

The Man Who Communed with Jehovah

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Ti Tao a Kinasao ni Jehova

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Ti Pitupulo

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Joseph Smith was “blessed to open the last dispensation,” and we are blessed that he did.

My purpose this day and always is to testify of Jesus Christ, that He is the Son of God, the Creator and Savior of the world, our Deliverer and Redeemer. Because “the fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ,” today I share with you my knowledge and testimony of the Savior as they have been strengthened and deepened by the life and teachings of one key apostle and prophet.

The Beginning of Wisdom

On the morning of a beautiful clear day early in the spring of 1820, 14-year-old Joseph Smith entered a grove of trees near his family’s home to pray about his sins and to ask which church to join. His sincere prayer, offered with unwavering faith, received the attention of the most powerful forces in the universe, including the Father and the Son. And the devil. Each of these had an intense interest in that prayer and in that boy.

What we now call the First Vision marked the beginning of the Restoration of all things in this last dispensation. But for Joseph, the experience was also personal and preparatory. All he wanted was forgiveness and direction. The Lord gave him both. The instruction to “join none of [the churches]” was directive. The words “Thy sins are forgiven thee” were redemptive.

Ni Joseph Smith ket “nabendisionan a nanglukat iti maudi a dispensasion,” ken nabendisionantayo gapu ta inaramidna dayta.

Ti panggepko ita nga aldaw ken iti kanayon ket ti mangpaneknek ken ni Jesucristo, nga Isu ti Anak ti Dios, ti Namarsua ken Mangisalakan ti lubong, ti Manangispal ken Mannubbottayo. Gapu ta “dagiti kangrunaan a pagbatayan ti rehiontayo ket ti pammaneknek dagiti Apostol ken Propeta, maipanggep ken ni Jesucristo,” ita nga aldaw ibinglayko ti pannakaammok ken pammaneknekko iti Mangisalakan a napabileg ken napauneg babaen ti biag ken dagiti pannursuro ti maysa a kangrunaan nga apostol ken propeta.

Ti Pangrugian ti Kinasirib

Iti agsapa ti napintas a nalawag nga aldaw iti panagsusulbod ti 1820, simrek ti 14 ti tawenna a ni Joseph Smith iti maysa a kakaywan iti asideg ti pagtaengan ti pamiliana tapno agkararag maipapan kadagiti basolna ken agdamag no ania a simbaan ti pagkamenganna. Ti napasnek a kararagna, a naidaton iti natibker a pammati, ket nangngeg dagiti kabilangan a puersa iti uniberso, agraman ti Ama ken ti Anak. Ken ti sairo. Tunggal maysa kadagitoy ti interesado unay iti dayta a kararag ken iti dayta a barito.

Ti aw-awagantayo itan nga Umuna a Parmata ti nangrugian iti pannakaisubli ti amin a bambanag iti daytoy maudi a dispensasion. Ngem para ken Joseph, ti padasna ket personal ken panagsagana pay. Ti laeng kayatna ket ti pammakawan ken panangiturong. Inted kenkuana ti Apo ti agpada. Ti naibaga “a saanak a kumameng iti ania man [kadagiti simbaan]” ket

For all the beautiful truths we might learn from that First Vision, perhaps Joseph's main takeaway was simply, "I had found the testimony of James to be true—that a man who lacked wisdom might ask of God, and obtain."

As one scholar noted: "The real resonance of the First Vision today is to know that it's the nature of God to give to those who lack wisdom. ... The God that reveals Himself to Joseph Smith in the sacred grove is a God who answers teenagers in times of trouble."

Joseph's experience in the grove gave him confidence to ask for forgiveness and direction for the rest of his life. His experience has also given me confidence to ask for forgiveness and direction for the rest of my life.

Regular Repentance

On September 21, 1823, Joseph earnestly prayed for forgiveness, confident that because of his experience in the grove three years earlier, heaven would respond again. And it did. The Lord sent an angel, Moroni, to instruct Joseph and inform him of an ancient record he would later translate by the gift and power of God—the Book of Mormon.

Almost 13 years after that, Joseph and Oliver Cowdery knelt in solemn, silent prayer in the newly dedicated Kirtland Temple. We do not know what they prayed for, but their prayers likely included a plea for forgiveness, for, as they arose, the Savior appeared and declared, "Behold, your sins are forgiven you; you are clean before me."

In the months and years after this experience, Joseph and Oliver would sin again. And again. But in that moment, for that moment, in response to their plea and in preparation for the glorious restoration of priesthood keys that was about to happen, Jesus made them sinless.

Joseph's life of regular repentance gives me confidence to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that [I] may obtain mercy." I have learned that Jesus Christ truly is "of a forgiving disposi-

maysa a bilin. Dagiti balikas a, "Napakawanen dagiti basbasolmo." ket manangsubbot.

Kadagiti amin a kinapudno a masursurotayo iti Umuna a Parmata, ti kangrunaan a nasursuro ni Joseph ket, "Napaneknekak a pudno ti pammaneknek ni Santiago—a ti tao nga agkurang iti kinasirib ket mabalinna ti dumawat iti Dios, ket saanto a mapaidaman."

Kas kinuna ti maysa nga eskolar: "Ti kapatgan a mensahe ti Umuna a Parmata ita ket ti pannakaammo a ti kababalin ti Dios mangted iti sirib kadagidiay awanan iti dayta. ... Ti Dios a nagpakita ken ni Joseph Smith iti sagrado a kakaywan isu ti Dios a mangsungbat kadagiti agtutubo iti panawen ti riribuk."

Ti padas ni Joseph iti kakaywan ti nangted iti panagtalekna nga agkiddaw itipammakawan-kenpanangiturongiti nabati pay a panagbiagna. Ti padasna ti nangted metkaniakiti panagtalek a dumawat iti pammakawan ken panangiturong iti intero a panagbiagko.

Kanayon a Panagbabawi

Idi Septiembre 21, 1823, sipapasnek nga inkarag ni Joseph ti pammakawan, ken nagtaleb a gapu iti padasna iti kakaywan tallo a tawen kasakbayanna, sumungbat manen ti langit. Ket kasta ti napasamak. Imbaon ti Apo ti anghel a Moroni tapno isurona ni Joseph ken ipakaammo na ti maysa a kadaanan a kasuratan nga ipatarusna babaen ti sagut ken pannakabalin ti Dios—ti Libro ni Mormon.

Agarup 13 a tawen kalpasan dayta, nagparintumeng da Joseph ken Oliver Cowdery iti napasnek, naulimek a panagkararag iti kabarbaro a naidaton a Kirtland Temple. Ditayo ammo no ania ti inkaraganda, ngem nalabit a karaman ti panagkiddawda iti pammakawan, gapu ta, idi timmakderda, nagparang ti Mangisalikan ket impakdaarna, "Adtoy, napakawankayon kadagiti basolyo; nadaluskayon iti imatangko."

Kadagiti bulan ken tawen kalpasan daytoy a padas, nagbasol manen da Joseph ken Oliver. Ket manen. Ngem iti dayta a kanito, paraiti dayta a kanito, kas sungbat iti panagpakaasida ken kas panagsagana iti nadayag a pannakaisubli dagiti tulbek ti priesthood, inaramid ni Jesus ida nga awan basolda.

Ti biag ni Joseph a kanayon a managbabawi ti mangmangted kaniak iti panagtaleb nga "umasideg iti trono ti parabur ti Dios ta, magun-od[ko] ti asi." Naadalko a ni Jesucristo ket

tion.”It is neither His mission nor His nature to condemn. He came to save.

Inquiring of the Lord

As part of the promised “restitution of all things,”the Lord, through Joseph Smith, brought forth the Book of Mormon and other revelations that contain the fulness of His gospel. Vital truths were given clarity and completeness as Joseph repeatedly inquired of the Lord for direction. Consider the following:

The Father and the Son have bodies “as tangible as man’s.”

Jesus took upon Himself not only our sins but also our sicknesses, afflictions, and infirmities.

His Atonement was so excruciating it caused Him to bleed from every pore.

We are saved by His grace “after all we can do.”

There are conditions to Christ’s mercy.

As we come unto Christ, He will not only forgive our sins, but He will also change our very nature so “that we have no more disposition to do evil.”

Christ always commands His people to build temples,where He manifests Himself unto themand endows them with power from on high.

I testify that all these things are true and necessary. They represent only a fraction of the fulness that was restored by Jesus Christ through Joseph Smith in response to Joseph’s recurring requests for direction.

Rolling on This Kingdom

In 1842, Joseph wrote of amazing things that would come to pass in this last dispensation. He declared that during our day, “the heavenly Priesthood will unite with the earthly, to bring about those great purposes; and whilst we are thus united in the one common cause, to roll forth the kingdom of God, the heavenly Priesthood are not idle spectators.”

To his friend Benjamin Johnson, Joseph said, “Benjamin, [if I die] I [would] not be far away from you, and if on the other side of the veil, I

“pudno a manangpakawan.”Saanna a mision wenno kababalin ti mangkondena. Immay Isuna tapno mangisalakan.

Panagsaludsod iti Apo

Kas paset ti naikari a “pannakaisubli ti amin a banag,”inyeg ti Apo, babaen ken Joseph Smith, ti Libro ni Mormon ken dadduma pay a paltining a naglaon iti pakabuklan ti ebangeliona. Naan-anay a nailawlawag dagiti napateg a kinapudno bayat ti maulit-ulit a panagsaludsod ni Joseph iti panangiturong ti Apo. Ibilangmo dagiti sumaganad:

Nagtagilasag ken nagtagitulang ti Ama “a marikna a kas iti tao.”

Sinagaba ni Jesus saan laeng dagiti basoltayo ngem dagiti pay saksakit, rigrigat, ken sagubantayo.

Nakaro unay ti Pannubbotna isu a na-kaigapuan ti panagdara iti tunggal teterremanna.

Babaen ti parabur maisalakantayo “kalpasan ti amin a maaramidantayo.”

Adda dagiti alagaden iti asi ni Cristo.

Bayat ti yaasidegtayo ken Cristo, saanna laeng a pakawanen ti basbasoltayo, no di ket baliwanna pay mismo ti kinataotayo “nga awanen ti tarigagaytayo nga agaramid iti dakes.”

Kanayon a bilinen ni Cristo dagiti taona a mangbangon kadagiti templo,a pangipakitaanna iti bagina kadakuadaken ipaayanna ida iti bileg nga aggapu iti ngato.

Paneknekak a pudno ken kasapulan amin dagitoy a banag. Paset laeng dagitoy ti pakabuklan nga insubli ni Jesucristo babaen ken ni Joseph Smith kas sungbat iti maulit-ulit a kiddaw ni Joseph a panangiturong.

Agtultuloy a Panagdur-as iti Daytoy a Pagarian

Idi 1842, insurat ni Joseph dagiti nakaskasdaaw a banag a mapasamakto iti daytoy maudi a dispensasion. Impakdaarna a bayat ti aldawtayo, “agkaykaysanto ti nailangitan ken naindagaan a priesthood, tapno mangitungpal kadagitoy naindaklan a panggep; ket bayat ti panagkaykaysatayo iti maymaysa a panggep, a mangituloy a mangpadur-as iti pagarian ti Dios, saan a nasadut a mangnamnama ti nailangitan a Priesthood.”

Iti gayyemna a ni Benjamin Johnson, kinuna ni Joseph, “Benjamin, [no matayak] saanakto nga adayo kenka, ket iti sabali a bangir ti belo,

[would] still be working with you, and with a power greatly increased, to roll on this kingdom.”

On June 27, 1844, Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were murdered. Joseph’s body was laid to rest, but his testimony continues to reverberate around the world and in my soul:

“I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it.”

“I never told you I was perfect; but there is no error in the revelations which I have taught.”

“The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it.”

What was said of John the Baptist might also be said of Joseph Smith: “There was a man sent from God, whose name was [Joseph]. ... He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light,” “that all men through him might believe.”

I believe. I believe and am sure that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. I testify that the living God is our loving Father. I know this because the voice of the Lord has spoken it to me, and so has the voice of His servants, the apostles and prophets, including and beginning with Joseph Smith.

I testify that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet of God, a witness and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was “blessed to open the last dispensation,” and we are blessed that he did.

The Lord commanded Oliver and all of us, “Stand by my servant Joseph, faithfully.” I testify that the Lord stands by His servant Joseph and the Restoration wrought through him.

Joseph Smith is now part of that heavenly priesthood of which he spoke. As he promised his friend, he is not far away from us, and on the other side of the veil, he is still working with us, and with a power greatly increased, to roll on this kingdom. With joy and thanksgiving, I raise my voice in “praise to the man who communed with

agtultuloyakto latta a makipagtrabaho kenka, ken addaan iti dakdakkal a bileg, a mangitultuloy a mangpadur-as iti daytoy a pagarian.”

Idi Hunio 27, 1844, napapatay da Joseph Smith ken ti kabsatna a ni Hyrum. Naitanem ti bangkay ni Joseph, ngem agtultuloy ti pammaneknekna a mangaring iti sangalubongan ken iti kararuak.

“Ta nakakitaak iti parmata; ammok dayta, ken ammok nga ammo ti Dios dayta, ket diak mapaglikudan.”

“Diak pulos imbaga kadakayo a perpektoak; ngem awan ti biddut kadagiti paltiing nga insur-ok.”

“Dagiti kangrunaan a pagbatayan ti rehiontayo ket ti pammaneknek dagiti Apostol ken Propeta, maipanggep ken Jesucristo, a natay, naitanem, ken nagungar manen iti maikatlo nga aldaw, ken immuli sadi langit; ket amin a daduma a banag ket karaman laeng kadagitoy, a mainaig iti rehiontayo.”

Ti naisao ken ni Juan Bautista ket mabalin met a maisao ken Joseph Smith: “Adda maysa a lalaki nga imbaon ti Dios, nga agnagan iti [Joseph]. ... “Saan nga isu dayta a Silaw, ngem naibaon tapno paneknekanna ti dayta a Silaw” ... “tapno mangngegda ti mensahe ket mamatida.”

Mamatiak. Mamatiak ken masiguradok a ni Jesus isu ti Cristo, ti Anak ti sibibiag a Dios. Paneknekak a ti sibibiag a Dios isu ti managayat nga Amatayo. Ammok daytoy agsipud ta ti timek ti Apo ti nagsao kaniak, ken kasta met ti timek dagiti katulonganna, dagiti apostol ken propeta, a pakairamanan ken mangrugi ken ni Joseph Smith.

Paneknekak a ni Joseph Smith ket maysa idi ken maysa a propeta ti Dios, maysa a saksi ken katulongan ni Apo Jesucristo. Isu ket “nabendisionan a nanglukat iti maudi a dispensasion,” ket mabendisionantayo gapu ta inaramidna dayta.

Binilin ti Apo ni Oliver ken datayo amin, “Agtakderkayo iti sibay ti katulongak a ni Joseph, a simamatalek.” Paneknekak nga agtaktakder ti Apo iti sibay ti katulonganna a ni Joseph ken ti Pannakaisubli a naaramid babaen kenkuana.

Ni Joseph Smith ket paset itan dayta nailangitan a priesthood a dinakamatna. Kas inkarina iti gayyemna, saan nga adayo isuna kadayo, ket iti sabali a bangir ti belo, makipagtrabaho pay laeng kadayo, ken addaan iti dakdakkal a bileg, a mangitultuloy a mangpadur-as iti daytoy a pagarian. Addaan iti rag-o ken panagyaman,

Jehovah.”And above all, praise to Jehovah, who communed with that man! In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

itag-ayko ti timekko a “mangidaydayaw iti tao a kinasao ni Jehova.”Ken kangrunaanna, maiday-dayaw ni Jehova, a nakisao iti dayta a tao! Iti nagan ni Jesucristo, amen.