcome with emotion he later said: "I was so affected that I could hardly reply, but I did say, 'I hope Brother Joseph, that my whole life and actions will ever prove my feeling and the depth of my affection towards you.'"

(Journal of Discourses, Vol. V, p. 391)

Young people! Can you help but love a man like Joseph. I honor and revere the name of Joseph Smith. I love his doctrine; I delight to hear stories of his life.

Final Witness of the Value of Right Living and the Prophetship of Joseph Smith:

Alexander Neibaur, a converted Jew to the Church, having endured the hardships and privations required to join the Church in a foreign land and migrate to Nauvoo, and then to cross the plains to the west, was asked shortly before his death if the gospel was worth the sacrifice he had made. He replied:

"Yes! Yes! and more! I have seen my Savior. I have seen the prints in his hands! I know that Jesus is the Son of God, I know that this work is true and that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God. I would suffer it all and more, far more than I have suffered for that knowledge, even to the laying down of my body on the plains for the wolves to devour.

(Taken from Life Sketch of Alexander Neibaur, by Wenonah Shirley)

This paper represents the stories I love to tell teenagers about the Prophet Joseph Smith. It is a testimony of my love for him.

Keith Warner, March, 1968



## WHAT OTHERS THOUGHT OF JOSEPH SMITH

JOSIAH QUINCY--Mayor of Boston and author of, Figures of the Past

It is by no means improbable that some future textbook, for the use of generations yet unborn, will contain a question something like this: What historical american of the nineteenth century has exerted the most powerful influence upon the destinies of his countrymen? And it is by no means impossible that the answer to that interrogatory may be thus written: JOSEPH SMITH THE MORMON PROPHET. And the reply, absurd as it doubtless seems to most men now living, may be an obvious commonplace to their descendants. History deals in surprises and paradoxes quite as startling as this. 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 human being is not to be disposed of by pelting his memory with unsavory epithets."

THE MASONIC GRAND MASTER, IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS WROTE OF JOSEPH TO THE ADVOCATE.

Having recently had occasion to visit the city of Nauvoo, I cannot permit the opportunity to pass without expressing the agreeable disappointment that awaited me there. I had supposed from what I had previously heard, that I could witness an impoverished, ignorant and bigoted population, completely priest-ridden and tyrannized over by Joseph Smith, the great Prophet of these people.

On the contrary, to my surprise, I saw a people apparently happy, prosperous and intelligent. Every man appeared to be employed in some business or occupation. I saw no idleness, no intemperance, no noise, no riot; all appeared to be contented, with no desire to trouble themselves with anything except their own affairs....

During my stay of three days I became well acquainted with their principal man, and more particularly with their prophet. I found them hospitable, polite, well-informed and liberal. With Joseph Smith, the hospitality of whose I kindly received, I was well pleased. He appears to be much respected by all the people about him and has their entire confidence. He is a fine looking man about thirty-six years of age and has an interesting family."

A WRITER FOR THE NEW YORK HERALD HAD VISITED THE PROPHET AND IN 1842 THAT PAPER SAID:

Joseph Smith is undoubtedly one of the greatest characters of the age. He indicates as much talent, originality and moral courage as Mahomaet, Odin or any of the great spirits of past ages. In the present infidel, irreligious, ideal, geological animal-magnetic age of the world, some such singular prophet as Joseph Smith is required to preserve the principle of faith, and to plant some new germs of civilization that may come to maturity in a thousand years.



## EXCERPTS FROM "BROTHER JOSEPH"

BY CARL ARRINGTON  
THE NEW ERA, DECEMBER 1973

Joseph Smith was endowed with the magnetic charm to inspire men with loyalty and enthusiasm. Most people loved him, a few hated him, but few who met the farm-boy prophet came away untouched. He was a man of power and feeling--a man who was capable of heavenly virtues and subject to the same mortal temptations as his enemies.

Brother Joseph was a man with an unparalleled ministry that began with an unpretentious prayer offered in a country grove, included severe persecutions, inspired translations, healings, and imprisonment, and ended with a burst of gunfire at the Carthage Jail in 1844.

While the gospel teachings of Joseph Smith are widely known and studied, comparatively little is known about his personal qualities. What sort of physical countenance did he have? What recreations did he enjoy? What was he like as a friend and neighbor?

Though a few authentic pictures exist today, some reliable physical descriptions help us to imagine what the Prophet looked like. Parley P. Pratt, who was close to Joseph throughout his lifetime, by his side in the midst of angry mobs and in the quietude of the Smith home, provides a vivid personal description. (See article entitled "Joseph Smith--the Man".)

It is obvious from the accounts of those who knew him that Joseph was a man with natural leadership ability. He was open, gregarious, and inspiring. One description of Joseph's character is provided in an unpublished dissertation by Garland Tickemyer:

"He was impulsive, bold, self-confident, and consciously dramatic. He rarely hesitated to take risks, and his intuition enabled him to feel and grasp new and unusual possibilities which neither sense nor reason would normally have revealed to him. His contempt for the existing order and his inherent propensity to change and to innovate continually introduced elements of novelty which diverted the attention of his followers from their own problems to the wonders of the great enterprise in which they were engaged. He was a man on fire and would permit nothing to stand in the way of the achievement of his purposes."

Because we often dwell on the great, important aspects of Joseph Smith's life, there is sometimes a tendency to forget his kind, compassionate manner in dealing with people. To look at Joseph through the reflected image of others provides important insights into his life. His personal papers include diaries, letters, and documents and give a new appreciation of the Prophet in human terms. Reminiscences of his associates give us an intimate glimpse of the great leader--they reveal the yearnings of his heart and the outpourings of his soul.

The papers of Joseph Smith in the Church Archives provide evidence of his sincere religiosity, his love for his family, his love for all people, young and old, his enjoyment of games, his zest for life, his love of learning, and his willingness to sacrifice himself for his friends.

As Richard Bushman points out in a paper on the Prophet, Joseph's diary furnishes evidence of his religiosity in his sincere search for personal salvation. Joseph's sermons are prophetic and theological, but he also sought salvation for himself. He reveals the truth, exhorts, and administers, but he also prays to be forgiven, for peace of mind, for help in overcoming weakness. The following diary entries in the early 1830's suggest his prayerful attitude: "O may God grant that I may be directed in all my thoughts," or "Lord bless my family and preserve them." Some entries are quite urgent: "O Lord deliver thy servant out of temptations and fill his heart with wisdom and understanding." "A great congregation paid good attention. Oh God, seal our testimony to their hearts. Amen." "Oh God, establish thy word among this people."

Usually Joseph was sure of himself, radiant, and forceful, but he also had moments of anxiety. For example, "This evening my mind is calm and serene for which I thank the Lord." Again, "This evening feel better in my mind than I have for a few days back. Oh Lord, deliver thy servant out of temptations." Another: "I feel very well in my mind. The Lord is with us but have much anxiety about my family."

The personal documents among the Joseph Smith papers show plainly how love enveloped his family. Many times in his diary he notes his concern for them, and his letters are replete with inquiries after his children's welfare. "I want you should not let those little fellows forget me." he wrote rather plaintively after five months' imprisonment. "Tell them Father loves them with a perfect love, and he is doing all he can to get away from the mob to come to them."

"Those little children are subjects of my meditation continually." Joseph wrote in another letter, and he could not refrain from advising his wife on the best methods of dealing with the children. "Do teach them all you can, that they may have good minds. Be tender and kind to them. Don't be fractious to them, but listen to their wants." In one letter it is obvious that he is turning each one over in his mind as he sits in jail: "Tell little Joseph, he must be a good boy. Father loves him with a perfect love. He is the Eldest (and) must not hurt those that are smaller than him, but comfort them. Tell little Frederick, Father loves him, with all his heart. He is a lovely boy. Julia is a lovely little girl. Love her also. She is a promising child. Tell her Father wants her to remember him and be a good girl." As for his wife: "Oh my affectionate Emma, I want you to remember that I am a true and faithful friend, to you and the children forever. My heart is entwined around you forever and ever. Oh may God bless us all."

Another sister tells of the "tender sympathy and brotherly kindness he ever showed toward me and my fatherless child. When riding with him and his wife Emma in their carriage I have known him to alight and gather prairie flowers for my little girl." (Juvenile Instructor, vol. 27 (1892), p. 399.)

Still another wrote of attending school in Nauvoo in 1843: "Passing by the Prophet's house one morning, he called me to him and asked what book I read in at my school. I replied, 'The Book of Mormon.' He seemed pleased, and taking me into the house he gave me a copy of the Book of Mormon to read in at school, a gift greatly prized by me." (Juvenile Instructor, vol. 27 (1892), p. 24.)

Another girl was attending a cottage meeting: "I, a little girl, being tired and sleepy, my Pa took me in his arms to rest. Brother Joseph stopped speaking, stooped and took my feet on his knees and when I would have drawn them away, he said 'No let me hold them; you will rest better.'" (Young Woman's Journal, vol. 16 (1905), p. 558)



"Another time my older brother and I were going to school, near to the building which was known as Joseph's brick store. It had been raining the previous day, causing the ground to be very muddy, especially along that street. My brother Wallace and I both got fast in the mud, and could not get out, and of course, child-like, we began to cry, for we thought we would have to stay there. But looking up, I beheld the loving friend of children, the Prophet Joseph, coming to us. He soon had us on higher and drier ground. Then he stooped down and cleaned the mud from our little, heavy-laden shoes, took his handkerchief from his pocket and wiped our tear-stained faces. He spoke kind and cheering words to us, and sent us on our way to school rejoicing."  
(Juvenile Instructor, vol. 27 (1892), pp. 66-67).

With respect to the Prophet's concern for boys and young men, here's the recollection one: "Here (in Nauvoo) I became personally acquainted with the Prophet Joseph as a boy. The Prophet was fond of children and frequently used to come out of the Mansion and play ball with us boys. Joseph would always conform to the rules. He would ketch till it came his turn to take the club, then, being a very stout man, would knock the ball so far that we used to holler to the boy that was going to the ball to take his dinner while he was at it. This used to make the Prophet laugh. Joseph was always good natured and full of fun. I have seen him sit down on the carpet in his office in the Mansion and pull sticks with the Nauvoo Police." (Aroet Hale, Autobiography, pp. 23-24).

Edwin Holden, who first saw Joseph Smith in New York in 1831, said: "In 1838 Joseph and some of the young men were playing various out-door games, among which was a game of ball. By and by they began to get weary. He saw it, and calling them together he said: 'Let us build a log cabin.' So off they went, Joseph and the young men, to build a log cabin for a widow woman. Such was Joseph's way, always assisting in whatever he could."  
(Juvenile Instructor, vol. 27 (1892) p. 153.)

Joseph was a man who had the benefit of self-confidence yet maintained a balance through concerned humility. He was a brilliant thinker and linguist, but had little schooling and was a poor speller. He was profoundly spiritual, but avoided the impression of solemn piety. He was an uncommon type of religious leader who combined his frontier background with a divine calling to give a solid foundation to a new religious dispensation.

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#### The Minute

Just a tiny little minute,  
Only sixty seconds in it,  
Forced upon me,  
Can't refuse it,  
Didn't seek it,  
Didn't choose it,  
But it's up to me to use it,  
Give account if I abuse it.  
Just a tiny little minute  
But eternity is in it.

Anonymous

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"JOSEPH  
JOSEPH  
JOSEPH"

In July 1972, shortly after President Harold B. Lee was ordained prophet, seer, and revelator of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he went to the sacred precincts of the Salt Lake Temple. There he stood before the portraits of the ten powerful men who had preceded him. Gazing at the pictures he thought of each man's individual role and calling. All of them displayed diverse talents, yet each was bonded by covenant and desire to do the will of the Lord and promote the welfare of his people. (See Conference Report, October 1972, P. 18.)

Quite possibly these earlier presidents had thoughts similar to those of President Lee as they contemplated their calling and predecessors. No doubt their thoughts often turned to Joseph, the martyr.

Several latter-day prophets have known Joseph Smith. Some, like Brigham Young, knew him as a friend, neighbor, and mentor. To others he came in dreams and visions, as he did to Wilford Woodruff. And to all he has given solace and inspiration in directing the affairs of Christ's church.

The respect and awe with which the other prophets have characterized Joseph reveals a great deal about the young leader.

Joseph characterized himself in these words:

"I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force against religious bigotry, priestcraft, lawyer-craft, doctor-craft, lying editors, suborned judges and jurors, and the authority of perjured executives, backed by mobs, blasphemers, licentious and corrupt men and women--all hell knocking off a corner here and a corner there. Thus will I become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty...." (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, (Deseret Book Co.; 1961), p. 304.)

Brigham Young often spoke of his great love for the Prophet, and he died with the Prophet's name on his lips. A few classic excerpts from his discourses reveal his love and admiration for Joseph:

"I honor and revere the name of Joseph Smith. I delight to hear it; I love it. I love his doctrine." (Journal of Discourses, vol. 13, p. 216.)

"When I saw Joseph Smith, he took heaven, figuratively speaking and brought it down to earth; and he took the earth, brought it up, and opened up, in plainness and simplicity, the things of God; and that is the beauty of his mission." (JD, vol. 5, p. 332.)

"If Jesus lives, and is the Savior of the world, Joseph Smith is a Prophet of God, and lives in the bosom of his father Abraham. Though they have killed his body, yet he lives and beholds the face of his Father in Heaven; and his garments are pure as the angels that surround the throne of God; and no man on earth can say that Jesus lives, and deny at the same time my assertion about the Prophet Joseph." (JD, vol. 1, p. 38.)



John Taylor was in the room when the mob broke in to assassinate the Prophet as the Carthage Jail. Though he was wounded, he recovered and later became the third president of the Church. He knew Joseph in life, witnesses his death, and provides one of the most poignant tributes offered about the Prophet.

"I testify that I was acquainted with Joseph Smith for years. I have traveled with him; I have been with him in private and in public. I have associated with him in councils of all kinds; I have listened hundreds of times to his public teachings, and his advice to his friends and associates of a more private nature. I have been at his house and seen his deportment in his family. I have seen him arraigned before the tribunals of his country, have seen him honorably acquitted, and delivered from the pernicious breath of slander, and the machinations and falsehoods of wicked and corrupt men. I was with him living, and with him when he died, when he was murdered in Carthage Jail by a ruthless mob....with their faces painted. I was there myself and was wounded; I at that time received four balls in my body. I have seen him, then, under these various circumstances, and I testify before God, angels, and men, that he was a good honorable, virtuous man....that his private and public character was unimpeachable--and that he lived and died as a man of God and a gentleman. This is my testimony." (The Gospel Kingdom, (Bookcraft; c. 1943), p. 355.)

Wilford Woodruff was with Joseph before and after his death. He traveled thousands of miles with him and often acted as scribe for him--it was Brother Woodruff who wrote the revelation given through Joseph Smith concerning the Civil War. (See D & C 87.) In the Millennial Star he recounts the delightful and revealing first meeting with the Prophet Joseph:

"Before I saw Joseph I said I did not care how old he was, or how young he was; I did not care how he looked--whether his hair was long or short; the man that advanced that revelation was a Prophet of God. I knew it for myself. I first met Joseph in the streets of Kirtland. He had on an old hat, and a pistol in his hand. Said he, 'Brother Woodruff, I've been out shooting at a mark, and I wanted to see if I could hit anything,' and says he, 'Have you any objection to it?' 'Not at all,' says I; 'there is no law against a man shooting at a mark, that I know of.' He invited me to his house. He had a wolf skin, which he wanted me to help him to tan; he wanted it to sit on while driving his wagon team. Now, many might have said, 'You are a pretty Prophet; shooting a pistol and tanning a wolf skin.' Well, we tanned it, and used it while making a journey of a thousand miles. This was my first acquaintance with the Prophet Joseph. And from that day until the present, with all of the apostasies that we have had, and with all the difficulties and afflictions we have been called to pass through, I never saw a moment which I had any doubt with regard to this work. I have had no trial about this. While the people were apostatizing on the right hand and on the left, and while Apostles were urging me to turn against the Prophet Joseph, it was no temptation to me to doubt this work or to doubt that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God." (Millennial Star, vol. 53, pp. 627-28).

President Woodruff said, "Joseph visited me a great deal after his death and taught me important principles." One time he was visited by both Joseph and Hyrum Smith when he was on his way to England on a ship, and in his words, "Among other things he told me to get the spirit of God; that all of us needed it." (Discourses of Wilford Woodruff (Bookcraft; 1946), p. 288.)

In a talk given on October 19, 1896, Brother Woodruff said:



"Joseph Smith continued visiting myself and others up to a certain time, and then it stopped. The last time I saw him was in heaven. In the night vision I saw him at the door of the temple in heaven. He came to me and spoke to me. He said he could not stop to talk with me because he was in a hurry....I met half a dozen brethren who had held positions on earth, and none of them could stop to talk with me because they were in a hurry. I was much astonished. By and by I saw the Prophet again and I got the privilege of asking him a question.

"Now," I said, "I want to know why you are in a hurry. I have been in a hurry all my life; but I expected my hurry would be over when I got into the kingdom of heaven, if I ever did."

"Joseph said, 'I will tell you, Brother Woodruff. Every dispensation that has had the priesthood on the earth and has gone to the celestial kingdom has had a certain amount of work to do to prepare to go to the earth with the Savior when he goes to reign on the earth. Each dispensation has had ample time to do this work. We have not. We are the last dispensation, and so much work has to be done, and we need to be in a hurry in order to accomplish it.'" (Discourses of Wilford Woodruff, pp. 288-89).

Lorenzo Snow had a close personal relationship with Joseph Smith, and he obviously understood the Prophet's calling. President Snow characterized Joseph in the following manner:

"Joseph Smith, whom God chose to establish this work, was poor and uneducated, and belonged to no popular denomination of Christians. He was a mere boy, honest, full of integrity, unacquainted with the trickery, cunning and sophistry employed by politicians and religious hypocrites to accomplish their ends. Like Moses of old, he felt incompetent and unqualified for the task--to stand forth as a religious reformer in a position the most unpopular--to battle against opinions and creeds which have stood for ages, having the sanction and support of men the most profound in theological lore; but God had called him to deliver the poor and honest-hearted of all nations from their spiritual and temporal thralldom. And God promised him that whosoever should receive and obey his message, and whosoever would receive baptism for the remission of sins, with honesty of purpose, should receive divine manifestations--should receive the Holy Ghost--should receive the same Gospel blessings which were promised and obtained through the Gospel, as preached by the ancient Apostles; and this message, this promise, was to be in force wherever and to whomsoever it should be carried by the Elders. God's authorized messengers. So said Joseph Smith, the uneducated, the unsophisticated, the plain, simple, honest boy." (Eliza R. Snow, Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow (Deseret News Press; 1884), p. 243.)

One man who was capable of great insight into the life of Joseph Smith was Joseph F. Smith, brother Hyrum's son, who still had memories of the Prophet as an uncle as well as a prophet. Having been only a child when the Prophet's assassination took place, he recalls Joseph in this way:

"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 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 this 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 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 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." (Sermon, Salt Lake Assembly Hall July 8, 1917.)

Being a son to the Prophet's beloved brother obviously offered additional insight into his loving, fatherly character, in speaking of his namesake's love of children he said:

"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 times 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. 168.)

Heber J. Grant often expressed his admiration and respect for the Prophet in his talks. He recognized what miraculous works had been accomplished by the dynamic young seer. While speaking at the Tabernacle in Salt Lake he said, "Joseph Smith has been ridiculed and characterized as 'old Joe Smith.' I stand before you today a mere boy (39 years old), and yet Joseph Smith was martyred when he was a year younger than I am. This 'old man' accomplished in a very few years a great and marvelous labor. When we contemplate what he did, considering the opportunities of education that he had, it is indeed a marvel and wonder." (Remarks, Salt Lake Tabernacle, January 26, 1896.)

To this he added his testimony, saying, "Joseph Smith was the instrument in the hands of the living God of restoring again to this earth the true plan of life and salvation." (Improvement Era, Vol. 41, (September 1938), p. 519.)

Present-day prophets often wonder what their predecessors envisioned the Church to be in the future. George Albert Smith pondered this very question when he said, "I wonder if that great man, Joseph Smith, who gave his life that the Church might be organized and carried on as the Lord intended, could see the Church as it exists today, with its branches established in all parts of the world, and realize that each day since he was martyred, since he laid down his life and sealed his testimony with his blood, the Church has become stronger than the day before?" (Improvement Era, vol. 48 (November 1945), p. 634.)

David O. McKay was a teacher by profession and as a prophet; he displayed this quality in both his sermons and his life. Many times he recognized the deft talent displayed in the teachings of Joseph Smith. One tribute said:

"When Joseph Smith taught a doctrine, he taught it authoritatively. His was not the question whether it agreed with man's thoughts or not; whether it was in harmony with the teachings of the orthodox churches or whether it was in direct opposition. What was given to him he gave the world irrespective of its agreement or disagreement, of its harmony or its discord with the beliefs of the churches, or the prevailing standards of mankind; and



today, we look through the vista of over 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." (Gospel Ideals (An Improvement Era Publication: 1953), p. 81.)

Joseph Fielding Smith was the fourth member of the Smith family to serve as president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In addition to serving as an apostle and prophet he was a prolific writer and historian. Besides compiling the important teachings of his great-uncle, he offered many insightful statements on the Prophet. One testimony he offered was given in a talk commemorating the Prophet's birthday. He said, "...since this is the anniversary of the birth of the Prophet Joseph Smith, I feel inclined to say a word about him, about his mission. As one of the greatest of all the prophets, he presides over the last dispensation and no prophet has been given a greater mission, save perhaps it could have been Adam; and no prophet in the past has done more for the salvation of the human family, in my judgment, than did Joseph Smith the Prophet." (Take Heed to Yourselves (Deseret Book Co., 1966), pp. 273-74.)

On another occasion he said, "Do I love the Prophet Joseph Smith? Yes, I do, as my father did before me. I love him because he was the servant of God and because of the restoration of the gospel and because of the benefits and blessings that have come to me and mine, and to you and yours, through the blessings that were bestowed upon this man and those who were associated with him in the restoration of the dispensation of the fulness of time." (CR, April 1960, p. 73.)

President Harold B. Lee characterized him in this way: "Joseph Smith was the one whom the Lord raised up from boyhood and endowed with divine authority and taught the things necessary for him to know and to obtain the priesthood and to lay the foundation for God's kingdom in these latter-days." (CR, October 1972, p. 18.)

President Spencer W. Kimball wrote the following about the prophet Joseph: "Another child for Lucy! No trumpets are sounded; no hourly bulletins posted; no pictures taken; no notice is given; just a few friendly community folk pass a word along. It's a boy! Little do the brothers and sisters dream that a prophet is born to their family; even his proud parents can little suspect his spectacular destiny. No countryside farmers or loungers at the country store, no village gossips even surmise how much they could discuss, did they but have the power of prophetic vision.

'They are naming him Joseph,' it is reported. But no one knew, not even his parents, at this time, that this infant and his father have been named in the scriptures for 3,500 years, named for and known to their ancestor, Joseph, the savior of Egypt and Israel. Not even his adoring mother realizes, even in her most ambitious dreaming and her silent longings, that this one of her children, like his ancestor, will be the chief sheaf of grain to which all others will lean and the one star to which the sun and moon and other stars will make obeisance.

My testimony to you is, the Lord is God. He has charted the way, but we do not follow. He personally visited Joseph Smith in our world, in our century. He outlined the way of peace in this world and eternal worlds. That path is righteousness. The Prophet Joseph with all the successor prophets proclaimed the ripening of this world in iniquity and the solution of all vexing problems. The Book of Mormon, which he translated, relates the story of 200 years of peace in the old days, which was the greatest era of happiness of which we have any complete record.

Joseph Smith is a true prophet of the living God and his successors likewise. The mantle of authority and prophecy and revelation and power lies in his choice servant who now leads us, and he is God's prophet not only to Latter-day Saints, but to every living soul in all the world. This is my testimony." (Faith Precedes the Miracle, Spencer W. Kimball, pp. 325, 327-328).

## WHAT JOSEPH SMITH TEACHES US OF CHRIST

BY ELDER S. DILWORTH YOUNG  
ENSIGN, DECEMBER 1973

A great number of conceptions and ideas have arisen about Jesus Christ in 1900 years. And one is hard put to believe that such a gentle soul, with such a simple plan, could be the cause of the disputes, disagreements, wars, and bloodshed that have taken place on earth since he came to fulfill all righteousness.

His word and the story of his life have been explained, perverted, denied, affirmed, and completely misunderstood.

During the early 1800s, in the minds of self-appointed interpreters, God was vast, immaterial, unknowable, and indefinable. Somehow he became incarnated in the person of Jesus Christ. He would, they said, assume his mortal shape at some future and probably imminent day. All who would profess to believe on him would be saved.

Because the religionists could not agree on the principles by which these great events were to take place, they traveled around the country holding meetings and trying to stir up people to fear, believe and confess. Each claimed his views and authorities were correct and acknowledged by God.

With all of their preaching and all of their fear-provoking threats about the future for those who did not accept their teachings, none claimed to be a prophet. They totally ignored the statement of Amos, who said the Lord would do nothing except he revealed the coming events by means of a prophet. (Amos 3:7.)

During the winter of 1819, Joseph Smith listened to four ministers of religion. While they collectively agreed that one must confess belief in Christ and live to reach the presence of the Lord, Joseph Smith discovered they told four different stories of how to reach that goal. One could choose any of the four routes, but until one made a choice he was subject to a great deal of tugging and hauling by those who professed to know.

Most who wanted to be saved solved the problem by joining with the preacher whose word appealed to them most.

But Joseph Smith was an extraordinary person. He did not respond in the usual way; instead, he learned that the apostle James had given a way to gain necessary wisdom to make a decision: "Let him ask of God." (James 1:5) The word had come through eighteen centuries untouched and unchanged. But its effect on Joseph's mind was unusual--he truly believed he might ask and that he would get an answer.



In the early spring of 1820 Joseph decided he would ask God, as James had instructed. Boy-like, just a few months past fourteen, he selected a place out-of-doors where he would not be disturbed or embarrassed. He crossed the fence dividing his father's cleared acres from the surrounding forest and climbed the nearby hill. Finding a spot in dense timber where he felt safe, he knelt and began to pray.

Suddenly, Joseph was seized by an evil influence so powerful that it covered him in black darkness so suffocating that he could not speak. Struggling with all his might, he continued to pray silently for relief and succor. Relief came in an all-enveloping light; there, standing in the air before him, were two beings, manlike in form, so glorious, so wonderful, so beautiful that he could not describe them. One spoke:

"This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" (Joseph Smith 2:17.)

Joseph heard the Son declare that all churches had gone astray, and that he was to join none of them. (See Joseph Smith 2:18-20.) In that one moment all of the error in the false statements and creeds spoken by men were brushed aside. God lives! He is glorious personage! His son, resurrected, is like him, but a different personage. The Son of God has an immortal Father, who has glorified His son. These simple statements of the ancient apostles were proven true.

However, the knowledge that the Savior and his Father are personages, similar to what we may become, did not reveal knowledge of their attributes, characters, or purposes. The ancient statement of Jacob still stood: "Behold, great and marvelous are the works of the Lord. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways. And no man knoweth of his ways save it be revealed unto him; wherefore, brethren, despise not the revelations of God." (Jac. 4:8.) Isaiah said, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:8-9.)

We do not know to what extent the attributes, purposes, and personality of the Father or of the Son were revealed to the Prophet in his first vision, but we do know that Jesus Christ has, on many occasions, declared those of his attributes and characteristics that he desired to know. From these declarations and statements we begin to comprehend God and his Son Jesus Christ.

We may assume the Prophet grew in knowledge of the Son of God. But we do not know all that Joseph knew. Through him the Lord declared himself on numerous occasions. It is quite apparent that on these occasions that the Lord wanted to identify Himself by stating some eternal truth as a testimony of Himself.

What does the Lord want us to know about Himself?

He first established the truth of His physical person, and He revealed the truth about His Father's physical person in the same blazing and glorious vision. To know this one truth--the physical relationship between the Father and Son--gives understanding of the Savior's declaration that He and His Father are not one in person, but one in spiritual matters. It confirms the description of that oneness in the great prayer in Gethsemane. (See John 17.) It also gives a key to the first thirteen verses in the book of John, and, by inference,

gave us knowledge that we are also the offspring of God and may become His sons and daughters. (See Moses 6:68.)

In revelations to and through Joseph Smith the Lord often declared Himself. Moroni taught Joseph Smith his duty during a four-year period; yet when he yielded to the importuning of Martin Harris and the Book of Mormon manuscript was stolen from him, he must have felt that all was lost, that Satan had won a victory, and that he was condemned forever. However, the Lord was generous, telling Joseph that:

- a) No one can frustrate the works, designs, or purposes of God, nor bring them to naught.
  - b) God does not walk in crooked paths.
  - c) He turns neither to the right nor left.
  - d) His paths are straight.
  - e) His course is one eternal round.
  - f) Men's works may be frustrated, but the Lord's never will be.
  - g) If a man boasts of his own strength, he will fall.
  - h) If a man sets at naught God's counsel and follows his own, he will fall.
  - i) A man must not fear man more than God.
  - j) If a man is faithful, God will support him against the adversary.
- (See D & C 3:1-8.)

The Lord later declared that He is God, and that His word, quick and powerful, is sharper than a two-edged sword, to the dividing asunder of both joints and marrow (a phrase well understood by backwoods dwellers in the early 1800s). Then He said:

".....I am the light which shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not (D & C 6:21). I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I am the life and the light of the world" (D & C 11:28).

Lest anyone misunderstand, He added:

"I am Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, who created the heavens and the earth, a light that cannot be hid in darkness." (D & C 14:9)

He further explained, ".....mine arm is over all the earth." (D & C 16:2.) Then, as he proceeded to instruct the Prophet and future members of His Church, He gave forth a great burst of light:

"Behold, Jesus Christ is the name which is given of the Father, and there is no other name given whereby man can be saved." (D& C 18:23.) "I am Alpha and Omega, Christ the Lord; ye, even I am he, the beginning and the end, the Redeemer of the world." (D & C 19:1.)

"I, having accomplished and finished the will of him whose I am, even the Father, concerning me--having done this that I might subdue all things unto myself--

"Retaining all power, even to the destroying of Satan and his works at the end of the world, and the last great day of judgement, which I shall pass upon the inhabitants thereof, judging every man according to his works and the deeds which he hath done." (D & C 19:2-3.)

And then this: "I am endless." (D & C 19:10.)



He also gave a sharp warning:

"But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I: which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all to tremble because of pain and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit--and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink--Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men." (D & C 19:17-19.)

Those near the Prophet probably thought the principal message of each revelation was all they were meant to receive. But these messages also contain revelation about the Savior personally. By March of 1830, the Savior had revealed much about himself in declarations of introduction.

Because the Church was once again on the earth, the Holy Ghost was given to every member, and the Lord continued to reveal himself.

In August of 1830 people were reminded of what the Lord said before: "listen to the voice of Jesus Christ, your Redeemer, the Great I am, whose arm of mercy hath atoned for your sins." (D & C 29:1.) He explained another great law at the same time when he said, "Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual....." (D & C 29:34.)

The Savior later reminded Ezra Thayre and Northrop Sweet to open their "ears and hearken to the voice of the Lord your God, whose word is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow, soul and spirit; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (D & C 33:1.)

To Orson Pratt he revealed the truth concerning the biblical phrase: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son....." (John 3:16.)

"My son Orson, hearken and hear and behold what I, the Lord God, shall say unto you, even Jesus Christ your Redeemer; the light and life of the world, a light which shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not; who so loved the world that he gave his own life, that as many as would believe might become the sons of God. Wherefore you are my son." (D & C 34:1-3)

In this statement the Savior declared his harmony with his Father, but said that while the Father gave the Son, the Son gave his own life, too. He was not forced; it was a voluntary sacrifice.

When Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge came inquiring, they were told of the eternal nature of the Lord when He told them:

"I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was crucified for the sins of the world, even as many as will believe on my name, that they may become the sons of God, even one in me as I am one in the Father, as the Father is one in me, that we may be one." (D & C 35:2.)

In these statements to Orson Pratt, Sidney Rigdon, and Edward Partridge the Lord seems to be saying: How much do I love you? I gave my life that you might have a way to become my sons, and thus also sons of God. What more love could one have than that, to give His life for His friends?

He revealed Himself still more when He declared himself--with all the titles before mentioned as the Lord,".....the same which looked upon the wide expanse of eternity, and all the seraphic hosts of heaven, before the world was made; the same which knewth all things, for all things are present before mine eyes; I am the same which spake, and the world was made, and all things came by me. I am the same which have taken the Zion of Enoch into mine own bosom; and verily, I say, even as many as have believed in my name for I am Christ, and in mine own name, by virtue of the blood which I have spilt, have I pleaded before the Father for them." (D & C 38:1-4)

"And I have made the earth rich, and behold it is my footstool, wherefore, again I will stand upon it." (D & C 38:17.)

".....Hearken ye and give ear to him who laid the foundation of the earth, who made the heavens and all the hosts thereof, and by whom all things were made which live, and move, and have a being." (D & C 45:1) Again He reiterated:

".....he who was crucified for the sins of the world" (D & C 54:1) who has all power, who is from everlasting to everlasting....." (D & C 61:1); "who willetth to take them whom he will take, and preserveth in life them whom he will preserve; who buildeth up at his own will and pleasure; and destroyeth when he pleases, and is able to cast the soul down to hell. Behold, I, the Lord, utter my voice, and it shall be obeyed" (D & C 63:3,5).

".....a voice as one of one sent down from on high, who is mighty and powerful, whose going forth is unto the ends of the earth." (D & C 65:1.)

".....the heavens and the earth are in mine hands, and the riches of eternity are mine to give." (D & C 67:2.)

Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon spoke of Christ by inspiration and bore a mighty witness: "Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O earth, and rejoice ye inhabitants thereof, for the Lord is God, and beside him there is no Savior. Great is his wisdom, marvelous are his ways, and the extent of his doing none can find out. His purposes fail not, neither are there any who can stay his hand. From eternity to eternity he is the same, and his years never fail." (D & C 76:1-4.)

Many have wondered what Joseph Smith said or thought about the Savior. The statement just quoted is an epitome of what he said in testimony, filled with the Holy Ghost. Then the Lord added to this testimony:

"For thus saith the Lord--I, the Lord, am merciful and gracious unto those who fear me, and delight to honor those who serve me in righteousness and in truth unto the end." (D & C 76:5.)

On the day this word was given, much more was added. The Lord opened the eyes of Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon, and they saw as well as heard His glory:

".....he lives!" they declared, "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--that by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God. (D & C 76:22-24.)



In this great vision these two men heard the voice again:

"And this is the gospel, the glad tidings, which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us--

"That he came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness;

"That through him all might be saved whom the Father had put into his power and made by him;

"Who glorifies the Father, and saves all the works of his hands, except those sons of perdition who deny the Son after the Father has revealed him." (D & C 76:40-43.)

The Lord promised that if they lived for it, men might see the Lord, even as Joseph Smith saw Him, and could learn for themselves and know that the Lord Jesus Christ is the true light which lighteth every man that comes into the world; that He is in the Father and the Father in him; that they are indeed one; that He came into the world and made manifest the works of the Father. Then he quoted John The Baptist:

"And John saw and bore record of the fulness of my glory, and the fulness of John's record is hereafter to be revealed.

"And he bore record, saying; I saw his glory that he was in the beginning, before the world was:

"Therefore, in the beginning the Word was, for he was the Word, even the messenger of salvation.

"The light and the Redeemer of the world; the Spirit of truth, who came into the world, because the world was made by him, and in him was the life of men and the light of men.

"The worlds were made by him; men were made by him; all things were made by him, and through him, and of him.

"And I, John, bear record that I beheld his glory, as the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, even the Spirit of truth, which came and dwelt in the flesh, and dwelt among us.

"And I, John, saw that he received not of the fulness at the first, but received grace for grace;

"And he received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness;

"And thus he was called the Son of God, because he received not of the fulness at the first.

"And I, John, bear record, and lo, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove, and sat upon him and there came a voice out of heaven saying: This is my beloved Son.

"And I, John, bear record that he received a fulness of the glory of the Father;

"And he received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him." (D & C 93:6-17)

With this statement he identified the 1820 revealed Christ as the same being testified of by John the Baptist.

These statements about the nature and purposes of the Lord were made certain by the Lord himself when on April 3, 1836, he suddenly appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple:

"The veil was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened.

"We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber.

"His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying:

"I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the father." (D & C 110:1-4)

Here was the Lord, risen, glorified, and exalted. He had gone to his Father. He had received a fulness. He revealed himself as he was in 1836. Over a span of fourteen years the Lord revealed his person, his virtues, and his purposes through the Holy Ghost, both by vision and by personal appearance.

There is no doubt that Joseph Smith knew, loved, and worshipped the Lord with all his heart. He knew by seeing and by hearing that God lives and that Jesus is the Christ. His mission was to bear that witness so that we all could understand the truth of it, and understanding, accept and learn to part the veil and come into the presence of the Lord. All of us may know the same truths, by reading pondering, and asking for the same knowledge. Let us fully realize these potent words:

"Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am." (D & C 93:1.)

Then, by doing as He says, we may find Him and see Him and know Him as He is.



# THE HUMAN QUALITIES OF JOSEPH SMITH, THE PROPHET

BY LEONARD J. ARRINGTON, PH.D.  
THE ENSIGN, JANUARY, 1971

The Prophet of the Restoration has been portrayed as a philosopher, community builder, military commander, and visionary. But the rapid growth of the Church under his leadership suggests a warm and attractive personality which appealed to all ages and classes of people. Joseph Smith, divinely appointed to restore the gospel in this dispensation, was a vigorous and resourceful, but also a jovial and exciting leader. Examination of the wealth of material that relates to Joseph's life impresses one that his personal qualities, as well as his teachings, played a prominent role in the restoration. To use a word often heard today, Joseph Smith possessed charisma.

Joseph Smith grew up in a family that enjoyed temporal and spiritual unity, thus exemplifying in his own early experience the importance of the family in personal growth and development. Those who knew the Smith family, and the memoirs of Lucy Smith, mother of the Prophet, convey images of this family solidarity. The Smiths worked together to make maple syrup, went out in groups of two or three to work for neighbors, sat around the fireside entertaining each other with real and imagined stories of human experiences, and walked to nearby villages to attend Sunday "preaching services."

Touching incidents in the life of the Prophet reveal his concern for his parents: his tearful plea to his mother to go out of the room during the operation on his leg so she would not have to see him suffer; his rejoicing upon the baptism of his father in 1830; his frantic attempts to reach through a break in the wagon canvas to hold his mother's hand before he was taken away to be shot; his week-long vigils at the bedsides of his parents when they were ill; and his deference to his father's intervention during a dispute with his brother William.

"Blessed is my mother," Joseph wrote in his diary, "for her soul is ever filled with benevolence and philanthropy....and blessed is my father, for the hand of the Lord shall be over him." What a blessing it is, he said in 1835, to have the society of parents "whose mature years and experience render them capable of administering the most wholesome advice." Soon after settling in each place of gathering, the Prophet arranged for a house to be built for his parents so he would be blessed with their company and advice. Joseph felt strongly about the prerogatives of parents, and cautioned missionaries not to baptize young people without the approval of their parents. As an example, when the Prophet called for the "strength of Israel to go forth to redeem Zion" in 1834, one teenager, John Riggs, offered to join the cause, in opposition to his parents' wishes. Joseph said to the eager boy: "Go home to your father, and obey him until you are twenty-one, and you shall have all the blessings promised those who go to build up Zion."

The strength of the Joseph Smith, Sr., family is reflected in the cheerful and substantial support which each of them gave to the restoration, and, more particularly, in the David-and-Jonathan friendship of Joseph and Hyrum. They were nearly always together; one was not complete without the other, and, as Joseph said, "I loved Hyrum with a love that is stronger than death." "No matter how often or when or where Joseph and Hyrum met," wrote William Taylor, a family friend, "it was always with the same expressions of supreme joy....both (of these kindred spirits) were filled to overflowing with the gift and power of the Holy Ghost!"



Influenced by this example of family love and unity, Joseph's marriage to Emma Hale in 1827 produced a warm and affectionate relationship that continued until the Prophet's assassination seventeen years later. His letters to Emma (and Emma's letters to him), his private diaries, his official histories--all of these demonstrate Joseph's devotion to his own family and their devotion to him. "When I want a little bread and milk," he told William W. Phelps, "my wife loads the table with so many good things it destroys my appetite."

As with every couple, the Prophet and Emma occasionally disagreed. When these disagreements became serious, the couple had recourse to the Holy Spirit. One morning while staying at the Whitmers, not long after their marriage, Joseph and Emma had "some words." When Joseph went upstairs to translate the plates, "All was dark." So the Prophet walked out into the woods to pray, then he returned to ask Emma's forgiveness. Back at work, everything went well with the translation. Later in their marriage, when they were preparing for a parade in his honor, Emma complained to the Prophet that he was not properly dressed. Joseph took time to change to his "best clothes."

The first child of Joseph and Emma, Alvah, died in Harmony, Pennsylvania, while Joseph was still engaged in translating the plates. Emma's second pregnancy resulted in the birth of twins--Thaddeus and Louisa--both of whom lived only about three hours. The Prophet learned that on the very same day Sister John Murdock died after giving birth to twins, so he and the grief-stricken Emma were given permission to adopt the Murdock twins, who were named Joseph and Julia. The twins later became ill with the measles, and both Joseph and Emma stayed up several nights to nurse them. One night, noting that Emma was very tired, Joseph suggested she should "retire to rest" with the girl, while he would stay up with the boy, who was the sicker of the two. During a lull in little Joseph's crying, Joseph dozed on the trundle bed. Suddenly the Prophet was awakened by Emma screaming "Murder!" and Joseph found himself being carried out the door in the hands of a dozen men. Leaving the door ajar, the mob exposed the boy to bitter weather, and he died a few days later. Julia, however lived until she was about fifty years of age. Joseph was very fond of Julia, and many of his letters to Emma mentioned his love for her.

Despite a turbulent life punctuated with frequent mobbings, imprisonments, judicial proceedings, and other difficulties involving his role as President of the Church, Joseph was with Emma during most of her confinements. Mercy Thompson recalled his tenderness: "I saw him by the bed-side of Emma, his wife, in sickness, exhibiting all the solicitude and sympathy possible for the tenderest of hearts and the most affectionate of natures to feel." When he was imprisoned in Missouri for several months in 1838-39, he wrote Emma: "Those little children (Julia, Joseph, Frederick, and Alexander) are subjects of my meditation continually. Tell them that Father is yet alive. God grant that he may see them again. . . . If I do not meet you again in this life--may God grant that we may--may we meet in heaven . . . . my heart is full."

When the sixth son of Joseph and Emma, Don Carlos, died at the age of fourteen months in 1841, the Prophet asked a neighbor, Sister McIntire, for the privilege of adopting one of her baby twin girls. The mother didn't want to give her child up, but she finally consented for him to take one of them, on the condition that he take her back home each night. Margarette McIntire later stated: "This he did punctually himself, and also came after it each morning. One evening he did not come with it at the usual time, and mother went down to the Mansion to see what was the matter, and there sat the



Prophet with the baby wrapped up in a little silk quilt. He was trotting it on his knee, and singing to it to get it quiet before starting out, as it had been fretting. The child soon became quiet when my mother took it, and the Prophet came up home with her. Next morning when he came after the baby, mother handed him Sarah, the other baby. They looked so much alike that strangers could not tell them apart; but as mother passed him the other baby he shook his head and said, 'This is not my little Mary.' Then she took Mary from the cradle and gave her to him, and he (proudly) carried her home with him . . . After his wife became better in health he did not take our baby anymore, but often came in to . . . play with her."

Joseph enjoyed his family. There are dozens of references in his official diary that read like this one of March 27, 1834: "Remained at home and had great joy with my family." Indeed, according to a distant cousin, George A. Smith, one convert family apostatized because, when they arrived in Kirtland from the East, Joseph came downstairs from the room where he had been translating "by the gift and power of God" and began to romp and play with his children. In their view, this was not proper behavior for a prophet.

The Prophet's journal mentions going with his family to concerts, the theater, circus performances, and taking excursions on Mississippi River Boats. The family often enjoyed "home evening" around the fireside, playing games, reading, and studying together. On February 8, 1843, the Prophet recorded in his history, "At four in the afternoon, I went out with my little Frederick, to exercise myself by sliding on the ice."

Such incidents reveal the warmth of Joseph's personality, his sociability, and his sympathetic response to the needs and desires of others. In Kirtland, according to one reminiscence, when wagonloads of grown people and children came in from the country to meeting, "Joseph would make his way to as many of the wagons as he could, and cordially shake the hand of each person. Every child and young babe in the company was especially noticed by him and tenderly taken by the hand, with his kind words and blessings. He loved innocence and purity and he seemed to find it in the greatest perfection with the prattling child."

Evaline Burdick Johnson remembered that as a child in Kirtland her mother had put her in the middle of the floor while cleaning house. The little girl heard a man's voice, looked up, and saw a tall, smiling man come up the steps. He called something to the mother and she told him to come in. "When he saw me," said the girl, "he picked me up and sat me on his left arm and crossed the room to a large mirror. We both looked into the glass. He then turned and sat me down and asked mother where my father was. When he went out of the room mother called me to her and told me he was the Prophet of the Lord, and what a good man he was."

In a similar vein the Prophet called at a house to see a man on business and found instead a child with a swollen sore throat, in much pain. "He took me up in his lap," said the child later, "and gently anointed my throat with consecrated oil and administered to me, and I was healed. I had no more pain nor soreness."

Joseph's interest in others, and his concern for their welfare, was felt by nearly everybody. He enjoyed wrestling, even as an adult; he frequently played catch, "pulled stick," and engaged in similar contests with young people. He circulated "without reserve," often uttered jokes for the amusement of his companions, and "moved upon the same plane with the humblest and



poorest of his friends; to him there were no strangers." As did other Church officials, he often performed manual labor, and there are many references in his journals to digging ditches, carrying the trunks of arriving passengers into the Mansion House, gathering apples, plowing in his garden, hoeing potatoes, drawing wood, and work of like character.

On another occasion, Andrew Workman and other men were sitting on the fence near the Prophet's home one afternoon, as the Prophet spoke to them. A man came up and said that a poor brother who lived out some distance from town had had his house burn down the night before. The men all began to get long faces and say how sorry they were. But "Joseph put his hand in his pocket, took out five dollars, and said, 'I feel sorry for this brother to the amount of five dollars; how much do the rest of you feel sorry for him?'"

Shortly before his martyrdom, the Prophet awaited some member of the Nauvoo Legion who had been called into the city to protect the people. It had been raining, and the roads were bad. All but eight of the seventy-five men went afoot, and in places they waded waist-deep in water. "We reached Nauvoo about daylight," says the narrator, "and encamped in front of Foster's big brick house near the temple. Our camp equipage was placed by the side street. While I was guarding the baggage, Joseph the Prophet rode up to the log, reached his hand to me, and inquired after uncle and aunt. He held me by the hand and pulled me forward until I was obliged to step upon the log. When turning his horse sideways he drew me step by step to near the end of the log, when, seeing that each foot left marks of blood upon the bark, he asked me what was the matter with my feet. I replied that the prairie grass had cut my shoes to pieces and wounded my feet, but they would soon be alright. I noticed the hand he raised to his face was wet and looking up I saw his cheeks covered with tears. He placed his hand on my head and said, 'God bless you, my dear boy,' and asked if others of the company were in the same plight. I replied that a number of them were. Turning his face toward Mr. Lathrup as the latter came to the door of his store, the Prophet said: 'Let these men have some shoes.' Lathrup said: 'I have no shoes.' Joseph's quick reply was 'Let them have boots, then.' Joseph then turned to me and said, 'Johnny, the troops will be disbanded and return home. I shall go to Carthage for trial, under the protection the governor will give.' Then leaning toward me, with one hand on my head, he said: 'Have no fear, for you shall yet see Israel triumph in peace.'"

A final story illustrates Joseph's capacity for quiet heroism. "One evening in the summer of 1837 two travelers drove into the little town of Painesville, in northern Ohio, and stopped at the house of a friend for supper. They had scarcely finished their meal when a disturbance arose without. A crowd had gathered and that its intent was hostile was soon shown by angry yells and threats of murder and the demand on the man of the house to bring out his guests. Instead of sacrificing his friends, however, he led them out through a back door, and aided them to get away in the darkness. As soon as the escape was discovered, riders were hurried along the road it was thought they would take, bonfires were lighted, sentinels placed and the country was scoured. The two men were prudent enough not to go on the highway, but taking to the woods and swamps they skirted the road, being guided somewhat by the bonfires. Only a short time had passed when one began to falter in his flight. Sickness and fright had robbed him of strength. His companion now had to decide whether to leave him to be captured by the bloodthirsty mob or still further endanger himself by rendering aid. Choosing the latter course, he



lifted the sick man upon his own broad shoulders and bore him with occasional rests, on through the swamp and darkness. Several hours later they emerged upon the lonely road and soon reached safety. The man whose devotion to his friend led him to undertake this task and whose herculean strength permitted him to accomplish it was Joseph Smith."

Joseph Smith was a prophet, President of the Church, businessman, and politician. But his life also illustrated a prime goal of the restoration--turning the hearts of older people to children and the hearts of children and young people to their elders. Correct theological beliefs were an indispensable facet of the restoration, but only the uniting of families and of generations would provide the individual and collective spirituality that the restoration of the gospel demanded.

## JOSEPH SMITH - THE MAN

### ONE GREAT AMERICAN

A Russian historian had visited the United States for something over a year studying the history of great Americans and American institutions. As he was about to board his ship to return to his native land, newspapermen interrogated him. One of them asked him this question: "In your study of great Americans during this past year which of them do you consider to be the greatest?" His answer is most startling. He said, "You have only had one truly great American, one man who gave to the world ideas that could change the whole destiny of the human race--Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet," (William E. Berrett, *The Life and Character of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Speeches of the Year* (Provo, Utah; University Press, Brigham Young University, 1964,) p.2.)

The true greatness of Joseph Smith is found not only in the fact that he "gave to the world ideas that could change the whole destiny of the human race," but also in the fact that he lived those God-given principles and incorporated them into his own personality. They were an integral part of the character of Joseph Smith.

### GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH JOSEPH SMITH

Parley P. Pratt, one of the Prophet's closest associates in laying the foundation of the kingdom of God in this latter-day dispensation has left us one of the best pen pictures of Joseph Smith:

President Joseph Smith was in person tall and well built, strong and active; of light complexion, light hair, blue eyes, very little beard, and of an expression peculiar to himself, on which the eye naturally rested with interest, and was never weary of beholding. His countenance was ever mild, affable, beaming with intelligence and benevolence; mingled with a look of interest and an unconscious smile, or cheerfulness, and entirely free from all restraint or affectation of gravity; and there was something connected with the serene and steady penetrating glance of his eye, as if he would penetrate the heaven and comprehend all worlds.

He possessed a noble boldness and independence of character; his manner was easy and familiar; his rebuke terrible as the lion; his benevolence unbounded as the ocean; his intelligence universal, and his language abounding in original eloquence peculiar to himself--not polished--not studied--not smoothed and softened by education and refined by art; but flowing forth in

its own native simplicity, and profusely abounding in variety of subject and manner. He interested and edified, while, at the same time, he amused and entertained his audience; and none listened to him who were ever weary with his discourse. I have even known him to retain a congregation of willing and anxious listeners for many hours together, in the midst of cold or sunshine, rain or wind, while they were laughing at one moment and weeping the next. Even his most bitter enemies were generally overcome, if he could once get their ears....

In short, in him the character of a Daniel and a Cyrus were wonderfully blended. The gifts, wisdom and devotion of a Daniel were united with the boldness, courage, temperance, perseverance and generosity of a Cyrus. And had he been spared a martyr's fate till mature manhood and age, he was certainly endowed with powers and ability to have revolutionized the world in many respects, and to have transmitted to posterity a name associated with more brilliant and glorious acts than has yet fallen to the lot of mortal. (Hyrum L. Andrus, Joseph Smith, the Man and the Seer (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1963,) p. 14.)

Joseph Smith was not an ordinary man in any sense of the word. He was extraordinary to say the least. Often those meeting the Prophet for the first time were impressed with his greatness. One of these, Amasa M. Lyman, upon meeting Joseph Smith had this to say:

When he grasped my hand in that cordial way (Known to those who have met him in the honest simplicity of truth), I felt as one of old in the presence of the Lord, my strength seemed to be gone, so that it required an effort on my part to stand on my feet; but in all this there was no fear, but the serenity and peace of heaven pervaded my soul and the still small voice of the spirit whispered its living testimony in the depths of my soul, where it has ever remained, that he was a Man of God (Andrus, Joseph Smith, p. 4.)

Upon meeting the Prophet even those who had been previously prejudiced against him to the point that they sought his life or desired to plunge him into the filthiest of dungeons often had a change of heart if he could beget their ears or form their acquaintance. One such situation is related by his mother, Lucy Mack Smith:

.....Joseph was at our house writing a letter. While he was thus engaged, I stepped to the door, and looking towards the prairie, I beheld a large company of armed men advancing towards the city, but, as I supposed it to be training day, said nothing about it.

Presently the main body came to a halt. The officers dismounting, eight of them came into the house. Thinking they had come for some refreshment, I offered them chairs, but they refused to be seated, and placing themselves in a line across the floor, continued standing. I again requested them to sit, but they replied "We do not choose to sit down; we have come here to kill Joe Smith and all the 'Mormons'."

"Ah," said I, "what has Joseph Smith done, that you should want to kill him?"

"He has killed seven men in Daviess County," replied the foremost, "and we have come to kill him, and all his Church."

"He has not been in Daviess County," I answered, "consequently the report must be false. Furthermore, if you should see him, you would not want to kill him."



"There is no doubt that the report is perfectly correct," rejoined the officer, "it came straight to us, and I believe it; and we were sent to kill the Prophet and all who believe in him, and I'll be d--d if I don't execute my orders....."

Joseph, just at this moment finished his letter, and, seeing that he was at liberty, I said, "Gentlemen, suffer me to make you acquainted with Joseph Smith, the Prophet." They stared at him as if he were a spectre. He smiled, and stepping towards them, gave them his hand, in a manner which convinced them that he was neither a guilty criminal nor yet a hypocrite.

Joseph then sat down and explained to them the views, feeling, etc., of the Church, and what their course had been; besides the treatment which they had received from their enemies since the first. He also argued, that if any of the brethren had broken the law, they ought to be tried by the law, before anyone else was molested. After talking with them some time in this way, he said, "Mother, I believe I will go home now--Emma will be expecting me." At this two of the men sprang to their feet, and declared that he should not go alone, as it would be unsafe--that they would go with him, in order to protect him. Accordingly the three left together, and during their absence, I overheard the following conversation among the officers, who remained at the door:

1st Officer. "Did you feel strangely when Smith took you by the hand? I never felt so in my life."

2nd Officer. "I could not move. I would not harm a hair of that man's head for the whole world."

3rd Officer. "This is the last time you will catch me coming to kill Joe Smith, or the Mormons either."

1st Officer. "I guess this is about my last expedition against this place. I never saw a more harmless, innocent appearing man than the Mormon Prophet."

2nd Officer. "That story about his killing them men is all a d--d lie--there is no doubt of it; and we have had all this trouble for nothing; but they will never fool me in this way again; I'll warrant them."

The men who went home with my son promised to disband the militia under them and go home, which they accordingly did and we supposed that peace was again restored..... (Lucy Mack Smith, History of Joseph Smith (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958,) pp. 254-56.)

## JOSEPH SMITH THE ATHLETE

Joseph Smith was strong and agile--athletic in appearance. He loved to run, jump, wrestle, and pull sticks; and he was usually the winner. On March 13, 1843, Joseph recorded in his journal, "I wrestled with William Wall, the most expert wrestler in Ramua, and threw him."

Another such instance was related by Major Joseph McGee of Gallatin, Missouri, who said, "I saw Joseph Smith throw John Brassfield, the champion wrestler of the country, the first two falls out of the match of three. He was a powerful man." (Andrus, Joseph Smith,; . 14.)

Joseph was also a master at pulling sticks. Two players engaging in this sport sit on the ground facing each other, the soles of their feet touching.

Their arms and legs are extended, and they grasp a sturdy stick, which is held horizontally between them, exactly over their feet. When the signal is given they both pull, the winner pulling the other player from his seated position.

Another excerpt from the Prophet's journal states, ".....In the evening, when pulling sticks, I pulled up Justus A. Morse, the strongest man in Ramus, with one hand." (Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vol. (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1932-51), 5:302. Hereafter referred to as HC.)

On another occasion, when his life had been threatened, "Joseph spoke to the Saints declaring, '.....I am well--I am hearty. I hardly know how to express my feelings. I feel as strong as a giant. I pulled sticks with the men coming along, and I pulled up with one hand the strongest man that could be found. Then two men tried, but they could not pull me up.....'" (Andrus, Joseph Smith, p. 16.)

The Prophet was a well-rounded individual. There is no question about the fact that he personally enjoyed engaging in sports; but while doing so, he used them to accomplish worthwhile purposes. On one occasion he explained to those who thought it beneath his dignity to engage in sports the reason for his indulgence in this harmless activity:

.....He then related a story of a certain prophet who was sitting under the shade of a tree amusing himself in some way, when a hunter came along with his bow and arrows, and reproved him. The prophet asked him if he kept his bow strung up all the time. The hunter answered that he did not. The prophet asked why, and he said it would lose its elasticity if he did. The prophet said it was just so with his mind, he did not want it strung up all the time, (Andrus, Joseph Smith, p. 16.)

When his brother Hyrum reproved him for playing a game of ball with the young men in Nauvoo, stating that such conduct was not becoming to a prophet of the Lord, Joseph replied, "Brother Hyrum, my mingling with the boys in a harmless sport like this does not injure me in any way, but on the other hand it makes them happy and draws their hearts nearer to mine; and who knows but there may be young men among them who may sometime lay down their lives for me!" (Andrus, Joseph Smith, p. 17.)

## JOSEPH SMITH -- MAN OF COURAGE

Early in his prophetic career, young Joseph learned a bitter, but valuable, lesson--not to trust in the "arm of flesh." Through the persuasions of Martin Harris, Joseph Smith reluctantly allowed 116 pages of completed manuscript from the Book of Mormon to pass out of his hands. Through negligence, Martin Harris lost them. In consequence of this, Joseph received a severe rebuke from the Lord, and thereafter he looked only to the Lord for support. He was told:

For although a man may have many revelations, and have power to do many mighty works, yet if he boasts in his own strength, and sets at naught the counsels of God, and follows after the dictates of his own will and carnal desires, he must fall and incur the vengeance of a just God upon him.

Behold you have been entrusted with these things, but how strict were



your commandments; and remember also the promises which were made to you, if you did not transgress them.

And behold, how oft you have transgressed the commandments and the laws of God, and have gone on in the persuasions of men.

For, behold, you should not have feared man more than God. Although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despise his words--

Yet you should have been faithful; and he would have extended his arm and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; and he would have been with you in every time of trouble.

Behold, thou art Joseph, and thou was chosen to do the work of the Lord, but because of transgression, if thou are not aware thou wilt fall.  
(D & C 3:4-9)

Never again did Joseph give way to the persuasions of men. He once wrote, "I never knew what it was as yet, to fear the face of clay, or the influence of man." (HC 5:157.)

On the occasion when two uncouth and unprincipled law officers, Constable Harman T. Wilson of Carthage and Sheriff Joseph A. Reynolds of Jackson County, Missouri, tried to kidnap the Prophet, we receive an example of his unflinching courage. Joseph relates:

I was in the yard going to the barn when Wilson stepped to the end of the house and saw me. He accosted me in a very uncouth, ungentlemanly manner, when Reynolds stepped up to me, collared me, then both of them presented cocked pistols to my breast, without showing any writ or serving any process. Reynolds cried out, "G-- d-- you, if you stir I'll shoot;....d-- if you stir one inch, I'll shoot you, be still, or I'll shoot you....." I inquired, "What is the meaning of all this?" "I'll show you the meaning.....; d-- if you stir one inch, I'll shoot you,.....d-- you." I answered, "I am not afraid of your shooting; I am not afraid to die." I then bared my breast and told them to shoot away. "I have endured so much oppression, I am weary of life; and kill me, if you please; I am a strong man, however, and with my own natural weapons could soon level both of you; but if you have any legal process to serve, I am at all times subject to law, and shall not offer resistance." Reynolds replied, "....d-- you, if you say another word I will shoot you....." I answered, "Shoot away, I am not afraid of your pistols."

By this time Stephen Markham walked deliberately towards us. When they saw him coming, they turned their pistols from me to him, and threatened his life if he came any nearer; but he paid no attention to their threats, and continued to advance nearer. They then turned their pistols on me again, jamming them against my side, with their fingers on the triggers.....

They then hurried me off, put me in a wagon without serving any process, and were for hurrying me off without letting me see or bid farewell to my family or friends, even allowing me time to get my hat or clothes, or even suffer my wife or children to bring them to me. I then said, "Gentlemen, if you have any legal process, I wish to obtain a writ of habeas corpus," and was answered, ".....d-- you, you shan't have one." They still continued their punching me on both sides with their pistols.

Markham then sprang and seized the horses by the bits, and held them un-

...my wife could bring my hat and coat. Reynolds and Wilson again threatened to shoot Markham, who said, "There is no law on earth that requires a sheriff to take a prisoner without his clothes." .....I told Markham to go and he immediately proceeded to Dixon on horseback.....The officers held their pistols with the muzzles jamming into my side for more than eight miles, and they only desisted on being reproached by Markham (in Dixon) for their cowardice in so brutally ill-treating an unarmed, defenseless prisoner...

I again stated to Reynolds, "I wish to get counsel," When he answered, "....d-- you, you shan't have counsel: one word more, .....d-- you, and I'll shoot you." "What is the use of this so often?" said I. "I have repeatedly told you to shoot; and I now tell you again to shoot away!" (HC 5:440-42.)

He was not shot, nor was the kidnap attempt successful, since the bullying bravado of his captors was no match for the quiet determination of the Prophet's friends on this occasion. However, in spite of the constant threat to his life and the injury to him, "my flesh.....was black for about eighteen inches....on each side, from their punching me with their pistols." The Prophet never flinched nor showed the slightest evidence of fear. His account of the event is touched with gentle humor rather than with indignation.

At one time while hiding in exile from his enemies, Joseph was asked by William Taylor:

"Brother Joseph, don't you get frightened when all those hungry wolves are after you?" The Prophet's reply again revealed the source of the security he manifested throughout his life. Said he, "No, I am not afraid; the Lord said he would protect me, and I have full confidence in His word." (Andrus, Joseph Smith, p. 22.)

Joseph Smith had faith in the Lord and in the fact that his own mission would be completed regardless of what men could do. The Lord had spoken it! (D & C 122:4-9)

## CHARACTER TRAITS OF JOSEPH SMITH

### Justice and Mercy ----

When someone broke the law, Joseph believed that justice should be administered. However, the Prophet's sense of justice was tempered with the principle of mercy, as illustrated by the following example in which the two principles are beautifully blended:

While he was acting as mayor of the city, a colored man named Anthony was arrested for selling liquor on Sunday, contrary to law. He pleaded that the reason he had done so was that he might raise the money to purchase the freedom of a dear child held as a slave in a Southern State.....Joseph said, "I am sorry, but the law must be observed, and we will have to impose a fine."

The next day Brother Joseph presented Anthony with a fine horse, directing him to sell it, and use the money obtained for the purchase of the child. (Andrus, Joseph Smith, p. 33.)

### Love -----

The Prophet's character abounded with love for his brethren, and he par-



ticularly loved little children. L. O. Littlefield says:

He was naturally fond of the young--especially the little children. He did not like to pass a child, however small, without speaking to it. He has been known to actually cross a street if he saw a child alone on the opposite side, to speak to it or to inquire if it had lost its way. (Andrus, Joseph Smith, p. 38.)

While in his youth Littlefield accompanied Zion's Camp and makes mention of an experience he had with Joseph Smith while encamped at Salt River that portrays the Prophet's love and concern for youth:

While there the men were paraded outside of the camp for exercise and instruction. This was an unpleasant feature for me, as I was too young and too small of stature to act with the men. This created within me, as I remember, some lonesome reflections. I sat down upon a rock where the men were passing, the better to observe their movements. While thus seated, the Prophet Joseph Smith, who happened to be passing by in quite a hurry, noticed me.

He stepped to where I sat alone. It might have been my isolated position that attracted him. I knew not the motive; but that man, who to me appeared so good and so godlike, really halted in his hurry to notice me--only a little boy. Placing one of his hands upon my head, he said: "Well, bub, is there no place for you?"

This recognition from the man who I then knew was a Prophet of God created within me a tumult of emotions. I could make him no reply. My young heart was filled with joy to me unspeakable. He passed on and left me in my lonely attitude, for he was then in quite a hurry to accomplish something pertaining to the movements of the men which could not be delayed.

The Mormon Prophet fully exemplified the teachings and example of Christ in his conduct toward little children. Mosiah Hancock said, "It was the disposition of the Prophet when he saw little children in the mud to take them up in his arms and wash the mud from their bare feet with his handkerchief." (Andrus, Joseph Smith, pp. 38-39.)

Joseph loved the Saints and was willing to lay down his life for them. Christ said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13.)

When the Prophet's enemies were pressing in upon him and crying for his blood, he decided it would be wise to leave Nauvoo, both for his own safety and the safety of the Saints. He and his faithful brother Hyrum had actually crossed the Mississippi when word reached them that the Prophet's motives had been misinterpreted. There were those in Nauvoo whom the Prophet loved dearly who betrayed his love by accusing him of cowardice. They said he was like the shepherd who fled, leaving the sheep to be slaughtered by raving wolves. The Prophet's reaction was, "If my life is of no value to my friends it is of none to myself."

#### A TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH SMITH

The Prophet Joseph Smith lived great and he died great. He not only gave to the world principles that would revolutionize it for good, but he lived by those principles himself. Josiah Quincy's words describe to some degree the greatness of the Prophet:

It is by no means improbable that some future text-book for the use of generations yet unborn, will contain a question something like this: What historical American of the nineteenth century has exerted the most powerful influence upon the destinies of his countrymen? And it is by no means impossible that the answer to that interrogatory may be thus written: Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet. And the reply, absurd as it doubtless seems to most men now living, may be an obvious commonplace to their descendants....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 human being is not to be disposed of by pelting his memory with unsavory epithets. (Andrus, Joseph Smith, p. 2.)

--LDS Institute of Religion  
Study Outline

## JOSEPH THE PROPHET: A SELF-PORTRAIT

BY J. LEWIS TAYLOR  
ENSIGN, JUNE, 1973

One who has become a giant of the Lord is one we would all like to appreciate more deeply. And what better way to feel the pulse of such a person's heart than through his own eyes?

Joseph Smith the Prophet left a treasure house of personal reflections and self-characterizations in his "History of the Church", which totals over 3,200 pages. He was remarkably candid in both his speeches and writings. And he reflected his feelings openly, usually offhand, but occasionally studied, expressions. Assembled here are some of his self-picturizations that offer at least a glimpse into the strength of his dynamic character and the sweep of his soul.

Eduard Meyer, the great German historian, once made a comparison of Joseph Smith and Mohammed. He concluded that Mohammed stood higher in his estimation than Joseph, because Mohammed experienced periods of self-doubt, vagueness, and misgiving in developing his religious views, whereas Joseph Smith seemed free of such despairing struggles. The prophet was clear in his religious pronouncements. And he had no doubt as to the divinity of his calling or of the message he taught. Read what he says about his life's mission:

"I have actually seen a vision; and who am I that I can withstand God, or why 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...."

"I was called of my Heavenly Father to lay the foundation of this great work and kingdom in this dispensation, and testify of His revealed will to scattered Israel...."

"If any person should ask me if I were a prophet, I should not deny it, as that would give me the lie...."

Knowing who he was and what he was about, Joseph spoke powerfully "as one having authority."

"I know what I say; I understand my mission and business."



"In relation to the power over the minds of mankind that I hold, I would say, It is in consequence of the power of truth in the doctrines which I have been an instrument in the hands of God of presenting unto them, and not because of any compulsion on my part....I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Repent ye of your sins and prepare the way for the coming of the Son of Man, for the kingdom of God has come unto you....'"

"I defy all the world to destroy the work of God; and I prophesy they never will have power to kill me till my work is accomplished, and I am ready to die."

To initiate the work of the Restoration, the Lord needed an indimitable spirit, a confident, fearless personality whose allegiance would be first and always to Him. Such a one indeed was the Prophet, "I never knew what it was, as yet, to fear the face of clay, or the influence of man," he wrote to James Arlington Bennett. "My fear, sir, is before God. I fear to offend Him and strive to keep His commandments."

On another occasion the Prophet announced: "The object with me is to obey and teach others to obey God in just what He tells us to do. It mattereth not whether the principle is popular or unpopular. I will always maintain a true principle, even if I stand alone in it."

In another letter to Bennett he wrote, "The whole earth shall bear me witness that I, like the towering rock in the midst of the ocean, which has withstood the mighty surges of the warring waves for centuries, am impregnable, and am a faithful friend to virtue, and a fearless foe to vice....I combat the errors of ages...."

Lest one conclude that Joseph Smith was unduly impressed with his own self-importance, we should hasten to add that he consistently spoke of his profound need for the Lord and ascribed his success to a divine source. "God Almighty is my shield," he told the Saints, "I am His servant."

On other occasions he made these significant statements: "I realize in some measure my responsibility, and the need I have of support from above, and wisdom from on high, that I may be able to teach this people...." "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is my Great Counselor."

With the Lord as his friend and teacher, the Prophet was enlightened with the wisdom of eternity. Little do we grasp even now the gospel heights to which his mind soared.

"I could explain a hundred fold more than I ever have of the glories of the kingdoms manifested to me in the vision, were I permitted, and were the people prepared to receive them."

The Prophet loved "the learning and wisdom of heaven." And he made it a lifelong preoccupation to edify the Saints with these sacred truths. "It is my meditation all the day, and more than my meat and drink, to know how I shall make the Saints of God comprehend the visions that roll like an overflowing surge before my hand."

Little wonder then that he was exasperated by the feeble attempts of many to seek the truth. "When things that are of the greatest importance are passed over by weak-minded men without even a thought, I want to see the truth in all its bearings and hug it to my bosom. I believe all that God ever revealed...."

Joseph Smith was not one to be trampled over by conspiring men. Although he dutifully submitted to trials according to due processes of law, regardless of the falsity of charges brought against him, he refused to have his rights circumscribed without vigorous defense.

More important to him was the liberty to enjoy the free exercise of conscience, to think and believe as one chooses, without interference from evil men, false traditions, and tired creeds. He described his feelings in these characteristic statements:

"It is a love of liberty which inspires my soul--civil and religious liberty to the whole of the human race. Love of liberty was diffused into my soul by my grandfathers while they dangled me on their knees...."

"I want the liberty of thinking and believing as I please. It feels so good not to be trammelled."

"I cannot believe in any of the creeds of the different denominations, because they all have some things in them I cannot subscribe to, though all of them have some truth. I want to come up into the presence of God, and learn all things; but the creeds set up stakes, and say, 'Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further;' which I cannot subscribe to."

"I will spill my heart's blood in our defense. They (the Missourians) shall not take away our rights...."

Closely associated with his love of freedom was his deep sense of patriotism. "I would ask no greater boon, than to lay down my life for my country," he told the Nauvoo Legion. Having described himself as a 'patriot and lover of my country,' he once proclaimed, "I am the greatest advocate of the Constitution of the United States there is on the earth. In my feelings I am always ready to die for the protection of the weak and oppressed in their just rights."

Four months later he said, "I feel it to be my right and privilege to obtain what influence and power I can, lawfully, in the United States, for the protection of injured innocence; and if I lose my life in a good cause I am willing to be sacrificed on the altar of virtue, righteousness and truth, in maintaining the laws and Constitution of the United States, if need be, for the general good of mankind."

With the Prophet's steel there was also velvet: "Sectarian priests cry out concerning me, and ask, 'Why is it this babbler gains so many followers, and retains them?' I answer, it is because I possess the principle of love. All I can offer the world is a good heart and a good hand."

"....my heart is large enough for all men." "I have no enmity against any man. I love you all." Gauge the depth of that love from these expressions:

"I love to wait upon the Saints, and be a servant of all...."

"I am not learned, but I have as good feelings as any man. O that I had the language of the archangel to express my feelings once to my friends! But I never expect to in this life. When others rejoice, I rejoice; when they mourn, I mourn."

"I hope I shall see them (his friends) again, that I may toil for them, and administer to their comfort also. They shall not want a friend while I live; my heart shall love those, and my hands shall toil for those...."

"As I grow older, my heart grows tenderer for you. I am at all times willing to give up everything that is wrong, for I wish this people to have a virtuous leader."

The Prophet's pure love of others was forged out of his close kinship with his first love--the Lord and his righteousness. "The nearer we get



to our Heavenly Father," he said to the Relief Society sisters, "the more we are disposed to look with compassion on perishing souls; we feel that we want to take them upon our shoulders...."

Typical of the Prophet are these words penned in his journal: "...those holy doctrines....I cherish in my bosom with the warmest feelings of my heart, and with that zeal which cannot be denied. I love friendship and truth; I love virtue and law; I love the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob...."

A prophet of God is also human, an admission usually more readily grasped by the prophet himself than by his followers. "A prophet is always a prophet," said Joseph, "only when he (is) acting as such"

Joseph Smith was extraordinarily candid in his self-evaluations before the Saints, and he readily confessed his imperfections to them, along with his desire to improve. Consider these public statements:

"I told them (the Saints) I was but a man, and they must not expect me to be perfect; if they expected perfection from me, I should expect it from them; but if they would bear with my infirmities....I would likewise bear with their infirmities."

We should not assume, however, that Joseph Smith's sins were malignant, for by his own statement, "a disposition to commit such was never in my nature." His famous words, spoken in his final hours on earth, suggest the outcome of his humble petitions for forgiveness from the Lord:

"I have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward all men."

No facet of the Prophet's life shows more clearly the indomitable nature of his spirit than his reaction to adversity. He rarely spent a completely peaceful day in his entire lifetime, but his troubles served ultimately only to refine his soul:

"I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain: and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force against religious bigotry, priestcraft, lawyer-craft, doctor-craft, lying editors, suborned judges and jurors, and the authority of perjured executives, backed by mobs, blasphemers, licentious and corrupt men and women--all hell knocking off a corner here and a corner there. Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty, who will give me dominion over all and every one of them, when their refuge of lies shall fail, and their hiding place shall be destroyed, while these smooth-polished stones with which I come in contact become marred."

"Excitement has almost become the essence of my life," reported the Prophet on another occasion. "When that dies away, I feel almost lost."

By his devotion through such trials he obtained the promise that God would exalt him and be with him forever and ever. (D&C 121:8, 122:9).

We have caught only flashes, here and there, of the Prophet's remarkable character, but judged on their own merit, his self-characterizations are impressive. When considered in combination with the life he lived, the message he announced, and the influence he exerted and continues to exert on scores of lives, they are even more significant.

A FUGUE ON SUFFERING AND PERFECTION  
FROM THE WRITINGS OF JOSEPH SMITH AND  
HIS MOTHER, LUCY MACK SMITH

--BY MICHAEL PALMER

I AM LIKE A HUGE, ROUGH STONE  
but you have not come to take off my leg,  
have you sir?  
ROLLING DOWN FROM A HIGH MOUNTAIN;  
No, doctor I will not be bound  
AND THE ONLY POLISHING I GET  
I will have my father  
sit on the bed and hold me in his arms,  
and then I will do whatever is necessary  
in order to have the bone taken out.  
IS WHEN SOME CORNER GETS RUBBED OFF....  
after which they broke it off  
with a pair of forceps or pincers.  
They thus took away large pieces of the bone.  
ALL HELL KNOCKING OFF A CORNER HERE  
When they broke off the first piece,  
Joseph screamed out so loudly,  
that I could not forbear running to him.  
AND A CORNER THERE. THUS I WILL BECOME  
When the third piece was taken away,  
I burst into the room again--  
and oh, my God! what a spectacle  
for a mother's eye!  
A SMOOTH AND POLISHED SHAFT IN THE QUIVER OF THE ALMIGHTY....  
Joseph was pale as a corpse,  
and large drops of sweat  
were rolling down his face,  
WHILE THESE SMOOTH POLISHED STONES  
whilst upon every feature  
was depicted the utmost agony!  
WITH WHICH I COME IN CONTACT BECOME MARRED.

(The New Era, Dec. 1973, p. 32.)

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The Secret

I met God in the morning  
when my day was at its best  
And his presence came like sunrise  
Like a glory in my breast.

All day long the presence lingered  
All day long he stayed with me  
And we sailed in perfect calmness  
O're a very troubled sea.

So I think I know the secret  
learned from many a troubled way,  
You must seek Him in the morning  
If you want Him through the day.



# JOSEPH SMITH ON JOSEPH SMITH

## The Prophet's Calling

Every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of the world was ordained to that very purpose in the Grand Council of heaven before this world was. I suppose that I was ordained to this very office in that Grand Council. (DHC, Vol. VI, p. 364.)

## The Prophet's Characterization of Himself

I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force against religious bigotry, priestcraft, lawyer-craft, doctor-craft, lying editors, suborned judges and licentious and corrupt men and women--all hell knocking off a corner here and a corner there. Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty....(DHC, Vol. V, p. 401.)

## The Prophet's Humility, Meekness and Love

....When I contemplate the great work which is now rolling on, and the relationship which I sustain to it, which it is extending to distant lands, and thousands are embracing it, I realize in some measure my responsibility, and the need I have of support from above, and wisdom from on high....Can I rely on your prayers to our Heavenly Father on my behalf, and on all the prayers of my brethren and sisters in England, (whom having not seen, yet I love), that I may be enabled to escape every stratagem of Satan, surmount every difficulty, and bring this people to the enjoyment of those blessings which are reserved for the righteous? I ask this at your hands in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (DHC, Vol. IV, p. 230)

## The Prophet's Acknowledgement of his Weaknesses

I told them I was but a man, and they must not expect me to be perfect; if they expected perfection from me, I should expect it from them; but if they would bear with my infirmities and the infirmities of the brethren, I would likewise bear with their infirmities. (DHC, Vol. V, p. 181.)

## God Protected the Prophet

He that arms himself with gun, sword, or pistol, except in the defense of truth, will sometime be sorry for it. I never carry any weapon with me bigger than my penknife. When I was dragged before the cannon and muskets in Missouri, I was unarmed. God will always protect me until my mission is fulfilled. (DHC, Vol. VI, pp. 364-365.)

## The Love His Followers Had for Him

There is no greater love than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. I discover hundreds and thousands of my brethren ready to sacrifice their lives for me. (DHC, Vol. V, p. 516)

## The Unknown Prophet

You don't know me; you never knew my heart. No man knows my history. I cannot tell it....I don't blame any one for not believing my history. If I had not experienced what I have, I would not have believed it myself.... When I am called by the trump of the archangel and weighed in the balance, you will all know me then. (DHC, Vol. VI, p. 317.)

While the Prophet and others were imprisoned in Missouri, they were sent to Daviess County under guard and turned over to a group of the strongest and roughest men in that county. The reputed champion wrestler of Daviess County challenged the Prophet to a wrestling match, which Joseph at first declined to engage in because he was a prisoner and felt that he could not participate in such activities under the circumstances. But, after being encouraged by the guards and after the man had promised not to get angry if he should be thrown the Prophet consented. The Daviess County wrestler sought to use all the trickery known to him in his effort to throw the Prophet, but he failed. Finally, Joseph made his first real attempt and threw his antagonist flat on his back in a puddle of water. This made the Missourian angry, even though he had agreed to restrain himself, but his associates interfered and thereafter subjected him to much ridicule over the matter. (Autobiography of Andrew Jenson, pp. 164-65)

Pulling sticks was another sport in which the Prophet often engaged. The contestants would sit upon the floor facing each other with a sturdy stick between them, and then see which one could pull the other up from his seated position. But in such tests of strength said Benjamin F. Johnson, "he never found his match." Joseph recorded one such example in his journal, "In the evening, when pulling sticks, I pulled up Justice A. Morse, the strongest man in Ramus, with one hand." On another occasion, he said, "I am well--I am hearty....I feel as strong as a giant. I pulled sticks with the men coming along, and I pulled up with one hand the strongest man that could be found. Then two men tried, but they could not pull me up." (History of the Church, p. 302 and p. 466.)

## THE PROPHET'S RULE

....I MADE THIS MY RULE: WHEN THE LORD  
COMMANDS, DO IT.

D.H.C., VOL. II, P. L70.

The criteria of emotional maturity are:

Having the ability to deal constructively with reality.

Having the capacity to adapt to change.

Having a relative freedom from symptoms that are produced by tensions and anxieties.

Having the capacity to find more satisfaction in giving than in receiving.

Having the capacity to relate to other people in a consistent manner with mutual satisfaction and helpfulness.

Having the capacity to sublimate, to direct one's instinctive hostile energy into creative and constructive outlets.

Having the capacity to love.

--Dr. William C. Menninger:



## THE GREATNESS OF JOSEPH SMITH AND HIS REMARKABLE VISIONS

BY JERRY C. ROUNDY  
THE NEW ERA, DEC. 1973

During the month of December we especially remember the birth of the Savior and his special ministry. It is also appropriate that we remember the man God chose to restore his gospel in these latter days, because the Prophet Joseph Smith was born December 23, 1805.

To understand Joseph Smith you need to see his spiritual and physical traits. Parley P. Pratt, who was personally acquainted with the Prophet, gave this word description:

"President Joseph Smith was in person tall, and well built, strong and active; of light complexion, light hair, blue eyes, very little beard, and of an expression peculiar to himself, on which the eye naturally rested with interest, and was never weary of beholding. His countenance was ever mild, affable, beaming with intelligence and benevolence; mingled with a look of interest and unconscious smile, or cheerfulness, and entirely free from all restraint or affectation of gravity; and there was something connected with the serene and steady penetrating glance of his eye, as if he would penetrate the deepest abyss of the human heart, gaze into eternity, penetrate the heavens and comprehend all worlds.

"He possessed a noble boldness and independence of character; his manner was easy and familiar; his rebuke terrible as the lion, his benevolence unbounded as the ocean; his intelligence universal, and his language abounding in original eloquence peculiar to himself--not polished--not studied--not smoothed and softened by education and refined by art; but flowing forth in its own native simplicity, and profusely abounding in variety of subject and manner. He interested and edified, while, at the same time he amused and entertained his audience; and none listened to him who were ever weary with his discourse. I have known him to retain a congregation of willing and anxious listeners for many hours together, in the midst of cold or sunshine, rain or wind, while they were laughing one moment and weeping the next. Even his most bitter enemies were generally overcome, if he could once get their ears....

"In short, in him the character of a Daniel and a Cyrus were wonderfully blended. The gifts, wisdom and devotion of a Daniel were united with the boldness, courage, temperance, perseverance and generosity of a Cyrus. And had he been spared a martyr's fate till mature manhood and age, he was certainly endowed with powers and ability to have revolutionized the world in many respects, and to have transmitted to a posterity a name associated with more brilliant and glorious acts than has yet fallen to the lot of mortal." (The Historical Record, Vol. 7 (January 1888), pp. 575-76).

Adam was the first member of the Church of Christ on the earth and the first high priest after the order of the Son of God. In the commission he received from God, Adam was given the keys to administer the divine plan of salvation to others, including all his children to the very latest generation of time. It is through Adam's authority that any revelation pertaining to the gospel of Christ was or shall be revealed. The Prophet Joseph said:



"Adam holds the keys of the dispensation of the fulness of times; i.e., the dispensation of all the times that have been and will be revealed through him from the beginning to Christ, and from Christ to the end of the dispensations that are to be revealed." (Teaching of The Prophet Joseph Smith (Deseret Book Co., 1961), pp. 167-68.)

He further observed that whenever any principles or teachings of the gospel are revealed to men on this earth, they are revealed from heaven by Adam's authority. (bid.)

This principle means that whenever any keys of the priesthood are revealed from heaven, they are revealed under the direction of Adam. When John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood, he was acting under the direction of Peter, James, and John; but they were acting under the direction of Adam. Section 128 of the Doctrine and Covenants is a recap of the restoration of the gospel, and the Prophet here recounts some of the events that happened. In verse 20 he says:

"And again, what do we hear? Glad tidings from Cumorah! Moroni, an angel from heaven, declaring the fulfillment of the prophets-the book to be revealed. A voice of the Lord in the wilderness of Fayette, Seneca county, declaring the three witnesses to bear record of the book! The voice of Michael on the banks of the Susquehanna, detecting the devil when he appeared as angel of light! The voice of Peter, James, and John in the wilderness between Harmony, Susquehanna county, and Colesville, Broome county, on the Susquehanna river, declaring themselves as possessing the keys of the kingdom, and of the dispensation of the fulness of times!"

From this it appears that Michael, whom the Prophet Joseph Smith said was Adam, was around to keep the devil from thwarting the plans of God. When Peter, James, and John came to restore the Melchizedek Priesthood, Adam was there.

Adam stands at the beginning of the gospel plan and presides over all dispensations of the gospel and at the grand conference at Adam-ondi-Ahman, which will take place before Christ appears in the clouds in glory for all mankind to behold. There each prophet who has had a hand in the affairs of mankind will make his report to Father Adam, who will then make his report for all of them to the Savior. Joseph Smith was the prophet who became the receptacle for all the keys that were ever held by any of the prophets from Adam to his time, because he was chosen to lead the dispensation of the fulness of time.

Joseph Smith was foreordained to this important calling. He was also somewhat conscious of this foreordination because he at once said, "Would to God, brethren, I could tell you who I am! Would to God I could tell you what I know! But you would call it blasphemy, and there are men upon this stand who would want to take my life." (Orson F. Whitney, Life of Heber C. Kimball, p. 322.)

At the age of 14 this boy exercised such great faith that he was given the privilege of beholding the greatest vision ever recorded in the annals of scripture. This man was privileged to behold the presence of not just the great Jehova, whom the ancient prophets had conferred with, but he was to have the great privilege of having the Father, known to us as Elohim, come down and in a face-to-face meeting speak to him and introduce His Son. In commenting about this President Joseph Fielding Smith said:

"All revelation since the fall has come through Jesus Christ, who is the Jehovah of the Old Testament. In all of the scriptures, where God is mentioned and where he has appeared, it was Jehovah who talked with Abraham, with Noah, Enoch, Moses and all of the prophets....The Father has never dealt with man directly and personally since the fall, and he has never appeared except to introduce and bear record of the Son." (Doctrines of Salvation (Bookcraft: 1954),



However, the First Vision was only the beginning of visitations from beyond the veil that Joseph was to receive during his short life of 38 years. Four years after he had been visited by the Father and the Son, he was visited by an ancient prophet who had formerly lived upon the American continent and who introduced himself as the angel Moroni. Then, on May 15, 1829, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were visited by another ancient prophet, John the Baptist, who bestowed upon them the Aaronic Priesthood; and within a month they had been visited by Peter, James, and John, the ancient apostles of Christ, who bestowed upon them the Melchizedek Priesthood. This is the incident when Adam was present and thwarted the devil in his attempt to stop the bestowal of the priesthood.

After the Kirtland Temple was completed and dedicated, the Lord had a place to which he could come and restore other keys pertaining to the gospel. On April 3, 1836, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were visited by Christ who accepted the Temple; then three other ancient prophets appeared and bestowed necessary keys of the gospel. The great prophet Elias, whom Joseph Fielding Smith says is Noah (See Answers to Gospel Questions (Deseret Book Co., 1975), Vol. 3, p. 138) appeared and bestowed upon their heads the keys of the dispensation of Abraham, or in other words, as Elder Bruce R. McConkie says in Mormon Doctrine (2nd ed. (Bookcraft: 1966), p. 219), the keys of celestial and plural marriage. Once again the promise that husbands and wives could be eternally united was upon the earth.

Following this vision the great prophet Moses, who had led the children of Israel from bondage, appeared and bestowed upon the heads of Joseph and Oliver the keys of the gathering of Israel and the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the North. Joseph now had authority to disperse missionaries throughout the world to begin the gathering in of the Lord's elect in these latter days.

As soon as Moses had departed, the prophet Elijah, who was taken to heaven in a chariot of fire, appeared and bestowed upon them the sealing power to bind wives to husbands, husbands to wives, and children to parents until the whole human race is sealed back to Father Adam. Although Elias had bestowed the keys of celestial marriage, the keys to seal that, and all other ordinances of the gospel, were bestowed by Elijah. This key also gave authority to begin work for the dead. With the authorization Joseph now had he could begin to look beyond the veil and perform proxy ordinances that would open the door of salvation for beloved ancestors who had lived upon the earth and died without an opportunity to hear the gospel.

Can you now begin to see the greatness of Joseph Smith's mission? Each of these prophets may have held only a few keys of the gospel. Now he was receiving all the keys that had ever been on the earth.

By this time in his life Joseph Smith had become so used to looking beyond the veil that it was almost an everyday occurrence. When he and Sidney Rigdon were privileged at Father Johnson's home in Hiram, Ohio, to have the revelation that is known as section 76 of the Doctrine and Covenants, he was so used to the Spirit of the Lord that he did not fall to the earth from exhaustion as Moses had done when he talked with God (Moses 1:9-10) and as he himself had done after the incident. After the vision closed, Sidney was completely exhausted and had to lie down on the couch. Seeing Sidney's pallor, Joseph remarked with a smile on his face: "Well, Brother Sidney is not as used to it as I am." (Juvenile Instructor, Vol. 27 (May 15, 1892). pp. 303-4.)



The first time Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith, on September 21, 1823, it was the beginning of a very intensive teacher-student relationship between Joseph and Moroni that was to encompass four years and was to culminate in having brought the young Joseph from the role of an unlearned farm boy to the position of a heaven-taught, angel-tutored prophet of God. It is true that the young prophet spent very little time inside the formal schoolroom--but he was not unlearned. He spent four years in the university of eternity, taught by learned men from the throne of God.

During the night of Moroni's first appearance to Joseph, the principle of repetition in the learning process could not have been better illustrated. The angel, appearing three different times, spent the entire night teaching Joseph the things he needed to know relative to the gold plates and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. The next day Moroni appeared to him again in the field where he was working with his father. In this visitation the angel instructed him to proceed to the Hill Cumorah. There the two met again, and Joseph was allowed to view the plates, although he was not allowed to take them out of their repository. In four of these visits the angel repeated to Joseph the same information.

During the four-year preparatory period Joseph received instructions not only from Moroni but also from others. George Q. Cannon said that Joseph was visited constantly by angels. In a letter he wrote to John Wentworth, the Prophet said: "After having received many visits from the angels of God unfolding the majesty and glory of the events that should transpire in the last days, on the morning of the 22nd of September, 1827, the angel of the Lord delivered the records into my hands." (Documentary History of the Church, Vol. 4, p. 537.)

When Joseph went to the Hill Cumorah the first time and was allowed to view the plates, he thought it was possible to remove them and immediately take them home with him. He even had thoughts of what he could do with a chunk of gold of that size. However, the Lord knew the frailties of man and sought to strengthen the young prophet by showing him a vision of what would be his if he were faithful; he also showed him, on the other hand, what would be his reward should he fail. Oliver Cowdery records that while Joseph was being instructed by the angel, "...the heavens were opened and the glory of the Lord shone around about and rested upon him. While he thus stood gazing and admiring, the angel said, 'Look,' and as he thus spoke he beheld the prince of darkness, surrounded by his innumerable train of associates, all this passed before him, and the heavenly messenger said, 'All this is shown, the good and the evil, the holy and the impure, the glory of God, the power of darkness, that ye may know hereafter the two powers and never be influenced or overcome by that wicked one.'" (Messenger and Advocate, Vol. 2, no. 1 (October 1835), p. 198.)

Another but not very well-known appearance of Moroni was the visit that took place on the same day in September, one year later, 1824. At this time Joseph would have been 18, Joseph doesn't tell us much about this particular visit, but the Prophet's mother, in the history she wrote of her son, records some interesting details of this visit to the hill. She said that the Prophet went to the hill fully intending to take the plates home with him, and indeed was allowed to take them out of their hiding place. He supposed that the only requirements necessary to receiving the plates was to keep the commandments of God. This he felt he could do. Among those requirements was a strict injunction not to lay the plates down or put them out of his hands until he could deposit them in a safe place. But as he took them and turned away, he thought perhaps he should return and cover the



box and check to see if, perchance, he had left anything therein. After laying the plates down upon the ground, he returned. And as he turned again to pick up the record, it was gone. Anyone who has ever lost anything of great value can empathize with the feelings of this frightened young man. In a state of great alarm he commenced to pray, whereupon the angel appeared to him and chastized him for his neglect. He was then permitted again to raise the stone that covered the repository and therein he beheld the plates. Still he was convinced he was ready to take the plates from the hill, and according to his mother's account, "He immediately reached forth his hand to take them, but instead of getting them, as he anticipated, he was hurled back upon the ground with great violence. When he recovered, the angel was gone, and he arose and returned to the house, weeping for grief and disappointment." (Lucy Mack Smith, History of Joseph Smith by his Mother, (Bookcraft: 1958) p.84.)

On another occasion the young man was sent by his father, Joseph Smith, Sr., on an errand to Manchester a short distance from the Smith home. Joseph was late returning home, and his father began questioning him as to the reasons why. The young prophet answered, "I have taken the severest chastisement that I have ever had in my life." When his father began to interrogate him as to who had a right to find fault in him, he answered, "Stop, father, stop, it was the angel of the Lord. As I passed by the hill of Cumorah, where the plates are, the angel met me and said that I had not been engaged enough in the work of the Lord; that the time had come for the record to be brought forth; and that I must be up and doing and set myself about the things which God had commanded me to do." (History of Joseph Smith by his Mother, (Bookcraft; 1958) pp. 99-101.)

Moroni's many appearances to Joseph during these four years, as well as the appearances of other ancient prophets, were to instruct the Prophet and prepare him for his mission. By the time 1827 had rolled around, Joseph had been sufficiently instructed and disciplined to the point where he could be entrusted with the care of the plates and the task of translating them.

A number of individuals appeared to Joseph Smith in order to help prepare him for his mission. He received visitations from the Father and the Son; Moroni; John the Baptist; Peter, James, and John; Moses; Elias (Noah); Raphael (it is not clear who this is); Michael (Adam); and Elijah. John Taylor says that Joseph Smith had communication not only with the Lord, "...but with the ancient apostles and prophet; such men for instance as Abraham, Isaac, Noah, Adam, Seth, Enoch, and Jesus and the Father, and the apostles that lived on this continent as well as those who lived on the asiatic continent." (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 21, p. 94.)

Joseph Smith states in the Wentworth letter that prior to his receiving the plates on the morning of September 22, 1827, he had received many visits from the angels of God; and John Taylor further stated that when Joseph Smith was raised up as a prophet of God, "Mormon, Moroni, Nephi, and others of the ancient prophets who formerly lived on this Continent" visited him and communicated certain principles of the gospel. (JD, Vol. 17, p. 374.)

The Prophet's mother said in her book that the family could hardly wait to get their chores done at night so they could gather around the kitchen table and listen to stories told by Joseph about the ancient Nephites and Lamanites. She said the stories were so vivid and filled with details of history, culture, and religion that it was as though the Prophet had lived amongst these ancient peoples all his life. He must have seen in panoramic vision the entire history of the Nephite and Lamanite generations.



Joseph was able to give excellent descriptions of the apostle Paul that indicate Paul had visited him. (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 180.) On one occasion he compared his brother Alvin in likeness to Adam and Seth, saying he looked very much like them. (DHC, vol. 5, p. 347.)

His intimacy with the prophets is further evidenced by an event that took place in 1834 when the Prophet was leading the March of Zion's Camp to Missouri to assist the Saints in reclaiming their land and homes that had been lost to the mobs. One day while walking out ahead of the company he was queried as to whom he was talking with. He said that it was John the Revelator and that he was on his way to visit the lost ten tribes. (Diary of Oliver Boardman Huntington, Typescript in BYU Library, 1847-1900, part 2, p. 162.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith was totally committed to the Lord and was willing to serve him at all times, at all costs, and at all hazards. He was willing to serve the Lord even when it was not convenient. When Joseph was living in the Johnson's home at Hiram, Ohio, his wife Emma, gave birth to twins who died the day of their birth. The wife of John Murdock also gave birth to a set of twins on that same day, but Mrs. Murdock died in childbirth. Joseph and Emma asked Brother Murdock if they might adopt his twins, and he readily accepted that offer.

When the twins were 11 months old, they became very ill with measles, causing many sleepless nights in the Smith household. One night the Prophet told his wife to go into the back bedroom and try to get some rest while he sat up in the living room with the sicker of the two children. As the night passed, Joseph lay down upon a trundle bed and dozed off. The next thing he knew, he was being carried bodily through the front door by an angry mob who were shouting among themselves, "Don't let his feet touch the floor, or he will take us all." They realized what a tremendously powerful man he was physically as well as spiritually.

They carried him out through the orchard, and as they did so, he saw Sidney Rigdon lying on the ground, presumably dead. The mob had also dragged Brother Rigdon from his house by the heels, bumping his head on the frozen ground till it had knocked him insensible.

After coming to a halt, the mob deliberated as to whether or not they should kill the Prophet but decided against it. Finally one of them said, "Let's tar up his mouth." With that they tried to force the tar paddle into his mouth. Next they tried to force a phial of poison between his teeth, but he kept them clenched so tightly that the bottle broke, along with the corner of one of his front teeth. Failing to tar up his mouth or poison him, one of the members of the mob fell on him, and after the others had torn off all Joseph's clothes except his shirt collar, began scratching him like a mad cat, muttering: "...that's the way the Holy Ghost falls on folks." They then poured hot tar on his body, rolled him in a feather tick and left him for dead.

After regaining consciousness the Prophet made his way to the house. When his wife, Emma, saw him coming to the door with his body covered with tar and feathers, she fainted. The rest of the night was spent removing the tar from his body. The tender hands of Dr. Frederick G. Williams, a physician and also a counselor to the Prophet in the First Presidency, performed the heartbreaking task. Sometimes large pieces of skin came off with the tar. The next day was the Sabbath, and the Prophet, in great discomfort, was at the service where he spoke.

It is hard to study the life of the Prophet Joseph Smith without remembering that he learned to serve the Lord fully at all times, and at all costs.



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"I FEEL LIKE SHOUTING HALLELUJAH, ALL THE TIME, WHEN I THINK THAT I EVER KNEW JOSEPH SMITH, THE PROPHET WHOM THE LORD RAISED UP AND ORDAINED, AND TO WHOM HE GAVE KEYS AND POWER TO BUILD UP THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH AND SUSTAIN IT. THESE KEYS ARE COMMITTED TO THIS PEOPLE, AND WE HAVE POWER TO CONTINUE THE WORK THAT JOSEPH COMMENCED, UNTIL EVERYTHING IS PREPARED FOR THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN."

--BRIGHAM YOUNG

THE PROPHET'S JOY AT  
HAVING ADDITIONAL WITNESSES TO THE  
BOOK OF MORMON

BY LUCY MACK SMITH

The next morning, after attending to the usual services, namely, reading, singing, and praying, Joseph arose from his knees, and approaching Martin Harris with a solemnity that thrills through my veins to this day, when it occurs to my recollections, said, "Martin Harris, you have got to humble yourself before God this day, that you may obtain a foregiveness of your sins. If you do, it is the will of God that you should look upon the plates, in company with Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer."

In a few minutes after this, Joseph, Martin, Oliver, and David, repaired to a grove, a short distance from the house, where they commenced calling upon the Lord, and continued in earnest supplication, until He permitted an angel to come down from His presence, and declare to them, that all which Joseph had testified of concerning the plates was true.

When they returned to the house, it was between three and four o'clock P.M. Mrs. Whitmer, Mr. Smith, and myself, were sitting in a bedroom at the time. On coming in, Joseph threw himself down beside me, and exclaimed, "Father, mother, you do not know how happy I am: The Lord has now caused the plates to be shown to three more besides myself. They have seen an angel, who has testified to them, and they will have to bear witness to the truth of what I have said, for now they know for themselves, that I do not go about to deceive the people, and I feel as if I was relieved of a burden which was almost too heavy for me to bear, and it rejoices my soul, that I am not any longer to be entirely alone in the world." Upon this, Martin Harris came in: he seemed almost overcome with joy and testified boldly to what he had both seen and heard. And so did David and Oliver, adding that no tongue could express the joy of their hearts and the greatness of the things which they had both seen and heard.

--History of Joseph Smith, pp. 151-153.

## THE PROPHET REBUKED THE GUARDS

### AT RICHMOND, MISSOURI

BY PARLEY P. PRATT

I (Parley P. Pratt) had listened (to the guard's boasts of defiling wives and maidens by force) till I became so disgusted, shocked, horrified and so filled with the spirit of indignant justice that I could scarcely refrain from rising upon my feet and rebuking the guards; but had said nothing to Joseph, or any one else, although I lay next to him and knew he was awake. On a sudden he (Joseph Smith) arose to his feet, and spoke in a voice of thunder, or as the roaring lion, uttering as near as I can recollect, the following:

"Silence! ye fiends of the infernal pit. In the name of Jesus Christ I rebuke you, and command you to be still; I will not live another minute and hear such language. Cease such talk, or you or I die this instant!"

He ceased to speak. He stood erect in terrible majesty. Chained and without weapon; calm, unruffled, dignified as an angel, he looked upon the quailing guards, whose weapons were lowered or dropped to the ground; whose knees smote together, and who shrinking into a corner, or crouching at his feet, begged his pardon, and remained quiet till a change of guards.

I have seen the ministers of justice, clothed in magisterial robes, and criminals arraigned before them, while life was suspended on a breath, in the courts of England. I have witnessed a congress in solemn session to give laws to nations; I have tried to conceive of kings, of royal courts, of thrones and crowns, and of emperors assembled to decide the fate of kingdom's but dignity and majesty have I seen but once, as it stood in chains, at midnight in a dungeon, in an obscure village in Missouri.

--Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt, pp. 210-211



## A PROPHET CELEBRATES

Two days before Christmas in 1805, Joseph Smith, Jr., was born in Sharon, Vermont, to Joseph and Lucy Mach Smith. He was the third son of a loving and loyal family. In spite of great hardships and some sadness they enjoyed being together and shared many happy experiences.

When Joseph married and had a home of his own, his love reached out not only to his family but to everyone. He always lived for others and once said, "Friendship is one of the grand fundamental principles of 'Mormonism.'"

The Prophet Joseph enjoyed his friends and was always happy to have them in his home. In his journal he mentions an especially happy Christmas in 1843:

"This morning, about one o'clock, I was aroused by an English sister, Lettice Rushton,....accompanied by three sons, with their wives, and her two daughters, with their husbands, and several of her neighbors, singing 'Mortals, awake! with angels join.' (etc.), which caused a thrill of pleasure to run through my soul. All of my family and boarders arose to hear the serenade, and I felt to thank my Heavenly Father for their visit, and blessed them in the name of the Lord. They also visited my brother Hyrum, who was awakened from his sleep.

"At two o'clock (in the afternoon), about fifty couples sat down at my table.

"A large party supped at my house, and spent the evening in music, dancing, (etc.), in a most cheerful and friendly manner."

--December, 1974 Friend

# EMMA HALE AND JOSEPH SMITH

BY ELDER S. DILWORTH YOUNG  
OF THE FIRST COUNCIL OF THE SEVENTY

Tall and stately,  
She walked in the October woods,  
Her deep brown hair soft in the  
Indian Summer light,  
Her eyes, dark and luminous,  
Catching every nuance  
Of the shadows as evening  
Descended on the landscape.  
Had he noticed the blood-red  
Of the oak tree? Or has  
Yon maple impressed him  
That it is the most beautiful  
Tree in the forest? See how  
It wears its evening dress  
Of gold and orange.  
Has he seen how the  
Rich yellow of the  
Gracious birch blends into  
The riotous color?  
Does the wild honking  
Of the fast-flying geeze  
High in the sky, the setting  
Sun catching their swift  
Flight, fill him with  
Aching, undefined longing?

He, tall and muscular  
Strode easily by her side,  
His blond hair blending  
Into the mood of the  
Forest on that October day,  
His blue eyes were on her.

What beauty of the wild  
Can match beauty seen  
With the eyes of love?

They paused beside  
A rustic bench, and  
Watched the quiet river  
Lapping at its banks,  
A mirror of the glory of  
The trees.

And then he spoke  
Please do not suspect the words  
That I would speak,  
The honorable intent  
Is in my heart  
To make you mine.  
I am not as ordinary men,  
To range the hills, plow land, turn sod,  
Marry and improve a farm.  
Nor can I be.  
My destiny is pointed out to me  
By the Lord God.

Please hear me out!  
Five years ago  
The morning dew of  
Spring was on the land,  
I went into the woods  
To pray.  
The vision which then  
Burst upon my sight was  
So glorious I cannot  
Begin to tell the half of it,  
And in the light  
Stood God, our Father,  
And with him was  
The Lord. They spoke  
To me.

I did not ask to have  
An answer thus, but  
In simple faith, they said  
To join no Church,  
That I would be  
A prophet, called of God,  
Raised up to bring to earth  
Once more,  
His church,  
Its power to restore.

I then received no word for  
Three long years  
Then just two years ago  
An angel came and took  
Me to a hill, and showed  
Me plates of gold, engraved  
In ancient characters,  
Old indeed.  
It is God's will, he said,  
That I should  
Translate fair their  
Meaning to the world.



# EMMA HALE AND JOSEPH SMITH

(CONTINUED)

He came again a month ago  
And he will come again for  
Two more years to teach me  
What to do.

I do not know what lies in  
Store for me,  
How much of poverty, of persecution,  
Of martyrdom perhaps.

Can you find it in your heart  
To share my destiny?  
Can you believe the things I say to you?  
I must stand true  
To God.  
I will be strong to bear  
The tests which come  
If you are by my side.

I love you more than life,  
I pledge to make you happy  
As I can  
If you will be my wife.

There was a long silence.  
The stream lapped gently at its banks  
Reflecting the forest mood,  
The glory of the fall.  
Then she spoke:  
I believe you.  
I love you, too,  
And will join you till I die.

## TWO MINUTES IN JAIL

BY WILLARD RICHARDS

Possibly the following events occupied near three minutes, but I think only about two, and have penned them for the gratification of many friends.

CARTHAGE, June 27, 1844.

A shower of musket balls were thrown up the stairway against the door of the prison in the second story, followed by many rapid footsteps.

While Generals, Joseph and Hyrum Smith, Mr. Taylor and myself, who were in the front chamber, closed the door of our room against the entry at the head of the stairs, and placed ourselves against it, there being no lock on the door, and no catch that was usable.

The door is a common panel, and as soon as we heard the feet at the stairs head, a ball was sent through the door, which passed between us, and showed that our enemies were desperadoes, and we must change our positions.

General Joseph Smith, Mr. Taylor and myself sprang back to the front part of the room, and General Hyrum Smith retreated two-thirds across the chamber directly in front of and facing the door.

A ball was sent through the door which hit Hyrum on the side of his nose, when he fell backwards, extended at length, without moving his feet.

From the holes in his vest (the day was warm and no one had his coat on but myself), pantaloons, drawers, and shirt, it appears evident that a ball must have been thrown from without, through the window, which entered his back on the right side, passing through, lodged against his watch, which was in his right vest pocket, completely pulverizing the crystal and face, tearing off the hands and mashing the whole body of the watch. At the same instant the ball from the door entered his nose.

As he struck the floor he exclaimed emphatically, "I am a dead man". Joseph looked toward him and responded, "Oh, dear brother Hyrum!" and opening the door two or three inches with his left hand, discharged one barrel of a sixshooter (pistol) at random in the entry, passed from whence a ball grazed Hyrum's breast, and entering his throat passed into his head, while other muskets were aimed at him and some balls hit him.

Joseph continued snapping his revolver round the casing of the door into the space as before, three barrels of which miss fired, while Mr. Taylor with a walking stick stood by his side and knocked down the bayonets and muskets which were constantly discharging through the doorway, while I stood by him, ready to lend any assistance, with another stick, but could not come within striking distance without going directly before the muzzle of the guns.

When the revolver failed, we had no more firearms, and expected an immediate rush of the mob, and the doorway full of muskets, half way in the room, and no hope but instant death from within.

Mr. Taylor rushed into the window, which is some fifteen or twenty feet from the ground. When his body was nearly on a balance, a ball from the door within entered his leg, and a ball from without struck his watch,



a patent lever, in his vest pocket near the left breast, and smashed it into "pie", leaving the hands standing at 5 o'clock, 16 minutes and 26 seconds, the force of which ball threw him back on the floor, and he rolled under the bed which stood by his side, where he lay motionless, the mob from the door continuing to fire upon him, cutting away a piece of flesh from his left hip as large as a man's hand, and were hindered only by my knocking down their muzzles with a stick; while they continued to reach their guns into the room, probably left handed, and aimed their discharge so far round as almost to reach us in the corner of the room to where we retreated and dodged, and then I recommenced the attack with my stick.

Joseph attempted, as the last resort, to leap the same window from whence Mr. Taylor fell, when two balls pierced him from the door, and one entered his right breast from without, and he fell outward, exclaiming, "Oh Lord, my God!" As his feet went out of the window my head went in, the balls whistling all around. He fell on his left side a dead man.

At this instant the cry was raised, "He's leaping the window!" and the mob on the stairs and in the entry ran out.

I withdrew from the window, thinking it of no use to leap out on a hundred bayonets, then around General Joseph Smith's body.

Not satisfied with this I again reached my head out of the window, and watched some seconds to see if there were signs of life, regardless of my own, determined to see the end of him I loved. Being fully satisfied that he was dead, with a hundred men near the body and more coming round the corner of the jail, and expecting a return to our room, I rushed towards the prison door, at the head of the stairs, and through the entry from whence the firing had proceeded, to learn if the doors into the prison were open.

When near the entry, Mr. Taylor called out, "Take me" I pressed my way until I found all doors unbarred, returning instantly, caught Mr. Taylor under my arm and rushed by the stairs into the dungeon, or inner prison, stretched him out on the floor and covered him with a bed in such a manner as not likely to be perceived, expecting an immediate return of the mob.

I said to Mr. Taylor, "This is a hard case to lay you on the floor, but if your wounds are not fatal, I want you to live to tell the story." I expected to be shot the next moment, and stood before the door awaiting the onset.

