

The Law of Adoption: One Phase of the Development of the Mormon Concept of Salvation, 1830-1900 by Gordon Irving Ftn, *BYU Studies*, vol. 14 (1973-1974), Number 2 - Winter 1974 311.)

Ftn: Woodruff's sermon was published in several places. Text quoted taken from *The Deseret Weekly* 48 (1894) 541-44. See also *The Deseret Evening News*, 14 April 1894.

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You have acted up to all the light and knowledge that you have had; but you have now something more to do than what you have done. We have not fully carried out those principles in fulfillment of the revelations of God to us, in sealing the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers. I have not felt satisfied, neither did President Taylor, neither has any man since the Prophet Joseph who has attended to the ordinance of adoption in the temples of our God. We have felt that there was more to be revealed upon this subject than we had received . . . and the duty that I want every man who presides over a Temple to see performed from this day henceforth and forever, unless the Lord Almighty commands otherwise, is, let every man be adopted to his father. . . . That is the will of God to this people. . . . I say let every man be adopted to his father; and then you will do exactly what God said when he declared He would send Elijah the prophet in the last days. . . . We want the Latter-day Saints from this time to trace their genealogies as far as they can, and to be sealed to their fathers and mothers. Have children sealed to their parents, and run their chain through as far as you can get it. When you get to the end, let the last man be adopted to Joseph Smith, who stands at the head of this dispensation. This is the will of the Lord to this people, and I think when you come to reflect upon it you will find it to be true.

(Brian H. Stuy, ed., *Collected Discourses*, 5 vols. [Burbank, Calif., and Woodland Hills, Ut.: B.H.S. Publishing, 1987-1992], 1: .)

Brother Cannon has given my mind with regard to Joseph Smith. I look upon Joseph Smith as the greatest Prophet that ever breathed the breath of life, excepting Jesus Christ. Father Adam, as I have said, stands at the head; but Joseph Smith was reserved to lay the foundation of this great Kingdom and dispensation of salvation to the whole human family in these last days, to build up Zion, to establish God's Kingdom, and to prepare it for the coming of the Son of Man. He held those keys. Brother Cannon has told you the truth. No other man held those keys while he lived. After him, as has been said, came Brother Brigham. I have traveled with Joseph Smith thousands of miles. There are some here tonight who were in Zion's Camp. He was a boy, in one sense of the word. He was but a young man when he was martyred and passed into the presence of God. His days were comparatively few. But he was a great man. He lived a long life for a few days. He performed an almighty work—as great a work as any man, save Jesus Christ, that ever lived on the earth. We knew him. We knew the Apostles. We knew Brother Brigham; he was a

glazier and painter, and, in one sense of the word, an illiterate man. But God raised him up to do a great work and to follow in the channel of Joseph Smith. He magnified his calling. He led this people to these mountains, and he built up this country almost from one end of it to the other, by his counsel. The Lord took him to Himself. Brother Taylor followed, until he was taken away.

(Brian H. Stuy, ed., *Collected Discourses*, 5 vols. [Burbank, Calif., and Woodland Hills, Ut.: B.H.S. Publishing, 1987-1992], 1: .)
Wilford Woodruff, June 2, 1889

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM.

REMARKS

by President Wilford Woodruff, at the Y.M.M.I.A. Conference,
on Sunday, June 2, 1889.

But in the morning of the resurrection you will find Joseph Smith holding the keys of this kingdom and dispensation at the head of all Israel who belong to this dispensation; he will hold them to the endless ages of eternity, notwithstanding that we shall all get our reward for what we do. The keys of the kingdom were given to Joseph Smith. They were placed on the heads of other men to make use of on earth for a short time; and when we get through we shall all have our reward.

Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, edited by his son, Parley P. Pratt [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 293 - 294.)

As I walked along over the plains of Illinois, lonely and solitary, I reflected as follows: I am now drawing near to the beloved city; in a day or two I shall be there. How shall I meet the sorrowing widows and orphans? How shall I meet the aged and widowed mother of these two martyrs? How shall I meet an entire community bowed down with grief and sorrow unutterable? What shall I say? or how console and advise twenty-five thousand people who will throng about me in tears, and in the absence of my President and the older members of the now presiding council, will ask counsel at my hands? Shall I tell them to fly to the wilderness and deserts? Or, shall I tell them to stay at home and take care of themselves, and continue to build the Temple? With these reflections and inquiries, I walked onward, weighed down as it were unto death. When I could endure it no longer, I cried out aloud, saying: O Lord! in the name of Jesus Christ I pray Thee, show me what these things mean, and what I shall say to Thy people? On a sudden the Spirit of God came upon me, and filled my heart with joy and gladness indescribable; and while the spirit

of revelation glowed in my bosom with as visible a warmth and gladness as if it were fire. The Spirit said unto me: "Lift up your head and rejoice; for behold! it is well with my servants Joseph and Hyrum. My servant Joseph still holds the keys of my kingdom in this dispensation, and he shall stand in due time on the earth, in the flesh, and fulfil that to which he is appointed. Go and say unto my people in Nauvoo, that they shall continue to pursue their daily duties and take care of themselves, and make no movement in Church government to reorganize or alter anything until the return of the remainder of the Quorum of the Twelve. But exhort them that they continue to build the House of the Lord which I have commanded them to build in Nauvoo."

(Brian H. Stuy, ed., *Collected Discourses*, 5 vols. [Burbank, Calif., and Woodland Hills, Ut.: B.H.S. Publishing, 1987-1992], 2: .)

As I have said, Joseph Smith organized the Church. He lived but a short time with us—a little longer than the Savior did after He entered the ministry. The Savior lived about three and a half years from the time He commenced His ministrations among the people until He was crucified. Joseph Smith lived some fourteen years, if I mistake not, after he organized this Church. He also was slain. But before he died he organized the Church with Apostles, Patriarchs, Pastors, Teachers, and the whole government of the Church of God; and that Priesthood he organized or laid the foundations of remained with the people after his death, as Brother Roberts has said to-night. The Twelve Apostles stood next to the First Presidency of the Church; and I am a living witness myself to this work. I am a living witness to the testimony that Joseph gave to the Twelve Apostles when all of us received our endowments under his hands. I remember the last speech that he ever gave us before his death. It was before we started upon our mission to the East. He stood upon his feet some three hours. The room was filled as with consuming fire, his face was as clear as amber, and he was clothed upon by the power of God. He laid before us our duty. He laid before us the fullness of this great work of God; and in his remarks to us he said: "I have had sealed upon my head every key, every power, every principle of life and salvation that God has ever given to any man who ever lived upon the face of the earth. And these principles and this Priesthood and power belong to this great and last dispensation which the God of heaven has set His hand to establish in the earth. Now," said he, addressing the Twelve, "I have sealed upon your heads every key, every power, and every principle which the Lord has sealed upon my head." And continuing, he said, "I have lived so long—up to the present time—I have been in the midst of this people and in the great work and labor of redemption. I have desired to live to see this Temple built. But I shall never live to see it completed; but you will—you will." Now, we didn't suppose but what he would live. We didn't understand what he meant. Neither did the Twelve in the days of the Savior understand what He meant when He said "I am going away from you; if I go not the Comforter will not come unto you." And so we did not understand Joseph when he said he would not live to see that Temple completed, but we would. Probably it was not given for us to understand at that time.

(Brian H. Stuy, ed., *Collected Discourses*, 5 vols. [Burbank, Calif., and Woodland Hills, Ut.:

B.H.S. Publishing, 1987-1992], 4: .)

Joseph Smith was raised up by the power of God, and the Priesthood and Apostleship has been with us from that day to this, and will continue until Christ comes to reign. Christ has passed through His trials and afflictions; He has redeemed the world; He has gone home, and He sits in glory with the righteous, and will come with them. All the prophets and apostles, those of our day as well as of other generations, will come with Him. Joseph Smith stood at the head of the greatest dispensation God ever gave to man.

(Brian H. Stuy, ed., *Collected Discourses*, 5 vols. [Burbank, Calif., and Woodland Hills, Ut.: B.H.S. Publishing, 1987-1992], 4: .)

We are here upon a mission, and it is a great mission. We are blessed in living in this day and generation. We ought to try and make the most of it we can. We ought to try and improve our time, magnify our calling, and do our duty. I will say to the Latter-day Saints, the Lord has called and chosen us to stand as the leaders of the people—the Presidency, the Twelve Apostles and the various quorums and positions which we are in, and we are responsible to God for the course we pursue in these matters. True, we need the faith and fellowship of the Saints; we need their assistance; but inasmuch as we do our duty the blessings of God will be with us. I know for myself that the Lord has set His hand to carry out His great purposes and prepare the way for the coming of the Son of Man. We have passed through a long period of time, as men count time, in our history. I will here refer to one incident: When Christ and Peter, James and John went into the mount, Moses and Elias were manifest to them, and Jesus was transfigured before them. The last time the Apostles ever met with the Prophet Joseph Smith, there were eleven of us present,—nine Apostles, himself and his brother Hyrum. He likewise was transfigured before us, as far as mortal man can be. The room which he was in was filled as with consuming fire by the power of God. His face was clear as amber, he was clothed with the power of God. We did not know he was going to leave us any more than the Apostles knew the Savior was going to leave them in that day. But he told us what our duties were. He laid before us what God required at his hands and the ordinances unto which he had been ordained by the power of God. He said the Lord had sealed upon his head every ordinance, every key and every power belonging to this dispensation of the fulness of times; and, he added, "I have sealed these things upon your heads; now you must go forth and bear off this kingdom or you will be damned." That was a very strong remark to us. I have never forgotten it from that day to this. I realize that God was with him. And He has been with His people. He is with Zion to-day. He will continue to be. Though all the powers of darkness may war against us, the Lord is our Friend and He will sustain us and give us power to build up Zion and to carry out this work until the coming of the Son of Man. Therefore, let your hearts be comforted. These Apostles, I am satisfied, are of one heart and mind. I know they are united with us; I know we are united with them. This is a great joy and consolation to me. We all should be united in the cause in which we are engaged. Inasmuch as we do this we shall come off triumphant. I have no fear about Zion; I never had. It is written, as with a pen

upon a rock, and is the voice of God, that Zion shall stand. All the prophecies that the Lord has given as contained in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants will be fulfilled to the very letter. Not one jot or one tittle will fall unfulfilled. Zion will arise and flourish, and the glory of God will rest upon her. When I cast my mind over the signs of the times, when I look at the fulfilment of prophecy and observe what is taking place in the earth I see the hand of God manifest and the fulfilment of prophecy and revelation. These angels of God that have been standing in the temples of heaven holding sharp sickles day after day pleading with God to let them go forth to reap down the earth have been commanded of the Lord to wait until the wheat was gathered into the garner, and then they might go forth and reap down the earth. If the world wants to know what is coming to pass, let them read the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants; let them read these revelations of St. John. As God lives they will come to pass. Not one of them will fall unfulfilled. And the hand of God is beginning to be manifest in the earth. Judgment is at the door; calamity awaits the nations of the earth; but we ourselves should be prepared to stand in hol places while the judgments of God are manifest in the earth.

President Wilford Woodruff, *Conference Report, April 1898, Afternoon Session* .)

The last speech that Joseph Smith ever made to the quorum of the Apostles was in a building in Nauvoo, and it was such a speech as I never heard from mortal man before or since. He was clothed upon with the Spirit and power of God. His face was clear as amber. The room was filled as with consuming fire. He stood three hours upon his feet. Said he: "You Apostles of the Lamb of God have been chosen to carry out the purposes of the Lord on the earth. Now, I have received, as the Prophet, seer and revelator, standing at the head of this dispensation, every key, every ordinance, every principle and every Priesthood that belongs to the last dispensation and fulness of times. And I have sealed all these things upon your heads. Now, you Apostles, if you do not rise up and bear off this kingdom, as I have given it to you, you will be damned."