

[Brigham Young]

[CD 4:2157-2159]

[Reported by G. D. Watts]

I wish your faith and prayers to be exercised in my behalf that I may have strength to speak to you a short time.

The subject I shall lay before you is naturally interesting in consequence to the relationship it bears to Joseph the Prophet.

You have heard that Young Joseph Smith, the son of Joseph Smith the Prophet, has presented himself as the leader of the Latter-day Saints. I will take this for my text.

In the first place I will say to the saints that I know more about Joseph Smith, the prophet of the last days, and his family, than all the apostates that ever did or ever will leave this church.

My remarks will be few on this subject for I shall merely make a few declarations and perhaps call for some testimony and evidence.

Joseph Smith that now is living in the state of Illinois, the son of Joseph the Prophet, will never lead the Latter-day Saints: he may lead apostates, and will lead them to hell.

I am a witness that Joseph Smith the Prophet had a son born to him after his death. He received his death wound about 24 minutes past five in the afternoon of the 27th of June 1844, and about the latter part of October following in the following fall he had a son born to him. Long before his death Joseph said to me, "I shall have a son born to me and his name shall be called David; and on him in some future time will rest the responsibility that now rests upon me." This is Joseph's declaration to me and others some time before his death. I can produce plenty of witnesses to the truth of this if necessary.

If Joseph Smith was a prophet we will take his words for what they are worth. If he was not a prophet then are we deceived and our professions and testimonies relating to the Kingdom of God are void.

There is now considerable whispering among us concerning the Josephites as they are called. What are they? They are apostates. Their preaching is scurrility and abuse and calling me the worst man in the world. You are witnesses of my private and public life. They say the same things of all the leaders of this church.

Two missionaries of the Josephite church are in this city and I will here say that if any honest persons shall be so far in the dark as to be deceived and be decoyed away from the truth by those men, if they will seek diligently unto the Lord and be humble and faithful in spirit, they will yet see light in God's light and return to the truth. But dishonest persons who wish some excuse for yielding to the temptations of the enemy, who wish to cloak and cover their iniquity will willingly be bound hand and foot by the enemy of all truth that they may be better prepared for the judgments of the Almighty. None but apostates in spirit will believe Joseph Smith the son of Joseph the Prophet to be the leader of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

If one of the Prophet Joseph's boys ever received a revelation from God the Father, from the Lord Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Ghost, or from Gabriel or from Michael, or from any other angel that God may send, that revelation will dictate that son of Joseph to come directly to your humble servant, Brigham Young. And I will be as ready to receive him as any man that lives on this earth. He will not go to apostates, to liars, to wicked and like persons, "who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness. These are wells without water, trees whose fruit withereth, raging waves of the sea foaming out their own shame, wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. These are murmurers, complainers walking after their own lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the spirit."

It has been told you what Joseph the Prophet said with regard to the keys of the priesthood. Here are men sitting around me that sat in the Prophet Joseph's secret councils year after year; I refer to the twelve apostles and some others; they heard Joseph say thousands of things that the people have never yet heard. Among a great many other things he said, and he had a foreboding that he would be betrayed into the hands of his enemies. "I will give you a key to govern your actions if I should be slain by my enemies. If ever this transpires, some persons will stand forth who honor and hold the keys of the holy priesthood, and the main body of the people will follow that individual. You may depend upon this." Many of you are witnesses with regard to the truth of this saying.

Have the people called "the Josephites" any gathering place? They have not. What has the Lord revealed through his servant Joseph over this point? "Behold it is my will, that all they who call on my name and worship me according to mine everlasting gospel should gather together and stand in holy places and prepare for the revelation which is to come when the veil of the covering of my temple and my tabernacle which hideth the earth shall be taken off and all flesh see me together." Book of D & C, 4th European Edition, page 278 paragraph 5. [D&C 101:22-23]

They will tell you that Joseph the Prophet never gave a revelation on marriage in Nauvoo July 12th 1843. There are scores of persons in this congregation who have heard Joseph say, I should think hundreds of times, that "if ever there was a truth revealed from heaven through him, it was revealed when that revelation was given, and if I have to die for any revelation God has given through me I would as readily die for this one as any other. And I sometimes think that I shall have to die for it. It may be that I shall have to forfeit my life to it and if this has to be so, Amen."

I have already said that Young Joseph Smith will never be the leader of the Latter-day Saints. To put your minds at rest I will say it again: while the sun shines, the water runs, the grass grows and the earth remains, Young Joseph Smith never will be the leader of the Latter-day Saints! But, if the one that Joseph the Prophet predicted should step forth to become the leader of this church, he will come to us like a little child, saying "God says so and so through me." He will not be found cursing and swearing and lying and stealing and cohabiting with lewd women. They say that I and my brethren are men of this class because we have many wives. If we have many wives we have them honorably and by the revelations of Jesus Christ and we own them and treat them honorably before all mankind and ask no odds of the poor miserable creatures who whine about, and I want you to understand so.

Old Man Briggs is not in this church and never was, and makes no pretension of righteousness, yet he can tell the truth. He said in the street the other day, "My sons were once Mormons and are apostates now, but let me tell you that they are a set of damned whore masters and I know it, or else somebody has lied to me." I say to this people, don't trust them, they will creep into your houses and into your beds if you are not careful.

We have many of the connections of Joseph Smith's family with us. George A. Smith and Elias Smith are cousins to the Prophet. We have also the sons of Hyrum and Samuel Smith with us. They visited their friends in Illinois when they went to England on their last mission and held a conversation with their cousin Joseph Smith when he told them that those apostates came to him and tried to hire him to let them put his name to revelations and letters and they gave him money. He is a lawyer and is paid a fee of \$400 for the use of his name. We have witnesses for all this, and what they were going to do by coming to Council Bluffs to build up a church there; they promised Young Joseph 70 thousand dollars if he would bring so many people to Council Bluffs at such a time. Mr. Bideman came to the Bluffs to see the place and get the fee for Young Joseph and the family and then he would gather the saints. Bideman did not make any profession of religion but he was going to settle the matter for them and do up the blessings as it should be done but in a short time he gave it up saying, "To tell you the truth I do not know much about the damned thing myself." I will insure it that Young Joseph has not put his name willingly, religiously, divinely and godly to one letter that he has signed. I have more respect, more charity and good feeling for him than to think that he would be such a consummate hypocrite, for he is in sentiment and principle an infidel. He cares nothing at all for religion but, "if you will give me your money you may use my name."

Bro. George A. Smith saw Young Joseph a few years ago and judging from what they and the other boys say they do not believe their father as a prophet of God, but they think he was a consummate scoundrel in religious matters. I know what Emma believes and have known it all the day long, and yet there is not that woman on the earth that I would delight to honor more with the whole family if they would let me do it. In Joseph's date she tried to throw me, Br. Heber, Br. Willard Richards and the twelve apostles out of the church, and tried to destroy the whole church and I know it. Joseph himself testified before high heaven more than once that she had administered poison to him. There are men and women present today who can bear witness that more hell was never wrapped up in any human being than there is in her. She gave him too heavy a dose and he vomited it up and was saved by faith.

Now set your hearts at rest regarding the matter, for if Joseph Smith's son ever received a revelation from the Lord Jesus you may look for that boy or that man to place himself before this people like a child, like a servant of God and not like a hypocrite, the head of a lying thieving clan.

The Strangites were once with us, in full fellowship with us, and the Lord spewed them out of his church and will purge out many more. He purifies the hearts and feelings and bodies of his saints and makes manifest the hypocrite and the evil doer that they may go to their own place and the saints will be gathered home to Zion.

If any of you wish to hearken to the folly and wickedness of apostates, why do so. And if you wish to apostatize, do it like men and women who are willing to answer for their own actions and go to hell independently. I would either be what I profess to be, a faithful Latter-day Saint, or freely and openly subject myself to the devil for damnation.

May God bless the righteous and overthrow the wicked and the ungodly and prepare the way for us to go back to Jackson County in Missouri. Hear it all the world: the Latter-day Saints will go back to Jackson County Missouri and build up the center stake of Zion and all hell can not prevent it. Amen.