

Defining The Fruits Of Joseph Smith

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In a recent talk Denver Snuffer made a very strong point about the men who betrayed Joseph Smith early in the restoration. The talk I refer to is entitled Cursed: Denied Priesthood which he gave January 07, 2018 in Sandy, Utah. Interesting to note that part of the title of the talk is "Part 1". In that talk he outlines the history of the sore betrayals by men against Joseph Smith. The horrible atrocities perpetrated against Joseph and the church. He names names of men who I had never considered. He quotes a letter Joseph wrote while incarcerated in Liberty Jail, which included this and other revelations:

"[C]ursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed saith the Lord and cry they have sin[n]ed when they have not sined before me saith the Lord but have done that which was meat in mine eyes and which I commanded them but those who cry transgression do it becaus they are the servants of sin and are the children of disobediance themselvs and those who swear false against my servants that they might bring them unto bondage and death. Wo unto them because they have offended my little ones they shall be severed from the ordinances of mine house their basket shall not be full their houses and their barnes shall famish and they themselvs shall be dispised by those that flattered them they shall not have right to the priesthood nor their posterity after them from generation to generation it had been better for them that a millstone had been hanged about their necks and they having drownd in the depth of the see..." (JSP, Documents Vol. 6, p. 366; all as in original.) pg 6

Denver goes on to say:

The probable candidates who earned this cursing are those Joseph identified in his letters describing the lies and false testimony against him. They were: George Hinkle, John Corrill, Reed Peck, Sampson Avard, William McLellin, John Whitmer, David Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery, Martin Harris, Thomas Marsh, Orson Hyde and W. W. Phelps. Each of these men and their wrongdoings are mentioned by Joseph Smith in his correspondence from jail in Missouri.

When I first listened to this talk, my heart ached and my gut wrenched at the thought of what Joseph had endured. And to think I am probably part of direct descendants of these men or have received my priesthood line of authority through them my thoughts turned to a sad place. However, there may be a remedy.

During the question and answer portion of the talk, a valuable idea was presented.

Question #7C: What about their descendants? Are they eligible now? Should we be careful about to whom we ordain priesthood?

Denver: I would say that whoever thinks that they fall within the category probably ought to make it a matter of not just personal prayer but some sincere.... What provoked the curse was derision, rejection, and conspiracy of Joseph Smith. Almost every problem

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that we encounter in this life requires repentance in order to fix the problem that we've uncovered in this life. How do you fix the problem in which rejection, derision, conspiracy to destroy Joseph provoked God's ire? One of the ways to do that would be to say, let me see what I can do to combat the lies, the derision, the misrepresentations, and the rejection of someone God sent to try and save a fallen world.

Question #7D: So the descendants of those people then, through repentance, can re-qualify, or can qualify...

Denver: I would say that the sentence of those people need to repent of their father's sins. Almost every one that I know who's a Mormon thinks Joseph Smith was a liar and an adulterer, a dishonest man. I don't. I think Joseph Smith sealed women to him, and that was one of the qualifications I put into the words that I used: "carnal sexual relations." I think that from the time that the first realization of what sealing power could be used for rolled out until the earliest reference I can find it, is in October 1843, which was eight months before his death, there appears to have been one and only one ordinance associated with sealing, and that one and only one ordinance was the marriage covenant. Using that one and only ordinance, marriage, didn't mean that what you were trying to achieve was sexual access to other women, it meant you were trying to bring....

So I wanted to stand to defend the works of Joseph Smith. What were his works? What were his fruits? Matthew warns us about knowing the fruits:

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Matthew 7:15 - 20

In the Wentworth Letter, Joseph made a bold proclamation. He established the standard by which we should base our lives. The scriptures and correct, true documents of Joseph Smith are the stand to measure our lives against. Today we refer to that proclamation as "The Standard of Truth."

"...the standard of truth has been erected no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing, persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent till

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it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished and the great Jehovah shall say the work is done."

The following books and Documents are some of the fruits of Joseph Smith. I found them on the following websites:

<http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary>
<http://restorationarchives.com/library/joseph-smith.php>

Doctrine & Covenants

The Book of Mormon

Lectures on Faith

Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible

Pearl of Great Price

Wentworth Letter which contain The standard of truth and Articles of Faith

Baptism - an article written by Joseph Smith Jr.

Baptism of the Dead

Many various articles in The Times and Seasons

Joseph Smith History

Letter to "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," 6 September 1842

Established The Council of Fifty

Personal Journal entries

Wrote The Lectures on Faith

Times & Seasons article "Try the Spirits"

Gift of the Holy Ghost

The Government of God

Joseph said, "I was informed that I was chosen to be an instrument in the hands of God to bring about some of his purposes in this glorious dispensation." Here is a list of some of things Joseph Smith did in his life. (I found most of these items listed chronologically here: <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/reference/events> - I would encourage all of us to review this fascinating page.)

Received The First Vision & countless visitations with Angels

Militia leader

US Presidential Candidate

Established anti-banking society

Established The Council of Fifty

He was a buried treasure seeker

King Follet Discourse

Organized Church of Christ

Established Mission to Unorganized Territory

Instituted Office of High Priest Instituted

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Formed Camp of Israel
Appointed President of High Priesthood
President of the church
Established newspaper: The Evening and the Morning Star
Created City of Zion Plat
Received a Patriarchal Blessing from Joseph Smith Sr.
Published Northern Times political newspaper
Established Quorum of Twelve, the Seventy and all other quorums
Established Relief Society
Helped build two temples And Dedicated one temple
Organized Session of Elders School
Established Instruction on Washing of Feet and Endowment
Organized Hebrew Language School
Revealed the place of Adam-ondi-Ahman
Imprisoned at Liberty Jail
Healed people by faith - malaria outbreak
Met with President Van Buren
Introduced Baptism for Dead
Met with group of Indians in Nauvoo to discuss promises made concerning them in Book of Mormon
Organized Relief Society
Mayor of Nauvoo
Joseph and Emma Smith Married for Eternity
Chosen to be president over special council of elders that met in upper room of Nauvoo Mansion
Nominated as candidate for president of United States
Gave the King Follett Sermon
Joseph and Hyrum Smith Assassinated - died as martyrs

In that same talk given by Denver, he said:

I DO NOT believe Joseph Smith was an adulterer. He was not a liar, nor a hypocrite. But almost every Mormon institution, and certainly the largest ones, either proclaim or admit Joseph was all these things. I do not. I think he was pure in heart, noble, and virtuous. Must a person themselves be pure in heart, wise, noble, and virtuous before they qualify to seek worthy counsel, authority and blessings through Joseph Smith's legacy?

I would like to share a portion of my final testimony read in fast and testimony meeting - Sunday November 2nd 2014

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When I leave this life, I want to leave a legacy for my children. For many LDS folks the legacy they want to leave their family is many different things. Like "He was a great missionary." Or "He served faithfully in the temple." Or ""He loved his wife dearly." When I pass on, I want my children and grandchildren to say about me, "He loved the Lord so much, he sacrificed everything to know the Lord." That is what I want to leave my family. That is what I want people to know about me.

I relish the words of The Book of Mormon. I believe it is true. I believe the stuff written in that book really, actually happened. I believe the writings of the Book of Mormon are written, compiled and translated in such a way to help us to learn to repent and connect with the Lord no other way possible.

I believe Joseph Smith learned in his life to divine communications with the heavens. I believe, Like Lehi, Joseph had the heavens open to him to see numberless angels, Christ and Father in Heaven. Joseph made a life of revealing truths, keys of knowledge, to help his contemporaries progress. Joseph translated the Book of Mormon by the power of the Holy Spirit.

My prayer:

Dear Father in Heaven, we come to you in the name of Jesus Christ. Please Father help us to know what can done "to combat the lies, the derision, the misrepresentations, and the rejection of someone God sent to try and save a fallen world." Help us to know what can be done to repent of our fathers betrayal of both the man Joseph Smith and his works. We believe him when he claimed he was told he "...was chosen to be an instrument in the hands of God to bring about some of his purposes in this glorious dispensation." Help us to know what can be done to repent of the current lack of belief in the divine fruits of Joseph Smith. Help us to share the truth about his life, his fruits, his love for your work.

Father, thank you for all you have given to us through your servant Joseph. Thank you for the Book of Mormon. Thank you for all the revelations and teachings of Joseph. Thank you for his example of righteousness. Thank you for offering us this chance to hopefully exonerate brother Joseph.

Help us to honor those works, which in turn honors you, Lord. We dedicate this event to these ideas. We pray that you will bless us in these matters. Father, please send your holy angels to protect us and minister truth to us. Grant us your wisdom that we may come to understand your will in these matters. Bless us with faith that we may continue in your way as defined in the Book of Mormon. Our intent is to repent. Please bless us as we do so is our prayer. Amen.