

2016 Smith Family Reunion Address

By: Daniel Adams

- I am supposed to tell you about our Family Association; what we've accomplished and where we are going. But in order to do that I need to explain why this is so important, because we are carrying on the legacy of our common ancestor, Joseph Smith Sr., who raised up such a great family and gave them a commission to support the Prophet Joseph.
- I would like to tell you a little about Joseph Sr. and why he was so important.
 - Joseph Sr. stood 6'2" and was a powerful, strapping, handsome young man, and stood a full head taller than most men. He was athletic and a great wrestler. Joseph Jr. said there was only one man his father ever met that he couldn't throw.
Joseph Smith Sr. was prophesied of in the BofM, 2 Ne. 3.
 - Joseph Smith described his father as "straight, and remarkably well proportioned."
 - He loved a good story and would laugh until tears ran down his cheeks. (Heber C. Kimball)
 - He was circumspect and dignified in his manners. (Eliza R. Snow)
 - He never did a mean or ungenerous act in his life. (Joseph Smith)
 - He consecrated his family to the Lord (in meeting, Orange, Ohio, 25 October 1831)
 - He was baptized on the day the church was organized.
 - "An affectionate companion and tender father as ever blessed the confidence of a family (Lucy Mack Smith)
- Before Joseph Sr. was a teenager, he was as tall as most men, and so he fought in the Revolutionary War. He said there were times when he watched all around him fall dead and he was the only one left standing. Surely Providence was watching over him at an early age.
- In the late 1700's, in his early 20's, Joseph's father Samuel bought some land in New Hampshire, and Joseph and his brother Jesse went up from Massachusetts to clear it. (Powerful man to fell and clear giant oak & maple trees)
- This is where Joseph and Lucy first met, in Tunbridge, and I'm sure she was smitten. I've visited the Tunbridge General Store, and City Hall where the records show Joseph and Lucy's marriage in 1797, and Alvin's birth a few years later and then Hyrum and Sophronia.
- When Lucy was young, she had a powerful spiritual experience where she covenanted to follow the lord and find that religion which served Him best.
- She wanted Joseph to 'get religion,' to go to church, but his brother Jesse fought against it so vigorously that for a while they couldn't talk about religion.
- This bothered Lucy so much that she became depressed, and she resorted to go to a grove of trees to pour her heart out to the Lord.
- That night she had a remarkable dream, of two giant oak trees, one Joseph and the other Jesse. The one oak, Joseph had a golden band and bent to the gentle breeze. She knew this meant her husband would listen to the promptings of the Spirit and make a covenant with God. This comforted her and she never worried about it again.
- While living through trials in Tunbridge, Royalton, Randolph, Sharon, West Lebanon, and eventually Palmyra, Joseph Sr. had a series of 7 remarkable dreams or visions, in which he was led by a guide through a dark wilderness to a tree of life or where he was being prepared to receive an important treasure.

- I wonder if it wasn't because of these experiences that when his father Samuel's family all moved to Potsdam NY, that Joseph was led by a different spirit to Palmyra, NY.
- I can't help but think that later, when his son, Joseph Jr., heard all the confusion and tumult of opinion, he did what his mother did, go into a nearby grove and pour his heart out to his Heavenly Father. Joseph didn't make that up, He did what his mother taught him, and because of her, he had confidence he would get an answer.
- And I think it was because of these visions that Joseph Sr. had, that in 1823, when Joseph Jr. described Moroni to Joseph Sr. he just wept—he knew it was true.
- And he wept again when Joseph got the plates.
- And I can't help but think that when Moroni quoted Joel 2: 6 (Your old men shall dream dreams and young men shall have visions), that Joseph couldn't help but see how his father had fulfilled that part of the prophecy!
- Moroni told Joseph his name would be had for good and evil throughout the world, and this has certainly come true, and thus we know that Joseph told the truth.
- Joseph saw God the Father and Jesus Christ, and thus began the great restoration foretold by ancient prophets, Isaiah, Christ, Peter, Paul, Nephi and Mormon.
- Joseph's entire family joined in supporting Joseph. They gave their all and were forced by mobs to move 17 times.
- They never abandoned Joseph, even in Carthage, Joseph, Hyrum, and Samuel paid the ultimate price for that testimony. How can we doubt that was true when all of our ancestors never did?
- **And that is what holds us together. We descend from everyone of the Smiths who gave their life in support of Joseph.**
- This is why we too have worked to proclaim Joseph's name for good!
- In 2013, we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the miraculous surgery by Dr. Nathan Smith who founded Dartmouth, that saved Joseph's leg and quite possibly his life.
- We held the Joseph's Miracle 5K Run, where 700 people participated –we had a record number of descendants at that reunion, and because of that, we were able to give a substantial endowment, a gift of thanks to Dartmouth Medical School in Joseph Smith's name.
- Dartmouth celebrated this event with us, with a luncheon, visit to Sharon VT, and had their medical students attend a symposium that evening.
- In all, millions of people read, saw or heard about the miracle run and gift to Dartmouth Medical School.
- Surely, we are working to make Joseph's, and the Smith name known for good!
- This is also why we are producing video and podcasts about our amazing Joseph Smith Sr. family—so our children and friends can know more about our ancestors and have a desire to honor their faith and covenants:
 - The Grandfather's Influence
 - The Connecticut Valley Covenant
 - Mt. Tabor and the Restoration
 - Emma's Request

- We also make these podcasts because we want you to learn about and come visit them. There is a spirit about these places. You can feel it. Take your children to the spot.
- When we are on the spot our spirits are stirred by what happened there, the sacrifice, the love, the provisions laid out for the future of our posterity.
- These sites link us together, we sense a destiny or a tie that binds us to our forebears and to each other, the bond of family is felt.
 - Watch and share the family podcasts with family, friends and neighbors.
 - Remind them that they can use them in Family Nights, etc.
- The Smith Family was involved in one the greatest works ever done on this earth. It required their lives and they sacrificed everything for it.
- There never was a fundraiser like what the Lord required of them, constantly asking our fathers and mothers to give their all.
- It is our obligation to sustain this work. It is a sacrifice, and it has to be, otherwise we wouldn't remember them or cherish the work.
- This is why we do fundraising and ask for family dues, because we can't do this without your help! And we constantly need your help!
- Newsletter
- **Bob Smith iDigNauvoo**
- He is providing experience that cannot be forgotten, the children put their hands in the dirt the restoration sprang from, they extract the shards, they begin the process of building the monument to the future where their children will come. It brings out minds to what the future will be.
- We will continue to take this message out as we work together as a family,
- The glimpse we bring to our children of what has happened is vital,
- The glimpse we bring to the world breaks down prejudice and misunderstanding, implements values, and unites others with us as they become part of the story.
- Julie has written marvelous things on the cemetery, the touching and vital history of it and how it joins us together. Her words and other words need to come forth defining this family and this work. It is the most exhilarating story there is.
- Encourage anyone who has a desire to help with this work to contact one of the committee members
- Let people know they are loved and valued in this work and whatever they do is something useful as it moves a beautiful and faithful work forward. They have a place in it. The smallest token is appreciated (you also have to watch out for nuts who want to take advantage of the family for their ends and there are those--The point is to sacrifice selflessly for a good work and not to enhance your own objective.)