

Who was the Successor
of
Joseph Smith?

Not long ago we saw an article in an Iowa paper, dated Utah, — '90, but directed to an Iowa divine. The answer was given to the Utah man, but it did not agree with what Joseph Smith taught his people concerning his successor thirteen years before his death. The Utah man claimed to be an honest seeker for truth, and wanted to learn who the successor of Joseph Smith was.

We made up our mind to point the Utah man to what God and Joseph Smith said on that question. Men have claimed that they were the duly Ordained, and all others were usurpers, when they were the greatest villains in all the land, and led many to ruin. There was no need of this, as Joseph left all doctrinal questions plainly written in the book of D & C. Men have seceded, and others have cried, Mormon delusion, when these very men were the most deluded of all men. Mormonism, proper, is no delusion. It will bear as close criticism as any other *ism*, and will stand clear as the sun and far as the moon, when all other *isms* will travel with that stone John told of in Rev. xviii, 21.

No man ever contended for good order and the true sciences, clearer than did Mr. Smith. No man despised unsound doctrine in State or Church more than Joseph. And the policy of government he handed down to us, yet speaks, though he sleeps with the worthy dead. This subject of Prophet Making is just as

clearly set forth in the church Book of Rules, as is any city or state law on election of city or state officers. As early as 1831 he told the church *how* his successor would be *planted* in his stead. At his death, all the people had to do to learn the duly appointed man, was to heed the rules he gave them thirteen years before his death.

There was no excuse for division; the honest man who could read could see when, and through whom he was to be appointed, and would identify the man Angels ordained, to be the successor. But they set the law *aside* and set up their *own ways*. And men are doing the same this day, in sending out Sermons and Tracts far away, deceiving the people by their opinions, and the testimony of dead apostates, who preached lies when alive—and many are led this day by these false teachers. Much of the past work of these villains has been laid to Joseph Smith, when he had no more to do with them or their principles than Abraham Lincoln had to do with Jefferson Davis.

Many have claimed that Mr. Smith was not parliamentary, and did not claim nor contend for good order. No greater mistake could have been made. He claimed the government of God (the church) on earth, could only exist and prosper as it heeded the Priest-hood of the Son of God. And then added; "As no city or state can do legal business without *duly authorized officers*, no more

could the church." We give his views on Prophet Making, and on what terms to accept their Revelations:

"We do not consider ourselves bound to receive any revelations from any man or woman without their being called or legally constituted and ordained, and given sufficient proofs of it."—Joseph Smith's Letter of April, 1833.

By this we see he put the people on their guard, that they be not deceived by usurpers. Yet we know L. D. S. who have accepted and published to the broad world Revelations from men who had no more right to get or give revelations than Ben Butler or Gen. Sheridan, yet these saints feast on the false tales of usurpers and call it good. As many as four times during his ministry, he called the attention of his people to his death, and the appointing of another in his stead. In 1830 he told the church how he was ordained by Peter, James and John, (angels.) In 1831 he, in a definite and a plain way, told the plan that would be adopted in setting a man in his place. This was done that the people might not be deceived by false brethren or usurpers. Yet with all of these landmarks, men have led their fellows from the Rock of Christ to fables and lies. A Book of Rules was adopted by the church, which contained provisions for filling up any vacancy that might occur by death or otherwise. By this book I will show who the man was that was appointed and ordained to fill Joseph's

place. There is no great mystery in this matter, we only take the Book of Rules, and by that identify the man:—

First, When was the Man to be Appointed? Book of Rules, Section 43, Part 1st: "And this ye shall know assuredly, that there is none other appointed unto you to receive Commandments, *until* he be taken."

There is nothing mysterious about this. All there is of it, there was no one to be appointed *until* he was taken. This settles the question adversely, with those usurpers and false teachers, who claim Joseph did ever ordain a man (or boy) to stand as President of the church *before* he was taken. Comment is not necessary. The next question is to let the Book tell us through whom was the successor to be appointed. It reads: "But verily, verily, I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift, except it be through him," Joseph. —Book of Rules, Section 43, Part 2. We need nothing plainer on who was to appoint. We all know how President Cleveland appoints officers in the Federal Government, and the plan was carried out on the same principle by Mr. Smith in appointing his successor. Further comment on this is not needed.

The next question we want to learn is the extent of Mr. Smith's power in planting a man in his stead. We will let the Book settle this also: Book of Rules, Section 43, 2d Part,—says, "If it (the gift) be taken from him, he shall not

have power *except* to *appoint another* in his stead, etc. This limits Mr. Smith's power to simply appoint another in his stead, etc. Then in addition to this the Book reads,—“And this I give unto you that you may not be deceived—that you may know they are not of me.” Will these Rules fail to detect all usurpers, and help us to discern the duly appointed man? We say they will not, for God said: “And this I give unto you that you may not be deceived.” Therefore by these Rules we can criticise all that have put up claims, and directly identify the man that was legally appointed, and by Angels ordained, as he told us before, — (1831).

We have learned when, and through whom, the successor was to be appointed; also the extent of Mr. Smith's power in planting the man to fill his place. We now ask who was to ordain the successor? Let the Book answer the question: “For verily I say unto you, that he who is ordained of me, shall come in at the gate and be ordained as I have told you before.”—Book of D. & C. Section 43, Part 2.

This part of the planting the man into the Presidency, is like all the other parts, plain and definite. He was to be ordained as he has told us before, this date or time. In 1830 we are told, the

Prophet Joseph, was ordained by Peter, James and John, (Angels). By this we learn that the successor was to be ordained as the predecessor was ordained, no less no more. This compels us to hold that the successor was to be ordained by Angels. The Book (D. & C.) brings us to these and no other conclusions. Thus we have fulfilled our promise, by simply telling the public what the Book says on the appointment and ordination of the successor to Joseph Smith.

After setting forth the law on appointing and ordaining the successor, we will add our own testimony: First, Joseph Smith was duly called and legally ordained even by Angels, and stood to the nations of the earth as did Moses. He filled his mission like a brave man. He translated from the records the Book of Mormon, which contains the history of the Indians, and many other important facts concerning the nations of this day. He need not suffered as he did, yet he chose it rather than the honors of this short life. He was aware of the fate that should befall him, but he stood up to do the work given him to do. He died as a servant of God and Jesus Christ, and has his reward.

At the death of Joseph, Mr. James J. Strang claimed he had been ordained in the same way that Joseph was (by Angels) and had been legally constituted the President of the Church. He published his claims, sent them abroad, and

published to the world he was ready and willing to meet, and discuss his claims with any that were willing to compare their views with his. He clearly proved his authority to all that took pains to criticise them. He was identified by the public in and around the country where he lived and died, as the legal successor of Joseph Smith. He translated from the records that was taken from Laban the Book of the Law of the Lord, a work of 336 pages, which Joseph had told of before his death. And the work that Lehi had in view when he said that Joseph should write. See 2d Book of Nephi, 2d Chapter. This Book of the Law of the Lord, is often spoken of in the Bible and has been called one of the lost Books.—By Joseph Smith.

James, like Joseph, had bitter persecutions, yet he bravely stood for the truth and right. He had presented views of his martyrdom and called his friends aside and gave them hints of coming trouble. He, like Joseph, might have avoided it by leaving the church and seeking his own ease with the world. But he chose to stand to his duty as the leader of God's people, and met his fate. We need not speak of his noble life, for it is read and known by the honorable men that met him in the legislative halls of his state and other places.

It is true, many of the usurpers lied, and to cover their false claims they misrepresented him and his teachings. But

they stand on the page of history, and will be read and known as long as sun and moon endure—while the usurpers will fall with their lies. Men will yet rise up and honor the names of Joseph and James as the chosen of God.

We would like to end our testimony here and say, Peace to all Men; but we want to warn all honest men, that they be not led by usurpers and false teachers. It is a fact well known in all the factions of the Mormon schools, that the Gurley & Briggs reform that started in Wisconsin and terminated in the re-organization, have from the first, accused the others of holding bad faith. And to this day have accused the Utah people of holding to lies, and teaching false doctrine. By the land laws, they had a right to hold up to public gaze what they held to, so long as their views were not opposed by the government.

But let us take a look into the eyes of this re-organized child and see if we don't find sand. This child of Gurley & Briggs has given the Martyr the lie, and if Clark Braden knew how to handle the truth and lies, he would need no better ropes (doctrine false) to hang the boys he has been playing with who claim to defend Joseph as a Prophet. They tell us that Joseph Smith did, in '43, anoint and ordain his son, and publicly on the stand in Nauvoo, said: "I am no longer your Prophet," but this, my son, is your Prophet."

When this same Joseph had told the church years before, that all the part he would be able to take in planting another man in his stead would be to appoint, and that he would not do *until* he was taken. Gentlemen of No. 17, will you tell us what to call you? Speak out and tell us what to call you. We want to call men and things by their right name. One thing is sure, Joseph either lied or else you have in that No. 17. And we are sorry to say, the lies of Ephraim are not all confined to No. 17. Those Books and writings that Joseph left us, don't lie. Nor do we have to hunt from Boston to Oregon, to find witnesses to prove what they teach. The writings of Moses, David, Jeremiah, Isaac, Malachi and the prophets, stood true and independent of even the words of Christ and his Apostles.

So with the work of Joseph, what he told the world was true, independent of the testimony of thousands. Yet false witnesses came against Moses, Christ, and all the servants of God; we have page after page of their lies against the truth. So with Joseph and James, we have their merit and on it we stand, and the usurpers may compile and send out their tracts with the testimony of apostates and dead Pseudoes who, when alive, told and published lies against Joseph. But the words of the Prophets Joseph and James, stand to us as the north star to the Mariners on the ocean,

at the midnight hour.

It looks bad to see a certain school of *Saints* throwing stones at Utah, when they are telling lies daily. It reminds us of the old tricks of Ephraim, as found in Hosea, xii—1; he lied daily in those days. Let the tales of modern Ephraim speak for themselves. One thing is certain, if Clark Braden knew how to handle Joseph Smith and his works, he could find plenty of ropes (lies) in sight of these men he has been debating with, to hang them but not a string as large as a fine thread to hurt Joseph or James. Joseph said in 1831 he would *only* have power to appoint a successor; he also said the successor would not be appointed until Joseph was taken. This was all right and came to pass just as Joseph said thirteen years before—it was fulfilled in 1844. But here comes up a school of fellows and tell us that Joseph did *annoint* and *ordain* his son in 1843, and constituted him the President of the Church. Clark Braden can't hurt Joseph nor his successor on the policy of these wise Mormon Legislators, who try to make Joseph a man-made and man-sent prophet. But if he can't take Joseph's words and make them false teachers like himself, then he is small potatoes and few in a hill, (to use a figure.)

In conclusion, we say that we have proved that Mr. Smith pointed out the policy that would be taken at his death, in planting a man in his stead. Mr.

Strang was the only man that ever presented legal claims to that office. We might call up the names of scores that came out at that time and gave their testimony to the world that James was the man. But we have our case without. If men will not accept of what we have taken from the Books, they can go where all unbelievers go. But there is one question that I am often asked: Who stands at the head of the work of God, now? I answer, the man that holds the highest Priesthood! It is the work of God, and he builds or pulls down when and whom he will. Joseph Smith could not ordain a man to fill his place, but he could ordain a man to fill any other office in the church. It took Angels to ordain him, and it took Angels to ordain a man like him. But we have no record that James should appoint a man to fill his place.

It took Angels to ordain Joseph and it took Angels to ordain his successor. God told the church several times

prior to the death of Joseph that he would plant another in his stead when he was taken. See D. & C. Sec. 43.

But we find in ^{more} of the Revelations of God given during the reign of James that another should be given the church when James was taken—like Moses. But we do find God threatened the church of serving them, similar to the Hebrews—who were not to enter the promised land—yet God said, “I will have a people to serve me.”

The question is often asked us, who is the chief Shepherd now? We answer, the man who holds the highest degree of Priesthood. It certainly is not on any man associated with Utah. Not but they are chosen people, but they hold no Priesthood. See what God said of them July 8, 1846. That tells their fate. Find it in a Revelation by James, God’s Prophet.

Truly and sincerely,
L. D. HICKEY.

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