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HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

SEPTEMBER, 1813.

I do not like that religion which lies in a man's long face, or his coat or hat. If I wear a strange hat, it is not because of my religion; for where the religion of a man is in the shape of his hat or coat, it is not very extensive any where else.

Some of the elders want to appear very big, and to be called great preachers; but whenever I have seen them trying to preach something large and mysterious to get a name, I have concluded they have yet much to learn. I have been eleven years a member of this church, and was a believer two years before I entered it; and during that time I have seen many elders who like to preach large and mysterious sermons.

As many are desirous of hearing mysteries, I will rehearse a short sermon of mysteries for their edification. Elder Kimball has had a long standing in the church; he has preached much, done much good, brought many souls into the kingdom, had great influence, and is considered the most successful minister among us.

Elder Amasa Lyman and myself went into Pike county, Illinois, to preach where the elders had preached all the mysteries about beasts, heads and horns: they wanted us to preach mysteries; we told them we were not qualified to preach mysteries, but if they would send for Elder Kimball he could preach them. So they sent about forty miles for Elder Kimball, and brought him down, they were so anxious to hear the mysteries.

When he came he had a large congregation assembled; he arose and remarked that he understood they had sent for him to come and preach the mysteries to them. 'I am well qualified, and fully competent to do it, and am happy to have the privilege: I want the attention of all.' When every mind was stretched and eager to learn these great mysteries, he said, 'The first mystery I shall present before you is this: look at Elder Amasa Lyman, he needs a pair of pantaloons, and a new hat; but it appears you do not see it, consequently I want to open your eyes, and reveal to you a great mystery, for an elder in this church has need of a hat and a pair of breeches! as well as yourselves, and especially when the Saints know he is so much in need of them?' He preached a few more mysteries of the same nature: and the result of this sermon was, that Elder Lyman got a pair of pants and a new hat, and Elder Kimball and myself each a barrel of flour for our families.

Elder Brigham Young arose and said: 'I will make an apology for my remarks in the former part of the day; some may think I spoke very plain, but the object I had in view was to teach you your duty, as I am aware the people are not made to feel; and the apology I have to make is this: I will turn Thomsonian doctor, and give the composition without cream and sugar; it matters not whether I get friends or foes. If this work does not live, I do not want to live; for it is my life, my joy, my all; and if it sinks, God knows I do not want to swim.'

I wish you to understand this; that he that gathereth not with us scattereth, and they have not the Spirit of God. We live in anticipation of the day when mobs cannot harm us, and they who have tasted the bitter cup feel to realize this hope. Wake up, ye elders of Israel who have sought to build yourselves up and not the kingdom of God, and put on your sword:—wake up, ye that have daubed with untempered mortar, hearken and hear me; for I say unto you in the name of Jesus Christ, that if you do not help us to build the Temple, and the Nauvoo House, you shall not inherit the land of Zion.

If you do not help to build up Zion, and the cause of God, and help me and my brethren on our way when we want to go on the Lord's business, you shall not partake of the blessings which are laid up in store for the Saints.

Many elders seek to build themselves up and not the work of the Lord; they will say, 'Put gold rings on my fingers—give me what I want,' and they care nothing about the Temple. This they should not do: I will not allow myself to do so; and when any one does this, no matter who he may be, even though he was one of the Twelve, he will not prosper. Those of the Twelve and others of the elders who have apostatized, I have known their hearts, and their breathings; I have known their movements, although they thought I did not

know much; but I knew all about them, and when I see men preaching to build themselves up and not Zion, I know what it will end in. But you may say you are young: I don't care if you are so; are you old enough to know what you are about? if so, preach and labor for the building up of the city of Zion; concentrate your means and influence there, and not scatter abroad. Instead of which some of the elders appear to be dumb and lazy, and care for nothing but themselves.

Now, ye elders, will you be faithful? if not, you will not be chosen, for the day of choosing is at the door. Why be afraid of a sacrifice? I have given my all many times, and am willing to do it again. I would be glad to hear the Lord say through his servant Joseph, 'let my servant Brigham give again all that he has,' and I would obey it in a moment, if it took the last coat off from my back.'

A hymn was sung.

Elder Kimball arose and said: 'I get up on necessity, to say a few words. I am quite unwell, but I feel the importance of this work. I have been a member of this church twelve years: I came out of the Baptist church, and joined this with all my heart, as I was seeking after truth. I have passed through everything but death; in fact, I have been brought into situations even worse than death. It has been my lot and privilege to sacrifice all I possessed from time to time; and we have come here to call for help to build the Temple and Nauvoo House. I have spent thirty dollars to get here, and have collected fifteen, and that with much difficulty.'

We were commanded of the Lord to come, but it seems as though but few felt interested in it. Here I see four brethren going as missionaries to the Sandwich Islands, and destitute of means to help themselves: I could weep for them. I feel interested in this great work; we are seeking to bring about a work that could never before be performed.

When the time is brought about that we are to receive our inheritances, the more faithful we are, the larger will be our reward. We have come out to reap, but do we have time to reap new grain? No: for it takes all our time to try to save that which is already reaped.

We have reapers in the field, and we are trying to save the wheat; we want to get it on the barn floor, so that we may thrash it; we have come after you to warn you: you think Elder Young put the nail on rather heavy, but it is nothing to be compared with the thrashing you will get in Zion; and those who have the hardest heads will, of course, have to be thrashed the hardest; but don't be troubled about the chaff when it comes to the barn, for God will prepare a great winnowing mill which will blow all the chaff away, and the wheat will be found before the mill; then it has to go through the smut machine, then ground, then put through the bolting machine, and many will bolt in going through. I speak in parables: I compare the Saints to a good cow; when you milk her clean, she will always have an abundance of milk to give; but if you only milk her a little, and don't strip her, she will soon dry up. So with the Saints, if they do but little in building up Zion, they soon have but little to do with; this was the case in Cincinnati.

The night before arriving at Cincinnati I had a dream while on the steamboat; I dreamt that I had a wagon with a rack on it, and an individual with me. We were going to a field of wheat of mine that had been cut, bound and shocked up, in order to haul in to the barn; when we came to the field, I jumped off the wagon and got over the fence to examine it, pulled off the cap sheaf, and behold it was oats, pulling the bundles apart I found there were clusters of rats: on further examination I found clusters of mice, and the oats were all eaten up.

In my dream I was going to haul in wheat, but to my astonishment it was oats, and they were all eaten up by the rats and mice.

I thought these rats and mice were the elders and official members who had been in and lain on the church at Cincinnati, lived on the wheat, eaten them up, instead of building up new branches; so that when the Twelve came along, they could not get anything for the Temple or Nauvoo House, or hardly a place to stay; the rats had eaten up the wheat; so we had to go to the world for a home to stay while we were there.

We do not profess to be polished stones like Elders Almon W. Babbitt, Geo. J. Adams, James Blakeslee, and Eli P. Maginn, &c.; but we are rough stones out of the mountain, and when we roll through the forest, and knock the bark from the trees, it does not hurt us even if we should get a corner knocked off occasionally; for the more we roll about, and knock the corners off, the better we are; but if we were polished and smooth when we get the corners knocked off, it would deface us.

Joseph Smith never professed to be a dressed, smooth, polished stone, but to have kicked himself rough out of the mountain; and he has been rolling among the rocks and trees, yet it has not hurt him at all; but he will be as smooth and polished in the end as any other stone, while many who were so very polished and smooth in the beginning, get badly defaced and spoiled while they are rolling about.

Elder Parley P. Pratt said: 'Some are going to Zion, and the rest want to know what they shall do. The Lord, through Jeremiah, 3 ch. 14 v., says, 'I will take you one of a city, and

two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion; and I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.' Inasmuch as you hearken to counsel, you will know what the will of the Lord is concerning you in all things. Meet often together to worship God, and to speak to each other of the things of God. Gather as soon as you can; come up to the mountain of the Lord's House, and there learn of these things, that the scriptures may be fulfilled.'

Elder Orson Pratt said: 'I do not know that I can say anything to impress the subjects which have been spoken upon more fully upon your minds than has been done. There are some things, however, I wish to mention: we have learned from what we have heard this day that great blessings will be given to the faithful when the Temple is finished. I will speak of some of the consequences that will follow, if we do not obey.'

When the Temple is reared, God will manifest himself in a peculiar manner; if we are obedient, he has told us he will make manifest to us things we are now ignorant of; he has said he will reveal things which pertain to this dispensation that have been hidden and kept secret from the foundation of the world.

No former age or generation of the world have had the same things revealed; all other dispensations will be swallowed up in this. He declares in his revelations, the consequences of not building the house unto his name within such a time. The Lord says, if you build the house in that time, you shall be blessed; but if not you shall be rejected as a church with your dead, saith the Lord. So if that house is not built, then in vain are all our cares; our faith and works, our meetings and hopes are vain also—our performances and acts will be void.

The servants of God who are faithful and do their duty, will get the blessing; and we are determined to do our duty, and lay these principles before the Saints, so that they may have the privilege of contributing; we will turn this responsibility upon the heads of the Saints; then our garments will be clear, and the Lord is able and will be willing to endow all the faithful in some other place.

This church, in its infancy, was directed to do a certain work, and the consequences pointed out. The Lord gave a revelation several years since to the church to appoint our wise men, and send up our moneys by them to buy lands; if not, we should not have an inheritance, but our enemies should be upon us. We went through and told the Saints these things; but did the churches do as God commanded? No, they did not, but the revelation was fulfilled, and the enemies of the Saints came upon them, and drove them from their houses and homes, and finally from the State of Missouri. This was in consequence of their disobeying the commandments of God through his servant Joseph.

Many suppose they must get direct revelation from God for themselves; not so; he has a prophet, and he says the church shall give heed to the words of the prophet, as he is to hold the keys of the kingdom of God in this life, and in the world to come. Then it is of much consequence that you give heed to his word.

Says one, suppose we are not satisfied that this is the work of God? You can ask God if the work is true, and he will give you a testimony. You can put every confidence in the Book of Mormon, and in Joseph the Prophet; and if you are not satisfied, go to God. I doubt in my own mind if any man can stand what they will have to pass through, unless they do get a witness for themselves; and I pray you to give heed to the words which the Twelve have taught you, and ask God to help you.'

The conference was adjourned until 10 o'clock to-morrow morning.

Sunday, 10.—'Conference met according to adjournment.'

Meeting was opened by singing; and prayer by Elder Maginn; after which

Elder W. Woodruff addressed the assembly from Amos 3 ch. 7 v., 'Surely the Lord God will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.' According to the testimony of the scriptures in all ages of the world, whenever God was about to bring a judgment upon the world or accomplish any great work, the first thing he did was to raise up a prophet, and reveal unto him the secret, and send him to warn the people, so that they may be left without excuse. This was the case in the days of Noah, and Lot: God was about to bring judgments upon the people, and he raised up those prophets who warned the people of it; yet they gave no heed to them, but rejected their testimony; and the judgments came upon the people, so that they were destroyed, while the prophets were saved by pursuing the course marked out by the Lord.

Jesus Christ testified to the Jews of the things that awaited them as a nation, the fall of Jerusalem, and their dispersion among the gentile world; but they did not believe it. Yet the secret of all these things was revealed to the prophets and apostles; they believed it, and looked for its fulfillment; and it came to pass as it was predicted, though contrary to the expectation of the Jewish nation.

In like manner do we look for the certain fulfillment of those tremendous events upon the heads of the gentile world, which have been spoken of, and pointed out by all the holy pro-

phets and apostles since the world began, they having spoken as they were moved upon by the power of God and the gift of the Holy Ghost: events which more deeply concern the gentile world, than the overthrow of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews did the Jewish nation; for while they stumbled at the stone they were broken, but when it falls upon the heads of the gentile world it will grind them to powder.

The full set time is come for the Lord to set his hand to accomplish these mighty events; and as he has done in other ages, so has he done now—he has raised up a prophet, and is revealing unto him his secrets; through that prophet he has brought to light the fulness of the everlasting gospel to the present generation, and is again once more for the last time establishing his church upon the foundation of the ancient apostles and prophets, which is revelation, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone.

In the church is now found judges as at the first, and counselors as at the beginning; also apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, with gifts and graces, for the perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, and the edifying of the body of Christ.

The Lord has raised up his servants, and sent them into the vineyard to prune it once more for the last time—to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to warn the nations that they may be left without excuse in the day of their visitation; also to gather the honest in heart, and the meek of the earth, that Zion may be built up, and the sayings of the prophets fulfilled.

One of the secrets that God has revealed unto his prophet in these days is the Book of Mormon; and it was a secret to the whole world until it was revealed unto Joseph Smith, whom God has raised up as a prophet, seer, and revelator, unto his people. This record contains an account of the ancient inhabitants of this continent, and of the cities with which they overspread this land from sea to sea; the ruins of which still remain as standing monuments of the arts, science, power and greatness of their founders. It also points out the establishing of this our own nation, with its progress, decline, and fall; and those predictions contained in the Book of Mormon—the stick of Joseph in the hand of Ephraim, will as truly be fulfilled as those contained in the Bible—the stick and record of Judah; and both these sticks or record contain prophecies of great import concerning the gentile nations, and especially this land and nation, which are not yet fulfilled, but must shortly come to pass; yea, their fulfilment is nigh even at the doors.

Though the secrets which God is revealing through his servant the Prophet in these last days may be unpopular, and unbelieving in by the world, yet their unbelief will not make the truth of God of none effect, any more than it did in the days of Lot and Noah, or at the fall of Jerusalem.

When Jesus Christ said there should not be left one stone upon another in the temple, that should not be thrown down, the Jewish nation did not believe it, neither would they receive such testimony; but they looked at outward circumstances, and were ready to say, 'who can prevail against us? What nation like unto our nation? We have held the giving of the law, the articles, and the Urim and Thummim; the law-giver has never departed from between our feet: we have held the power of government from generation to generation; and what nation hath power now to prevail against us?'

Through this order of reasoning they were blinded, and knew not the day of their visitation—they understood not the things that belonged to their peace—they rejected their Lord and King, contended against his word and testimony, and finally put him to death on the cross, with many who followed him. But this did not hinder the fulfilment of his predictions concerning that nation; the words of the Lord had gone forth out of his mouth, and could not return unto him void. The things that belonged to their peace were hid from their eyes, and they were counted unworthy as a nation; the kingdom was to be rent out of their hands, and given to another; the die was cast, and judgment must come.

Jerusalem was soon surrounded by the Roman army, led on by the inspired Titus; and a scene of calamity, judgment and woe immediately overspread the inhabitants of that city, which was devoted to destruction—such a calamity as never before rested upon the nation of Israel. Blood flowed through their streets, tens of thousands fell by the edge of the sword, and thousands by famine. Women were evil towards the children of their own bosoms in the straits of the siege, the spectacle of which shocked the Roman soldiers as they entered the city. The Jews were crucified in such numbers by their enemies that they could find no more wood for crosses, or room for their bodies; and while despair was in every face, and every heart sinking while suffering under the chastening hand of God, their enemies rushed upon them in the city to strike the last fatal blow; and as their last resort, they rushed for safety into the temple, which was soon on fire, and they sunk in the midst of the flames with the cry of their sufferings ascending up on high, accompanied by the smoke of the crackling spires and towers.