



The Gospel Doctrine Class



Doctrine & Covenants - Lesson 32

To Seal the Testimony

“Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it.” (D&C 135:3)

D&C 135

A study of this lesson will teach us about the martyrdom of the Prophet Joseph Smith and strengthen our testimonies of his calling as a prophet of God.

Joseph Smith: "You don't know me; you never knew my heart. No man knows my history. I cannot tell it: I shall never undertake it. I don't blame any one for not believing my history. If I had not experienced what I have, I would not have believed it myself. I never did harm any man since I was born in the world. My voice is always for peace.

"I cannot lie down until all my work is finished. I never think any evil, nor do anything to the harm of my fellow-man. When I am called by the trump of the archangel and weighed in the balance, you will all know me then." (History of the Church, 6:317)

Brigham Young: "What is the nature and beauty of Joseph's mission? You know that I am one of his Apostles. When I first heard him preach, he brought heaven and earth together; and all the priests of the day could not tell me anything correct about heaven, hell, God, angels, or devils: they were as blind as Egyptian darkness. When I saw Joseph Smith, he took heaven, figuratively speaking, and brought it down to earth; and he took the earth, brought it up, and opened up, in plainness and simplicity, the things of God; and that is the beauty of his mission." (Journal of Discourses, 5:332)

Wilford Woodruff: "Joseph Smith was what he professed to be, a prophet of God, a seer and revelator. He laid the foundation of this Church and kingdom, and lived long enough to deliver the keys of the kingdom to the Elders of Israel, unto the Twelve Apostles. He spent the last winter of his life, some three or four months, with the Quorum of the Twelve, teaching them. It was not merely a few hours ministering to them the ordinances of the Gospel; but he spent day after day, week after week and month after month, teaching them and a few others the things of the kingdom of God. Said he, during that period, 'I now rejoice. I have lived until I have seen this burden, which has rested on my shoulders, rolled on to the shoulders

of other men; now the keys of the kingdom are planted on the earth to be taken away no more for ever.' But until he had done this, they remained with him; and had he been taken away they would have had to be restored by messengers of heaven. But he lived until every key, power and principle of the holy Priesthood was sealed on the Twelve and on President Young, as their President. He told us that he was going away to leave us, going away to rest. Said he, 'You have to round up your shoulders to bear up the kingdom. No matter what becomes of me. I have desired to see that Temple built, but I shall not live to see it. You will; you are called upon to bear off this kingdom.' This language was plain enough, but we did not understand it any more than the disciples of Jesus when he told them he was going away, and that if he went not the Comforter would not come. It was just so with Joseph. He said this time after time to the Twelve and to the Female Relief Societies and in his public discourses; but none of seemed to understand that he was going to seal his testimony with his blood, but so it was." (Ibid., 13:164)

Josiah Quincy (former mayor of Boston): "It is by no means improbable that some future textbook, for the use of generations yet unborn, will contain a question something like this: What historical American of the nineteenth century has exerted the most powerful influence upon the destinies of his countrymen? And it is by no means impossible that the answer to the interrogatory may be thus written: Joseph Smith, the 'Mormon' Prophet. And the reply, absurd as it doubtless seems to most men now living, may be an obvious commonplace to their descendants. History deals in surprises and paradoxes quite as startling as this. The man who established a religion in this age of free debate, who was and is today accepted by hundreds of thousands as a direct emissary from the Most High - such a rare human being is not to be disposed of by pelting his memory with unsavory epithets." (quoted by B.H. Roberts in, Joseph Smith, The Prophet Teacher, pp8-9)

Next Week's Reading Assignment
D&C 107:22-24; Our Heritage, pages 66-71