

The Latter-Day Saint Doctrine of Baptism for the Dead<sup>1</sup>  
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"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."<sup>2</sup> These words from the third chapter of John in the New Testament express God's love for all mankind, which is manifest in His gift to the world of His Only Begotten Son in the flesh, Jesus Christ. In this same chapter of John, Christ responds to "a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews,"<sup>3</sup> explaining to him a step believers must follow to receive this everlasting life. Christ said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."<sup>4</sup>

Nicodemus responded as though he missed the meaning of the Savior's words. "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "[C]an he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"<sup>5</sup> Jesus was more explicit the second time. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit," the Savior declared, "he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."<sup>6</sup> A third time, Christ proclaimed, "Ye must be born again."<sup>7</sup> These verses make clear that God loves the world and wishes to save all who will believe, but with a condition: those who believe must be baptized.

Now consider that billions have been born to this earth who have lived and died here without an opportunity to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, let alone be baptized. Would this loving God who "sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" deny salvation to these individuals when they had no chance to be baptized? I testify that the answer to this question is no. Our loving Heavenly Father will not deny salvation to anyone who would accept it by keeping His commandments, including the commandment to be born again of the water and of the spirit. This is my testimony and the testimony of Latter-day Saints around the world who are beneficiaries of the word of God revealed through living prophets in these last days.

In the few moments we have together, I would like to review how the doctrine of baptism for the dead was revealed to a modern prophet, Joseph Smith, during his lifetime in the first half of the nineteenth century. In doing so, I will attempt to trace the thought processes of Joseph Smith as he received revelation regarding this work, line upon line and precept upon precept,<sup>8</sup> insofar as these thought processes find place in the documentary record.

Joseph Smith came from a Bible-reading Christian family and probably understood the need for baptism into the true church. But he didn't know which church was the right one. In the spring of 1820, after an impression he received while reading the scriptures, he went into the woods near his home to pray for guidance. "My object in going to inquire of the Lord," he said, "was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know

which to join." In response to his prayer, God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph and replied to his question. "I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong. . . . He again forbade me to join with any of them: and many other things did say unto me, which I cannot write at this time."<sup>9</sup> Note the last statement, "and many other things did he say unto me, which I cannot write at this time." Did these things include a preview of the work of redeeming the dead? We don't know. We do know, however, that the subject was broached during Joseph's second known vision, this one the visit of an angel called Moroni during the night of 21-22 September 1823.

Joseph recalled that Moroni quoted Bible verses to him, among them a hallmark scripture related to the redemption of the dead. Joseph described the event as follows: "He first quoted part of the third chapter of Malachi, and he quoted also the fourth or last chapter of the same prophecy, though with a little variation from the way it reads in our Bibles. Instead of quoting the first verse as it reads in our books, he quoted it thus:

"For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall burn as stubble: for they that come shall burn them, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

"And again," Joseph continued, "he quoted the fifth verse thus:

"Behold I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

"He also quoted the next verse differently," Joseph added:

"And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers; if it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming."

Let's stop and think about these passages for a moment. The verse from Malachi 3 told that the proud and wicked would be left without root or branch. What better way to say they would be left without connection to their ancestors or to their descendants? Malachi 4, on the other hand, promises (by means of a priesthood to be revealed by the hand of the prophet Elijah) to "plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers."<sup>10</sup>

Yet these were not the only passages Moroni quoted to Joseph. He also quoted Isaiah 11, "saying that it was about to be fulfilled."<sup>11</sup> The eleventh chapter of Isaiah is a prophecy, the first five verses of which refer to the Savior. (One reason we know they refer to Christ is that Joseph Smith, in instructions that now make up D&C 113, told us so.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, the description is given in genealogical terms. Verse one reads, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots."<sup>13</sup> Note once again we have root and branch language. As a result of Christ's work, Isaiah 11 goes on to tell us, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb,"<sup>14</sup> "They shall not

hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain,"<sup>15</sup> and "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."<sup>16</sup> Clearly these verses refer to the last days.

Then we come to verse 10, which also uses genealogical terminology. It reads, "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."<sup>17</sup> Section 113 of the Doctrine and Covenants tells us that "the root of Jesse spoken of in the 10th verse of the 11th chapter" is "a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days."<sup>18</sup>

Note the root language once again.

In light of this interpretation by Joseph Smith, the final six verses of Isaiah 11 quoted to Joseph by Moroni prove especially interesting since they refer to the gathering of the Lord's people in the latter days. For example, verse 12 reads, "And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."<sup>19</sup>

Joseph Smith would later tell us that "It was the design of the councils of heaven before the world was, that the principles and laws of the priesthood should be predicated upon the gathering of the people in every age of the world. . . . All must be saved on the same principles. It is for the same purpose that God gathers together his people in the last days, to build unto the Lord a house to prepare them for the ordinances and endowments, washings and anointings, etc. One of the ordinances of the house of the Lord is baptism for the dead. God decreed before the foundation of the world that that ordinance should be administered in a font prepared for that purpose in the house of the Lord."<sup>20</sup>

In short, Isaiah's prophecy, quoted to Joseph Smith by an angelic messenger in 1823, foreshadowed that an ensign would be established and that a people would be gathered who would build temples wherein they would carry out the ordinances required to save the living and the dead.

The passages I have quoted from Malachi and Isaiah may not be the only ones relating to family history and temple work that the angel quoted to the prophet. Joseph tells us that Moroni quoted many passages of scripture to him and offered many explanations, only a few of which he specifically cited in his history.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless the passages we do know about tell us how significant this work is to the Lord. Referring to the passage from Malachi quoted to Joseph Smith, Church President Gordon B. Hinckley, while serving as a counselor in the First Presidency, said the following:

[I]t is tremendously significant to me that this declaration, this repetition of the wondrous words of Malachi concerning the work for the dead, was given to the boy Joseph four years before he was allowed to take the plates from the hill. It was given before he received either the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood, before he was baptized, and well

before the Church was organized. It says much concerning the priority of this work in the plan of the Lord.<sup>22</sup>

And to President Hinckley's testimony, I add my own. The work of redeeming the dead is an important part of the Lord's work of bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.<sup>23</sup>

Joseph's eldest living brother at the time Moroni appeared was named Alvin.<sup>24</sup> Alvin was a tremendous physical specimen whom an adult Joseph would later describe as "a very handsome man, surpassed by none but Adam and Seth, and of great strength."<sup>25</sup> Available evidence strongly suggests that the youthful Joseph loved and looked up to his brother Alvin, who set an example of diligence, faithfulness, and industry for his younger siblings.<sup>26</sup> Nearly nineteen years after Moroni's appearance, Joseph would record the following lines about Alvin in a record he kept to memorialize the righteous:

He was the oldest, and the noblest of my father[']s family. He was one of the noblest of the sons of men: Shall his name not be recorded in this book? Yes, Alvin; let it be had here, and be handed down upon these sacred pages, forever and ever. In him there was no guile. He lived without spot from the time he was a child. From the time of his birth, he never knew mirth. He was candid and sober and never would play; and minded his father, and mother, in toiling all day. He was one of the soberest of men . . .<sup>27</sup>

Following the third appearance of Moroni to Joseph during the night of 21-22 September 1823, a cock crew, signaling it was morning, and Joseph arose to begin his daily labors.<sup>28</sup> Being harvest time, Joseph, Alvin, and their father were, according to their mother's later account, "reaping together in the field." Mother Smith recounted:

[A]s they were reaping Joseph stopped quite suddenly, and seemed to be in a very deep study. Alvin, observing it, hurried him, saying, "We must not slacken our hands or we will not be able to complete our task." Upon this Joseph went to work again, and after labouring a short time, he stopped just as he had done before. This being quite unusual and strange, it attracted the attention of his father, upon which he discovered that Joseph was very pale. My husband, supposing that he was sick, told him to go to the house, and have his mother doctor him.<sup>29</sup>

We know from Joseph's own account, of course, that as he headed back to the house, the angel appeared to him a fourth time and commanded him to tell his father what had happened to him.<sup>30</sup>

According to Joseph's mother, after the angel left, "Joseph returned to the field, where he had left my husband and Alvin; but when he got there, his father had just gone to the house, as he was somewhat unwell. Joseph then desired Alvin to go straightway and see his father, and inform him that he had something of great importance to communicate to him, and that he wanted him to come out into the field where they were at work. Alvin did as he was requested, and when my husband got there, Joseph related to him all that had passed between him and the angel the previous night and that morning."<sup>31</sup>

Regarding his conversation with his father about the angel's visit, Joseph recorded, "He replied to me that it was of God, and told me to go and do as commanded by the messenger. I left the field, and went to the place where the messenger had told me the plates were deposited."<sup>32</sup> Then, according to Mother Smith,

The ensuing evening, when the family were all together, Joseph made known to them all that he had communicated to his father in the field, and also of his finding the Record, as well as what passed between him and the angel while he was at the place where the plates were deposited.

Sitting up late that evening, in order to converse upon these things, together with over-exertion of mind, had much fatigued Joseph; and when Alvin observed it, he said, "Now, brother, let us go to bed, and rise early in the morning, in order to finish our day's work at an hour before sunset, then, if mother will get our suppers early, we will have a fine long evening, and we will all sit down for the purpose of listening to you while you tell us the great things which God has revealed to you."

Accordingly, by sunset the next day we were all seated, and Joseph commenced telling us the great and glorious things which God had manifested to him . . . .

. . . we received them joyfully, never mentioning them except among ourselves, agreeable to the instructions which we had received from him.

From this time forth, Joseph continued to receive instructions from the Lord, and we continued to get the children together every evening, for the purpose of listening while he gave us a relation of the same.<sup>33</sup>

Just three weeks after Moroni's first visits, tragedy disrupted the joy felt by Joseph and his family. Mother Smith recalled:

On the fifteenth of Nov. . . . about 10 o'clock in the morning, Alvin was taken very sick with the bilious colic. He came to the house in much distress, and requested his father to go immediately for a physician. He accordingly went, and got one by the name of Greenwood, who, on arriving, immediately administered to the patient a heavy dose of calomel. I will here notice, that this Dr. Greenwood was not the physician commonly employed by the family; he was brought in consequence of the family physician's absence. And on this account, as I suppose, Alvin at first refused to take the medicine, but by much persuasion he was prevailed on to do so.

This dose of calomel lodged in his stomach, and all the medicine which was freely administered by four very skilful physicians could not remove it.

On the third day of his sickness, Dr. M'Intyre, whose services were usually employed by the family, as he was considered very skillful, was brought, and with him four other eminent physicians. But it was all in vain, their exertions proved unavailing, just as Alvin

said would be the case—he told them the calomel was still lodged in the same place, after some exertion had been made to carry it off, and that it must take his life.<sup>34</sup>

Knowing he would die, Alvin called each of his siblings to his side and gave them some parting counsel. To Joseph, he said, "I am now going to die, the distress which I suffer, and the feelings that I have, tell me my time is very short. I want you to be a good boy, and do everything that lies in your power to obtain the [Book of Mormon] Record. Be faithful in receiving instruction, and in keeping every commandment that is given you. Your brother Alvin must leave you; but remember the example which he has set for you . . ."<sup>35</sup>

Last of all, Alvin asked his mother to bring to him his two-year-old sister Lucy, who in her childish speech used to call him "Amby." At the time of Alvin's request, little Lucy was asleep. Mother Smith recalled of Alvin:

He was always very fond of her, and was in the habit of taking her up and caressing her, which naturally formed a very strong attachment on her part for him. I went to her, and said: "Lucy, Alvin wants to see you." At this, she started from her sleep, and screamed out, "Amby, Amby["]; (she could not yet talk plain, being very young). We took her to him, and when she got within reach of him, she sprang from my arms and caught him round the neck, and cried out, "Oh! my Amby," and kissed him again and again.

"Lucy," said he, "you must be the best girl in the world, and take care of mother; you can't have your Amby any more. Amby is going away; he must leave little Lucy."

Alvin then kissed his little sister goodbye and asked the family to take her away as the little girl tried to hold on to him.<sup>36</sup> Moments later on that 19 November 1823, Alvin passed away.<sup>37</sup>

Despite his having died, baby Lucy struggled to get back to her brother. Mother Smith recounted:

The child still cried to go back to Alvin. One present observed to the child, "Alvin is gone; an angel has taken his spirit to heaven." Hearing this, the child renewed her cries, and, as I bent over his corpse with her in my arms, she again threw her arms around him, and kissed him repeatedly. And until the body was taken from the house she continued to cry, and to manifest such mingled feelings of both terror and affection at the scene before her, as are seldom witnessed.<sup>38</sup>

After years of reflection, Mother Smith described Alvin as "a youth of singular goodness of disposition--kind and amiable, so that lamentation and mourning filled the whole neighborhood in which he resided." She also reported that "[a] vast concourse of people attend his obsequies, who seemed very anxious to show their sympathy for us in our bereavement."<sup>39</sup>

And bereaved the family was. In his history, Joseph would describe Alvin's death as a "great affliction" for the family,<sup>40</sup> and in a funeral speech nearly two decades after the event, Joseph reminisced on the death of Alvin and another brother and said, "It has been hard for me to live on earth & see those young men upon whom we have leaned upon as a support & comfort taken from us in the midst of their youth[;] yes it has been hard to be reconciled to these things[.] I have some times felt that I should have felt more reconciled to have been called [away] myself if it could have been the will of God."<sup>41</sup> Even later, Joseph would record, "I remember well the pangs of sorrow that swelled my youthful bosom and almost burst my tender heart, when he died."<sup>42</sup>

Joseph's parents also left recorded impressions of Alvin's death. Joseph Smith Sr. mourned that Alvin was "taken from us in the vigor of life, in the bloom of youth."<sup>43</sup> But it was Joseph's mother who left the most poignant account of the family's grief. Referring to the Book of Mormon record that Moroni had shown to Joseph just a few weeks before Alvin's death, her history explained:

Alvin manifested, if such could be the case, greater zeal and anxiety in regard to the Record that had been shown to Joseph, than any of the rest of the family; in consequence of which we could not bear to hear anything said upon the subject. Whenever Joseph spoke of the Record, it would immediately bring Alvin to our minds, with all his zeal, and with all his kindness; and, when we looked to his place, and realized that he was gone from it, to return no more in this life, we all with one accord wept over our irretrievable loss, and we could "not be comforted, because he was not."<sup>44</sup>

Adding to the family's grief was a statement made by a minister at Alvin's funeral. William Smith, younger brother of Alvin and Joseph, recalled that the reverend "intimated very strongly that he [Alvin] had gone to hell, for Alvin was not a church member, but he was a good boy." William also recalled that the statement particularly bothered their father, Joseph Smith Sr.<sup>45</sup>

That this minister made such an insensitive statement at Alvin's funeral may at least in part have been due to Joseph's earlier recitation of what he had been told in his First Vision: that none of the existing churches was true and that he should not join any of them. "I soon found, however," Joseph would recount, "that my telling the story had excited a great deal of prejudice against me among professors of religion, and was the cause of great persecution, which continued to increase; and though I was an obscure boy . . . and my circumstances in life such as to make a boy of no consequence in the world, yet men of high standing would take notice sufficient to excite the public mind against me, and create a bitter persecution; and this was common among all the sects--all united to persecute me."<sup>46</sup>

Later on in his history, Joseph recounted that "rumor with her thousand tongues was all the time employed in circulating falsehoods about my father's family, and about myself. If I were to relate a thousandth part of them, it would fill up volumes."<sup>47</sup> Although Joseph did not take the time to recount these rumors, we know from other sources about one in particular that deepened even further the family's grief over Alvin's death.

The sickening rumor was that the body of Alvin had been exhumed and dissected. If true, the rumor was revolting. If false, what malice prompted its spread? The rumor so wounded the family's sensibilities that Father Smith was finally forced to take severe measures to quell it. Less than one year after Alvin's death, he published the following notice for six successive weeks in a local newspaper:

Whereas reports have been industriously put in circulation, that my son Alvin had been removed from the place of his interment and dissected, which reports, every person possessed of human sensibility must know, are peculiarly calculated to harrow up the mind of a parent and deeply wound the feelings of relations--therefore, for the purpose of ascertaining the truth of such reports, I, with some of my neighbors, this morning repaired to the grave, and removing the earth, found the body which had not been disturbed.

This method is taken for the purpose of satisfying the minds of those who may have heard the report, and of informing those who have put it in circulation, that it is earnestly requested they would desist therefrom; and that it is believed by some, that they have been stimulated more by desire to injure the reputation of certain persons than a philanthropy for the peace and welfare of myself and friends.<sup>48</sup>

Though Father Smith's actions may have put to rest rumors of Alvin's dissection, they would not have changed other statements about the Smiths--like the minister's assertion that Alvin had gone to hell for not joining a church. So what was Joseph Smith Jr. thinking all this time? With the Aaronic priesthood and its authority to baptize not yet having been restored, Joseph may have wondered what would become of his beloved older brother, a man family members would remember as extraordinarily wholesome and righteous.

Some three years after Alvin's death, when Joseph had fallen in love with Emma Hale of Harmony, Pennsylvania, he was still mourning his older brother's death. One day, Joseph Smith Sr. was planning a trip to Harmony. Lucy Mack Smith recalled that their son Joseph Jr. "called my husband and myself aside, and said, 'I have been very lonely ever since Alvin died, and I have concluded to get married; and if you have no objections to my uniting myself in marriage with Miss Emma Hale, she would be my choice in preference to any other woman I have ever seen.' We were pleased with his choice, and not only consented to his marrying her, but requested him to bring her home with him, and live with us. Accordingly, he set out with his father for Pennsylvania."<sup>49</sup> Joseph and Emma were married on 18 January 1827.<sup>50</sup>

In September of that year, Joseph at last received the Book of Mormon plates from the heavenly messenger, and persecution eventually forced Emma and him to leave the Palmyra-Manchester area and return to Emma's parents in Harmony. They were assisted financially in their travels by Martin Harris, who eventually joined them there to serve as scribe for the first 116 pages that Joseph would dictate from the plates. Martin, of course, eventually took the 116 pages back to New York to show them to acquaintances, and in the process he disobeyed the will of the Lord and lost the priceless pages. Shortly after

Martin left for New York with the manuscript, Emma went into a difficult labor, finally giving birth to hers and Joseph's first child, a boy who expired the day he was born.<sup>51</sup>

Surely the death of this child must have caused the Prophet to reflect on the destiny of those who have passed beyond the veil. At this time, Joseph's thoughts also returned to his deceased older brother. From the available evidence, it appears that Joseph and Emma, who buried their precious firstborn just yards away from their home in Harmony, named the child for Joseph's brother Alvin.<sup>52</sup>

Because Martin Harris lost the 116 pages containing the Book of Lehi, he also lost the privilege of serving as scribe for the Book of Mormon. Joseph prayed for another scribe, and on 5 April 1829, Oliver Cowdery arrived at Joseph and Emma's home in Harmony. Two days later, he began to write for Joseph as the Prophet dictated the Book of Mormon translation.<sup>53</sup> The translation of the Book of Mormon was a rich educational experience for the young prophet as he absorbed important principles pertaining to the salvation of humanity.

As Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon, he came to know that baptism is most certainly required for eternal life. Many Book of Mormon passages make this point. Consider, for example, 3 Nephi 11:33-34, in which the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ says, "And whoso believeth in me, and is baptized, the same shall be saved; and they are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God. And whoso believeth not in me, and is not baptized, shall be damned." Or what about 3 Nephi 23:5: "And whosoever will hearken unto my words and repenteth and is baptized, the same shall be saved."<sup>54</sup>

When Joseph and Oliver encountered passages--probably in 3 Nephi--regarding baptism, they went into the woods near Joseph's and Emma's home and there inquired of the Lord respecting baptism. In answer to their prayer, John the Baptist appeared to them and bestowed upon them the priesthood authority to baptize. With this authority, they baptized each other in the nearby Susquehanna River.<sup>55</sup> Their authority to baptize, however, extended only to the baptism of the living. What of those who had already passed away?

In the case of those who die as young children, like Joseph and Emma's firstborn, the Book of Mormon provided Joseph additional insight and comfort. Mosiah 3:16-18, for example, taught Joseph:

16 And even if it were possible that little children could sin they could not be saved; but I say unto you they are blessed; for behold, as in Adam, or by nature, they fall, even so the blood of Christ atoneth for their sins.

17 And moreover, I say unto you, that there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent.

18 For behold he judgeth, and his judgment is just; and the infant perisheth not that dieth in his infancy; but men drink damnation to their own souls except they humble themselves and become as little children, and believe that salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning book of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent.

And on the specific issue of whether infants should be baptized, the epistle of Mormon to Moroni that now makes up the eighth chapter of the book of Moroni answered resoundingly in the negative. Consider for example the following verses from that chapter in which Mormon instructs his son:

7 . . . I inquired of the Lord concerning the matter. And the word of the Lord came to me by the power of the Holy Ghost, saying:

8 Listen to the words of Christ, your Redeemer, your Lord and your God. Behold, I came into the world not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; the whole need no physician, but they that are sick; . . . little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them in me, that it hath no power over them. . . .

11 . . . little children need no repentance, neither baptism. . . .

These verses would have ended all doubt in Joseph's mind about the salvation of little children who die before the age of accountability, and later revelations would confirm this important principle. Thus, within roughly a year of the death of Joseph's and Emma's firstborn, they would have had the comforting assurance that their baby was alive in Christ and needed no baptism. But what about Joseph's brother Alvin. Did the Book of Mormon shed any light on his circumstances?

Interestingly this same eighth chapter of Moroni provided a glimpse of a doctrine Joseph would understand more fully many years later. In verse 22 are these important words: "all little children are alive in Christ, and also all they that are without the law. For the power of redemption cometh on all them that have no law; wherefore, he that is not condemned . . . cannot repent; and unto such baptism availeth nothing." This verse and the ones following explained that those who were without the law were not condemned, but they also confirmed the need for baptism on the part of those who had the law. Which was Alvin? He came from a God-fearing, Bible-reading family. Did he have the law or not? One thing was clear: He hadn't been baptized.

As best scholars can determine at this point, after the loss of the Book of Lehi, Joseph and Oliver began translating from the Book of Mosiah and went to the end of Moroni, the title page, the small plates, and the Words of Mormon, in that order.<sup>56</sup> If that is true, Joseph would have encountered 2 Nephi 9 probably after moving from Harmony, Pennsylvania, to Fayette, New York, to live with the Peter Whitmer family. In any case,

2 Nephi 9 is one of the richest doctrinal chapters in the entire Book of Mormon. Beginning with verse 23, we read:

23 And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God.

24 And if they will not repent and believe in his name, and be baptized in his name, and endure to the end, they must be damned; for the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has spoken it.

25 Wherefore, he has given a law; and where there is no law given there is no punishment; and where there is no punishment there is no condemnation; and where there is no condemnation the mercies of the Holy One of Israel have claim upon them, because of the atonement; for they are delivered by the power of him.

26 For the atonement satisfieth the demands of his justice upon all those who have not the law given to them, that they are delivered from that awful monster, death and hell, and the devil, and the lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment; and they are restored to that God who gave them breath, which is the Holy One of Israel.

27 But wo unto him that has the law given, yea, that has all the commandments of God, like unto us, and that transgresseth them, and that wasteth the days of his probation, for awful is his state!

These verses offer a bit more insight. All men must repent and be baptized; those who have not the law are not condemned; those who have "all the commandments of God . . . and transgresseth them," wasting the days of their probation, find themselves in an awful state. So what about Joseph's brother Alvin? He had some commandments, but did he have them all? He had not been baptized, but neither did he fritter away the days of his probation. Perhaps there was hope for Alvin here.

About the same time these verses were translated, Joseph received a revelation for himself, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer that now makes up Doctrine and Covenants section 18. It reiterated the requirements of repentance and baptism for "men, . . . women, and children who have arrived at the years of accountability."<sup>57</sup> The following year when the Church was organized, a copy of the Articles and Covenants of the Church was read, a document we now call section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants.<sup>58</sup> D&C 20:71 declares, "No one can be received into the church of Christ unless he has arrived unto the years of accountability before God, and is capable of repentance."

Some few days before a conference held 26 September 1830 in Fayette, New York, the Lord gave a revelation we now know as D&C 29. Among other things, this revelation reviews the fall of Satan and adds:

39 And it must needs be that the devil should tempt the children of men, or they could not be agents unto themselves; for if they never should have bitter they could not know the sweet-- . . .

46 But behold, I say unto you, that little children are redeemed from the foundation of the world through mine Only Begotten;

47 Wherefore, they cannot sin, for power is not given unto Satan to tempt little children, until they begin to become accountable before me;

The revelation also speaks of those who have insufficient knowledge or understanding. Verses 49 and 50 read:

49 And, again, I say unto you, that whoso having knowledge, have I not commanded to repent?

50 And he that hath no understanding, it remaineth in me to do according as it is written. And now I declare no more unto you at this time. Amen.

The final verse hints that more on the subject of those who died without knowledge would be forthcoming. And come it would.

Meanwhile, in early 1831, Joseph and Emma moved from New York to Kirtland, Ohio. Emma was pregnant with twins at the time. Not long after their arrival in Kirtland, Joseph continued work he had begun earlier on what we now call the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. During this period, Joseph translated Genesis 17,<sup>59</sup> and his new translation condemns "the washing of children,"<sup>60</sup> a phrase that apparently refers to infant baptism. Verse 11 of that chapter in the Joseph Smith Translation goes on to read, "And I will establish a covenant of circumcision with thee, and it shall be my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations; that thou mayest know for ever that children are not accountable before me until they are eight years old."

Just weeks after these verses were translated, Emma gave birth to the twins. The children, a girl and a boy, lived just three hours. By the end of 30 April 1831, Joseph and Emma had lost all three of their children. To assuage their grief, they adopted the Murdock twins, who had lost their mother in childbirth. They named the adopted twins Julia and Joseph.<sup>61</sup> Sometime around the birth of both these sets of twins, Joseph Smith was translating Matthew chapters 18 and 19. Under inspiration, he revised Matthew 18:10 and 11 to read :

10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.

11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost, and to call sinners to repentance; but these little ones have no need of repentance, and I will save them.

He also translated Matthew 19:13 as follows: "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray. And the disciples rebuked them, saying, There is no need, for Jesus hath said, Such shall be saved." What comfort there

must have been for Joseph and Emma to have this additional confirmation that their three children who had died were not lost to the Lord.

When the adopted twins were less than a year old, Joseph reached the fifth chapter of John in his Bible translating. Verses 28 and 29 of that chapter in the King James Version read, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Inspired by this passage, Joseph and his scribe, Sidney Rigdon, inquired of the Lord and received a revelation known at the time as "The Vision."<sup>62</sup> Today we call it section 76 of the Doctrine and Covenants. This stunning vision revealed that heaven included more than one kingdom.

It clarified that to become an heir of the celestial kingdom, a person must accept the testimony of Jesus, believe on his name, be buried in the waters of baptism, receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, keep the commandments, "overcome by faith," and be "sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true."<sup>63</sup>

The revelation also speaks of a terrestrial glory reserved for those "who died without law" and those "who are the spirits of men kept in prison, whom the Son visited, and preached the gospel unto them, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh."<sup>64</sup> The revelation is, I believe, deliberately ambiguous in its next verse, which reads, "Who received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh, but afterwards received it."<sup>65</sup> At first, it seems to imply that both those who died without the law and those who rejected it in the flesh and received it in the spirit will inherit the terrestrial kingdom, and this appears to be the way Joseph took it at first. But it is susceptible of a more liberal interpretation, to which Joseph would come some three years later when he received another revelation about which I will speak later. It also leaves unanswered the question of which kingdom children would receive who died before the age of accountability.

Not long after this vision, more tragedy struck the Smith family. In late March of 1832, a mob broke into the John Johnson home in Hiram, Ohio, where an exhausted Joseph and Emma were caring for their measles-stricken adoptive twins, still less than a year old. The mob carried Joseph from the house, choked him, stripped off all his clothing but his collar, scratched his body with fingernails, tried forcing a vial of caustic fluid down his throat (chipping his tooth), then tarred and feathered him, leaving him gasping for breath through tar-covered lips as he lay naked on the frozen ground. Trying to stand and then collapsing, he finally gathered strength enough to stagger back to the house, where friends spent the evening scraping the sticky tar and feathers, along with hair and skin that came off with it, from his beaten body.<sup>66</sup> Yet this was only the beginning of the tragedy. Five days later, baby Joseph Murdock Smith, who was exposed to the elements during the mobbing, died, the fourth of the Smith children to do so.<sup>67</sup>

Several weeks later, when Hyrum and Jerusha Barden Smith lost their daughter Mary, not quite three years old, Joseph, who was in Indiana, wrote Emma and observed, "I was

grieved to hear that Hiram had [lost] his little Child I think we Can in Some degree Simpathise with him but we all must be reconciled to our lots and say the will be done."<sup>68</sup> Joseph may not have been fully aware of what would happen to the loved ones who had predeceased him, but he had the faith to say, "the will of the Lord be done."

As he patiently waited, Joseph struggled to keep his extended family worthy of whatever blessings the Lord had in store for the faithful. In a letter to his errant brother William in December 1835, Joseph wrote:

And now may God have mercy upon my fathers house; may God take away enmity, from between me, and them and may all blessings be restored, and the past errors be forgotten forever, may humble repentance bring us both to see O God, and under thy power and protection, and to a crown to enjoy the society of father, mother, Alvin, Hyrum, Sophronia, Samuel, Catharine, Carloss, Lucy, the Saints and all the sancitified in peace forever, is the prayer of Your brother<sup>69</sup>

Clearly the destiny of not only William, their parents, and living siblings, but also of the deceased brother Alvin, was high in the mind of Joseph at the time. Little did he realize that his long wonderings about the fate of Alvin would find a resolution in a little more than one month.

It came in the form of a vision on 21 January 1836 in the Kirtland Temple. As the headnote in the Doctrine and Covenants explains, "The occasion was the administration of the ordinances of the endowment as far as they had then been revealed." This marvelous revelation was added to our standard works a quarter century ago, first as part of the Pearl of Great Price, then as section 137 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Consider the history we have reviewed here today as I read this short section in its entirety:

1 The heavens were opened upon us, and I beheld the celestial kingdom of God, and the glory thereof, whether in the body or out I cannot tell.

2 I saw the transcendent beauty of the gate through which the heirs of that kingdom will enter, which was like unto circling flames of fire;

3 Also the blazing throne of God, whereon was seated the Father and the Son.

4 I saw the beautiful streets of that kingdom, which had the appearance of being paved with gold.

5 I saw Father Adam and Abraham; and my father and my mother; my brother Alvin, that has long since slept;

6 And marveled how it was that he had obtained an inheritance in that kingdom, seeing that he had departed this life before the Lord had set his hand to gather Israel the second time, and had not been baptized for the remission of sins.

7 Thus came the voice of the Lord unto me, saying: All who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God;

8 Also all that shall die henceforth without a knowledge of it, who would have received it with all their hearts, shall be heirs of that kingdom;

9 For I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts.

10 And I also beheld that all children who die before they arrive at the years of accountability are saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven.

After years of waiting, Joseph finally had answers to the question of what fate awaited his brother Alvin and the children he and Emma had lost. Alvin would inherit the celestial kingdom because had he lived to see the gospel restored, he would have accepted it fully. And the children would be saved not just in any kingdom of glory but in the celestial.

The vision that Joseph saw was of the future. His father, whom Joseph saw in the vision, was yet alive and in fact was in the temple with Joseph at the time he received this vision. His mother would live for many years after his own death.<sup>70</sup> Other events would have to transpire before Alvin would make it to the celestial kingdom. After all, the requirement of baptism for those who had reached the age of accountability had not been abrogated, and Alvin had not been baptized. How could he be? The answer would come later. In the meantime, other important events had to unfold.

One of these was the dedication of the Kirtland temple on 27 March 1836. In the dedicatory prayer for that temple, recorded as section 109 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Prophet prayed:

4 And now we ask thee, Holy Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of thy bosom, in whose name alone salvation can be administered to the children of men, we ask thee, O Lord, to accept of this house, the workmanship of the hands of us, thy servants, which thou didst command us to build.

5 For thou knowest that we have done this work through great tribulation; and out of our poverty we have given of our substance to build a house to thy name, that the Son of Man might have a place to manifest himself to his people.<sup>71</sup>

In fulfillment of this inspired dedicatory petition, the Lord did indeed manifest himself in the House of the Lord dedicated in Kirtland.

On 3 April 1836, a Sunday, Joseph helped pass the emblems of the Lord's flesh and blood to the congregation gathered in the Kirtland Temple. Afterward, he and Oliver Cowdery retired to the veiled pulpit and bowed in solemn, silent prayer.<sup>72</sup> As recounted in D&C 110, here is what happened:

1 The veil was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened.

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

3 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:

4 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.

Further instruction followed, after which the vision closed, and three others opened in succession. In the first of the three, "Moses appeared . . . and committed . . . the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north."<sup>73</sup> Next, "Elias appeared, and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham."<sup>74</sup> Finally, the account relates:

13 After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us; for Elijah the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said:

14 Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi--testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come--

15 To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse--

16 Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands; and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.

Twelve and a half years after Moroni first told Joseph that Malachi's prophecy was about to be fulfilled, Elijah the prophet did come and bestow the keys that would permit the tremendous task of doing ordinance work for the dead.

That the Prophet began privately teaching the doctrine of redemption of the dead seems apparent from such evidence as the ordination blessing that Zebedee Coltrin pronounced on the head of Wilford Woodruff on 3 January 1837. According to Brother Woodruff's journal, President Coltrin declared "that I should visit . . . and Preach to the Spirits in Prison & that I should bring all of my friends or relatives forth from the Terrestrial Kingdom (who had died) by the Power of the Gospel."<sup>75</sup> In the July 1838 Elders Journal, an early Latter-day Saint periodical, the question is asked, "If the Mormon doctrine is true what has become of all those who have died since the days of the apostles[?]" The published answer was, "All those who have not had an opportunity of hearing the gospel, and being administered to by an inspired man in the flesh, must have it hereafter, before

they can be finally judged."<sup>76</sup> These statements are glimpses of the unfolding revelation on this subject.

Yet as so often happens when temples are built, Satan raged and sought to prevent this redemptive work from going forward.<sup>77</sup> Before the work proceeded with much momentum, the saints had to endure the great apostasy of Kirtland, the expulsion from Missouri, and for the Prophet and his companions, the bitterness of Liberty Jail. Only when the saints became settled on the banks of the Mississippi River in Illinois did they receive a brief respite that would allow the work to go forward.

Finally on 15 August 1840, Joseph Smith preached the doctrine of baptism for the dead publicly for the first time in a sermon at the funeral of Seymour Brunson.<sup>78</sup> Four months later, he mentioned this sermon in a letter to the members of the Quorum of the Twelve who were serving missions overseas. He wrote:

I presume the doctrine of "Baptism for the dead" has ere this reached your ears, and may have raised some inquiries in your mind respecting the same. I cannot in this letter give you all the information you may desire on the subject, but aside from my knowledge independant of the Bible, I would say, that this was certainly practised by the antient Churches and St Paul endeavours to prove the doctrine of the ressurection from the same, and says "else what shall they do who are baptised for the dead["] &c &c. I first mentioned the doctrine in public while preaching the funeral sermon of Bro Brunson, and have since then given general instructions to the Church on the subject. The saints have the priviledge of being baptised for those of their relatives who are dead, who they feel to believe would have embraced the gospel if they had been priviledged with hearing it, and who have received the gospel in the spirit through the instrumentality of those who may have been commissioned to preach to them while in prison.<sup>79</sup>

Less than one month after first preaching this doctrine publicly, Joseph was called to the bed of his aged father, who was rapidly declining in health. Joseph's mother would later recall that during this bedside interview, Joseph "informed his father, that it was then the privilege of the saints to be baptized for the dead." She would also remember that her dying husband "was delighted to hear [this fact], and requested, that Joseph should be baptized for Alvin immediately; and, as he expected to live but a short time, desired that his children would stay with him as much as they could consistently."<sup>80</sup> Before long, the baptismal work for Alvin would be completed, meeting the scriptural requirement and finally making possible what Joseph had seen in vision in 1836--that Father Smith and his son Alvin would be together in the celestial kingdom.<sup>81</sup> The other ordinance work required for exaltation would await further revelation, the story of which we do not have time to recount here.

As he lay on his deathbed in September 1840, Father Smith called each of his children who were present to his bedside and gave them each a dying blessing. Within four short years, four of those children--Hyrum, Joseph, Samuel, and Don Carlos--would likewise pass beyond the veil. In the last moments of Father Smith's earthly life, the veil was very thin and his thoughts turned to his family. He comforted his wife, saying:

"Mother, do you not know, that you are one of the most singular women in the world?" "No," [she] replied, "I do not." "Well I do," he continued, "you have brought up my children for me by the fireside, and, when I was gone from home, you comforted them. You have brought up all my children, and could always comfort them when I could not. We have often wished that we might both die at the same time, but you must not desire to die when I do, for you must stay to comfort the children when I am gone. So do not mourn, but try to be comforted."<sup>82</sup>

With these and other words to his wife, Father Smith exhausted his strength. He "paused for some time . . . . After which he said, in a tone of surprise, 'I can see and hear, as well as ever I could.'" Then followed a "second pause, of considerable length" as the veil grew even thinner. At last he said, "I see Alvin."<sup>83</sup>

Within a few minutes, he passed to a happy reunion with his son and other deceased loved ones, there to await the arrival of the family members who would yet prove worthy of celestial glory.

And so we see in this story of the Prophet's family both how the doctrine of redemption for the dead began to unfold and how it applied to the redemption of the Prophet's own family. From that day until now, the glorious work of redeeming the dead has continued to go forward. What occurred with the family of Joseph Smith in doing the work for Alvin has since been repeated millions of times in temples that are rapidly spreading throughout the world, each of which is carrying forth the redemptive work of the Savior Jesus Christ. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."<sup>84</sup>

In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, amen.

#### Notes

1. Versions of this paper were previously delivered at the BYU Genealogy and Family History Conference, 5 August 1997, and at the Family History Department International Manager Seminar on 6 May 1999. Subsequently, I became aware of the works of two other scholars that coincide with portions of this paper. They are Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development* (Independence, Mo.: Department of Religious Education, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1969), 225-27; Alexander L. Baugh, "The Practice of Baptism for the Dead Outside of Temples," *Religious Studies Center Newsletter* 13, no. 1 (September 1998): 3-6.
2. John 3:16-17.
3. John 3:1.
4. John 3:3.
5. John 3:4.
6. John 3:5.
7. John 3:7.
8. Isaiah 28:10; 2 Nephi 28:30; D&C 42:61, 59:4, 98:12, 128:21.
9. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2d ed., 7 vols., ed. B.H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1948-53), 1:5-6.
10. *History of the Church*, 1:12.
11. *History of the Church*, 1:12.
12. D&C 113: 1-2.

13. Isaiah 11:1.
14. Isaiah 11:6.
15. Isaiah 11:9.
16. Isaiah 11:9.
17. Isaiah 11:10.
18. D&C 113:5-6.
19. Isaiah 11:12.
20. Address of 11 June 1843, in *History of the Church*, 5:423-24, noting that the version in this history was compiled "from the journals of Elders Willard Richards and Wilford Woodruff." For a transcription of these and other notes of the speech, see Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Orem: Grandin Book Co., 1991), 209-16.
21. *History of the Church*, 1:13.
22. "A Century of Family History Service," *Ensign* 25 (Mar. 1995): 61.
23. *Moses* 1:39.
24. *History of the Church*, 1:2.
25. *History of the Church*, 5:247.
26. See Mother Smith's descriptions of how Alvin put himself out to work to get money for the farm and how he worked to build a house for his parents. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and His Progenitors for Many Generations* (Liverpool: S.W. Richards, 1853), 70-71, 86-87.
27. Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, vol. 2 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 440-41; *History of the Church*, 5:126-27.
28. *History of the Church*, 1:14.
29. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 81-82.
30. *History of the Church*, 1:14-15.
31. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 82.
32. *History of the Church*, 1:15.
33. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 83-84.
34. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 87-88.
35. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 88.
36. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 88-89.
37. On the date, see Russell R. Rich, "Where Were the Moroni Visits?" *BYU Studies* 10 (spring 1970): 255-58.
38. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 89.
39. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 89.
40. *History of the Church*, 1:16.
41. Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 112; *History of the Church*, 4:587.
42. Jessee, *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2:440; *History of the Church*, 5:126.
43. Richard Lloyd Anderson, "Circumstantial Confirmation of the First Vision Through Reminiscences," *BYU Studies* 9 (spring 1969): 402.
44. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 89-90.
45. "Another Testimony. Statement of William Smith, Concerning Joseph, the Prophet," *Deseret Evening News*, 20 January 1894, p.11.
46. *History of the Church*, 1:7.
47. *History of the Church*, 1:19.
48. Rich, "Where Were the Moroni Visits?" 256.
49. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 93.
50. *History of the Church*, 1:17.
51. Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), 91.
52. See Buddy Youngreen, *BYU Studies* 14 (winter 1979): 202-3. Youngreen apparently relied on a family Bible entry later reproduced in the *Ensign* 11 (March 1981): 62.
53. *History of the Church*, 1:32-33.
54. See also, e.g., *Alma* 7:14,16 ("Now I say unto you that ye must repent, and be born again; for the Spirit saith if ye are not born again ye cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore come and be baptized unto repentance . . . And whosoever doeth this, and keepeth the commandments of

- God from thenceforth . . . shall have eternal life"); Alma 9:27 ("And behold, he [the Son of God] cometh to redeem those who will be baptized"); Mormon 9:23 ("And he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned"); Ether 4:18 ("he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"); Moroni 7:34 ("Repent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, and be baptized in my name, and have faith in me, that ye may be saved").
55. History of the Church, 1:39-40.
  56. John W. Welch and Tim Rathbone, "The Translation of the Book of Mormon: Preliminary Report on the Basic Historical Information," in Paper & Reprint WRR-86 (Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, [1997?]), 33-37.
  57. D&C 18:42.
  58. Robert J. Woodford, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants" (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1974), 291, 294-96; Lyndon W. Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 31, 125.
  59. Robert J. Matthews, "A Plainer Translation": Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible: A History and Commentary (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1985), 96.
  60. JST Genesis 17:6.
  61. Youngreen, "Joseph and Emma," 204-5.
  62. Woodford, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants," 926-35; Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 157, 311 n. 1.
  63. D&C 76:50-53.
  64. D&C 76:72-73.
  65. D&C 76:74.
  66. History of the Church, 1:261-64.
  67. History of the Church, 1:265.
  68. Joseph Smith Jr. to Emma Smith, 6 June 1832, in Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Personal Writing of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), 238.
  69. Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, vol.1 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 175.
  70. History of the Church, 2:379-80.
  71. D&C 109:4-5.
  72. Jessee, *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, 1:209-10.
  73. D&C 110:11.
  74. D&C 110:12.
  75. Wilford Woodruff, Journal, 3 January 1837, Church Archives, *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Salt Lake City, Utah.
  76. Elders' Journal 1 (July 1838): 43, question 16.
  77. See Remarks of Brigham Young, 3 March 1861, in *Journal of Discourses* 8 (1861): 355.
  78. Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith*, 49.
  79. Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), 486.
  80. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 265-66.
  81. According to Joseph's mother, Hyrum was with Joseph at the time Joseph made this statement. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 265. Nauvoo baptismal records show that Alvin was baptized at the instance of his brother Hyrum. Nauvoo Temple, Baptisms for the Dead 1840-45, Book A, pp. 145,149, Church Archives.
  82. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 269-70.
  83. Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches*, 270.
  84. John 3:17.