

by H. Joseph Smith, of his successor, His son Joseph, was selected as successor, Joseph Smith did the talking. There were present Joseph and Hyrum Smith, John Taylor, and some others who also spoke on the subject. There were 21 in support at the meeting. At that meeting Joseph Smith, the present presiding officer of the complainant church, was selected by his father as his successor. His name was written and anointed at that time, and he was given the keys of the kingdom. John Taylor and Willard Richards, they were two of the Twelve, Ebenezer Robinson was present, George W. Adams, Amos C. Cutler, and Reynolds Cahoon. I cannot tell them all; I was there too." (Times & Seasons, 3: 103.)

Now, Mr. Wilcox (E. S. Wilcox) and friends, I am in a shape that I may be called to meet my God at any minute, as a disease is preying upon my poor body and I am near a skeleton, and my flesh may soon be devoured by worms, but I bear testimony to you before my God that the statement I have made of Alpheus Cutler's confession is correct as near as I can word it. (Saints Herald, Vol. 5: 255.)

You see that each of these men named by James Whitehead give the lie to his declaration by their entire lives, but this is not all. Joseph Smith of the Reorganized Church denies it himself. While he states that he was blessed by his father, in his testimony under oath in the Temple lot, said he said:

"No, sir, I did not state that I was ordained by my father; I did not make the statement. I was NOT ordained by my father as his successor—according to my understanding of the word ordain, was not." Plaintiff's Abstract, Page 79 Par. 126.

Thus the testimony of James Whitehead is worthless. John S. Carter said the prophet chose his son at a public meeting in Nauvoo on a Sunday not long before Joseph was killed. (True Sac. page 48). Yet none of the people knew of this. Nothing was said of it during the trouble with Sidney Rigdon. And the same president of the Nauvoo stake, would most likely be present at the public meetings held on Sundays in Nauvoo. Yet he supported the claim of Sidney Rigdon to be the guardian when the latter declared that there could be no successor. It is a little strange that such an appointment could be made at a public meeting and all the people just a few months later—be ignorant of it. Where were the people the day this public meeting was held? How much easier it would have been for Sidney Rigdon to have said, August 8, 1844: "I want to be appointed 'guardian' until young Joseph grows up," instead of saying that no successor could be appointed. How easy it would have been for Lyman Wight to have said, "I was present when Joseph blessed his son in Liberty prison, as his successor." James Whitehead and John S. Carter to have declared that young Joseph's successor was ORDAINED as his father's successor at a PUBLIC meeting in Nauvoo shortly before the martyrdom and thus have reminded the people of it. How strange that such an important occasion would slip the minds of the entire people on such a vital occasion? But they did not think of it. The truth is it was an afterthought on the part of each of them.

Another thing which is peculiar: There were too many "appointments" and "ordinations" of this "successor" which makes the thing look suspicious. It is hardly reasonable to suppose that the prophet "appointed," "blessed," and "ordained" his son to this office every few days. If such a thing had taken place it would have been done in the proper way and manner in the presence of the presiding officers of the Church and a proper record of it would have been made and filed away. But the records of the Church are silent and it is quite significant that Lyman Wight, James Whitehead, John S. Carter and even Joseph of the "Reorganization" himself had "forgotten" this "appointing" or "ordinating" at the most critical moment for it to have been mentioned—August 8, 1844.

William Smith stated that the right of Presidency was by lineage, and therefore he supported the claim of the Prophet in 1850, or even in November 1845. (True Sac. p. 17). Yet William Smith knew of no appointment or ordination of young Joseph, although he was one of the Twelve, and would have been sure to have known had such a thing taken place. In May 1845 he stated that the twelve were the proper authorities of the Church. (Times & Seasons 6: 94.) He was excommunicated in the following October and it was not till after his excommunication that he advocated the right of young Joseph. Furthermore, William Smith claimed that he was himself ordained by his Succession pp. 101-103.)

Now, we put any credence in the testimonies of such men as Lyman Wight, James Whitehead, John S. Carter and William Smith? Most assuredly not.

That the prophet did not choose his son is quite evident also from the following testimony given by reliable witnesses and at the proper time:

TESTIMONY OF PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG at a meeting held at Nauvoo, Aug. 7, 1844, he said:

"How often has Joseph said to the twelve, I have laid the foundation and

you must build thereon, for upon your shoulders the kingdom rests. 'I tell you in the name of the Lord, that no man can put another between the twelve and the Prophet Joseph Smith. Why? Because Joseph was their first leader, and he has committed into their hands the keys of the kingdom in this last dispensation for all the world; don't put a threat between the priesthood and the Kingdom of God on Earth for Aug. 7, 1844.)"

And in a letter written to Orson Spencer, Jan. 22, 1845, President Young said: "Joseph told the twelve the year before he died. There is not one key or power to be bestowed on this Church to lead the people into the celestial gate but I have given you, showed you, and talked it over to you, the kingdom is set up, and you have the perfect pattern, and you can go and build up the kingdom and go in at the celestial gate, taking your train with you." (Mill. Star, 10: 115.)

TESTIMONY OF HEBER C. KIMBALL—At the trial of Sidney Rigdon, held in the fall of 1844, he said:

"Brother Joseph has passed behind the veil, and he pulled off his shoes, and some one else puts them on, until he comes to Brother Joseph. President Young is our president, and our head, and he puts the shoes on first. If Brother Hyrum had remained here, he would have put them on. Hyrum is gone with Joseph and is still his counselor. THE TWELVE HAVE RECEIVED THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM, and as long as there is one and a half left, he will hold them in preference to any other else." (Times and Seasons 5: 664.)

TESTIMONY OF ORSON HYDE— "The shatts of the enemy are always aimed at the head first. Brother Joseph said some time before he was murdered, 'If I am taken away, upon you, the twelve, will rest the responsibility of leading this people, and do not be bluffed off by any man.'" (Times and Seasons 5: 650.)

"Before I went east on the 4th of April last, we went in with Brother Joseph, said Brother Joseph in one of those councils, 'There is something going to happen; I don't know what it is, but you are going to be taken away, and give your endowment before the temple is finished.' He conducted us through every ordinance of the holy priesthood, and when he had gone, he rejoiced very much, and said, 'Now, if they kill me, you have got all the keys, and all the ordinances, and you can confer them upon others, and the hosts of satan will not be able to tear down the kingdom, as fast as you will be able to build it up; and now, said he, 'on your shoulders will rest the responsibility of leading this people, rest, for the Lord is going to let me rest a while.'" (Times and Seasons 5: 651.)

TESTIMONY OF WILFORD WOODRUFF— "Now my boy, I want to ask you a question. Did you ever see Joseph Elder Rigdon in his councils when he organized the quorum of the twelve, a few months before his death, to prepare them for the endowment? And when they received their endowment, and actually received the keys of the kingdom of God, and oracles of God, keys of revelation, and the pattern of heavenly things, and they dressed the twelve, Joseph exclaimed, 'Upon your shoulders, the kingdom rests, and you must round up your shoulders, and bear it; for I have had to do it until now. But now the responsibility rests upon you.'" (Times and Seasons 5: 688.)

(See also President Woodruff's testimony given in 1852. See Sac. page 101.)

MATHIAS W. SMITH'S TESTIMONY—Sister Bathsheba W. Smith says of the calling of the twelve: "In the year 1844, a short time before the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, I was privileged to attend a regular prayer circle meeting in the upper room over the prophet's store. There were present at this meeting most of the twelve apostles, their wives, and a number of other prominent brethren and their wives. On that occasion the prophet arose and spoke at great length, and during his remarks I heard him say that he had conferred on the heads of the twelve apostles all the keys and powers pertaining to the priesthood, and that upon the heads of the twelve apostles the burden of the kingdom rested, and they would have to carry it."

BENJAMIN F. JOHNSON'S TESTIMONY—At the eighty-seventh birthday anniversary celebration of Elder Benjamin F. Johnson, held at Mesa, Arizona, July 29, 1895, that patriarch said:

"I speak of things of which I know. I was the business partner of Joseph Smith, from my mission until the time of his martyrdom; was as familiar with him as with my brother or my father. 'Do I know that Brigham Young was the true successor of Joseph Smith? I knew it before the prophet was martyred, for Joseph had made it known. I was present when the prophet gave his charge to the twelve apostles when they were gathered in prayer, and rose up with the light of heaven shining in his countenance, related his experiences with reference to the beginning of this work, the responsibilities placed upon him, the persecutions and hardships through which he had passed. He declared that God had revealed all the truth necessary to save mankind, had given unto him the keys of the kingdom, and he had carried the weight and load thus far, and then, speaking directly to the twelve, he said: 'I now roll upon you the burden of this responsibility upon you; I give unto you all the keys and powers bestowed upon me, and I say unto you, that unless you round up your shoulders and bear off this kingdom you will be damned.'"

EZRA T. CLARK'S TESTIMONY— "Before I left Nauvoo, I heard the Prophet Joseph say he would give the keys of the kingdom to whomever he would never be led away or deceived, and that was: The Lord would never suffer the majority to be led away or led away or deceived by impostors, nor would he allow the records of this Church to fall into the hands of the enemy." I heard Joseph say this, and I also heard him say that he would roll the burden of the apostleship upon the quorum of the twelve; I heard Joseph preach many times; heard him, in the last sermon he ever delivered, bear testimony to the truth of the work that God had called him to; also that the Lord had never suffered him to be slain by his enemies, because his work had not been done until a short time ago. It had now laid the foundation of this work, and rolled the burden of the priesthood upon the twelve; and, having given them the washing and anointings, they would not bear off this work triumphantly, and it would roll on faster than ever before; and, if the Lord was willing to accept him, he was willing to go.—M. L. A. Rev. Vol. 5: 202.

We will now consider the claim that Joseph Smith of the "Reorganization" was properly ordained. We must first know what constitutes a proper ordination. It must be done by those holding authority in the priesthood who have been properly appointed; otherwise the ordination is not valid. Second, an ordination must be approved by the body of the Church and sanctioned by the Church, or it is not valid. For there is in the gospel the law of common consent. (Doc. & Cov. Sec. 42.)

Third, if a man exercises his priesthood contrary to the rules of the Church, or in unrighteousness, Amen to his authority. (Doc. & Cov. 121: 27.)

Fourth, "Again, I say unto you, it shall not be given to any one to go forth to preach my gospel, or to build up my Church except he be ordained by some one who has authority, and it is known to the Church that he has authority, and has been regularly ordained by the heads of the Church." (Sec. 42.)

The question is, will the ordination of Joseph Smith of the "Reorganization" stand this test? He was "ordained" under the hands of William Marks

(Mouth) Zenas H. Gurley, William W. Blair and Samuel Powers. Messrs. Blair and Powers never did belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, so will pass them by without consideration. We will take up the cases of William Marks and Zenas H. Gurley separately.

William Marks was president of the Nauvoo stake at the time of the martyrdom, but it is of a more recent period that we are considering him. Did he in 1840 hold the priesthood? William Marks was dropped from his position as president of the Nauvoo stake at a conference of the Church held Oct. 7, 1844 (T. & S. 5: 692).

The whole Church voting not to sustain him, excepting two votes. The action was taken because he supported the claims of Sidney Rigdon and opposed the twelve and action of the Church. In the Deceiver following he acknowledged his error in the following:

"Notice.—After mature and candid deliberation, I am fully and satisfactorily convinced that Mr. Sidney Rigdon is the proper president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, are not founded in truth. I have been deceived by his specious pretences and now feel to warn every one of whom I may have any acquaintance to beware of him, and his pretended visions and revelations. The twelve are the proper persons to lead the Church."—WILLIAM MARKS. Nauvoo, Dec. 9, 1844. (Times & Seasons 5: 742.)

After making this acknowledgment he was received back into fellowship, but did not again obtain his former position. Later he became satisfied with the withdrawal from the Church and was excommunicated. During the exodus he joined James J. Strang and in 1846 was called to be a counselor to James J. Strang in his organization. (Hist. of Reorganized Church 2: 723.) For a time he was also president of Strang's "Stake of Zion" and also a bishop in his organization (Hist. of Reorg. Ch. 3: 44 and 72). First a "bishop," then "president of the stake of Zion," and then "counselor" in Strang's presidency. In 1853 he became a member of the church of the right place and the rightful successor, and so on down to the present day, then I say to you when you go home become a member of the church of repentance and humility and prayer, and ask Him in faith for that knowledge and He will hear your prayers. There is no reason why any man should be deceived, for the Lord has promised us that we shall receive if we ask and if we kneel it shall be opened unto us. By keeping the commandments of God all men may know of this truth, and this is true. If you will do this, then when these deceivers and pretenders, these men who delight in destroying your faith, come to you and bid you stand in the dark, you can say to them, get behind me, for I will not be deceived by you. I know we have the truth that this is the will of the Lord, that Jesus is the Redeemer of the world and that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God and was called to stand at the head of this dispensation and those keys that did he after Joseph died, he was not a fallen prophet, but died a martyr to this work. May God bless you, Amen.

power and keys of the kingdom on others which the evidence shows that he did. The men who ordained Joseph Smith of the Reorganization were not regularly ordained and did not hold the keys of the kingdom. The apostles consulted the soul giving revelation in the Church and were sustained in their calling as the first presidency of the Church by the vote of the people Aug. 8, 1844, and again at the conference in October of that same year.

I call the attention of the Latter-day Saints once more to the fact previously mentioned (section 43: 4-6) that there is but one at a time who holds the keys and the right to receive revelation for the Church, and that man is the president of the Church. And when that first presidency is disorganized, when the death of the president, then according to revelation, the twelve apostles become the presiding quorum of the Church and then if the Lord has any revelations to give to His people they will come through the proper channel—the president of the twelve. If we will look in the mind of the Lord, that is the Lord intended that it should be by which we may save and keep the pretended revelations of men. When we see this man or that man or perhaps that woman or child giving revelation, as was the case in the Reorganized church when James W. Briggs, Zenas H. Gurley, Henry H. Deam or the daughter of Zenas H. Gurley, received "revelations" bearing on the organization of their cult, we will know assuredly that these things are not of God. The Lord will never ignore the presiding officer and quorum of the Church, for He respects authority as He requires us to respect authority. And it will always be key to us, if we will bear it in mind, that when ever He has a revelation or commandment to give to His people that it will come through the presiding officer of the Church. This is plainly taught in the revelations.

If there is within the sound of my voice one soul who has not received a testimony of this work, and that Brigham Young was the right man in the right place and the rightful successor, and so on down to the present day, then I say to you when you go home become a member of the church of repentance and humility and prayer, and ask Him in faith for that knowledge and He will hear your prayers. There is no reason why any man should be deceived, for the Lord has promised us that we shall receive if we ask and if we kneel it shall be opened unto us. By keeping the commandments of God all men may know of this truth, and this is true. If you will do this, then when these deceivers and pretenders, these men who delight in destroying your faith, come to you and bid you stand in the dark, you can say to them, get behind me, for I will not be deceived by you. I know we have the truth that this is the will of the Lord, that Jesus is the Redeemer of the world and that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God and was called to stand at the head of this dispensation and those keys that did he after Joseph died, he was not a fallen prophet, but died a martyr to this work. May God bless you, Amen.

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