

Elder Milton R. Hunter

Of the First Council of the Seventy

The holy scriptures declare that there were many noble and great spirits among God's numerous sons in the grand council in heaven before this world was created. Speaking of their future mortal probation, the Eternal Father proclaimed that he would make these noble and great ones his rulers. Thus they were chosen in heaven and foreordained by God to become prophets, seers, and revelators in mortality.

The greatest of these spirit sons of the Eternal Father was Jehovah, later known as Jesus Christ. The scriptures declare: "And there stood one among them that was like unto God." (Abr. 3:24.) The Eternal Father selected this one to work with him as co-creator of the world and also later to serve as the Savior of the human family. In explaining to Abraham about these noble and great spirits, Jehovah said: "Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born." (Abr. 3:23.)

Prophets foreordained

The prophet Jeremiah wrote:

"Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou earnest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (Jer. 1:4-5.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith declared:

"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." (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 365.)

It seems to be definite, therefore, that all the prophets, seers, and revelators who headed the various gospel dispensations, such as Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Joseph Smith, were called, sanctified, and foreordained by God before they came

into mortality to perform the great works which they performed here.

Prophet like unto Moses

Approximately 3,500 years before the birth of Joseph Smith, the prophet Joseph of Egyptian fame prophesied that in the latter days God would raise up a great prophet, seer, and revelator. This prophet and seer would perform a great and marvelous work for the salvation of the human family. His name would be Joseph, and his father's name would be Joseph. He would be mighty among the people and would "do much good, both in word and in deed, being an instrument in the hands of God, with exceeding faith, to work mighty wonders, and do that thing which is great in the sight of God." (See 2 Ne. 3:4-24.) He would be "great like unto Moses." (2 Ne. 3:9.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith fits in every detail with the prophecy made anciently by Joseph of Egypt. Joseph Smith was God's holy anointed prophet, seer, and revelator through whom the gospel was revealed from heaven and the true Church of Jesus Christ established in the latter days in fulfillment of the predictions made by many of the ancient prophets. In every respect Joseph Smith was God's prophet, seer, and revelator who was "great like unto Moses." A seer has the power to look through the veil and see visions.

Visitation in Sacred Grove

No personal visitation to mortal man of God the Father and his Only Begotten Son has been recorded in any holy scriptures which equals the marvelous experience had by Joseph Smith, the seer. In response to his prayer in the Sacred Grove in the spring of 1820, Joseph Smith was visited by God, the Eternal Father, and his Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Joseph reported the following:

"When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing

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above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other— *This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*" (Joseph Smith 2:17.)

And then Joseph received instructions from the Only Begotten Son, and throughout the remainder of his life the Prophet continued to receive numerous revelations from that divine Being.

Further manifestations

Also, on other occasions during his life, Joseph Smith had the unusual privilege of seeing Jesus Christ. For example, on February 16, 1832, regarding Sidney Rigdon and himself, Joseph wrote:

"... the Lord touched the eyes of our understandings and they were opened, . . .

"And we beheld the glory of the Son, on the right hand of the Father, . . .

"And saw the holy angels, and them who are sanctified before his throne, worshiping God, and the Lamb, who worship him forever and ever.

"And now after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

"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 76:19-24.)

These personal experiences had by the Prophet Joseph Smith definitely illustrate the fact that he was indeed a seer "great like unto Moses," because Joseph saw God and talked with him face to face as one man talks with another, even as did Moses.

The Prophet Joseph Smith was also visited on numerous occasions by heavenly messengers other than God, such as the Angel Moroni, John the Baptist, Peter, James, and John, Moses, Elias, and Elijah, as well as by Gabriel, Raphael, and Michael. (See Joseph Smith 2:29-33; D&C 13, 110:11-16, 128:20-21.) These heavenly messen-

gers bestowed upon the Prophet divine powers, keys, authority, and priesthood, and gave him instructions requisite to establishing the true gospel and Church of Jesus Christ on the earth again. Thus, there was a "restitution of all things [to the Prophet Joseph Smith], which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21.)

A teacher of truth

The principal work of a prophet of God is to be a teacher of religious truths and thereby give to the people the will and the word of the Lord. The Prophet Joseph Smith produced for the world three new volumes of holy scriptures, namely, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price, and, in addition, he revised the Bible. No prophet who has ever lived has accomplished such a tremendous feat. There are only 177* pages in the Old Testament attributed to Moses, while Joseph Smith either translated through the gift and power of God or received as direct revelation from Jehovah 835* similar-size pages of holy scriptures. Joseph's accomplishments stand superb among prophets as a proclaimer of the will and the word of the Lord.

Prophecies of Joseph Smith

Prophets, when directed by the Spirit of the Lord, predict future events, or, in other words, prophesy. Joseph Smith rates among the greatest of the prophets in this respect, having proclaimed many prophecies. I shall present only one prophecy he made as an illustration. While in Montrose, Iowa, on August 6, 1842, Joseph Smith wrote in his journal:

"... I prophesied that the Saints would continue to suffer much affliction and would be driven to the Rocky Mountains, many would apostatize, others would be put to death by our persecutors or lose their lives in consequence of exposure or disease, and some of you will live to go and assist in making settlements and build cities and see the Saints become a mighty people in the midst of the Rocky

*Number of pages may vary with different editions.

Mountains." (*Documentary History of the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 85.)

We all know that this prophecy has been literally and completely fulfilled.

Perhaps paramount to his accomplishments was that "through the gift and power of God and the Urim and Thummim" he translated the Book of Mormon into modern English from an ancient unknown language called Reformed Egyptian.

The gospel restored

It is of significance to remember that Jesus Christ restored his true gospel and Church on the earth again through the Prophet Joseph Smith. The Lord proclaimed that the gospel and Church would never be taken from the earth again nor given to another people. Because of this divine restoration, the Prophet Joseph was murdered when he was 38 years of age. Thus, he sealed his testimony of that divine restoration with his blood, giving his life for the Savior and his Church, as many of the ancient prophets had done.

The following important statement appears in modern scripture:

"Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer

of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it. . . ." (D&C 135:3.)

I bear my testimony that the Prophet Joseph Smith is one of the greatest (if not the greatest) of the prophets, seers, and revelators that the world has known. A study and evaluation of the prophecies he made, the visions and revelations he had, the scriptures he produced, and his numerous mighty works and marvelous accomplishments force this conclusion upon the honest investigator. Joseph Smith shall stand always as superior among God's elect—the noble and great ones whom he selected to be his rulers. Joseph was indeed a prophet, seer, and revelator "great like unto Moses."

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Joseph Fielding Smith

Elder Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of Seventy has just spoken to us.

Elder Bernard P. Brockbank, Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak. He will be followed by Elder Eldred G. Smith, the Patriarch of the Church.

Elder Bernard P. Brockbank

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

Brothers and sisters, I have had the great honor and privilege of spending the better part of the past nine years in the mission field. Many choice blessings have resulted from this experience. I have had the privilege of meeting and visiting with thousands of religious people from all parts of the world as they visited our Church pavilions at the New York World's Fair and at the Texas World's Fair [HemisFair].

I asked many of these visitors if they believed that they were literally in the image and likeness of God, and almost everyone answered no.

Discussion on Godhead

I would like to mention one fine, clean student who visited the pavilion

in Texas. He believed in a trinity of God the Eternal Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, that they were all one and the same God, and that they were incomprehensible. I asked him if he believed that Jesus Christ was ever a separate personage from God the Father. He said that he believed they are one and the same God. He asked about our exhibit of the painting that showed the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Sacred Grove, when he claimed that God the Eternal Father and his Son Jesus Christ visited him in the grove. We talked about the vision of Joseph Smith and the personal appearance of the Father and the Son. We read what Joseph Smith said about this marvelous vision.

Joseph Smith said, ". . . I saw a