

Joseph Smith III's 1844 Blessing And The Mormons of Utah

Members of the Mormon Church headquartered in Salt Lake City may have reacted anywhere along the spectrum from sublime indifference to temporary discomfiture to cold terror at the recently discovered blessing by Joseph Smith, Jr., to young Joseph on 17 January 1844, to "be my successor to the Presidency of the High Priesthood: a Seer, and a Revelator, and a Prophet, unto the Church; which appointment belongeth to him by blessing, and also by right."¹ The Mormon Church follows a line of succession from Joseph Smith, Jr., completely different from that provided in this document. To understand the significance of the 1844 document in relation to the LDS Church and Mormon claims of presidential succession from Joseph Smith, Jr., one must recognize the authenticity and provenance of the document itself, the statements and actions by Joseph Smith about succession before 1844, the succession developments at Nauvoo after January 1844, and the nature of apostolic succession begun by Brigham Young and continued in the LDS Church today.

All internal evidences concerning the manuscript blessing of Joseph Smith III, dated 17 January 1844, give conclusive support to its authenticity. Anyone at all familiar with the thousands of official manuscript documents of early Mormonism will immediately recognize that the document is written on paper contemporary with the 1840s, that the text of the blessing is in the extraordinarily distinctive handwriting of Joseph Smith's personal clerk, Thomas Bullock, that the words on the back of the document ("Joseph Smith 3 blessing") bear striking similarity to the handwriting of Joseph Smith, Jr., and that the document was folded and labeled in precisely the manner all one-page documents were filed by the church historian's office in the 1844 period.

Moreover, the fact that the document is in the handwriting of Thomas Bullock makes impossible any suggestion that the blessing is an invention of someone sympathetic with the later claims of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Bullock was Joseph Smith's personal clerk from 1843 to 1844, an active polygamist since 1843, the principal recorder of Joseph Smith's King Follet Discourse in April 1844 about the plurality of gods and the progressive nature of God, was clerk of the church historian from 1844 to 1865, Brigham Young's clerk, member of the first pioneer company to enter Salt Lake

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Valley in 1847, member of the theocratic Council of Fifty from 1846 to 1882, active member of the Mormon Church in Utah to his death in 1885, and never had any affiliation with the RLDS Church.²

The recent discovery of the January 1844 blessing in papers acquired from a descendant of Thomas Bullock is also consistent. As a clerk in the historian's office in Utah, Bullock kept many church minutes and records in his personal possession. Although Bullock had turned over most official church documents to the historian's office by the time Brigham Young dismissed him as clerk in 1865, Bullock retained some church documents that were in his own handwriting. Such an occurrence is not unknown. When Presiding Bishop Newel K. Whitney died in 1850, members of the Whitney family retained these official documents (including the only known copies of some of Joseph Smith's unpublished revelations) until the 1970s. They then donated these manuscripts to Brigham Young University.³

The significance of Joseph Smith III's blessing of January 1844 is complicated by a decade of previous statements and actions concerning succession by his father. On 19 April 1834, Joseph Smith "laid hands upon bro. Sidney [Rigdon, Counselor in the First Presidency], and confirmed upon him the blessings of wisdom and knowledge to preside over the church in the absence of brother Joseph."⁴ On 8 July 1834, Joseph ordained David Whitmer "To be a leader or a prophet to this church, which was on condition that he [Joseph Smith, Jr.] did not live to God himself."⁵ On 5 December 1834, Joseph ordained Oliver Cowdery as Assistant (or Associate) President of the High Priesthood "to assist in presiding over the whole church, and to officiate in the absence of the President."⁶ If the Prophet had died in 1835, three men would have had indisputable right to claim exclusive successorship to the office of Church president. In addition, on 28 March 1835, Joseph announced a revelation that the recently organized Quorum of the Twelve Apostles "form a quorum, equal in authority and power to the three presidents [of the First Presidency]," and on 23 July 1837, he dictated a revelation that "unto you, the Twelve, and those, the First Presidency, who are appointed with you to be your counselors and your leaders, is the power of this priesthood given, for the last days and for the last time, in the which is the dispensation of the fulness of times."⁷ On 19 January 1841, Joseph announced a revelation that his brother Hyrum Smith "take the office of Priesthood and Patriarch, which was appointed unto him by his father, by blessing and also by right" and that he "be crowned with the same blessing, and glory, and honor, and priesthood, and gifts of the priesthood, that once were put upon him, that was my servant Oliver Cowdery [former Associate President],"⁸ and in a public meeting at Nauvoo on 16 July 1843, Joseph announced that Hyrum Smith should "hold the office of prophet to the Church, as it was his birthright."⁹ Hyrum was now automatic successor.

Even though Joseph had ordained four other men before 1844 to succeed him and had given the Quorum of Twelve administrative authority over the church equal to the First Presidency, it is obvious that he intended his son Joseph Smith III to one day become president of the LDS Church. A revelation

given a month after the birth of young Joseph on 6 November 1832 stated that the priesthood "must needs remain through you and your lineage until the restoration of all things," and the revelation on priesthood and church officers of 19 January 1841 also stated "even so I say unto my servant Joseph: In thee and in thy seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed."¹⁰ Prior to this, Joseph had already advanced to be general authorities in the church his father, his brothers Hyrum and William, his uncle John, his aunt's first cousin Amasa M. Lyman, his first cousin George A. Smith, and his acknowledged fourth cousin Willard Richards, fifth cousin Heber C. Kimball, and sixth cousins Brigham Young, Parley P. Pratt, and Orson Pratt.¹¹ Joseph was making the Mormon hierarchy an extended family, and there can be no reasonable doubt that he had every intention of his son serving at the apex one day.

The lineal rights and 1844 blessing of Joseph Smith III relate directly to the pre-Utah practice of giving patriarchal blessings in the LDS Church. Joseph Smith, Sr., was ordained to the office of patriarch to bless "the fatherless" of the church on 18 December 1833, and several other men were ordained to the office of patriarch during the lifetime of Joseph.¹² Until the Mormon Church changed the procedure, ordained patriarchs were authorized to give blessings *only* to the "fatherless" of the church: Latter-day Saints of whatever age whose fathers were either dead, non-members or unworthy members of the church. Published instructions at Nauvoo specified that the ordained patriarch acted "as proxy for their father"; whereas "Every father, after he has received his patriarchal blessing, is a Patriarch to his own family; and has the right to confer patriarchal blessings upon which family; which blessings will be just as legal as those conferred by any Patriarch of the church: in fact it is his right."¹³ By the order of the church as it existed in 1844, eleven-year-old Joseph Smith III could have received his patriarchal blessing only from his father, the president of the church, and the document dated 17 January 1844 is the text of that father's blessing to his son. Like the father's blessings by Heber C. Kimball and other worthy priesthood holders at Nauvoo, Joseph Smith III's 1844 blessing was not recorded in the official record books of Nauvoo "proxy" patriarchal blessings now located at the LDS archives in Salt Lake City and at the RLDS archives in Independence. Like other such blessings of fathers to their sons, Joseph Smith III's blessing was maintained as a private document until its present discovery.¹⁴

We are indebted to James Whitehead for the details of the ceremony of the blessing of Joseph Smith III on 17 January 1844, the event which produced the Bullock text. At Nauvoo, Whitehead had been a financial clerk for the church's Trustee-in-Trust and the Nauvoo Temple Committee. He joined the RLDS Church in 1865. He testified in the 1892 Temple Lot legal suit that at a private council meeting in the upper room of Joseph Smith's red brick store during the winter of 1843, Joseph Smith III "was ordained and anointed at that meeting. Hyrum Smith anointed him, and Joseph his father *blessed* him and ordained him, and Newell K. Whitney poured the oil on his head, and he was set apart to be his father's successor in office, holding all the powers his father held."¹⁵

Whitehead testified that this private meeting was attended by twenty-five people (including Joseph and Hyrum Smith, John Taylor, Willard Richards, Newel K. Whitney, Reynolds Cahoon, Alpheus Cutler, Ebenezer Robinson, George J. Adams, William W. Phelps, and John M. Bernhisel), and in the manuscript transcript of his Temple Lot testimony (though not in the published version) Whitehead stated that this ceremony “might have been early in the year 1844,—it was near that time.”¹⁶ This intersects directly with the date of the newly discovered blessing, 17 January 1844. Moreover, in his 1892 testimony, Whitehead said that the ceremony occurred on a Wednesday, and after Joseph’s sermon the next Sunday, the Prophet made reference to his son Joseph and the blessing.¹⁷ The blessing date, 17 January 1844, was a Wednesday, and the following Sunday Joseph Smith gave a sermon on “sealing the hearts of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to the father,” a topic which very reasonably might have caused him to make some personal reference or gesture to young Joseph.¹⁸ It is remarkable that after nearly fifty years, Whitehead could remember accurately the circumstances concerning the blessing of Joseph Smith III, the only known copy of which was lying undiscovered in the possession of a Thomas Bullock descendant in Utah. In 1888 Whitehead had also specified that in the blessing Joseph Smith III “was anointed and set apart to be prophet, seer and revelator to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and to be his father’s successor in office.” This is almost identical to the actual wording of the blessing text in the handwriting of Thomas Bullock.¹⁹

Unfortunately, these positive characteristics of James Whitehead’s famous 1892 Temple Lot testimony are clouded by the incontrovertible fact that he knowingly perjured himself several times while under oath on the witness stand. Although it is reasonable that Joseph might have made some verbal reference or physical gesture to young Joseph after the sermon of 21 January 1844, and that the diarists and minute keepers at the meeting failed to record it because of its incidental nature, Whitehead testified that immediately after the sermon Joseph Smith asked the congregation of 3,000 persons to vote with uplifted right hand to sustain Joseph Smith III as his successor and also asked for a contrary vote.²⁰ It is inconceivable that the minutes of that Sunday meeting in the journals of Joseph Smith and Wilford Woodruff would omit reference to such a dramatic church action, whether or not the minute keepers understood the full significance of such alleged vote.²¹ Moreover, Whitehead testified under oath that the Nauvoo High Council officially endorsed Joseph Smith III as successor prior to the Sunday meeting, when in fact the complete manuscript minutes of the Nauvoo High Council in 1844 make no reference whatever to such action or to the blessing of Joseph Smith III, even though the minutes make at least an oblique reference to the far more explosive action of Hyrum Smith’s reading to the high council the revelation on plural marriage.²² More important to the central issue of the blessing ceremony, Whitehead testified under oath in 1892 that “I was there too” at the 1844 ceremony, whereas he told Joseph Smith III’s counselor, William W. Blair, in 1874 “that he

did not see the ordination take place, but heard it freely talked over in the office."²³ Whitehead testified in the Temple Lot court case that to his knowledge neither Joseph Smith nor anyone else in church authority taught and practiced polygamy before 1845, whereas Whitehead told Alexander Hale Smith in 1864 and William W. Blair in 1874 that "Joseph did teach polygamy and practice too. That Emma knows it too that she put hand of Wives in Joseph's hand."²⁴ Whitehead also testified under oath that he heard Joseph give the King Follett discourse in April 1844, but that "Joseph Smith did not in that sermon teach the plurality of gods," when in fact the contemporary manuscript minutes of that sermon by four different recorders verify that Joseph Smith taught polytheism in the King Follett sermon.²⁵ Whitehead testified in 1892 that "I withdrew from the Church there [at Winter Quarters] on account of its wickedness," when in fact he accepted a mission from Brigham Young in April 1848 to gather the Saints from the Eastern States to Utah, and remained on that mission until he was disfellowshipped for sexual misconduct.²⁶

James Whitehead's information about the January 1844 blessing of Joseph Smith III is thus in the good-news-bad-news category. Much of his 1892 testimony about the blessing is remarkably consistent with documentary evidence to which he had no access, but his testimony is undermined by his obvious perjuries in other areas where documentary evidence shows he was intentionally lying in order to enhance his credibility and to maintain the official position of the Reorganization about Joseph Smith's advocacy of plurality of wives and gods. Although Whitehead's testimony about the Nauvoo high council and public meeting vote on Joseph Smith III's successorship is highly suspect, his testimony is undoubtedly true in its description of the meeting on Wednesday, 17 January 1844. The best evidence in favor of that conclusion is the fact that when James Whitehead told the welcomed details about this ceremony to Alexander Hale Smith in 1864 and to William W. Blair in 1874, Whitehead also devastated them by informing them at the same time that Joseph Smith had taught and practiced plural marriage, and had been ordained a theocratic king by the Council of Fifty a few months after the blessing of Joseph Smith III. Unlike the 1892 testimony, Whitehead's earliest telling of the ceremony was not designed to give the leaders of the Reorganization what he knew they wanted to hear, as indicated by their stunned reactions to his disclosures about the Prophet's polygamy and theocracy.²⁷ Therefore, despite the present absence of contemporary descriptions of the 17 January 1844 blessing to Joseph Smith III, I feel that we can safely accept Whitehead's testimony that the blessing did in fact occur during a private meeting in the council room of Joseph Smith's red brick store, during which Hyrum Smith (Joseph's ordained and publicly acknowledged successor) anointed him with oil held in a vessel by Newel K. Whitney, after which Joseph Smith the Prophet pronounced the blessing which Thomas Bullock recorded.

But the succession question was complicated by new developments at Nauvoo after January 1844 as it was by the fact that Joseph had ordained four

other men to succeed him before 1844. First, there was Joseph's discovery that his wife Emma was again pregnant, his own impression that the child would be a son, and his apparent intention that this unborn child David would have a claim of succession superseding that of young Joseph. Second, Joseph increased the already awesome powers of Brigham Young and the Quorum of Twelve in a way that related directly to succession. Third, Joseph designated still other men to succeed him in the spring of 1844. Fourth, Joseph's preparations were directed toward his presence with the Saints at a new refuge in the American West, and his sudden death threw the church into a succession crisis where demands for continuity and strength of leadership eliminated any consideration of succession by eleven-year-old Joseph Smith III.

The significance of the birth of David Hyrum Smith to the succession question can be understood only by reference to Joseph's teachings and practices in what was known at the time as the "Holy Order of the Holy Priesthood" or the "Quorum of the Anointed" from 1843 to 1844. Joseph had introduced a series of rites and instructions known as the "endowment" in May 1842 to a group of trusted men of the church, and in September 1843 he began admitting women to the anointing and endowment ceremonies which he taught were revealed from God. As a part of these ceremonies, Emma Smith was sealed for time and eternity to Joseph Smith and was anointed to him on 28 September 1843 as an eternal wife, queen, and priestess.²⁸ Joseph taught that the first son born to a couple after they entered into this new and everlasting covenant of marriage had a special promise superior to any children not "born under the covenant."²⁹ Phebe Woodworth was one of the members of the Holy Order in 1843-1844, and in private conversation she said in 1861:

When her husband, Lucien Woodworth, was gone to Texas in the Spring of 1844 Joseph Smith came to her house and said Emma was going to have a son of promise; and if a son of promise was walled in with granite rock when the power of the Holy Ghost fell upon him he would break his way out. He knew the principle upon which a son of promise could be obtained, he had complied with that principle and Emma should have such a son. The November after David H. was born. Mrs. Woodworth said if she was a man, her testimony would be heard, but as she was a woman, she had only the pleasure of telling it, without expecting any importance to be attached to it. When Prest. Young announced the fact that in Joseph's posterity the keys of the Priesthood should rest and that upon young David the blessing should descend, she wished she were a man that credence might be attached to her words.³⁰

The possibility that Joseph had intentions for his unborn son that rivaled the previously intended succession of Joseph Smith III also appears within advocates of the Reorganization. When James Whitehead told William W. Blair about the blessing of young Joseph, Whitehead also informed Blair that the Council of Fifty had ordained Joseph a theocratic king in the spring of 1844, and that Joseph had predicted that his unborn son David "will yet be a Prince."³¹

Joseph Smith actually anticipated an even greater position for the son which should be born to him "under the covenant." He referred to this in a revelation of 27 July 1842 concerning patriarchal marriage, "that through this order he

may be glorified and that through the power of anointing David may reign King over Israel, which shall hereafter be revealed."³² By March 1844, Joseph undoubtedly knew that Emma was pregnant and that he would now have a child who was born heir to the promises of the Holy Order into which he and Emma had entered in 1843. On 10 March 1844 (just hours before he presided over the first provisional meeting of the theocratic Council of Fifty), Joseph gave a sermon in which he said that "the Priesthood that he received, and the throne and kingdom of David is to be taken from him and given to another by the name of David in the last days, raised up out of his lineage."³³ Mormons of the twentieth century have consistently interpreted these references by Joseph to the future King David as having some distant fulfillment by a Jew in the twenty-first century or beyond, but Joseph's contemporaries understood them to apply to his son who would be born in 1844 and who Joseph told Emma should bear the name David.³⁴

In the spring of 1844 (possibly at a meeting of the Holy Order) Joseph told Brigham Young and others about the succession promise of his soon-to-be-born son: "I shall have a son born to me, and his name shall be David; and on him, in some future time, will rest the responsibility that now rests upon me."³⁵ Although we now have the exact date and wording of Joseph's blessing upon Joseph Smith III, the contemporary record of the prophet's promises concerning the succession rights of David Hyrum Smith is probably in the presently unavailable minutes of the Holy Order for 1844. These minutes are apparently located in the vault of the LDS First Presidency in Salt Lake City.

Joseph Smith further complicated the succession issue by conferring his full priesthood authority upon the Quorum of Twelve about three months after he blessed young Joseph. To refute the succession claim of Sidney Rigdon on 8 August 1844, the apostles publicly testified that Joseph had conferred the full keys of the kingdom to govern the church upon the Quorum of Twelve the previous spring.³⁶ Their veracity is strengthened by circumstances that they did not publicly disclose: Joseph Smith conferred this comprehensive authority upon the apostles during a meeting of the secretive, theocratic Council of Fifty. The youngest man Joseph initiated into the Council of Fifty, Benjamin F. Johnson, later wrote a private account of "one of the last meetings of the council of Fifty," in Joseph Smith's lifetime during which the prophet committed these keys and powers to the Quorum of Twelve, and in a meeting of the Nauvoo High Council two members of the Council of Fifty (an apostle and a man who later organized his own theocratic schism of Mormonism) bore private witness to the fact:

Elder Orson Hyde then made some very appropriate and pointed remarks relative to the organization of the church; the course of Elder Rigdon and others; and also of the appointment of the Twelve by Brother Joseph on the 23d of March last, to stand in their present office, that on them the responsibility of bearing of the Kingdom rested, and tho' they had many difficulties to encounter, they must, "Round up their shoulders and bear it, like men of God and not be bluffed off by any man," which

statements were sanctioned by Councillor A[lpheus]. Cutler [a senior member of the Council of Fifty as organized by Joseph Smith].³⁷

Long after a majority of Mormons had accepted the succession claims of the Quorum of the Twelve and during a time when there was no external challenge to their claims that might cause exaggerated statements, Heber C. Kimball stated: "I am still an Apostle, and have never received any greater authority than that I received directly under the hands of Joseph Smith a short time previous to his death, in connection with Bro. Brigham Young and Willard Richards. He placed power into our hands, and all the keys and authority that he had received from God."³⁸ Elder Kimball made this statement on 23 March 1853, nine years after the date on which Orson Hyde stated in 1844 that Joseph Smith conferred the full authority and keys upon the Quorum of Twelve. Since several nonapostolic members of the Council of Fifty began testifying to this event as early as August 1844, the contemporary minutes of that March 1844 charge to the Twelve are undoubtedly contained in the still unavailable minutes of the Council of Fifty. These minutes are in the vault of the LDS First Presidency's office and fill 200 pages for the March-May 1844 period.

The succession claim of the Quorum of the Twelve did not derive from their original ordination as apostles in February 1835 nor from the revelation of March 1835 that gave them authority equal to that of the First Presidency nor from the revelation of July 1837 that the Quorum of Twelve shared the keys of the kingdom with the First Presidency. By the statements of Brigham Young and the other apostles from August 1844 onward, the succession claim of the Quorum of Twelve finally rested upon Joseph Smith's commission to them during a meeting of the Council of Fifty in the spring of 1844. On that occasion he conferred upon the apostles the responsibility to govern and preserve not only the church, but also the secret rites, priesthood keys, and teachings that the prophet had introduced at Nauvoo: polygamy, marriage for time and all eternity, the holy order endowment and anointings, the theocratic Council of Fifty, and Joseph Smith's teachings about God and mankind.

The sudden death of Joseph in June 1844 left the members at Nauvoo without a supreme leader, surrounded by mobs, and without most of the other church leaders who were scattered throughout the United States in a campaign for Joseph Smith's U.S. presidential candidacy. Worst of all, Joseph had left the Latter-day Saints with a multiplicity of succession precedents and not a single published revelation or instruction about the mechanics of an orderly succession in the event of his death.

Why did Joseph Smith leave the church of 1844 in such vulnerability to succession chaos? The answer is quite simple. Despite efforts of others to kidnap and kill him, Joseph Smith expected to escape his enemies again in 1844 and to continue living and leading the church. Joseph did not know that he was going to die in June 1844, and in fact had been assured by revelation that he would not die if he did what the Lord told him to. This is why the prophet did not make use of his ample opportunities to outline succession to his office in a

public sermon or in the church biweekly periodical *Times and Seasons*.

Brigham Young explained in a published sermon that Joseph's martyrdom at Carthage was unnecessary and occurred because Joseph had defied a revelation of the Lord by listening to those who persuaded him to return to Nauvoo on 23 June 1844. Brigham Young told a special meeting of the Mormons:

If Joseph Smith, jun., the Prophet, had followed the Spirit of revelation in him he never would have gone to Carthage . . . and never for one moment did he say that he had one particle of light in him after he started back from Montrose to give himself up in Nauvoo. This he did through the persuasion of others. I want you all to understand that. . . . But if Joseph had followed the revelations in him he would have followed the shepherd instead of the shepherd's following the sheep.³⁹

An earlier manuscript diary of the Nauvoo Legion stated that upon his return to Nauvoo to stand trial at Carthage, Joseph "said that he had went away by the council of the Spirit of the Lord, but I have been forced back by the brethren. . . . On the 27th June Col Markham asked Gen Smith if he could not tell by the spirit as he did at Dixon, how he would come out, to which he said I have heard to [sic] the brethren, & gone to Carthage [sic] contrary to the council of the spirit & I am now no more than another man."⁴⁰ In the final days of his life, Joseph Smith had acted contrary to a divine revelation, and he died as an unnecessary martyr at Carthage on 27 June 1844. This threw a totally unprepared church into an equally unnecessary turmoil.

From June to August 1844, the LDS Church was in an agonizing succession crisis, and no one, including Emma Smith, gave the slightest thought that eleven-year-old Joseph Smith III should lead the church. The revelation of July 1837 had specified that the priesthood keys given to Joseph Smith "shall not be taken from him" until the Second Coming of Christ, and many Latter-day Saints may have shared Brigham Young's religious terror upon learning of the martyrdom: "The first thing which I thought of was, whether Joseph had taken the keys of the kingdom with him from the earth."⁴¹ That possibility was too horrible for the restorationists to contemplate, and they began to grope for a means of succession out of the many the prophet had indicated.

On 4 July 1844, Emma Smith, William Marks, Alpheus Cutler, and Reynolds Cahoon agreed that Nauvoo's stake president William Marks should be made president of the church, but within two days Joseph Smith's private secretary William Clayton described the widening succession crisis of the summer of 1844: "The greatest danger that now threatens us is dissensions and strifes amongst the Church. There are already 4 or 5 men pointed out as successors to the Trustee & President & there is danger of feelings being manifest. All the brethren who stand at the head seem to feel the delicacy of the business. [William W.] Phelps & Dr [Willard] Richards have taken a private course & are carrying out many measures on their own responsibility without council."⁴² The knot of the problem was to whom should leaders of the church go for counsel when there was no supreme head that was generally acknowledged? By 12 July 1844, more

people were inclined to immediately appoint William Marks as Trustee-in-Trust and president of the LDS Church, but Newel K. Whitney privately raised the second most important issue of the succession crisis — continuity of the practices Joseph had secretly introduced as divine during the last years of his leadership of the church. William Clayton wrote:

He referred me to the fact of Marks being with [William] Law & Emma in opposition to Joseph and the quorum. — And if Marks is appointed Trustee our spiritual blessings will be destroyed inasmuch as he is not favorable to the most important matters. The Trustee must of necessity be the first president of the Church & Joseph said that if he and Hyrum were taken away Samuel H. Smith would be his successor.⁴³

As if the succession to the presidency were not complicated enough by Joseph's designation of Sidney Rigdon, David Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Joseph Smith III, and his unborn son David as possible successors, the prophet had also designated his brother Samuel H. Smith to be immediate president of the church if both Joseph and Hyrum died. Since Hyrum's life was not in jeopardy until he insisted on accompanying Joseph to Carthage Jail, Samuel's designation occurred sometime between June 23 and 27 in 1844.

But Samuel H. Smith died on 13 July and the church seemed to be sliding into chaos. On 30 July 1844 George Miller and Alexander Badlam urged that the theocratic Council of Fifty take the reins of the church. On 4 August Sidney Rigdon returned to Nauvoo and asked that he immediately be appointed guardian of the church "to build the Church up to Joseph as he has begun it," and on 5 August 1844 a virtually unknown but charismatic Mormon named James J. Strang used a forged letter to announce that Joseph had appointed him successor.⁴⁴ Joseph had left the church with an abundance of possible successors, and no clear way in any sermon, revelation, or published instructions for the Saints to know how to sort out the priority that one possible successor should have over another. The church needed immediate stability of strong leadership that represented continuity of priesthood revelations and government that were the foundation of the LDS Church.

It is under these circumstances that the Quorum of Twelve with Brigham Young as senior apostle, became the acting presidency of the church at Nauvoo. At the meeting of 8 August 1844, approximately 5,000 Latter-day Saints listened to two different propositions for providing continuity of priesthood leadership to the church without addressing the question of the appointment of an actual successor to Joseph Smith. Sidney Rigdon, as surviving counselor in Joseph Smith's First Presidency, claimed that he was still counselor in the presidency and should be appointed guardian of the church. On the other hand, Brigham and the apostles argued that Rigdon's authority as presidency counselor ended with the death of Joseph Smith, and that the Quorum of Twelve was the only existing supreme council that had the full authority, keys, and powers of Joseph Smith to govern the church. For many the rightness of the apostolic claim for continuity was demonstrated miraculously by a

transfiguration that occurred as Brigham Young stepped to the podium. Among the accounts written at the time in Nauvoo, the description of George Laub's diary was the most detailed: "Now when President Young arose to address the congregation his voice was the voice of Bro. Joseph and his face appeared as Joseph's face & Should I not have seen his face but heard his voice I should have declared that it was Joseph."⁴⁵ Obviously, not every one present saw this manifestation, because about twenty people voted against the apostles.⁴⁶ And most of the rest of that multitude were persuaded by the calm logic of the apostles rather than by seeing a miraculous transfiguration of Brigham Young.

Some Mormon commentators about the August 1844 vote for the Quorum of Twelve interpret that action as a vote for Brigham Young as Joseph Smith's successor, and some RLDS commentators have described the vote as a common consent "rejection of the church" that ultimately required the church's reorganization. Neither position is true. The Latter-day Saints voted on 8 August 1844 to preserve the LDS Church from fragmentation by sidestepping the succession question: there were too many seemingly unresolvable succession claims for various men to be the sole successor to Joseph Smith, and the church membership simply voted to defer that question by turning to the Quorum of Twelve to "act in its place" as the priesthood quorum that had the full powers and authority of Joseph Smith. In an epistle of 15 August 1844, the Quorum of Twelve also indicated to the members that the question of appointing a successor to Joseph could be deferred indefinitely, rather than risk disrupting the church by trying to choose among various succession contenders: "Let no man presume for a moment that his [Joseph Smith's] place will be filled by another; for, *remember he stands in his own place*, and always will."⁴⁷ The Latter-day Saints voted for stability and ecclesiastical continuity, not for a successor, when they sustained the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1844 as the acting presidency of the church.

But the apostles, William Marks, Emma Smith, and perhaps two hundred others knew that the presidency of the Quorum of the Twelve implied another level of continuity: continuing the secret teachings and practices that Joseph had introduced among trusted associates. Even those most devoted to Joseph and his memory recognized that these secret developments of the last four years of his presidency were radical, revolutionary, dangerous, and revolting to the sensibilities of most people. Nevertheless, Brigham Young, as president of the Quorum of Twelve, vowed publicly and privately to carry out all the measures of Joseph at whatever cost, and he demonstrated that steely resolve personally in September 1844 by starting to marry secretly the widowed plural wives of Joseph Smith.⁴⁸ In December 1844, Brigham Young also began initiating new members into the endowment ceremonies of the Holy Order that Joseph had given to less than seventy people in anticipation that eventually all church members would receive these ordinances in the temple.⁴⁹ On 4 February 1845, Brigham called the first meeting of the Council of Fifty since May 1844, and was sustained Joseph Smith's theocratic successor as Standing Chairman of the Council of Fifty. He

then commissioned the Council to begin preparations for moving the body of the church to the American West as Joseph had originally commissioned the apostles to do on 21 February 1844.⁵⁰

Ninety-nine percent of the Mormons knew little or nothing of these developments, but they followed the strong and productive lead of Brigham Young and the Quorum of Twelve, just as they had done while Joseph was alive. At the general conference of October 1844, the Quorum of Twelve had been sustained as the presidency of the church, and the manuscript minutes of the general conference of 7 April 1845 in Nauvoo show that Brigham Young was unanimously voted on and sustained as "The President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to this Church and nation, and all nations, and also as the President of the whole Church of Latter Day Saints," and within weeks Brigham Young was copyrighting church publications with his title as President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.⁵¹ Brigham Young was president of the church after 1844 by virtue of being senior member of the Quorum of Twelve which was acting as the Presidency of the LDS Church in the absence of a regularly sustained successor to the founding prophet.

Nevertheless, the right of the Quorum of the Twelve to form the Presidency of the Church was not explicit during Joseph Smith's lifetime. He had given them the fulness of the priesthood and all the keys of the priesthood he possessed in the spring of 1844, and he had delegated many spiritual and temporal responsibilities to Brigham Young as President of the Quorum (including the sealing ordinances). But it was not until after the Prophet's death that the apostles concluded that they had the right to constitute the Church Presidency. Brigham Young later told his family that he did not realize the Prophet's death placed the presidency upon the Twelve when he first learned of the Martyrdom.

When I first heard of Joseph's death the first flash across my mind was "are the keys of the priesthood here?" I was sat leaning in a chair, with Orson Pratt upon my left, and *I had no more idea of it falling upon me than of the most unlikely thing in the world*, and I felt it come like a flash of lightening [sic] to my mind, and I said, "the keys of the kingdom are here". *I did not think it was with me*, but I felt they were here, but knew that it was the Lord's business.

He told the apostles in Utah that it was not until he was en route to Nauvoo in August 1844 that he learned "by the visions of the Spirit" that the Quorum of Twelve constituted an acting presidency of the Church and would form a separate First Presidency from among their number.⁵² Therefore, the apostolic presidency had not been specifically designated before Joseph Smith's death, but emerged afterwards as the legitimate consequence of his conferral of keys and authority upon Brigham Young and the other apostles.

Although the blessing of Joseph Smith III was alluded to in an 1844 published history of Illinois as the Prophet's "will or revelation" appointing his twelve-year-old son as successor, members of the Smith family in 1845 did not promote him as an alternative to Brigham Young and the apostles. His grand-

mother, Lucy Mack Smith, temporarily urged that William Smith be appointed church president in June 1845, and during that year she dictated from memory a blessing Joseph Smith, Sr., gave to young Joseph at Kirtland when he would have been less than five years old: "You shall have power to carry out all that your Father left undone when you become of age."⁵³ Nevertheless, six months after Brigham Young was sustained as president of the Church, Lucy Mack Smith endorsed him publicly at the conference of 7 October 1845. And as one of the original members of the Holy Order, she also joined with Brigham Young and the apostles in the endowment ceremonies of the Nauvoo Temple in December 1845.⁵⁴ William Smith acknowledged the authority of Brigham Young as newly sustained president of the church long enough for Brigham and the other apostles to ordain William as presiding patriarch on 24 May 1845, and then William spent the summer trying to become president of the church himself, broke with his fellow apostles, and denounced them in a pamphlet of October 1845 which stated in part:

. . . this Brigham Young was pampering the church with the idea that although little Joseph was the rightful heir to the priesthood and office of his father as a prophet, seer, and revelator, that it was not prudent to mention this for fear of the little child's life.⁵⁵

Emma Smith apparently did not voice opposition in April 1845 that Brigham Young had been sustained president of the church by virtue of his position in the Quorum of Twelve. Instead of telling Joseph Smith III's private tutor (who was wavering about the succession question himself) that her son was Joseph Smith's rightful successor, Emma Smith told him that Nauvoo Stake President William Marks should be president of the church because "according to the ordination pronounced upon him by Br Joseph he was the individual contemplated by him for his successor."⁵⁶ If that was not just wishful thinking on Emma Smith's part (since Marks shared her hostility for polygamy and other radicalisms of her late husband), then William Marks must be added to the list of those whom Joseph Smith ordained, blessed, or otherwise designated to be his successors to the one-man office of church president. As for Joseph Smith III, by December 1846, his mother Emma "would not let him have anything to do with Mormonism at present."⁵⁷

The only one who was seriously urging the succession of Joseph Smith III in 1845 was George J. Adams. Ordained a special apostle by Joseph and admitted as one of the original members of the Council of Fifty, George J. Adams had been excommunicated on 10 April 1845 for defying the Quorum of Twelve by teaching and practicing polygamy in New England.⁵⁸ In May, he organized a church in Iowa, with Joseph Smith III as the intended president and himself as young Joseph's spokesman, and on 15 June 1845 Adams wrote: "I have suffered much persecution since i left Boston and much abuse because i cant support the twelve as the first presidency i cant do it when i know that it belongs to Josephs Son — Young Joseph who was ordained by his father before his Death."⁵⁹ Adams had told Emma in 1844 that he had witnessed the ceremony, and fifty years later

James Whitehead included Adams in the list of witnesses to the blessing of Joseph Smith III in January 1844. But George J. Adams was an erratic and inconsistent advocate of Joseph Smith III, and even though James J. Strang's claims left little room for lineal succession, Adams testified to the world in 1846 that Strang was the one "appointed and chosen of God, to stand in the place of brother Joseph."⁶⁰

Aside from the erratic Adams, everyone realized that Joseph Smith III was too young to assume the prophet's mantle for many years. Although William Smith publicly ridiculed Brigham for claiming to protect young Joseph by not promoting his succession rights, an 1845 patriarchal blessing to Joseph Smith III (pronounced either by his Uncle William or his Great Uncle John) referred to that vulnerability as well as to anticipations for young Joseph's future:

Joseph Smith 3rd was born Nov 6th A.D. 1832 in Kirtland Ohio

Joseph thou art a child and thy mind is tender yet the enemies of righteousness desire to destroy thy life but thou art in the hands of God and precious in his sight therefore he will suffer the nations to be destroyed before he will permit thee to fall. Thou art and shall be blessed of the Lord: and thy name shall be had in remembrance as long as the name of Israel or as the name of God for thou shalt be as God. Thou shalt be mighty in the earth for thou shalt wield the sword of Laban with might and thousands shall fall at thy feet.

Thy life is secured unto thee: and thy seed shall be as numerous as the hosts of Israel: and thou art sealed up unto eternal life even so in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ Amen.⁶¹

By any standard, that is a beautiful blessing to the son of a martyr. The clerk who recorded it, Evan M. Greene, went to Utah with the vast majority of the Nauvoo Saints. They sustained the apostolic presidency of the Quorum of Twelve, in anticipation that one day the sons of Joseph Smith the Martyr would also come to Utah and receive their priesthood opportunities. From 1844 to the 1860s, Brigham Young himself referred to the lineal rights of Joseph Smith III to preside in the priesthood, but did not limit those rights to young Joseph. In 1847, Brigham said, "I am entitled to the Keys of the Priesthood according to lineage and Blood, so is Brother H. C. Kimball & many others." Brigham Young chose two counselors and formed a separate First Presidency in December 1847, but in February 1860 he reassured those who inquired about Joseph Smith III that "blessings will rest upon the posterity of Joseph Smith the Prophet."⁶²

But others who rejected the leadership of the Quorum of Twelve and who could not accept the practice of polygamy that Brigham Young had brought out of the closet and into the canon of Utah Mormonism also waited for Joseph Smith III to take his father's mantle. Officially organized in 1853, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints had extended an invitation to Joseph Smith to become the president, only to have him stormily reject their offer in 1856.

During the 1850s, representatives from the church in Utah had also made friendly visits to the Smith home in Nauvoo, and had suggested that the family

gather to the Great Basin, and specifically asked Joseph Smith III to move to Utah even if no one else in his family did. The memory of his 1844 blessing and the burden of his prophetic heritage hung heavily upon young Joseph; and after rejecting Utah Mormonism out of hand because of his moral and physical revulsion at the practice of polygamy, Joseph Smith III felt inspired in the fall of 1859 to accept the leadership of the Reorganization. Members of the Reorganization were overjoyed that their long vigil for a presidential successor to the martyred prophet came to an end when Joseph Smith III became President of the RLDS Church on 6 April 1860.⁶³

On the other hand, Brigham Young and other Utah Mormons were stunned that young Joseph would affiliate with an organization other than the Utah Church which had been maintained in continuity by the apostles in anticipation that one day the sons of the prophet would receive their full opportunities therein. Two months later, Brigham publicly stated that when Joseph Smith's sons "make their appearance before this people, full of his power, there are none but what will say — 'Amen! we are ready to receive you.'" ⁶⁴ Apparently with the urging of church authorities in Utah, Joseph F. Smith and Samuel H. B. Smith went to Nauvoo in July 1860 to visit Joseph Smith III. The first cousin, Joseph F., was the son of the martyred Hyrum Smith, the second was the son of the short-lived Samuel Smith whom the Prophet Joseph said should be the immediate successor if both Joseph and Hyrum died at Carthage Jail. The third, Joseph, was the president of a rival branch of the Restoration. Samuel H. B. Smith reported to the authorities of Utah:

We visited Nauvoo and saw the young Prophet, for I suppose that is the name he goes by, having been ordained by his Father to do a work but what that work was to be we didn't find out, only he intends to be dictated by the Spirit in all things and whether the work was grate or Small it mattered not with him he intends to "leave the result with the Lord" . . . he said that the Spirit has been working on his mind during the last two years and he has felt all the time as though he had a work to do, but it appears that his mind has been so formed against the principle of polygamy that the Spirit has failed in removing its formation, but he told us that if he should come to understand it to be a true principle that he would imbrace it, but untill then he could not, he further stated that one day as he was pondering over in his own mind why he didn't go to Salt Lake that he felt his fathers hands upon his head, and then he thought [of] the reason why he didnt go . . . he said he didn't feel like blaming us for the corse we were persuing, and said he thought we would come out all right, and spoke as though he thought we would view things different some time.⁶⁵

Polygamy was the most revolutionary and (to many like the sons of Joseph Smith) the most revolting example of Mormonism's radicalism at Nauvoo. Despite the expressed openness of Joseph Smith III to accepting it, neither he nor any of his brothers could bring themselves to accept the implications of Nauvoo polygamy during their father's presidency of the church. When James Whitehead informed Alexander Hale Smith that his mother Emma had placed

the hands of plural wives in Joseph's hand at the same time Whitehead informed Alexander of the 1844 blessing of young Joseph, Alexander wrote in his 1864 diary that Whitehead "told me some things that I did not know and cannot understand," and then later tore out the page where he recorded Whitehead's polygamy testimony in his diary.⁶⁶ Not only did Joseph Smith III refuse to believe the testimony from his father's alleged plural wives, but he also refused to accept the testimony of his own counselor and Quorum of Twelve of the Reorganization. In 1865 his counselor William Marks testified to a meeting of the RLDS Presidency and RLDS Quorum of Twelve that Joseph Smith converted Hyrum to polygamy by dictating the July 1843 revelation, and in 1867 half of the Quorum of Twelve in the Reorganization refused to vote for a resolution exonerating the prophet from the practice of plural marriage, because of "the almost universal opinion among the Saints that Joseph was in some way connected with it."⁶⁷

Although Alexander and Joseph Smith III could somehow insulate their minds against the evidence and implications of their father's polygamous activity, David Hyrum Smith could not. During his missionary visit to Utah in 1872 to convert the people he described as "poor deceived souls," David H. Smith wrote:

I know my Mother believes just as we do in faith, repentance, baptism and all saving doctrines, in the books of the church and all, but I do not wish to ask her in regard to polygamy, for dear brother God forgive me if I am wrong — how can I tell you if I did not love you I could not. I believe there was something wrong, I don't know it, but I believe it, the testimony is too great for me to deny. Now you may give up everything if you must and cease to regard me as your friend but I never did deceive you and never will if my father sinned I can not help it. The truth to me is the same he must suffer for his sin. I do not know that he did, and if I had not received such convincing testimony of the gospel in my faith might fail but it does not even though he did sin. The bible is my guide and Christ my pattern there is no religion for me except the gospel we believe.⁶⁸

The Mormons had expected their evidence about Joseph Smith's polygamy to convince David that polygamy was divinely instituted by a prophet; instead they convinced David that his father was an adulterous prophet. Nevertheless David was true to his brother Joseph, as all the sons of the prophet tried to be true to their memory of their father, and David became a counselor to his brother ten months after writing this letter. But the effects of his 1872 mission to Utah were too great for David's sensitive personality and fragile constitution, and he was committed to the Illinois Hospital for the Insane in January 1877. Joseph Smith had spoken in 1844 of his son of promise being "walled in with granite rock," and David Hyrum Smith spent the last twenty-seven years of his life in the asylum.⁶⁹

What was for Joseph Smith III and his family a terrible personal tragedy was an institutional disappointment for the Mormons of Utah who had hoped that

one of the sons of Joseph Smith would eventually preside over the LDS Church. Brigham Young consistently told the Saints in general conferences and other public meetings that he was not Joseph Smith's successor, and that he was president of the LDS Church only by virtue of his position as senior member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles which was acting as the full-constituted presidency of the Church.⁷⁰ In October 1863 conference, Brigham said, "If one of Joseph's children takes the Lead of the church he will come and place himself at the head of *this* church, and I will receive him as willing as any one here."⁷¹ But Brigham insisted that Joseph Smith's sons could rightfully preside only over the LDS Church of Utah, not over a church which repudiated the practices Brigham had faithfully tried to implement as he had learned them from Joseph Smith the Prophet. Brigham was convinced that Joseph Smith III would never conform, but in 1866 expressed his fervent hope that David H. Smith would accept the fullness of the priesthood.

I am looking for the time when the Lord will speak to David [H. Smith]; but let him pursue the course he is now pursuing, and he will never preside over the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in time or in eternity. . . . It would be his right to preside over this Church, if he would only walk in the true path of duty. ⁷²

David H. Smith's commitment to a mental institution ten years later ended any hope of Utah Mormons for one of the Prophet Joseph Smith's sons to accept and preside in the Utah church. Because the sons of Joseph Smith refused to affiliate with the church that the apostles had maintained in continuity since 1844, the LDS Church continued the caretaker presidency of the Quorum of Twelve. From 1844 to the present, the president of the LDS Church has automatically been the senior surviving member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, whether or not he organized a separate First Presidency of three men. We can be sure that Brigham Young was sincere in his willingness to confer the fulfillment of succession rights upon the sons of Joseph Smith if they would accept the LDS Church in Utah as it was, not as they wanted it to be. But neither side of this last remaining echo of the 1844 succession crisis could change its determined course.

Looking back at the 1844 blessing of Joseph Smith III in relation to the entire succession crisis, it is clear that the positions of the Mormons of Utah and of the Reorganization were irreconcilable on grounds of legalism, continuity, and philosophy. It is virtually impossible to claim that there was only one legitimate successor to Joseph Smith's presidency when on the best of evidence he blessed, ordained, or designated Sidney Rigdon, David Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Joseph Smith III, David Hyrum Smith, Samuel H. Smith, and William Marks to succeed him, and also conferred upon the Quorum of Twelve the full keys, powers, and authority to govern the church and to administer all that he had introduced secretly at Nauvoo. In later years polemic writers in both the RLDS and Mormon churches tried to create a simple legalism by insisting that their path of succession was the only one Joseph

Smith authorized and that all other claims were spurious. These arguments cannot withstand the scrutiny of the documents from Joseph Smith's lifetime. Joseph Smith had provided many paths of succession.

Brigham Young and Joseph Smith III were each loyal to Joseph Smith as they understood him, but from irreconcilable points of view. Brigham Young saw Joseph first and foremost as the divine restorer, and dedicated his life from 1844 to 1877 as an "apostle of Jesus Christ and of Joseph Smith" to give the fullest expression possible to everything Joseph taught, revealed, practiced, and hoped for in the secret councils and public meetings of Nauvoo, where Brigham had his first continuous association with the prophet. Continuity was the key of apostolic succession Brigham Young led and implemented in the LDS Church of Salt Lake City. Joseph Smith III saw the prophet first and foremost as a father whom he loved and respected and who he believed had been called by God to bring forth a work and message of good. RLDS historians have observed that Joseph Smith III sought to continue the work of his father "ignorant of much of its earlier history and its doctrines."⁷³ Joseph Smith III could see nothing good or uplifting in polygamy, secret endowment rituals, overt and covert theocracy, or quasi-scriptural attacks on fundamental Christian theologies of God and humanity. Joseph Smith III forced himself to suspend judgment, despite overwhelming evidence, on the question of whether his father actively promoted these radicalisms, and he adopted the more neutral position that to whatever extent these things may have existed at Nauvoo, they did not do credit to his idealized view of Joseph Smith as father, restorer of righteousness, teacher of truth, and exponent of virtue. Therefore, Joseph Smith III and the Reorganization sought to honor the memory and prophetic calling of Joseph Smith, Jr., through discontinuity with what had occurred at Nauvoo.

There were many complexities and contradictions in the fourteen-year ministry of Joseph Smith as president of the LDS Church. Not only did he establish competing claims of individual succession to his office at the same time, but (with reference to polygamy in particular) Joseph Smith's public statements were moving in opposite directions from his private ministry. Brigham Young resolved the inconsistencies by adhering to the private instructions Joseph Smith the Prophet gave him in the name of the Lord during the last years of his life, and by dismissing the public inconsistencies as diplomatic concealment. Joseph Smith III resolved the inconsistencies by adhering to the public instructions published by Joseph Smith's authority during his lifetime, and by dismissing the secret developments at Nauvoo as aberrations. Both positions required rationalization or denial of discordant elements of the past. Both the Mormons of Utah and the Saints of the Reorganization were loyal to their conceptions of Joseph Smith's prophetic office, and from their differing viewpoints the recently discovered 1844 blessing of Joseph Smith III verified either the tragedy of unfulfilled prophetic office or the glory of a martyr's heritage.⁷⁴

NOTES

1. "A blessing, given to Joseph Smith, 3rd, by his father, Joseph Smith, Junr. on Jany. 17, 1844," manuscript at Research Library and Archives, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Independence, Missouri, with photocopy at Historical Department, Archives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.
2. Thomas Bullock Journal and holograph minutes of hundreds of meetings by Bullock in LDS Historical Department; Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Andrew Jenson History Co., 1901-1936), 2:599-600; C. Ward Despain, "Thomas Bullock: Early Mormon Pioneer" (Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1956).
3. Wilford Woodruff Journal, 26 Feb. 1862, 22 Jan. 1865, LDS Historical Department; Inventory of Newel K. Whitney Collection, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, hereafter cited as Brigham Young University.
4. Joseph Smith manuscript 1832-1834 Journal, 19 April 1834, p. 79, LDS Historical Department.
5. Far West Record, 15 March 1838, LDS Historical Department.
6. Manuscript History of the Church, Book A-1, 5 Dec. 1834, in handwriting of Oliver Cowdery, LDS Historical Department.
7. Doctrine and Covenants 107:24, 118:30, Utah edition; Doctrine and Covenants, 104:11c, 105:12, RLDS edition.
8. *Times and Seasons* 2 (1 June 1841): 42; Doctrine and Covenants 124:91, 95, Utah edition; Doctrine and Covenants 107:296b,e, RLDS edition.
9. B.H. Roberts, ed., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1970), 5:510; Willard Richards Journal, 16 July 1843, LDS Historical Department.
10. Doctrine and Covenants, 86:10, 124:58, Utah edition; Doctrine and Covenants 84:3b, RLDS edition.
11. D. Michael Quinn, "Organizational Development and Social Origins of the Mormon Hierarchy, 1832-1932: A Prosopographical Study" (M.A. thesis, University of Utah, 1973), pp. 132, 204-5.
12. Statement and transcribed minutes by Oliver Cowdery in Joseph Smith, Sr., Patriarchal Blessing Book, Vol. 1, pp. 8-9 LDS Historical Department. Other men ordained patriarchs from 1833 to 1844 were John Young about 1834, Isaac Morley in 1838, Hyrum Smith in 1840, Peter Melling in 1840, John Albiston in 1841, James Adams in 1843, John Smith in 1844, and Asahel Smith in 1844.
13. "Patriarchal," *Times and Seasons* 6 (1 June 1845):992, 921.
14. Heber C. Kimball's patriarchal blessing to his daughter Helen in 1843 is not in the church patriarchal blessing record books, but is presently located in W. Whitney Smith Papers, LDS Historical Department.
15. *Complainant's Abstract of Pleading and Evidence, In the Circuit Court of the United States, Western District of Missouri, Western Division, at Kansas City. The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Complainant, vs. The Church of Christ at Independence, Missouri . . .* (Lamoni, Iowa: Herald Publishing House, 1892), p. 28 hereafter cited as *Temple Lot*; italics added.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 28, 32; U.S. Circuit Court (8th Circuit), Testimony (1892), transcript, Box 1, folder 2, #5, p. 19, Question 250. In the Alexander H. Smith and William W. Blair diaries, Whitehead omitted Ebenezer Robinson and George J. Adams from the list of those witnessing the ceremony, and added the names of William W. Phelps and John M. Bernhisel.
17. *Temple Lot*, p. 36.
18. Joseph Smith, Jr., Journal, 21 Jan. 1844 and Wilford Woodruff Journal, 21 Jan. 1844, both at LDS Historical Department; Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo discourses of the Prophet Joseph* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), pp. 317-19; Roberts, *History of the Church* 6:179, 183.
19. *Autumn Leaves* 1 (May 1888):202. See footnote 1.
20. *Temple Lot*, pp. 33, 37.
21. Wilford Woodruff Journal, 21 Jan. 1844, Joseph Smith Journal, 21 Jan. 1844; Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph*, pp. 317-19.

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22. Nauvoo High Council 1843-1844 Minutes, consecutively numbered and stitch-bound manuscript, LDS Historical Department.
23. *Temple Lot*, p. 28; William W. Blair Diary, 17 June 1874, RLDS Research Library and Archives.
24. *Temple Lot*, 29, 33; manuscript transcript of testimony, p. 24, Question 354; Alexander Hale Smith Diary, 14 May 1864; see William W. Blair Diary, 17 June 1874, both at RLDS Research Library and Archives. The published complainant's abstract, *Temple Lot*, p. 32, omitted Whitehead's very specific denial in transcript question 354: "I never heard Joseph teach that in his life."
25. *Temple Lot*, p. 37; Ehat and Cook, *The Words of Joseph*, pp. 340-61.
26. *Temple Lot*, p. 35; Recommend and Appointment of James Whitehead, Winter Quarters, Camp of Israel, 17 April 1848, James Whitehead Papers, and Pottawattamie High Council Record, 5 Nov. 1848, both at LDS Historical Department; Letter of Orson Hyde to Orson Pratt in *Latter-Day Saints Millennial Star* 11 (1 Jan. 1849):27.
27. Alexander Hale Smith Diary, 14 May 1864, and entry following a torn out page, and William W. Blair Diary, page opposite entry for 17 May 1865, and full entry for 17 June 1874, both at RLDS Research Library and Archives.
28. D. Michael Quinn, "Latter-day Saint Prayer Circles," *BYU Studies* 19 (Fall 1978):83-91.
29. Howard and Martha Coray Notebook, 13 Aug. 1843, Franklin D. Richards Scriptural Items, 13 Aug. 1843, William Clayton Journal, 13 Aug. 1843, in LDS Historical Department and Archives, and quoted in Ehat and Cook, *Words of Joseph*, pp. 241-42; also Roberts, *History of the Church*, 5:530-31.
30. Historian's Office Journal, 1 Sept. 1861, LDS Historical Department.
31. William W. Blair Diary, 17 June 1874, RLDS Research Library and Archives.
32. Revelation to Newel K. Whitney, dictated by Joseph Smith, 27 July 1842, LDS Historical Department.
33. Roberts, *History of the Church* 6:253; Wilford Woodruff Journal, 10 March 1844, Joseph Smith Journal, 10 March 1844; D. Michael Quinn, "The Council of Fifty and Its Members, 1844 to 1945," *BYU Studies* 20 (Winter 1980):165.
34. "At the time of his birth, it was intimated by old Mrs Durphee and others that Joseph the prophet had said that he (David Hyrum which name Joseph gave him before his death) was to be the David the Bible speaks of to rule over Israel forever, which David spoken of most people took to be old King David." (Oliver B. Huntington diary, typescript, 1:53 Brigham Young University; E. Cecil McGavin, *The Family of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc. 1963), p. 138.
35. Manuscript minutes of Brigham Young sermon, 7 Oct. 1863, recorded by George D. Watt, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Historical Department.
36. *Times and Seasons* 5 (15 Sept. 1844):651, 5 (1 Nov. 1844):698.
37. Benjamin F. Johnson manuscript autobiography, "A Life Review," p. 96, and Nauvoo High Council Minutes, 30 Nov. 1844, p. 7, both at LDS Historical Department.
38. Unpublished manuscript minutes of sermon of 23 March 1853, Heber C. Kimball Papers, LDS Historical Department.
39. *A Series of Instructions and Remarks by President Brigham Young at a Special Council, Tabernacle, March 21, 1858* (Salt Lake City, 1858), pp. 3-4, pamphlet in Frederick Kesler Collection, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah. Also reported in A. Karl Larson and Katharine Miles Larson, *Diary of Charles Lowell Walker*, 2 vols. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1980), 1:25. However, Joseph Smith's immediate plans in June 1844 were to go east to Washington, D.C., to obtain federal protection for the embattled Nauvoo Mormons prior to the eventual westward move he had contemplated since 1842. In 1844 the eventual refuge in the West was apparently not clear in Joseph's mind: the Great Basin, Rocky Mountains, Texas, and Vancouver Island were all possible sites in the 1844-1845 period.
40. Manuscript fragment of Nauvoo Legion History, originally in Nauvoo Collection, LDS Historical Department; also referred to by Stephen Markham in remarks in public meetings in Utah, Provo School of the Prophets, 6 July 1868, LDS Historical Department.
41. Doctrine and Covenants 112:15, Utah edition; Doctrine and Covenants 105:66, RLDS edition; "History of Brigham Young," *LDS Millennial Star* 26 (4 June 1864): 359.
42. William Clayton Journal, 4 July, 6 July 1844.
43. *Ibid.*, 12 July 1844.

44. Roberts, *History of the Church*, 7:213; William Clayton Journal, 4 Aug. 1844; Crandall Dunn Journal, 5 Aug. 1844, at LDS Historical Department; D. Michael Quinn, "Mormon Succession Crisis of 1844," *BYU Studies* 16 (Winter 1976): 187-233.
45. George Laub 1845-1846 Journal, p. 91, and William Burton Diary, May 1845, both at LDS Historical Department; Henry and Catharine Brooke to Leonard and Mary Pickel, 15 Nov. 1844, Leonard Pickel Papers, Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, hereafter cited as Yale University.
46. Roberts, *History of the Church* 7:236, footnote, cites William C. Staines Journal as saying that there were "a few dissenting voices," and "History of William Adams, Wrote by himself January 1894," p. 15, says "out of that vast multitude about twenty voted for Rigdon to be Gardian," Brigham Young University.
47. *Times and Seasons* (15 Aug. 1844): 618; italics in original. On the day the Quorum of Twelve Apostles sustained Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards as a separate First Presidency; President Young reminded them, "You admit all the time that Joseph is still the 1st. Presy of the Ch." Miscellaneous Minutes, 5 Dec. 1847, p. 13, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Church Archives.
48. Brigham Young 1837-1844 Journal, 19 Sept. 1844; Heber C. Kimball 1844-1845 Journal, entry after 27 May 1845, both at LDS Historical Department.
49. William Clayton Journal, 22 Dec. 1844, 12 Jan., 26-27 Jan. 1845.
50. Quinn, "The Council of Fifty and Its Members," p. 171; Willard Richards Journal, 21 Feb. 1844. See note 39 regarding the intended location.
51. Manuscript Minutes of Conference, 7 April 1845, in the handwriting of Thomas Bullock, Miscellaneous Meeting Minutes, and Brigham Young to Wilford Woodruff, 8 May 1845, Woodruff Papers; and Willard Richards Journal, 15 Aug. 1845, all at LDS Historical Department.
52. Manuscript minutes of Brigham Young sermon "on the occasion of a family meeting, held at his residence," 25 Dec. 1857 (italics added), and Miscellaneous Minutes, 12 Feb. 1849, p. 2, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Historical Department.
53. Henry Brown, *History of Illinois* (New York: New York Press, 1844) p. 489; Statement of Lucy Mack Smith, 27 June 1845, Affidavits Collection, and Blessing of Joseph Smith III, given by Joseph Smith, Sr., in Kirtland, written by Lucy Mack Smith from memory in 1845, both at LDS Historical Department; Journal of John Taylor, 27 and 30 June 1845, quoted in B. H. Roberts, *Succession in the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret news, 1894), p. 19-23.
54. William Clayton Journal, 10 Dec. 1845; Heber C. Kimball Journal, 10 Dec. 1845; Roberts, *History of the Church* 7:470-72, 541-42.
55. Pamphlet printed in *Warsaw Signal* (Warsaw, Illinois), 29 Oct. 1845, pp. 1, 4.
56. James Monroe Journal, 24 April 1845, Yale University.
57. William Smith to James J. Strang, 25 Dec. 1846, Document 27b, Strang Manuscripts, Yale University.
58. *Voree Herald* 1 (Oct. 1846); Quinn, "The Council of Fifty and Its Members," p. 193.
59. William Clayton Journal, 23 May 1845; Adams to A.R. Tewkesbury, 14 June 1845, both at LDS Historical Department.
60. William W. Blair Diary, 15 May 1865; *LDS Herald* 8 (1 Oct. 1865); *Voree Herald* 1 (July 1846). Adams' original letter is Document 195 in Strang Manuscripts, Yale University.
61. Blessing given to Joseph Smith III and to Julia Murdock, undated and patriarch not indicated, but signed by E. M. Greene, clerk, in Inez Smith David Papers, RLDS Research Library and Archives.
62. Wilford Woodruff Journal, 16 Feb. 1847; Brigham Young Office Journal, 23 Feb. 1860, both at LDS Historical Department; *Journal of Discourses*, 4:6 John D. Lee, *Mormonism Unveiled* (St. Louis: Bryan, Brand & Co., 1877), pp. 155, 161-162, 164; statement of John H. Carter in *Temple Lot*, p. 181.
63. Inez Smith David, *The Story of the Church* (Independence, Missouri: Herald House, 1948); Mary Audentia Smith Anderson and Bertha Anderson Hulmes, eds., *Joseph Smith III and the Restoration* (1832-1914) (Independence: Herald House, 1979. Robert D. Hutchins, "Joseph Smith III: Moderate Mormon" (M. A. Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1977.) Aside from personal visits of Utah Mormons, George A. Smith invited Joseph Smith III to come to Utah in letters of 13 March 1849 and 24 June 1854.
64. *Journal of Discourses*, 8:69.

65. Samuel H.B. Smith to George A. Smith, 10 July 1860, Mss 1046, Special Collection, Brigham Young University; Joseph Fielding Smith, *Life of Joseph F. Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1938), pp. 197-198.
66. Alexander Hale Smith Diary, 14 May 1864, and partial account of the Joseph III blessing ceremony after a torn-out page. See William W. Blair Diary, 14 June 1874, where Whitehead tells what he had told Alexander.
67. Minutes of the RLDS Council of the Twelve Apostles, Book A, p. 11 (3 May 1865) and p. 34 (9 April 1867), RLDS Research Library and Archives.
68. David H. Smith to Brother Sherman, 27 July 1872, RLDS Research Library and Archives.
69. Paul M. Edwards, "The Sweet Singer of Israel: David Hyrum Smith," *BYU Studies* 12 (Winter 1972): 175-176, see note 30.
70. *Journal of Discourses*, 3:212, 5:296, 6:320, 8:69, 11:115, 18:70-71.
71. Edmund C. Briggs Journal, 7 Oct. 1863, RLDS Research Library and Archives; see manuscript minutes of Brigham Young sermon, 7 Oct. 1863, reported by George D. Watt, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Historical Department.
72. Manuscript minutes of sermon, 7 Oct. 1866 recorded by George D. Watt, Brigham Young Collection, LDS Historical Department. Brigham Young looked to David rather than to young Joseph as eventual Church president as early as August 1860. See Brigham Young office journal, 15 Aug. 1860.
73. Alma R. Blair, "The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints: Moderate Mormonism," in *Restoration Movement: Essays in Mormon History*, ed. by F. Mark McKiernan, Alma R. Blair, and Paul M. Edwards (Lawrence, Kansas: Coronado Press, 1973), p. 218.
74. RLDS and Mormons will probably always debate the significance of the words of the 1844 blessing to Joseph Smith III: "Verily, thus saith the Lord: if he abides in me, his days shall be lengthened upon the earth, but, if he abides not me, I, the Lord, will receive him, in an instant, unto myself." Since Joseph Smith III lived to the age of eighty-two as president of the Reorganization, RLDS interpreters quite naturally will regard this as vindication of their position and repudiation of the Mormons of Utah, whereas the latter will tend to be puzzled, at the least. From the most detailed analysis and reflection upon historical evidences, the author feels that it is impossible to adopt an exclusivist argument or interpretation about this issue, as expressed in the concluding paragraph of this article. Both Brigham Young and Joseph Smith III were "True" to Joseph Smith and "abided" in the Lord. Anyone adopting an exclusivist interpretation of the above quoted words of the Joseph Smith III blessing will also have to confront Joseph Smith's blessing of 18 December 1833 to Oliver Cowdery (who by the time he was excommunicated from the church in 1838 was an entrenched opponent of Joseph Smith's theocracy and polygamy): "for he shall have part with me in the keys of the Kingdom of the last days, and we shall judge this generation by our testimony: and the keys shall never be taken from us, but shall rest with us for an everlasting priesthood forever and ever." Blessing of Joseph Smith to Oliver Cowdery in Joseph Smith Sr. Patriarchal Blessing Book. 1:12, manuscript of blessings in handwriting of Oliver Cowdery, LDS Historical Department.