

# Forerunners of The Restoration

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## **Joseph Smith Senior's Prophetic Dream in 1811**

"We continued here until we had another son, born March 13, 1811 whom we called William. About this time my husband's mind became much excited upon the subject of religion; yet he would not subscribe to any particular system of faith, but contended for the ancient order, as established by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His Apostles. One night my husband retired to his bed in a very

thoughtful state of mind, contemplating the situation of the Christian religion, or the confusion and discord that were extant. He soon fell into a sleep, and before waking had the following vision, which I shall relate in his own words, just as he told it to me the next morning:

'I seemed to be traveling in an open, barren field, and as I was traveling, I turned my eyes towards the east, the west, the north and the south, but could see nothing save dead, fallen timber. Not a vestige of life, either animal or vegetable, could be seen; besides, to render the scene still more dreary, the most death-like silence prevailed, no sound of anything animate could be heard in all the field. I was alone in this gloomy desert, with the exception of an attendant spirit, who kept constantly by my side. Of him I inquired the meaning of what I saw, and why I was thus traveling in such a dismal place. He answered thus: 'This field is the world, which now lieth inanimate and dumb, in regard to the true religion, or plan of salvation; but travel on, and by the wayside you will find on a certain log a box, the contents of which, if you eat thereof, will make you wise, and give unto you wisdom and understanding.' I carefully observed what was told me by my guide, and proceeding a short distance, I came to the box. I immediately took it up, and placed it under my left arm; then with eagerness I raised the lid, and began to taste of its contents; upon which all manner of beasts, horned cattle, and roaring animals, rose up on every side in the most threatening manner possible, tearing the earth, tossing their horns, and bellowing most terrifically all around me, and they finally came so close upon me, that I was compelled to drop the box and fly for my life. Yet, in the midst of all this I was perfectly happy, though I awoke trembling.'"

Lucy Smith, Biographical Sketches

## **A Vision By President Wilford Woodruff**

"The people of Connecticut in those days thought it wicked to believe in any religion, or belong to any church, except the Presbyterian. They did not believe in having any prophets, apostles, or revelations, as they had in the days of Jesus, and as we now have in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

- There was one aged man in Connecticut, however, by the name of Robert Mason, who did not believe like the rest of the people. He believed it was necessary to have prophets, apostles, dreams, visions and revelations in the church of Christ the same as they had who lived in ancient days; and he believed the Lord would raise up a people and a church, in the last days, with prophets, apostles and all the gifts, powers and blessings, which it ever contained in any age of

the world. The people called this man the old Prophet Mason. He frequently came to my father's house when I was a boy, and taught me and my brothers those principles; and I believed them. This prophet prayed a great deal, and he had dreams and visions, and the Lord showed him many things by visions, which were to come to pass in the last days.

I will here relate one vision, which he related to me. The last time I ever saw him, he said: I was laboring in my field at mid-day when I was enwrapped in a vision. I was placed in the midst of a vast forest of fruit trees; I was very hungry, and walked a long way through the orchard searching for fruit to eat; but I could not find any in the whole orchard, and I wept because I could find no fruit. While I stood gazing at the orchard and wondering why there was no fruit, the trees began to fall to the ground upon every side of me, until there was not one tree left standing in the whole orchard, and while I was marveling at the scene, I saw young sprouts start up from the roots of the trees which had fallen, and they opened into young thrifty trees before my eyes. They budded, blossomed, and bore fruit until the trees were loaded with the finest fruit I ever beheld and I rejoiced to see so much fine fruit. I stepped up to a tree and picked my hands full of fruit, and I marveled at its beauty, and as I was about to taste of it the vision closed, and I found myself in the field in the same place I was at the commencement of the vision.

I then knelt down upon the ground, and prayed unto the Lord, and asked him, in the name of Jesus Christ, to show me the meaning of the vision. The Lord said unto me: This is the interpretation of the vision; the great trees of the forest represent the generation of men in which you live. There is no Church of Christ, or kingdom of God upon the earth in your generation; there is no fruit of the church of Christ upon the earth; there is no man ordained of God to administer in any of the ordinances of the Gospel of Salvation upon the earth in this day and generation. But, in the next generation, I the Lord will set up my kingdom and my Church upon the earth, and the fruits of the kingdom and church of Christ, such as have followed the prophets, apostles and saints in every dispensation, shall again be found in all their fullness upon the earth. You will live to see the day, and handle the fruit; but will never partake of it in the flesh.

When the old prophet had finished relating the vision and interpretation, he said to me, calling me by my Christian name: 'I shall never partake of this fruit in the flesh; but you will, and you will become a conspicuous actor in that kingdom;' and then turned and left me, these being the last word he ever spoke to me on earth.

This was a very striking circumstance, as I had spent many hours and days, during twenty years, with this old Father Mason, and he had never named this vision before to me. But at the beginning of this last conversation, he told me that he felt impelled by the spirit of the Lord to relate it to me. He had this vision about A. D. 1800, and he related it to me in 1830—the same Spring that this church was organized. This vision, with his other teachings to me, made a great impression upon my mind, and I prayed a great deal to the Lord to lead me by his spirit, and prepare me for His Church when it did come.

In 1832, I left Connecticut, and traveled with my eldest brother to Oswego county, New York; and in the winter of 1833, I saw, for the first time in my life, an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He preached in a school house near where I lived. I attended the meeting, and the Spirit of the Lord bore record to me that what I heard was true. I invited the elder to my house, and next day I, with my eldest brother, went down into the water and was baptized. We were the first two baptized in Oswego County, New York. When I was baptized I thought of what the old Prophet had said to me.

In the spring of 1834, I went to Kirtland, saw the Prophet Joseph Smith, and went with him, and with more than two hundred others in Zion's Camp, up to Missouri. When I arrived at my journey's end, I took the first opportunity and wrote a long letter to Father Mason, and told him I had found the church of Christ that he had told me about. I told him about its organization and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon; and the Church had prophets, apostles, and all the gifts and blessings in it, and that the true fruit of the kingdom and church of Christ were manifest among the Saints as the Lord had shown him in his vision. He received my letter, and read it over many times, and handled it as he had handled the fruit in the vision; but he was very aged, and soon died. He did not live to see any elder to administer the ordinances of the Gospel unto him. The

first opportunity I had, after the doctrine of baptism for the dead was revealed, I went forth and was baptized for him; he was a good man and a true prophet, for his prophecies have been fulfilled. "

from The Juvenile Instructor, Volume 2, January 15, 1867 p. 13

### **Solomon Chamberlain**

"In the year 1816 . . . the Lord showed me in a vision that there were no people on the earth that were right, and that faith was gone from the earth, excepting a few, and that all churches were corrupt. I further saw in the vision that he would soon raise up a church that would be after the apostolic order, that there would be in it the same powers and gifts that were in the days of Christ, and that I should live to see the day, and that there would [be] a book come forth, like unto the Bible, and the people would be guided by it, as well as the Bible ....

[About 1830] I had occasion to go on a visit into Upper Canada. . . . When the boat came to Palmyra, I felt as if some Genii or good spirit told me to leave the boat. This was a few miles from where the record (Book of Mormon) was found. After leaving the boat, the Spirit manifested to me to travel a south course. I did so for about 3 miles. I had not as yet heard of the Gold Bible (so called) nor any of the Smith family. I was a stranger in that part of the country.... About sundown... my guide directed me to put up for the night, which I did to a farm house. In the morning the people of the house asked me if I had heard of the Gold Bible; when they said Gold Bible, there was a power like electricity [that] went from the top of my head to the end of my toes. This was the first time I ever heard of the Gold Bible. I was now within a half a mile of the Smith family where Joseph [had] lived. From the time I left the boat until now, I was wholly led by the Spirit or my Genii. I soon made my way across lots to, Father Smiths and found Hyrum walking the floor as I entered the door. I

said, 'Peace be to this house.'

He [Hyrum Smith] looked at me as one astonished and said, 'I hope it will be peace.'

I then said, 'Is there anyone here that believes in visions and revelations?'

He said, 'Yes, we are a visionary house.'

I said, 'Then I will give you one of my pamphlets, which was visionary and of my own experience.'

They then called the people together which consisted of 5 or 6 men who were out at the door. Father Smith was one and some of the Whitmer's. They then sat down and read my pamphlet. Hyrum read first, but was so affected, he could not read it. He then gave it to a man, which I learned was Christian Whitmer. He finished reading it. I then opened my mouth and began to preach to them in the words that the angel had made known to me in the vision, that all churches and denominations on the earth had become corrupt and [that] no church of God [was] on the earth but that he would shortly raise up a church that would never be confounded or brought down, and be like unto the apostolic church. They wondered greatly who had been telling me these things, for said they, we have the same things written down in our house, taken from the Gold record that you are preaching to us ....

I then said, 'If you are a visionary house, I wish you would make known some of your discoveries, for I think I can bear them.'

They then made known to me that they had obtained a gold record and [had] just finished translating it. Now the Lord revealed to me by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost that this was the work I had been looking for. I stayed 2 days and they instructed me in the manuscripts of the Book of Mormon.

After I had been there 2 days, I went with Hyrum and some others to Palmyra printing office where they began to print the Book of Mormon, and as soon as they had printed 64 pages, I took them with their leave and pursued my journey to Canada, and I preached all that I knew concerning Mormonism to all, both high and low, rich and poor, and thus you see that I was the first, that ever printed Mormonism was preached to this generation. I did not see anyone in traveling 7 or 800 miles that had ever heard of the Gold Bible (so called). I exhorted all people to prepare for the great work of God that was now about to come forth."

### **Zera Pulsipher**

"That Glorious Day Is Drawing Nigh"

"When Zera Pulsipher was twenty-one years old, he married a very agreeable companion and lived with her about one year when she died, leaving [him] one child. For weeks after his beloved wife's death, Zera remained very anxious about her eternal condition, until one night when she appeared and comforted him:

'Consequently in answer to my desires in a few weeks she came to me in vision and appearing natural looked pleasant as she ever did and sat by my side and assisted me in singing a hymn—beginning thus: 'That glorious day is drawing nigh when Zions Light Shall Shine.' This she did with a seeming composure. This vision took away all the anxiety of my mind concerning her in as much as she seemed to enjoy herself well.'

This event occurred about ten years before the restoration of the gospel. During the intervening years, Zera served as a Protestant minister. It was not until he was introduced to the Book of Mormon in 1831 that he realized the meaning of the hymn that he had sung with his departed wife and the importance of the message, "That glorious day is drawing nigh." As he pondered the teachings of the Book of Mormon, a further angelic vision confirmed its truthfulness. He later recorded:

'I think about the seventh day as I was threshing in my barn with doors shut, all at once there seemed to be a ray of light from heaven which caused me to stop work for a short time, but soon began it again. Then in a few minutes another light came over my head which caused me to look up. I thought I saw the angels with the Book of Mormon In their hands in the attitude of showing it to me and saying "this is the great revelation of the last days in which all things spoken of by the prophets must be fulfilled."

Zera was so moved by this vision that he gathered together his parishioners and informed them of it and of his desire to join with the Saints of God. His testimony was so powerful in its conviction and witness of the divinity of the Book of Mormon that on 11 January 1832 Zera and a large number of his congregation were baptized. "

### Stories From The Early Saints

**Alfred Douglas Young** claimed to have seen in vision "a great prophet raised up . . . and he went forth with great power . . . preaching the Gospel."(1) **Samuel Turnbow's father** told his neighbors that "a great prophet would soon appear amongst the people who would declare the principles of the everlasting gospel." To Samuel he said, . . . My son you have honored your Father and your Mother and your days will be long upon the Earth, and you will see that great Prophet who shall come to prepare the way of the Lord, who will bring in at the former blessings and the Church of Christ will be established with all its gifts with Apostles who will receive revelations from God and the gift of healing the sick will be restored and the gift of prophesying and all the gifts as it was anciently and you my son will do a great and good work on the Earth through out all your days for you will see much of the good work wrought in your days. (2)

Personal journals of early Mormon converts disclose cases of strangers considered to be messengers from God who opened to them the knowledge of a new era of spiritual enlightenment to dawn shortly upon the inhabitants of the earth. **Samuel H. Rogers** records in his journal that while his father's family was living at Edinburg, Portage County, Ohio, a stranger preached in the local schoolhouse. This singular personage preached doctrine never uttered by preachers of the day. At the close of the meeting the Rogers family invited the stranger to their home. "They found him a very remarkable man." He said that the true church would be restored and that all of them would become identified with it. Overwhelmed with joy, they eagerly inquired how they would ascertain the true church when it was restored. The stranger's reply was simply, "This is your blessing, you shall know it and be identified with it." Seventeen years after the messenger's appearance, the Rogers family heard Mormon missionaries preach of the restoration of Christ's church. (3)

- (1) Alfred Douglas Young's Autobiographical Journal, 1808-42, Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah, p. 11.
- (2). Samuel Turnbow, "Genealogical and Blessing Book of Samuel Turnbow with Brief Sketch of His Life. 1804-1876," Mormon Diaries' typescript, Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah, 10:36
- (3) Samuel Hollister Rogers's Journal, Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah, pp. 2-3.

### **Martin Harris**

"The Lord showed me in 1818 there was no true church upon the face of the earth, none built upon the foundation designed by the Savior 'The rock of revelation' as declared to Peter. See Matthew XVI 16, 17, 18 verses. He also showed me that an angel should come and restore the Holy Priesthood again to the earth and commission his servants again with the holy Gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth: See Revelations XIV 6, 7 verses. He further showed me that the time was nigh when he would 'set His hand again the second time to restore the Kingdom of Israel. . . when He would bring the record of Joseph which was in the hand of Ephraim and join with the record of Judah when the two records become one in the hand of the Lord to accomplish his great work in the last days. See Ez. 36th and 37th chapter to the end of the book also Psalms 50. The Lord has shown me these things by his spirit . . . by administration of holy angels and confirmed the same with signs step by step, as the work has progressed for the space of fifty three years . . . write again and we will endeavor to enlighten you on any point relative to this doctrine."

I am very respectfully

Martin Harris Sr.

(Journal History, Jan. 1, 1877, pp.1-2)  
 (also in The Martin Harris Story by Madge Harris Tuckett and Bell Harris Wilson , 1983, Vintage Books, Provo, Utah )

**Roger Williams** who founded the First Baptist Church in America in the 1600's then for a strange reason resigned his pastorship and gave this reason for doing so, "There is no regularly constituted church on earth, nor any person qualified to administer any church ordinance; nor can there be until new apostles are sent by the Great Head of the Church. whose coming I am seeking."

Later near the end of his life he wrote, "In the poor span of my life, I desired to have been diligent and constant observer in city in country, in schools and universities in old and New England, and yet cannot in the holy presence of God bring in the result of a satisfactory discovery, that either the begetting ministry of the new apostles or messengers from God to the nations according to the first institution of the Lord, Jesus, are yet restored to the earth"(Knowles, Memoir of Roger Williams, p. 171) Mr. Knowles also said of him, "He conceived that the Church of Christ had so fallen into apostasy and to have lost both its right to form and the due administration of the ordinances, which could only be restored by some new apostolic or specially commissioned messenger from above."

### **Writings of Alexander Campbell on The Restoration**

"And while I write and labor as I do, he that knows the hearts of all flesh knows that I do it from the fullest conviction from his oracles that the Christianity of our day is a corrupt Christianity, and that the ancient order of things is lost sight of in all denominations of professing Christians."  
 (Christian Baptist IV:285)

"But a restoration of the ancient order of things, it appears, is all that is contemplated by the wise disciples of the Lord. Many there were who, wearied with the denominational strife, and restive

under ecclesiastical domination, awaited a prophet whose aim was spiritual emancipation and whose strong and fearless leadership they could trust (J.W. Grafton, Life of Alexander Campbell) "Besides, do not the experience of all the religious observations of the intelligent, the practical, result of all creeds, reformations, and improvements, and the expectations and longings of society warrant the conclusion that either some new revelation, or some new development of the revelation of God must be made before the hopes and expectation of all true Christians can be realized or Christianity save and reform the nations of the world? We want the old gospel back, and sustained by the ancient order of things; and this alone by the blessings of the divine spirit, is all that we do want, or can expect, to reform and save the world. For a divine warrant has always been essential to any acceptable worship. The question, "who has required this at your hands?" must always be answered by a "Thus saith the Lord" before an offering of mortal may be can be acknowledged by the Lawgiver of the universe. "In vain" said the great teacher, "Do you worship God, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

"Still a regular and constant ministry was needed among the Jews, and is yet needed among the Christians - and both of these by divine authority." (Alexander Cambell, The Christian System p, 250)

"An era is just at the door which will be known as the regeneration for a thousand years to come...The Lord Jesus will soon rebuild Jerusalem, and raise up the tabernacle of David which has so long been in ruins. Let the Church prepare herself for the return of her Lord, and see that she makes herself ready for the coming of the Lord must be the result of the restoration of the ancient gospel and order of things." (Ibid p. 310)

### **Prophecy of Asael Smith Joseph's Grandfather**

Long before Joseph's first vision his grandfather Asael Smith had a premonition which he recorded. "It has been borne in upon my mind and soul that one of my progenitors will promulgate a work to revolutionize the world of religious faith.. (George Q.. Cannon p. 26)

### **A Grandfather's Prophecy of the Restoration Fulfilled**

*In 1816, Daniel Tyler was born in Cayuga County, New York, to a large and religious family. His conversion to the gospel began in the spring of 1832, when two young missionaries, Samuel H. Smith and Orson Hyde, began holding meetings in the area. In January of the following year, after many months of soul searching and several miraculous experiences, young Daniel was baptized. Daniel Tyler went on to become one of the prominent leaders of the early church. He served as a member of the famous Mormon Battalion, fulfilled two missions, the second as president of the Swiss and Italian missions, and was ordained a patriarch in 1873, under the hands of George Albert Smith.*

In 1823, my father, with his family, moved to Springfield, Erie County, Pennsylvania, where his father and some other relatives had previously gone. About this time my father and grandfather became unusually interested in reading the scriptures and talking about them to their neighbors. One day my father happened to open to Mark, 16th Chapter, 16th and 17th verses. After reading them several times carefully he said, "There is not a true believer in the world," as the promise was that the signs spoken of should follow those who believed. He showed the passage to several ministers, mostly Methodists, and argued with them. The more he argued the more convinced he was that the gospel was not on the earth, and he was able to confound the

most learned divines, although he was quite illiterate. My grandfather also had the same views and he prophesied that he would die, but my father would live to see the true church organized with all the apostolic gifts and blessings.

For this cause much unfavorable comment in the neighborhood was indulged in, and my grandfather was often asked, usually in a derisive way, why he did not have his dislocated shoulder, which had been out of place for some thirty years, replaced by the power of faith. He argued that it would be done if he had sufficient faith.

One morning he came from his bedroom and told my father's family, with whom he lived, that the Lord had revealed to him that, "Whereas physicians had said your shoulder could not be set He would let them know it could be done, for He would do it Himself."

My father replied that if the Lord had given him such a revelation it would be so, for He could not lie. He, however, was rather incredulous, notwithstanding he had been advocating the doctrine of miracles for some time. It happened, not long afterwards, that while my grandfather was lying in his bed at the dawn of day, thinking quietly of the blessings of God to him, his shoulder slipped into place with a snap that he thought might have been heard for a distance of one or two rods. Previous to this he carried his arm in a sling most of the time and could not raise his hand to his head, but from that time it was as limber as the other and had its full strength. This was a testimony that could not be impeached. Outside of the family, however, it was looked upon as a mere accident; but the previous revelation to my grandfather convinced the family that it was done by the power of God. This was in 1827, and in 1829 my grandfather died.

After my grandfather was taken with his last illness, he told my parents that an angel appeared to him clothed in white, and told him he would not recover, for his sickness was unto death. Ten days later he died. To save ridicule, however, this vision was kept secret and only told me afterwards by my mother. The true church of Christ was not then on the earth (February, 1829), nor had such an occurrence been heard of by us at the time. Although the Father and the Son had appeared to Joseph Smith some years previously, we had not heard of the vision. The vision of my grandfather seemed so strange that my parents hardly knew whether to attribute it to imagination or a reality, as they could not question his sincerity, he having always been strictly reliable. I have never doubted, however, his having had the vision.

He walked half a mile to bid my parents good-bye, although in poor health. On parting, my grandfather wept like a child, and said, "This is the last time I shall ever visit you while I live."

My father continued his researches of the scriptures, and found that everything he read confirmed his views. He never allowed a traveling minister to leave the neighborhood without an argument if he could avoid it, and his arguments were in no instance refuted.

In the spring of 1832, Elders Samuel H. Smith and Orson Hyde, of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, came to our neighborhood and held a few meetings. Elder Smith read the 29th chapter of Isaiah at the first meeting and delineated the circumstances of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, of which he said he was a witness. He knew his brother Joseph had the plates, for the prophet had shown them to him, and he had handled them and seen the engravings thereon. His speech was more like a narrative than a sermon. Elder Hyde made a few closing remarks and appointed another meeting. At the close of the first meeting my father, as his custom was, sprung his usual question about the spiritual gifts and was quite surprised to hear

Elder Smith say, "That is our doctrine, and we have those gifts in our Church."

This meeting was held in the house of Mr. Joseph Hartshorn, one of our neighbors. At the close of the meeting I picked up the Book of Mormon, which they had left lying on the table, and began to read the preface in relation to Martin Harris losing 116 pages of the original manuscript. When I had read as far as a quotation from a revelation, now found in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, my brother, William, took the book out of my hands and closed it, remarking that good people said it carried with it a spirit of witchcraft, which caused those who read it to be bewitched and join the "Mormon" church. I was then over fifteen years of age and my brother, who was next older than myself, was in his eighteenth year. He was wild and sometimes profane, especially when angry, and I was quite taken by surprise to hear him quote what "good people said," as previously I had never heard him speak of them, except in derision. The last words I read where so riveted upon my mind that I sometimes feared there was some truth in the remark about the book being bewitching. The words were, "I will show unto them" (the wicked who had designed to change the manuscript in case Joseph retranslated it) "that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil."

Before leaving the place the Elders baptized three persons. My father soon became a bitter enemy. I believed every word of the first discourse referred to previously<sup>1</sup> but dared not make my belief known because of my youth and the bitterness of my father. He admitted that the "Mormon" doctrines were true, but claimed that the members of that church had adopted them to cover up a fraud. All classes of people joined in the cry, "Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing," etc., telling ridiculous stories about "Old Joe Smith walking on the water," pretended miracles, angels being caught<sup>1</sup> etc. The stories were about the same as those which the Elders now have to refute.

There was no human being to whom I dared make known the fact that I believed in the teachings of the despised "Mormons." I had, however, for some time been in the habit of engaging in secret prayer, and now, in this hour of trial, I went to my place of secret resort and poured out my soul to the Lord and made covenant with Him that in case my only sister would believe and be baptized I would go with her. I soon learned that she, like myself, had believed the work from the beginning and was resolved to be baptized at the first opportunity. She was then in service at one of our neighbors. When she came home on a visit father asked her if what he had heard, that she intended to join the "Mormons," was true. She answered that she believed they were right and felt it her duty to join them. He remonstrated until he saw that her mind was bent on being baptized at the first opportunity. He then said, "If you do join them, you must never darken my door afterwards." Still her resolution was unchanged. My older brothers told her they would shoot any "Mormon" Elder who dared to baptize her. Thus matters continued for several months, during which time I continued praying, not only for my sister, but for my parents and brothers, although my mother said but little either way.

About December, 1832, Elder Hyrum Smith, brother to the prophet, came to our neighborhood. My father told him that his daughter, who was present, was bent on being baptized into his church, stating at the same time, that the Elder who baptized her would do so at his peril. The Elder quite mildly remarked in substance as follows:

"Mr. Tyler, we shall not baptize your daughter against your wishes. If our doctrine be true,

which we testify it is, if you prevent your daughter from embracing it, the sin will be on your head, not on ours or your daughter's."

This remark pricked him to the heart. He began to think that possibly the "Mormons" were right and he was wrong. He therefore decided to counsel his daughter in the matter and then permit her to exercise her free agency. He would thus relieve himself of any responsibility.

His remarks to my sister were to the effect that if this new religion was true, it was the best religion in the world, but, if false, it was the worst. "These men," said he, "know whether it is true or false, but I do not." He wished her to reflect upon all these things before making a move in the matter. She replied that she had weighed them long ago and believed it to be her duty to be baptized. He took her on an ox-sled to Lake Erie, a distance of two miles, where, after a hole was cut through three feet of solid ice, she was baptized and confirmed into the Church by Elder Hyrum Smith.

I remained at home, a broken-hearted, bashful boy, without stamina enough to come out and confront a wicked world. Soon after, my grandfather appeared to my father in a dream, and told him that this was the people he prophesied of while living, and my parents were baptized. Then my persecuting brothers followed. When the last named went into the water I stood on the shore, feeling as though my ease was almost hopeless. I had twice failed to keep my covenants with the Lord and now the third promise was about to be broken. At this juncture my father, who knew nothing of my covenants, observing that I looked downcast, stepped to my side and asked what was the matter. I was speechless and could not utter a word. I had been studying how I could ever have a heart to call upon the Lord again. How could He trust me further? On my father asking if it was not hard for my sister, parents and brothers to leave me, I broke completely down and wept aloud. My father then for the first time told me I could be baptized if I wished. I, however, waited until the next Wednesday, this being on Sunday. During the interval, however, I plead with the Lord to forgive me of my sin of covenant-breaking; and when I came up out of the water, not before, did I feel that He had answered my prayers, and that all my sins were pardoned. This was on the 16th day of January, 1833. I was a little over sixteen years of age.

I did attend a Methodist Sabbath school, the only one I knew anything about; but at the tender age of fifteen years I was better versed in the true interpretation of the scriptures than the teacher. But attending Sabbath school kept me out of the company of wicked boys, and had a tendency to teach me a reverence for the Sabbath day.

After I was baptized<sup>1</sup> however, I never attended the Methodist Sabbath school any more, although it was desired that I should. My teachers said I was always honest and truthful, and they believed I was sincere in my religion, and if I would continue to attend their Sunday school I would see my error. They believed I had been converted, and that when I got a few years older I would be called to preach the gospel, and would be the means of saving many souls.

I admitted having been converted and that I knew my sins were forgiven, and further testified that obedience to "Mormonism", so-called, was what had brought peace to my soul; and the nearer I lived to it, the more of the peace of the Holy Spirit I felt.

The gift of prophecy was poured out upon me. I also received the gift and interpretation of tongues. But what then and ever since has seemed to me the greatest gift I received was to speak easily and fluently in my own language. This was the first gift I received. It came upon me in

great power. A few months after my baptism several leading Elders from Kirtland, Ohio, were about to be dragged from our school house by a mob who had assembled to tar and feather them. When the Elders and others failed to stop them from disturbing the meeting, I stepped upon a form or bench and began to talk to the people. Five minutes had not elapsed when, aside from my voice, a pin dropping upon the floor might have been easily heard. After I had spoken about ten or fifteen minutes the mob left the house, and, after consulting outside a few moments, retired, and we had a good meeting.

This circumstance had gone out of my mind until about 1849, while stopping over night at the house of a brother named Brim. Alfred O. Brim, who was one of the mob, called my attention to it, and asked me if I knew that they had a keg of tar and a feather bed in the carriage in which they came to the meeting.

I replied that I did not think I ever heard of it. He said they brought the tar and the feathers with the full intent to use them on the Elders, but they were so surprised at the power with which I spoke that they knew that I was helped by some invisible spirit. They had known me since I was seven years old, and were satisfied that I had not made up the speech, and that I was not capable of doing so. They decided that it must be of the Lord or of the devil. Of this they could not be the judges, not, as they said, having the discerning of spirits. Hence one of them suggested that lest they be found fighting against God, they had better retire. All agreed to it and they left.

Brim and several of his brothers afterwards joined the church, and were at one time prominent tanners in Salt Lake county, Utah.

Dr. Rion, an eminent physician of Springfield, who, I believe, was the leader, it was said died instantly of apoplexy, some time after, while sitting in his chair.

I never heard any more talk of mobbing in that neighborhood. Thus the Lord made use of a humble, unlearned boy to break up a spirit of mobocracy which had existed for some months, and saved His servants from cruel treatment and possible death.

"And one shall rise up from my seed in the latter times, beloved of the Lord, hearing upon the earth His voice, enlightening with new knowledge all the Gentiles, bursting in upon Israel for salvation with light of knowledge, and tearing it away from it like a wolf, and giving it to the synagogue of the Gentiles. And until the consummation of the ages shall be in the synagogues of the Gentiles, and among their rulers, as a strain of music in the mouth of all;...and he shall be inscribed in the holy books, both his work and his word, & he shall be a chosen one of God for ever; and because of him my father Jacob instructed me, saying, He shall fill up that which lacketh of thy tribe."

Origen [A.D. 185-230-254], seems to suggest that after times of wickedness & apostasy, the Lord would refresh & restore the world back to it's former state. The early anti-Christian writer, Celsus, [170-180 A.D.], must have been aware that some early Christians believed in a restoration, or times of "refreshing." But he rejects the idea, for he wrote: "...God does not need to amend His work afresh." Origen responded in these words: "But it is not as a man who has imperfectly designed some piece of workmanship, & executed it unskillfully, that God administers correction to the world, in purifying it by a flood or by a conflagration, but in order to

prevent the tide of evil from rising to a greater height;... It is, then, always in order to repair what has become faulty that God desires to amend His work afresh, For although, in the creation of the world, all things had been arranged by Him in the most beautiful manner, He nevertheless needed to exercise some healing power upon those who were laboring under the disease of wickedness, and upon a whole world, which was polluted as it were thereby. But nothing has been neglected by God, or will be neglected by Him; for He does at each particular juncture what it becomes Him to do in a perverted and changed world. And as a husbandman performs different acts of husbandry upon the soil and its productions, according to the varying seasons of the year, so God administers entire ages of time, as if they were, so to speak, so many individual years, performing during each one of them what is requisite with a reasonable regard to the care of the world; and this, as it is truly understood by God alone, so also is it accomplished by Him." (*The Ante-Nicene Fathers = (TANF) Vol.4: p.528, bk. IV, c.LXIX.*)

In the Apocalypse of Abraham, Abraham talked with God, "Oh thou who abolishest the confusion [or mix-up] of the universe" --the confusion that follows the disintegration of the world of both evil & righteous alike; "for thou renewest the world of the righteous." After this disintegration, after the falling away, God is the one who abolishes the confusion & reorganizes it. When the worlds reach a certain point, they disintegrate. Then they are organized again: God "reneweth the world of the righteous." (*Temple & Cosmos, op. cit., p.281-3, n.51, Apoc. of Abra. 17:17.*)

Emanuel Swedenborg, [born at Stockholm in 1688, & died in London in 1772.] He claimed to have had a number of spiritual experiences in which he, for a quarter of a century, was in constant contact with the spiritual world, observing what took place there, & then recording what he claimed was taking place there. Had he had an after life experience or a series of "Near Death Experiences"? Or just claimed to have been able to observe that realm while in the body? Had he also been influenced by lingering traditions, or scriptural predictions concerning "times of restoration" too? "...The reason given by him for this unique experience being granted was that the Church established by the Lord at His first advent had perished through falsities of doctrine and evils of life, and that a further revelation was about to be made, not to supersede the old, but to restore and amplify its lost truths, to add to them more interior truths unknown before, and to place them all, new as well as old, in such clear light and coherent connection that man would be able, if he were willing, to grasp them rationally. Concurrently with this new revelation, and as the indispensable condition of the commencement of a new spiritual age, a great judgment was accomplished in the world of spirits, or state intermediate between heaven and hell, where the great majority of mankind who had passed into the eternal world since the commencement of the Christian era were still dwelling."

"If Swedenborg's representations of the state in his day of the so-called Christian nations, whether on earth or in the spiritual world, are true, they supply a sufficient reason to any devout believer in divine revelation for the unique experience to which he was subjected. No one who is acquainted with the facts of the case can doubt that the Church, regarded not as a political or social institution, but as the depository and interpreter of divine truth, and means of leading men to a life in accordance with it, was at that time in a state of deplorable decadence; and that unless a great change had taken place Christianity as a spiritual power in the world must have perished. No one, however, could venture to assert, upon merely historical data, that the Church, in the sense indicated above, had come to its end. But neither can any one, on any similar grounds, deny it. All human things have their youth, maturity and decline; and divine institutions, so far as they depend for their maintenance and integrity on human free-will, may have a like fate. The visible organization of a Church may survive, to all appearance in full vigour, while all that made it an effective connecting link between God and man has perished. It may have a "name that it lives" and yet be spiritually "dead." It was so with the Jewish Church and with others which preceded it. While the possibility of such a fact cannot be denied by any one who believes in spiritual life as something distinct from merely natural life, its ascertainment is a totally different thing. Only a

teacher enlightened and accredited from heaven can certify us of that...." (Heaven and its Wonders and Hell (From Things Heard And Seen), by Emanuel Swedenborg, first published in Latin, London, 1758, Introduction from the E. P. Dutton & Co., N.Y., from the Everyman's Library Edition of Emanuel Swedenborg's Heaven And Hell. 1943 Swedenborg Foundation, N.Y. Organized in 1850 as The American Swedenborg Printing & Pub. Society, Introduction by J. Howard Spalding, Feb. 1909, pages III, IV, & V.)

Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick is reported to have said that: "A religious reformation is afoot, and at heart it is the endeavour or recover for our modern life the religion of Jesus as against the vast, intricate, largely inadequate and often positively false religions about Jesus. Christianity today has largely left the religion which he preached, taught, and lived, and has substituted another kind of religion altogether. If Jesus could come back to earth now, hear the mythologies built up around him, see the creedalism, denominationalism, sacramentalism, carried on in his name, he would certainly say, "If this is Christianity, I am not a Christian." (The Improvement Era, June 1955, p.444, A Marvelous Work, by LeGrand Richards