

APPEAL OF
Frederick M. Smith
One of the Presidency of the "Reorganized Church"
TO
Pres. Joseph F. Smith
For the Unlimited Use of
the Meeting Houses of
the Latter-day Saints
AND
HIS REPLY



President Israel A. Smith

The following letters are historical in character, and it is thought proper to preserve them in printed form. The facts and principles therein set forth will be interesting and helpful to the presiding authorities of The Church, in determining similar questions that may arise from time to time.

Frederick M. Smith's Letter.

The following somewhat arrogant communication was received by President Joseph F. Smith, August 22, 1905.

123 C Street, Salt Lake City, Utah,
August 21, 1905.

*Pres. Joseph F. Smith,
Salt Lake City, Utah.*

DEAR SIR AND KINSMAN—Feeling that I have a message to deliver to the people over whom you preside, a message the deliverance of which is made a duty upon me because I am of the seed of the man through the instrumentality of whom God saw fit to establish His church in these latter days, and feeling that you can not but be interested in what might come through the seed of that man, and feeling, too, that you can be of service to me in preparing to some extent the way for me to deliver this message to the “Mormon” people, I address you with a request that you shall signify to me your willingness that the various houses of worship

controlled by your people throughout this section of country shall be opened to me for the purpose of speaking to the people. If you are so willing, I shall be pleased to have a letter from you, stating so, that those having charge of such houses may thus know that you are willing the houses should be opened to me.

It is my purpose to make as thorough a canvass of the state of Utah and other parts of the country in which your people are numerous, as circumstances will permit, for the purpose of delivering my message; and when I have done so, then my responsibility in this particular work shall have ceased and that of the people begins, so far as my call is concerned. As you well know, I feel that you and your people have to an extent more or less great wandered away from the truth as established by Joseph Smith the prophet, and as one of the seed of that man there rests upon me the serious duty of calling to repentance those who have wandered thus. I have made the call through such channels as have been opened to me, and it is my determination to do all in my power to give all your people a chance to hear the call. I am most sincere and earnest, for I feel that dire consequences are sure to follow the refusal of your people to heed the call. No amount of ridicule hurled at me, no amount of derision, will forestall such consequences. They can be stayed only by heeding the call made by the promptings of the Spirit to repent of your ways and return to the truth as established by him whom you revere as your prophet. Even should I from any cause fail to fill the mission with which I am now commissioned, and should those who are placing themselves in opposition to me succeed in completely crushing me as an individual, the necessity for repentance on the part of the Mormon people still

remains, and others of the seed of Joseph will be sent of God to call you to repentance.

Do not make the mistake in believing that in coming among you I am impelled by motives springing from sources of jealousy or envy of the prosperity or prestige enjoyed by you and your people; for I care neither for your material prosperity nor your prestige. I come not of myself, but because duty and the Spirit demand. Had I considered my own choice, I should have remained among our own people, a people being richly blessed of God, and worked among them quietly along spiritual lines. As you know full well, and as you can not but know that I know full well, material prosperity or worldly success does not necessarily mean full acceptance with Deity, and no amount of commercial success will justify illegal succession or sanctify unrighteous courses. As an example, note how the Nephites were, by reason of their great prosperity, led so from the ways of God that He sent His prophet among them to warn them; and note further how, because they refused to heed the call to repentance they were scourged and suffered greatly, not because they were the people of God, but because they had wandered from the paths of righteousness. See Mosiah 11.

I warn you once more, beware how you reject the call coming through the seed of Joseph.

May I not have a letter from you indicating that you are at least not unwilling that your houses of worship shall be opened to me to speak to the people?

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed.)

Fredk. M. Smith.

President Smith's Reply.

President's Office, S. L. C., Utah,
August 24, 1905.

Mr. Frederick M. Smith,
City.

DEAR SIR AND KINSMAN—Your communication dated 21st inst. is before me; its contents have been carefully noted.

In answer thereto, I first call your attention to a fact of past and present history, viz.—the general willingness of our people to open their meeting houses to the representatives of different sects, who apply for such privilege in a spirit of sincerity and peace, and whose purpose it is to present their views in the same spirit.

We do not profess, however, such a degree of liberality as to offer our houses of worship to individuals or organizations whose avowed purpose is that of antagonism toward the Church, and to make hostile attacks upon its members. We have extended no general welcome to those whose profession it is continually to misrepresent, abuse, insult, and malign our people and the Church. Our pulpits and platforms have not been made for the use and convenience of such as come amongst us to defame and falsify.

Now, sir, you come to us with a declaration of hostility. You openly assume an attitude of avowed op-

position. And yet you ask that our people be called together in their several places of worship, there to submit to your attacks. But, you profess to be especially commissioned for this undertaking in that you bear a message of great import.

By what authority, real or assumed, do you thus appear? According to your letter you base your authority on the fact that you are “of the seed of the man through the instrumentality of whom God saw fit to establish His Church in these latter days.”

You claim to have a special message to the people of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and that it is your personal duty to deliver that message *because* you are of that seed. You seek to emphasize your own importance as the bearer of the message of which you speak, by these words: “I warn you once more, beware how you reject the call coming through the seed of Joseph.”

Let me assure you that the descendants of Joseph Smith, and those of Hyrum Smith, my father, stand before God as do all other men, assured of honor or dishonor, exaltation or degradation, according to their individual works.

You, sir, may well be proud of your lineage, but remember this, your worthy parentage can no more bring you authority in the Priesthood, than it can secure you exemption from the results of sin, or unearned exaltation at the bar of the Great Judge.

My interest in you as a descendant or “seed” of Joseph Smith the Prophet, ends absolutely when and where your interest in his divine mission, in its entirety, ends. In other words, my interest in you as a representative of the “seed” of Joseph Smith would begin where your faith and interest might begin in the whole divine

mission of Joseph Smith, and must of necessity cease absolutely when and where your interest ends. The Church will ever receive the "seed" of Joseph Smith when they come to it in the faith; but never while they continue to be their most vindictive, relentless and inveterate foes.

Your boast that you are of the "seed of Joseph" partakes largely of the spirit manifested by the Jews, who, in their unholy pride declared that they were of Abraham's seed, and as such felt it incumbent upon them to reject the message of John and also that of our Redeemer. Do you not remember, sir, the stinging rebuke that they received? that God could of the very stones "raise up children unto Abraham!" And when they answered "Abraham is our Father," Jesus said to them: "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one father even God. Jesus saith unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."

The seed of Christ, the Prophet Abinadi tells us, are "whosoever has heard the words of the prophets, yea, all the holy prophets who have prophesied concerning the coming of the Lord; I say unto you, that all those who have hearkened unto their words, and believed that the Lord would redeem his people, and have looked forward to that day for a remission of their

sins; I say unto you, that these are his seed, or they are the heirs of the kingdom of God.”

And again, “whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two Priesthoods . . . and the magnifying their calling . . . become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the Church and kingdom, and the elect of God,” so say I to you: God is not dependent upon the immediate sons and grandsons of Joseph Smith to do His bidding, and to consummate His purposes, but is able to raise up other seed to the Prophet, as set forth in the foregoing, who will indeed by Joseph’s seed in the Gospel, as are the Prophets and Saints who have been, are, and will be, true and faithful unto God, as the seed of Christ.

As to the message you say you have to deliver to the people of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I desire to call your attention to an historical fact: This Church has never been disorganized. The quorums of the Priesthood from the Deacons to the Apostles have had a continuous existence, from the time they were organized by the Prophet until the present. At the Prophet’s death the quorum of Apostles, designated in the revelation on Priesthood as equal in authority to the First Presidency, took charge of the Church until the spirit indicated to them to appoint three men holding the High Priesthood to preside. There were some disgruntled persons who withdrew from the Church, such men as James J. Strang, William Smith, Gladden Bishop and others, who had more or less of a following, but they were not able to hold their members together, and so these scattered. Others, when they saw persecution raging, were too cowardly to remain with the body of the Church. They left it in its darkest hour of suffering, and they also scattered in

different directions. Some years afterwards, out of such elements was formed the "New Organization," as it was first called, or the "Reorganized church," as it is now known. The keys of the Holy Priesthood which the Prophet held and which were bestowed by him upon the Twelve, have never been in the possession of the "Reorganization."

If God has a message for His Church He will not send it through such a source. Judging, sir, from the animus in your "open letter," and the tone of this private letter to me, I feel that I should greatly wrong our people, if I should open our houses of worship to you, and hence I must refuse to grant your request.

You hold up to ridicule the sacred principles taught by the Prophet, your honored grandfather. I refer to plural marriage and sealing for time and eternity. There are a number still living who testify that the Prophet taught the principle of plural marriage to them. Many acquainted with this fact have died, but hundreds in the different settlements throughout Zion have heard their testimony, and these people, knowing the truthfulness of those men and women are convinced that what they told is the truth. I myself know that my father married a second wife by the counsel and direction of his brother, the Prophet. Your denial of the Prophet's teaching this doctrine, your father's saying "I prefer not to believe it," does not change the fact, I know that he sealed a plural wife to my father.

More than a hundred sworn affidavits by men and women who lived in Nauvoo, testifying to the fact that the Prophet not only taught the principle, but also practiced it, are in possession of the Church. Even your own church members have testified of these things. Jason W. Briggs, one of the organizers of your church,

and James Whitehead so testified in the Temple Lot suit, and the first editor of your *Saints' Herald*, Isaac Sheen, declared that the Prophet Joseph Smith had a revelation on the subject of plural and celestial marriage, and that he also taught it. He claims that this was the cause of the Prophet's death.

Hundreds were sealed by him as husbands and wives for time and eternity, many received their endowments under his administration, and some are still living who testify that to their positive knowledge the endowments that he gave are the same as now administered in the Church.

I earnestly warn you, dear sir and kinsman, against denying that the Prophet taught these sacred principles. When you do this you show that you are not in fellowship with him. I also warn you against saying, as did one of your preachers the other evening, "If he taught plural marriage he was a fallen prophet." I bear testimony to you that he was not a fallen Prophet, for what he taught was revealed to him from the Lord. He was true and faithful to the last, and he and his brother, my father, sealed their testimony with their blood.

In your letter to me you speak about being ridiculed and that you may be crushed. If you make absurd statements these may be shown up in their true light, but as to crushing you, I can assure you, that not one Latter-day Saint would wish to hurt even a hair of your head. I cannot believe that you, for one moment, can harbor such a thought. The Saints bear no ill-feeling toward you, they may pity you when they see you take a course so contrary to your grandfather's teachings.

Your sneer at our prosperity seems curious to me.

You have been in our home, you know that we are but common folk. I hope that we have not given you any cause to believe that we were like those Nephites that you allude to as being lifted up in their pride and riches. As we have no riches we are not much in danger of becoming like unto them. As to the Church itself I hope to see it out of debt, and what property it may own will be used for the purpose mentioned in the revelations, viz.—the redemption of Zion. These means I hold as the sacred trust of the Church, and they are accounted for to the last cent.

Your fling at “commercialism” shows the source whence you have drawn your inspiration, and it is a fling as much against your grandfather’s course as against that of his successors. What he did in a business way was for the upbuilding of the Church of Christ, and no other object have his successors had in their business enterprises.

Now, sir, before I conclude, I solemnly call upon you to repent of misrepresenting the man whom God called to usher in the great dispensation of the fulness of times, and also of officiating in the ordinances of the Gospel without authority.

With only the best of feelings and with a desire for your spiritual welfare, I remain,

In sincerity, your kinsman,

(Signed.)

Joseph F. Smith.

