

## Notes about the Prophet Joseph, for Matthew, February 11, 2008

Joseph liked to relax

He said it tried some of the pious folks to see him play ball with the boys. He then related a story of a certain prophet who was sitting under the shade of a tree amusing himself in some way. when a hunter came along with his bow and arrow, and reproved him. The prophet asked him if he kept his bow strung up all the time. The hunter answered that he did not. The prophet asked why, and he said it would lose its elasticity if he did. The prophet said it was just so with his mind. he did not want it strung up all the time

*Juvenile Instructor*, v. 27, p. 472.

He liked to Play

When Joseph came to the crowd he told them what he wanted, passed around the hat, raised what money he could and then went into the ring to take part with the young men and boys in their games. So he was invited to wrestle with this bully. The man was eager to have a tussel with the Prophet. so Joseph stepped forward and took hold of the man. The first pass he made Joseph whirled him round and took him by the collar and seat of his trousers and walked out to a ditch and threw him in it. Then. taking him by the arm. he helped him up and patted him on the back and said: "You must not mind this. When I am with the boys I make all the fun I can for them."

*Juvenile Instructor*, v. 27, p. 255.

George Q. Cannon:

He was a great hater of sham. He disliked long-faced hypocrisy, and numerous stories are told of his peculiar manner of rebuking it. He knew that much that people call sin is not sin, and he did many things to break down superstition. He would wrestle, play ball, and enjoy himself in physical exercises, and he knew that he was not committing sin to do so. The religion of heaven is not to make men sorrowful, to curtail their enjoyment and to make them groan and sigh and wear long faces, but to make them happy. This Joseph desired to teach the people, but in doing so, he, like our Savior, when he was on the earth. was a stumbling block to bigots and hypocrites. They could not understand him; he shocked their prejudices and traditions.<sup>68</sup>

*The Historical Record*, p. 489.

Parley P. Pratt. tells of Joseph at Liberty Jail.

They [the guards] even boasted of defiling by force, wives, daughters and virgins, and of shooting or dashing out the brains of men. women and children. I had listened until I became so disgusted. shocked. horrified. and so filled with the spirit of indignant justice that I could scarcely refrain from rising upon my feet and rebuking the guards; but had said nothing to Joseph. or anyone else. although I lay next to him and knew he was awake. On a sudden he rose to his feet and spoke in the voice of thunder. or as a roaring lion. uttering. as nearly as I can recollect, the following words:

"Silence, ye fiends of the eternal pit! In the name of Jesus Christ I rebuke you. and command you to be still; I will not live another minute and hear such language. Cease such talk, or you or I die this instant!"

He ceased to speak. He stood erect, in terrible majesty. Chained, and without a weapon; calm, unruffled, and dignified as an angel, he looked upon the quailing guards, whose weapons were lowered, or dropped to the ground; whose knees smote together, and who, shrinking into a corner or crouching at his feet. begged his pardon, and remained quiet till a change of

*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt.* p. 228-30.

Philo Dibble was present when Joseph received the revelation that is D&C 76.

Joseph would, at intervals, say: "What do I see?" as one might say while looking out of the window and beholding what all in the room could not see. Then he would relate what he had seen or what he was looking at. Then Sidney replied, "I see the same." Presently Sidney would say, "What do I see?" and would repeat what he had seen or was seeing, and Joseph would reply, "I see the same."

This manner of conversation was repeated at short intervals to the end of the vision, and during the whole time not a word was spoken by any other person. Not a sound nor motion made by anyone but Joseph and Sidney, and it seemed to me that they never moved a joint or limb during the time I was there, which I think was over an hour, and to the end of the vision.

Joseph sat firmly and calmly all the time in the midst of a magnificent glory, but Sidney sat limp and pale, apparently as limber as a rag, observing which, Joseph remarked, smilingly, "Sidney is not used to it as I am."

*Juvenile Instructor*, 27, p. 303-304.

Philo Dibble

I arrived at Father Johnson's just as Joseph and Sidney were coming out of the vision alluded to in the book of Doctrine and Covenants, in which mention is made of the three glories. Joseph wore black clothes but at this time seemed to be dressed in an element of glorious white, and his face shown as if it were transparent, but I did not see the same glory attending Sidney.

Joseph appeared as strong as a lion but Sidney seemed as weak as water, and Joseph noticing his condition smiled and said: 'Brother Sidney is not as used to it as I am.'

*Eighth Book of Faith Promoting Series*, 80-1

Testimony of Wilford Woodruff

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.

*Conference Report*, April, 1898, p. 89

Wilford Woodruff, at a meeting of the First Presidency

I bear my testimony that in the early spring of 1844, in Nauvoo, the Prophet Joseph called the Apostles together and he delivered unto them the ordinances of the Church and Kingdom of God, and all the keys and powers that God had bestowed upon him, he sealed upon our heads, and he told us we must round up our shoulders and bear off this kingdom, or we would be damned. I am the only man now living in the flesh who heard that testimony from his mouth, and I know it was true by the power of God manifest to him. At that meeting he stood on his feet for about three hours and taught us the things of the kingdom. His face was clear as amber, and he was covered with a power that I had

never seen on any man in the flesh before.

*Journal History*, 12 March, 1897.

When the Kirtland Temple was dedicated, Joseph reported that when George A. Smith arose to speak,

A noise was heard like the sound of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the Temple, and all the congregation simultaneously arose, being moved upon by an invisible power; many began to speak in tongues and prophesy; others saw glorious visions; and I beheld the Temple was filled with angels, which fact I declared to the congregation. The people of the neighborhood came running together (hearing an unusual sound within, and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple), and were astonished at what was taking place. This continued until the meeting closed at eleven p.m.

*History of the Church*, v.2, p. 428.

Mosiah Hancock wrote of Joseph's visit to his father's home just before he left for Carthage:

...the Prophet came to our home and stopped in our carpenter shop and stood by the turning lathe. I went and got my map for him. "Now," said he, "I will show you the travels of this people." He then showed our travels through Iowa, and said, "Here you will make a place for the winter; and here you will travel west until you come to the valley of the Great Salt Lake! You will build cities to the North and to the South, and to the East and to the West; and you will become a great and wealthy people in that land."

"The Life Story of Mosiah Lyman Hancock," typewritten copy in BYU Library, p. 27-29.

Feb. 1831

Mary E. Lightner, Joseph Smith sealed up a small group unto everlasting life.

...As we stood there talking to them, Joseph and Martin Harris came in. Joseph looked around very solemnly. It was the first time some of them have ever seen him. Said he, "There are enough here to hold a little meeting." They got a board and put it across two chairs to make seats. Martin Harris sat on a little box at Joseph's feet. They sang and prayed, Joseph got up and began to speak to us.

As he began to speak very solemnly and very earnestly all at once his countenance changed and he stood mute. Those who looked at him that day said there was a search light within him, over every part of his body. I never saw anything like it on the earth. I could not take my eyes off him. He got so white that anyone who saw him

would have thought he was transparent. I remember I thought I could almost see the cheek bones through the flesh. I have been through many changes since, but that is photographed on my brain. I shall remember it and see it in my mind's eye as long as I remain upon the earth. He stood some moments. He looked over the congregation as if to pierce every heart. and said, "Do you know who has been in your midst?" One of the Smith's said an angel of the Lord. Martin Harris said, "It was our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ". Joseph put his hand down on Martin and said, "God revealed that to you". Brothers and Sisters, the Spirit of God has been here. The Savior has been in your midst (this night and I want you to remember it. There is a veil over your eyes, you could not endure to look upon Him. You must be fed with milk, not with strong meat. meat. I want you to remember this as if it were the last thing that escapes my lips. He has given all of you to me and has sealed you up to everlasting life that where He is there you may be also, And if you are tempted of Satan. say, 'Get behind me, Satan.'

Mary E. Lightner, Journal, p. 37.

Brigham Young

*Journal of Discourses*, 9: 89

[Joseph] had a revelation when we were singing to him. Those who were acquainted with him knew when the Spirit of revelation was upon him, for his countenance wore an expression peculiar to himself while under that influence. He preached by the Spirit of revelation, and taught in his council by it, and those who were acquainted with him could discover it at once, for at such times there was a peculiar clearness and transparency in his face.

Orson Pratt

I was present when Joseph received revelations. I particularly remember the one on the United Order. There was no great noise or physical manifestation. Joseph was as calm as the morning sun. But I noticed a change in his countenance that I had never noticed before, when a revelation was given to him. His face was exceedingly white, and seemed to shine. I had been present many times when the Prophet was revising the New Testament, and wondered why he did not use the Urim and Thummim, as in translating the Book of Mormon while this thought passed through my mind, Joseph, as if he had read my thoughts, looked up and explained that the Lord gave him the Urim and Thummim when he was inexperienced in the Spirit of inspiration. But now that he had advanced so far as to understand the operations of the Spirit, he did not need the assistance of that instrument.

quoted in John Henry Evans, *Joseph Smith, An American Prophet*, 326.

Oliver B. Huntington Journal 2: 244

[Patriarch Zebide Coltrin told O B Huntington that the prophet tried to tell him and Oliver Cowdery about the Celestial Kingdom, but gave up and said let me show you. He and they walked out onto the field, lay down in the grass, and opened the vision to them.]

Oliver B. Huntington, Journal, 2: 168-9

Joseph ...could 'See' whatever he asked the father in the name of Jesus to see.

I heard him say that 'he could ask what he would ask... what he would of the Father in the name of Jesus and it would be granted and I have no more doubt of it than I have that the mob killed him.

Oliver B. Huntington, Journal, 2: 408-9

[ says that before going to Carthage, Joseph was so sure he would be killed and his body mutilated by the mob that he took off his garments so the mob would not desecrate and mock them too, after they had killed him.]

In August, 1842. While Joseph and others were in Montrose, Iowa, he received a vision that the Saints would move West. Anson Call described the event.

I had before seen him in a vision, and now saw , while he was talking his countenance change towhite; not the deadly white of a bloodless face, but a living brilliant white, He seemed absorbed in gazing at something at a great distance, and said: "I am gazing upon the valleys of those mountains," This was followed by a vivid description of the scenery of these mountains, as I have since become acquainted with it, Pointing to Shadrach Roundy and others, he said: "There are some men here who shall do a great work in that land," Pointing to me, he said: "There is Anson, he shall go and shall assist in building up cities from one end of the country to the other, and you (rather extending the idea to all those he had spoken of) shall perform as great a work as has been done by man, so that

the nations of the earth shall be astonished, and many of them will be gathered in that land and assist in building cities and temples, and Israel shall be made to rejoice,"

It is impossible to represent in words this scene which is still vivid in my mind, of the grandeur of Joseph's appearance, his beautiful descriptions of this land, and his wonderful prophetic utterances as they emanated from the glorious inspiration that overshadowed him, There was a force and power in his exclamations of which the following is but a faint echo: "Oh, the beauty of those snow-capped mountains! The cool refreshing streams that are running down through those mountain gorges!" Then gazing in another direction, as if there was a change of locality: "Oh, the scenes that this people will pass through! The dead that will lay between here and there," Then turning in another direction as if the scene had again changed: "Oh the apostasy that will take place before my brethren reach that land! But,"he continued, "the priesthood shall prevail over its enemies, triumph over the devil and be established upon the earth, never more to be thrown down!" He then charged us with great force and power, to be faithful to those things that had been and should be committed to our charge, with the promise of all the blessings that the Priesthood could bestow. "Remember these things and treasure them up. Amen."

Edward W. Tullidge, *History of Northern Utah and Southern Idaho: Biographical Supplement*. p. 271-272.