

The Man Who Communed with Jehovah

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O Le Tagata na Fetaiai ma Ieova

Saunia e Elder Kyle S. McKay
O Le Fitugafulu

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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.

Sa “faamanuiaina Iosefa Samita e tatala le toe tisipenisione,” ma ua faamanuiaina i tatou ona sa ia faia.

O lo’u faamoemoega i le asō ma aso uma, o le molimau atu lea ia Iesu Keriso, o Ia o le Alo o le Atua, o le Foafoa ma le Faaola o le lalolagi, o lo tatou Laveai ma le Togiola. Ona “o mataupu faavae autu o lo tatou talitonuga o molimau a Aposetolo ma Perofeta, e faatatau ia Iesu Keriso,” o le a ou faasoa atu ai i le asō lo’u malamalama ma le molimau i le Faaola e pei ona faamalosia ma faalolotoina e ala i le olaga ma aoaoga o se apose-tolo ma se perofeta iloga.

O Le Amataga o le Poto

I le taeao o se aso matagofie maninoa i le tau-totogo o le 1820, sa ulu atu ai Iosefa Samita e 14 tausaga le matua i se pupu laau e lata ane i le fale o lona aiga e tatalo ai e uiga i ana agasala ma fesili atu po o le fea lotu e auai. O lana tatalo ma le loto faamaoni, na faia ma le faatuatua lē maluelue, na maua ai le gauai a ‘au mamana i le atulaulau, e aofia ai ma le Tamā ma le Alo. Ma le tiapolo. Na tofui ai se naunau ogaoga a i latou taitoatasi nei i lena tatalo ma i lena taulealea.

O le mea ua tatou faaigoaina nei o le Ulua i Faaaliga mamalu na faailogaina ai le amataga o le toefuataiga o mea uma i lenei toe tisipenisione. Ae mo Iosefa, o le aafiaga sa patino foi ma o se tapenaga. Na pau le mea sa ia manao i ai o le faamagaloga ma le taitaiga. Sa tuu atu e le Alii ia te ia mea uma ia e lua. O le faatonuga ia “aua nei auai i se tasi o [ekalesia]” sa tuusa’o. O upu “Ua faamagaloina au agasala uma mai ia te oe” o se faaolataga.

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 disposition." It is neither His mission nor His nature to condemn. He came to save.

O upumoni matagofie uma atonu na tatou aoaoina mai lena Ulua'i Faaaliga, atonu o le mea autu na alu ma Iosefa o le, "Na ou iloaia ai e moni le molimau a Iakopo—o se ua leai se poto e mafai ona ole atu i le Atua, ma maua mai ai."

E pei ona matau e se tasi sikola: "O le feau sili ona taua o le Ulua'i Faaaliga i le aso, o le iloa o le natura o le Atua o le foai atu ia i latou e leai se poto. ... O le Atua na faaaliga Ia lava ia Iosefa Samita i le vao paia, o se Atua e tali mai i tupulaga i taimi o faigata."

O le aafiaga o Iosefa i le vao na avatu ai ia te ia le talitonuga e ole atu mo le faamagaloga ma letaitaigamo aso uma o totoe o lona ola. O lona aafiaga foi na tuuina mai ai ia tea'ule talitonuga ma utinoia e ole atu mo se faamagaloga ma le taitaiga mo aso uma o totoe o lo'u ola.

Salamo E Le Aunoa

I le aso 21 o Setema, 1823, sa tatalo ai ma le lotonaunau Iosefa mo se faamagaloga, ma le ma utinoia ona o lona aafiaga i le pupu laau i le tolu tausaga ua mavae, o le a toe tali mai foi le lagi. Ma sa tali mai. Sa auina mai e le Alii se agelu, o Moronae e aoao Iosefa ma faailoa atu ia te ia se uiga i se talafaamaumau anamua o le a ia faaliluuina mulimuli ane e ala i le meaalofo ma le mana o le Atua—o le Tusi a Mamona.

Toetoe atoa le 13 tausaga ina ua mavae lena, sa tootutuli ai Iosefa ma Oliva Kaotui i le tatalo paia, toafimalie i le Malumalu faatoa faapaia o Katelani. Tatou te le iloa pe o a mea na la tatalo ai, ae o a la'ua tatalo e peiseai na aofia ai se olega mo se faamagaloga, aua, ina ua la tutulai i luga, sa faaali atu le Faaola ma tautino atu, "Faauta ua faamagaloina a oulua agasala ia te oulua; ua mama oulua i o'u luma."

I masina ma tausaga i le mavae ai o lenei aafiaga, o le a toe agasala ai foi Iosefa ma Oliva. Ma toe agasala foi. Peitai i lena taimi, molena lava taimi, i le tali atu i la la'ua aioiga ma i le tapenaga mo le toefuataiga mamalu mai o ki o le perisitua ia o le a tupu, na faia ai e Iesu i la'ua ia mamā.

O le soifuaga o le salamo e le aunoa o Iosefa, na ou maua ai le talitonuga ma utinoia e "faalat-alata atu ma le faamalosi i le nofoalii o le alofa tunoa, ina ia alofaina ai [a'u]" Sa ou aoaoina ai o Iesu Keriso e moni lava e "alofa mutimutivale ma faamagalo i agasala." E le o Lana misiona lea po o Sona natura le faamalaia. Na afio mai o Ia e laveai.

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 them and 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 [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

Fesili i le Alii

O se vaega o le “toefuatai mai o mea uma” na folafola mai, na aumaia ai e le Alii e ala mai ia Iosefa Samita le Tusi a Mamona ma isi faaaliga o loo i ai le atoaga o Lana talalelei. Na tuuina mai upumoni taua i le manino ma le atoatoa a o fesili e le aunoa Iosefa i le Alii mo le taitaiga. Mafaufau i tulaga nei:

O le Tamā ma le Alo e i ai tino “faitino e pei o le tagata.”

Sa tauaveina e Iesu Keriso i Ona lava luga e le gata ia tatou agasala ae faapea foi o tatou ma’i, tiga, ma vaivaiga.

Sa matuai ogaoga Lana Togiola na afua ai ona afutoto o Ia mai pu afu uma.

Ua faaolaina i tatou i Lona alofatunoa pe a “uma mea uma tatou te mafaia.”

E i ai tuutuuga o le alofamutimutivale o Keriso.

A o tatou o mai ia Keriso, e le gata o le a Ia faamagaloina a tatou agasala, ae o le a Ia suia foi lo tatou lava natura, “ua lē toe i ai so matou manao e fai mea leaga.”

E poloaiina e Keriso Lona nuu e le aunoa e fau ia malumalu, le e faaali mai ai o Ia lava ia i latouma faaeeina i latou i le mana mai luga.

Ou te molimau atu e moni nei mea uma ma e tatau ai. Ua na o se vaegamea ua faatusa i ai, o le atoaga na toefuatai mai e Iesu Keriso e ala mai ia Iosefa Samita e tali atu ai talosaga faifaiepea a Iosefa mo se taitaiga.

Taavale Atu o Lenei Malo

I le 1842, sa tusia ai e Iosefa ni mea ofoofogia o le a faataunuuina i lenei toe tisipenisione. Sa ia tautino mai e faapea i le aluga o o tatou taimi, “o le a soofaatasi ai le perisitua faalelagi ma le lalalagi, ina ia faataunuu ai na faamoemoega sili; ma a o tatou tutufaatasi i se faamoemoega masani e tasi, e faataavale i luma le malo o le Atua, o le Perisitua faalelagi e le o ni ‘au maimoa nofonofovale.”

I lana uo o Peniamina Johnson, na saunoa ai Iosefa, “Peniamina, [afai ou te oti] o le a [ou] le mamao ese mai ma oe, ma afai o le isi itu o le veli, o le a [ou] galue faatasi pea ma oe, ma faatasi ai ma se mana ua matuai faateleina, e faataavale i luma le malo.”

I le aso 27 o Iuni, 1844, sa tagatavaleina ai Iosefa Samita ma lona uso o Ailama. Sa tanumia le tino o Iosefa, ae o loo faaauau pea ona olaola

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

lana molimau i le lalolagi atoa faapea foi i lo’u agaga:

“Sa ou maua se faaaliga; sa ou iloina, ma sa ou mautinoa sa silafia e le Atua lena mea, ma e lē mafai ona ou faafitia.”

“Ou te le i tauina atu lava ia te outou ua atoatoa ona ou lelei; ae e leai lava se mea sese o i faaaliga na ou aoao atu.”

“O mataupu faavae autu o lo tatou talitonuga o molimau a Aposetolo ma Perofeta, e faatatau ia Iesu Keriso, e faapea na Ia maliu, ma tanumia, ma toetu mai i le aso tolu, ma afio ae i le lagi; ma o isi mea uma e faatatau i lo tatou talitonuga ua na o ni faaopoopoga i ai.”

O le mea na ta’ua e uiga ia Ioane le Papatiso, e mafai foi ona ta’ua e uiga ia Iosefa Samita.” Sa i ai se tagata na auina mai le Atua, o lona igoa o [Iosefa]. ... “E le o ia o lena malamalama, ae na auina mai e molimau atu e uiga i lena Malamalama,” “ina ia talitonu tagata uma e ala ia te ia.”

Ua ou talitonu. Ua ou talitonu ma ua ou mautinoa o Iesu o le Keriso, o le Alo o le Atua soifua. Ou te molimau atu o le Atua soifua o lo tatou Tama agaalofa. Ua ou iloa lenei mea ona o le siufofoga o le Alii na fetalaia mai ia te a’u, ma faapena foi leo o Ana auauna, o aposetolo ma perofeta, e aofia ai ma na amata ia Iosefa Samita.

Ou te molimau atu o Iosefa Samita sa avea o se perofeta ma o se perofeta lava a le Atua, o se molimau ma o se auauna a le Alii o Iesu Keriso. Sa “faamanuiaina o ia e tatala le toe tisipenisione,” ma ua faamanuiaina i tatou ona sa ia faia.

Na poloaiina Oliva ma i tatou uma e le Alii, “Ia e tu i autafa o la’u auauna o Iosefa, ma le faamaoni.” Ou te molimau atu o le Alii o loo tu i autafa i Lana auauna o Iosefa ma le Toefuataiga na auala mai ia te ia.

Ua avea nei Iosefa Samita o se vaega o lena perisitua faalelagi lea na ia saunoa i ai. E pei ona sa ia folafola atu i lana uo, e le o mamao o ia ma i tatou, ma i le isi itu o le veli, o loo tatou galulue foi faatasi ma ia, ma faatasi ai ma se mana ua matuai faateleina, e faataavale i luma lenei malo. Faatasi ai ma le olioli ma le faafetai, e si’i a’e ai lo’u leo i le faamanū i le tagata na fetalaia ma Ieova.” Ae silisili i lo mea uma, faamanū atu ia Ieova o lē na talanoa ma lena tagata! I le suafa o Iesu Keriso, amene.