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3 WAYS JOSEPH SMITH REVEALS JESUS CHRIST TO US

Joseph Smith Jr. was called of God “to be a translator, a revelator, a seer, and prophet” (Doctrine and Covenants 124:125). Each of these titles has particular significance, but there is no more important aspect of his prophetic mission than his revelation of Jesus Christ in our time.

Every element of God’s plan for the salvation of His children in time and eternity hinges on Jesus Christ and faith in Him, and since there is no salvation without Jesus, it is critical that He be revealed to mankind in His true character. This becomes increasingly important as the biblical testimony of Jesus recedes in time and more and more begin to doubt, including even some professors and ministers of religion.

The Prophet Joseph Smith is the great latter-day revelator of Jesus Christ in at least three important ways: first, he is a personal witness of the fact of the Savior’s Resurrection; second, he is the translator and publisher of the most forceful and complete written testament of Jesus Christ in existence; and third, he presents to the world a testimony of Christ irrefutably sealed with his own blood.

1. HIS PERSONAL WITNESS OF THE SAVIOR’S RESURRECTION

At age 14, in response to sincere and fervent prayer, Joseph Smith was visited by the Savior and God the Father. He saw the Father motion toward Jesus, and heard Him say, “This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!” (Joseph Smith—History 1:17). Joseph



FIRST VISION, BY LIZ LEMON SWINDLE



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spoke to the Lord, and the Lord spoke to him. He knew firsthand that Jesus is the Son, the Beloved Son of God, and that as a resurrected being, He lives. Of his experience, Joseph Smith wrote, “I had

actually seen a light, and in the midst of that light I saw two Personages, and they did in reality speak to me; and though I was hated and persecuted for saying that I had seen a vision, yet it was true” (Joseph Smith—History 1:25).

Some 16 years later, in the temple at Kirtland, Ohio, Joseph recorded:

“We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber.

“His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying:

“I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father” (Doctrine and Covenants 110:2–4).

In Joseph Smith’s testimony of these and other visitations, we find the clearest possible revelation of the resurrected Lord.

2. HIS TRANSLATION AND PUBLICATION OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ is the single most complete and compelling volume of scripture known to the world that attests to the divinity of Jesus Christ and the plan of redemption that centers in Him. It was compiled for the purpose of convincing all “that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations” (Book of Mormon, title page). It confirms and upholds the





eloquent witness of both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. In translating and publishing the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith has made its testimony his own.

The Book of Mormon's witness of Christ is found throughout the book. Among the most moving declarations are those connected with the Lord's personal ministry among the Book of Mormon peoples following His Resurrection. After the Father's voice from heaven introduced Jesus as "my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name" (3 Nephi 11:7), the Savior, standing in their midst, said to the people:

"Behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning. . . .

"Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world" (3 Nephi 11:11, 14).

My own witness of Jesus Christ was born in the pages of the Book of Mormon. It was the first and foundational evidence leading to my testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Continued study of that book continues to deepen my conversion.

3. SEALING HIS TESTIMONY WITH HIS OWN BLOOD

Martyrdom endows a prophet's testimony with a special validity. Indeed the Greek root *martureo* from which the English word *martyr* is derived means *witness*.

"Like most of the Lord's anointed in ancient times, [Joseph Smith] has sealed his mission and his works with his own blood" (Doctrine and Covenants 135:3). In a hail of bullets on the afternoon of June 27, 1844, in Carthage, Illinois, Joseph and his brother, Hyrum, were cut down for the religion and testimony they professed.

Joseph Smith's revelation of Christ, sealed by his blood and supported by the testimony of his fellow martyr Hyrum, is now

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binding upon the world. The most eloquent expression of that testimony was given in 1832 as follows:

"And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

"For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

"That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God" (Doctrine and Covenants 76:22–24).

Among mortals, the Lord Jesus Christ has had no surer witness, no more committed disciple, no more loyal advocate than Joseph Smith, His prophet, seer, and revelator. By his personal witness of the resurrected Savior, by his translation and publication of the Book of Mormon, and by his martyrdom, Joseph Smith has laid before the world the preeminent revelation of Jesus Christ for our time. **NE**

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