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✓ HEARKEN, O YE LATTER-DAY SAINTS, AND ALL YE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH WHO WISH TO BE SAINTS, TO WHOM THIS WRITING SHALL COME.

• Happening lately, while on a preaching trip to Cache Valley, to pick up a book which was lying on a table in the house where we were stopping, we were surprised to find that it was the book bearing the title, on the outside, of "Joseph Smith, the Prophet;" and on the title page, "Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and his progenitors for many generations, by Lucy Smith, mother of the Prophet; published for Orson Pratt by S. W. Richards, Liverpool," etc. Our surprise at finding a copy of this work may be accounted for by the fact of our having advertised some time ago that the book was incorrect, and that it should be gathered up and destroyed, so that no copies should be left; and, from this, we had supposed that not a single copy could be found in any of the houses of the Saints.

We now wish to publish our views and feelings respecting this book, so that they may be known to all the Saints in all the world. In Great Britain diligence has been used in collecting and in disposing of this work, and we wish that same diligence continued there and also exercised here, at home, until not a copy is left.

• The inquiry may arise in the minds of some persons "why do you want to destroy this book?" Because we are acquainted with individual circumstances alluded to in it, and know many of the statements to be false. We could go through the book and point out many false statements which it contains; but we do not feel to do so. It is sufficient to say that it is utterly unreliable as a history, as it contains many falsehoods and mistakes. We do not wish such a book to be lying on our shelves to be taken up in after years and read by our children as true history, and we, therefore, expect the High Priests, the Seventies, the Elders, the Bishops, and every one in the Church, male and female, if they have such a book, to dispose of it so that it will never be read by any person again. If they do not, the responsibility of the evil results that may accrue from keeping it will rest upon them and not upon us.

• Without entering into all the details of the writing of this book and its production in print, we may say that at the time it was written, which was after the death of the Prophet Joseph, mother Smith was seventy years old, and very forgetful. Her mind had suffered many severe shocks, through losing a beloved husband and four sons of exceeding promise, to whom she was fondly attached, three of whom had but recently fallen victims to mobocratic violence, and she could, therefore, scarcely recollect anything correctly that had transpired. She employed as an amanuensis a lady by the name of Coray.

Those who have read the history of William Smith, and who knew him, know the statements made in that book respecting him when he came out of Missouri to be utterly false. Instead of

being the faithful man of God and the Saint which he is there represented to have been, he was a wicked man, and he publicly expressed the hope that his brother Joseph would never get out of the hands of his enemies alive; and he further said that if he had had the disposing of him, he would have hung him years before.

• When the book was written mother Smith sent it to us to examine. In company with some others, who were acquainted with the circumstances alluded to in the book, we read the manuscript and we soon saw that it was incorrect. We paid the amanuensis who wrote the book for mother Smith for a copy of the work, and that copy is now in the Historian's Office, and has been in our possession ever since we left Nauvoo. But the original manuscript was purloined, we suppose, from mother Smith, and went into the hands of apostates, and was purchased of them by Orson Pratt. He had the work published in England. We do not know that Samuel W. Richards, who printed the work, knew anything about the manner in which it was written or how br. Pratt obtained it. He printed it, we suppose, as he would any other book. But brother Pratt had it printed, and published it, without saying a word to the First Presidency or the Twelve about what he was doing. This is the way the book came into being. It was smuggled, juggled and foisted into existence as a book.

• The preface of this book was written by brother Orson Pratt. In that he stated that the book was "mostly written previous to the death of the Prophet, and under his personal inspection," which statement is false, and which brother Pratt afterwards corrected in the DESERET NEWS, March 21st, 1855, as follows:

• "This work was first published in England, in 1853. I procured the manuscripts while on my last mission in the United States, and was informed, at the time, that most of the work was written under the inspection of the Prophet, but from evidences since received, it is believed that the greater part of the manuscripts did not pass under his review, as there are items which are ascertained to be incorrect."

• Many of the Saints may not know that the book is inaccurate; but those who have been instructed respecting its character and will still keep it on their tables and have it in their houses as a valid and authentic history for their children to read, need rebuke. It is transmitting lies to posterity to take such a course, and we know that the curse of God will rest upon every one, after he comes to the knowledge of what is here said, who keeps these books for his children to learn and believe in lies.

• We wish those who have these books to either hand them to their Bishops for them to be conveyed to the President's or Historian's Office, or send them themselves, that they may be disposed of; and they will please write their names in the books, with the name of the place where they reside, and if they wish to hand them over without pay in return, state so; and if they wish to get pay for them, state whether they desire it applied on tithing or wish the value returned in other books.

When we commenced this article we did not think of extending our comments beyond the work already alluded to. We consider it our duty, however, and advisable for us to incorporate with this, which we have already written, our views upon other doctrines which have been extensively published and widely received as the standard and authoritative doctrines of the church, but which are unsound. The views we allude to, and which we deem objectionable, have been published by Elder Orson Pratt. We have expressed our disapproval of some of these doctrines through the columns of the *Millennial*

Star, published in England, and the DESERET NEWS of this city; there are others, however, of a kindred character, which have not been alluded to in public print, that also require comment in order that a correct understanding may be had by the Saints respecting them. We do not wish incorrect and unsound doctrines to be handed down to posterity under the sanction of great names, to be received and valued by future generations as authentic and reliable, creating labor and difficulties for our successors to perform and contend with, which we ought not to transmit to them. The interests of posterity are, to a certain extent, in our hands. Errors in history and in doctrine, if left uncorrected by us who are conversant with the events, and who are in a position to judge of the truth or falsity of the doctrines, would go to our children as though we had sanctioned and endorsed them. Such a construction could very easily be put upon our silence respecting them, and would tend to perplex and mislead posterity and make the labor of correction an exceedingly difficult one for them. We know what sanctity there is always attached to the writings of men who have passed away, especially to the writings of apostles when none of their cotemporaries are left, and we, therefore, feel the necessity of being watchful upon these points. Personal feelings and friendships and associations ought to sink into comparative insignificance and have no weight in view of consequences so momentous to the people and kingdom of God as these.

Moses wrote the history of creation, and we believe that he had the inspiration of the Almighty resting upon him. The prophets who wrote after him were likewise endowed with the Spirit of revelation. The Apostles of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, the personal witnesses of his ministry, revealed many great and glorious truths to the people. The Prophet Joseph, in our own day, was chosen of God, and ordained as a Seer and Revelator, and was made the means of bringing much knowledge to light respecting God and the things of God. But none of these prophets and apostles,—no, not even the Son of God himself—has ever been able, to our knowledge, to inform the world respecting the "Great First Cause" and to explain how the first organized Being was originated. They never were able to reveal to man that every part of the Holy Spirit, however minute and infinitesimal, possessed "every intellectual or moral attribute possessed by the Father and the Son;" or that "the spiritual personages of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, if organized at all, must have been the result of the self-combinations and unions of the pre-existent, intelligent, powerful and eternal particles of matter. The reader may inquire "why they could not reveal this?" It was because there was no such fact in existence. They were evidently content with the knowledge that from all eternity there had existed organized beings, in an organized form, possessing superior and controlling power to govern what Brother Pratt calls the "self-moving, all-wise and all-powerful particles of matter," and that it was neither rational nor consistent with the revelations of God and with reason and philosophy to believe that these latter Forces and Powers had existed prior to the Beings who controlled and governed them. But to teach these ideas and to make them public to mankind, after so many ages of ignorance respecting them, has been reserved, according to his own arguments, for Brother Orson Pratt. We must do Brother Orson Pratt the justice, however, to say that he has never claimed to know these things by revelation, still he has published them to the world as facts and as

doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

In remarks which Bro. Pratt made, Great Salt Lake City, Jan. 29, 1860—remarks which were prompted upon learning our views respecting the doctrines that he had published, and which he delivered without giving intimation of any such intention—while speaking in relation to the things which were deemed objectionable and erroneous by the First Presidency and Twelve—he confessed that he had erred and done wrong in publishing them; he said, that "So far as revelation from the heavens is concerned, I have had none in relation to those points of doctrine;" and he further said, on this same subject: "There is one thing I will insure you of, God will never reveal anything to me, or to any other man, which will come in contact with the views and revelations which he gives to the man who holds the keys. We never need expect such a thing." These remarks were published in the DESERET NEWS, July 25th, 1860, and the First Presidency appended to them the following comments:

• "Elder Pratt sustains an unimpeachable character, as far as strict morality, tried integrity, industry, energy, zeal, faithfulness to his religion, and honesty in all business transactions are concerned, but it will be readily perceived from his remarks, that he does not claim exemption from liability to err in judgment in relation to some points of doctrine. Br. Pratt's preachings and teachings upon the first principles of the gospel are excellent.

• "With regard to the quotations and comments in the *Seer* as to Adam's having been formed 'out of the ground' and 'from the dust of the ground,' &c., it is deemed wisest to let that subject remain without further explanation, for it is written that we are to receive 'line upon line,' according to our faith and capacities, and the circumstances attending our progress.

• In the *Seer*, pages 24 and 25, par. 22, br. Pratt states:—

• "All these gods are equal in power, in glory, in dominion, and in the possession of all things; each possesses a fulness of truth, of knowledge, of wisdom, of light, of intelligence; each governs himself in all things by his own attributes, and is filled with love, goodness, mercy and justice towards all. The fulness of all these attributes is what constitutes God." "It is truth, light and love that we worship and adore; these are the same in all worlds; and as these constitute God, He is the same in all worlds;" "wherever you find a fulness of wisdom, knowledge, truth, goodness, love and such like qualities, there you find God in all His glory, power and majesty—therefore, if you worship these adorable perfections, you worship God."

Seer, page 117, par. 95:—

"Then there will be no Being or Beings in existence that will know one particle more than what we know; then our knowledge and wisdom and power will be infinite; and cannot, from thenceforth, be increased or expanded in the least degree."

Same page, par. 96:—

"But when they (the Saints) become one with the Father and the Son and receive a fulness of their glory, that will be the end of all progression in knowledge, because there will be nothing more to be learned. The Father and the Son do not progress in knowledge and wisdom, because they already know all things past, present and to come."

• Par. 97:—

• "There are none among them (the Gods) that are in advance of the others in knowledge; though some may have been Gods as many millions of years as there are particles of dust in all the universe, yet there is not one truth that such are in possession of but what every other God knows." "None of these Gods are progressing in knowledge; neither can they progress in the acquirement of any truth."

"In his treatise entitled 'Great First Cause,' page 16, par. 17, br. Pratt states:—

"All the organizations of worlds, of minerals, of vegetables, of animals, of men, of angels, of spirits, and of the spiritual personages of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, must, if organized at all, have been the result of the self-combinations and unions of the pre-existent, intelligent, powerful and eternal particles of substance. These eternal forces and powers are the great first causes of all things and events that have had a beginning."

• "The foregoing quoted ideas, and similar ones omitted to be quoted, with the comments thereon, as advanced by br. Pratt in an article in the *Seer*, entitled 'Pre-existence of man,' and in his treatise entitled 'Great First Cause,'