

# EARLY YEARS

Nathaniel R. Ricks

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# Triumphs of the Young Joseph F. Smith

“**S**urely, this man who presides over the Church, and whose life is an open book, has been prepared for his labor.”

—*John A. Widtsoe*<sup>1</sup>

At the 1984 Sidney B. Sperry Symposium on the Doctrine and Covenants, Robert L. Millet gave a presentation on the process that led Joseph F. Smith to receive the revelation now found in Doctrine and Covenants 138. Brother Millet catalogued a number of events throughout President Smith’s life that prepared him for his role as a revelator, among them his “frequent confrontation with death,” especially in losing members of his immediate family, his decades of Church service, and his prolific writings and sermons on spiritual subjects. Brother Millet surmised, “He was foreordained to serve the Lord in the leading councils of the Church, and he spent the last fifty years of his life realizing that election, actively involved as a legal administrator in the kingdom.”<sup>2</sup> This perspective coincides with conclusions I have made after several years of examining Joseph F. Smith’s Sandwich Islands and British mission diaries. His youth

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*Nathaniel R. Ricks teaches history at Endeavor Hall and Pikes Peak Community College.*

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provided spiritually grounding experiences and planted the seeds of character traits notable in his presidential years. Rather than solely the transcending of a difficult and dismal past, we see in his early life examples of how the Lord prepared Joseph F. Smith for the leader he would become—and how young Joseph F. began the process of triumphing over his weaknesses.

### Foundational Experiences

A number of Joseph F. Smith biographers have noted the challenges inherent in the death of Joseph F.'s mother, Mary Fielding Smith.<sup>3</sup> Orphaned at thirteen years of age, young Joseph F. certainly struggled to overcome the loss of his sole living parent. (His father, Hyrum Smith, had been murdered alongside Joseph Smith Jr. in 1844.) Yet during the summer prior to Mary Fielding Smith's death, Joseph F. experienced two spiritually foundational events: his baptism and his patriarchal blessing. His testimony of the transformation inherent in baptism has been quoted often (most recently by Bishop Keith B. McMullin in the priesthood session of the October 2011 general conference),<sup>4</sup> yet his patriarchal blessing, bestowed at the hands of his great-uncle, offered counsel, promises, and preparation that have heretofore eluded biographers. On June 25, 1852, barely a month after his baptism, Church Patriarch John Smith (1781–1854) placed his hands upon Joseph F. Smith's head and issued a number of promises that are enlightening, considering Joseph F.'s later life.<sup>5</sup>

Among other things, Joseph F. was promised that he would enjoy a “fullness . . . of the everlasting priesthood,” which would “reveal unto [him] all the hidden mysteries of the Redeemer's kingdom.” We could well consider this a foretelling of the later vision of the redemption of the dead and possibly even his setting apart as Church President, holding all keys of the priesthood.<sup>6</sup> Joseph F. was told that he, like others of the lineage of Ephraim, was called to “push the [Lord's] people together from the ends of the earth and from the Isles afar off,” and was promised that he would baptize captains and sailors while “lead[ing] thousands to Zion.” Throughout his missions he placed special emphasis on recording the names of captains of vessels on which he traveled,<sup>7</sup> especially while leading many British Saints to Utah in his role as emigration agent. He was promised a large posterity: “They shall spread upon the Mountains so numerous that they cannot be numbered.”<sup>8</sup> His role as a Church leader was foretold with two phrases: “Your name shall be had in honorable

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remembrance among the saints forever”—certainly the constant retelling of stories from his life fulfills this specifically—and “The mantle of thy father shall be upon thee.” Hyrum Smith had served as Church Patriarch, which office eventually rested on his oldest son, Joseph F.’s half brother John; Hyrum also jointly held the Presidency of the Church with Joseph Smith Jr. following Oliver Cowdery’s apostasy, in a position usually called “assistant president” of the Church (see D&C 124:94–95). Joseph F. assuming the mantle of his father could thus possibly refer to his destiny to lead the Church, though other explanations of the mantle could apply as well. Hyrum had received this promise of the Lord in 1829: “Seek not for riches but for wisdom; and, behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you. . . . I will impart unto you of my Spirit, which shall enlighten your mind, which shall fill your soul with joy; and then shall ye know . . . all things whatsoever you desire of me” (D&C 11:7, 13–14). Perhaps, then, the promise of inheriting his father’s mantle could be a reinforcement of the idea that Joseph F. would be a revealer of truth.

One last phrase from the patriarchal blessing merits discussion. Before the blessing’s end, Patriarch Smith promised his great-nephew, “You shall live to take vengeance [*sic*] on those that have slain your Father.” This seemed a most interesting and dark promise: is this meant to imply that the thirteen-year-old Joseph F. would be able to exact vengeance on the mob that killed Joseph and Hyrum? Perhaps not, for the emphasis on vengeance may be referring to justice and closure rather than retribution. Those who killed Joseph and Hyrum at the Carthage Jail in June 1844 made it a dark place, a place of infamy for the Church. When the Church, under President Joseph F. Smith’s direction, purchased the jail in 1903, the process of transforming the place from one of darkness and despair to one of reverent memory began. What more fitting vengeance than that thousands of Church members and investigators visit the site of the Martyrdom annually, ensuring that Joseph and Hyrum’s deaths will not go unremembered and that the work of the Restoration will not go unnoticed? Carthage was just the first such historic site to be purchased: the Joseph Smith birthplace in Sharon, Vermont, and the Smith family homestead and Sacred Grove followed within a few years.<sup>9</sup>

Joseph F.’s baptism and patriarchal blessing illustrate that the Lord was mindful of both the young boy and the trials he would soon endure. Following this spiritual outpouring, Joseph F.’s mother died. He entered a challenging eighteen months, yet he had been granted a degree of preparation for his life.

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*Carthage Jail.* © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

Similar preparatory events—and further opportunities for growth—came while Joseph F. served his missions to the Sandwich Islands (1854–57) and the British Isles (1860–63).<sup>10</sup> During these two missions, Joseph F. Smith left behind a rich record of diaries and letters that portray him as a young man who prevailed in difficult circumstances.

Biographers have noted both spiritual “mountaintop experiences” and “valleys of discouragement and doubt” during Joseph F.’s first two missions.<sup>11</sup> Far from being a reluctant or ill-prepared emissary of the restored gospel, however (as some have hinted that his first call to serve was intended solely to get him out of trouble), Joseph F. threw himself into the work wholeheartedly.<sup>12</sup> (One could well point out that he had been fortified for his work with

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the receipt of his endowment, assumedly on the same day he was set apart as a missionary.<sup>13</sup>) Indeed, shortly after arriving in the Sandwich Islands, he wrote to Apostle George A. Smith, his father's cousin, "I know that the work in which I am ingaged [*sic*] is the worke of the living and true god, and I am reddy [*sic*] to bare my testimony of the same, at any time ore at any place ore in whatsoever circumstances I may be placed. and hope and pray that I ever may prove faithful in serving the lord my god. I am happy to say that I am reddy to go through thick and thin for this cause in which I am ingaged, and truly hope and pray that that [*sic*] I may prove prove [*sic*] faithful to the end."<sup>14</sup> During the two missions he served between 1854 and 1863, Joseph F. began to develop a number of qualities that later became hallmarks of his time in the Church presidency, indicating not only the continuing presence of the Lord's preparatory hand, but also the deliberate effort Joseph F. placed on triumphing over his weaknesses and obstacles. Among the qualities evident in the records of these two missions are Joseph F.'s intellectual development, his ability to defend the Church, his dedication to family and friends, his love for the Saints, and his spiritual aptitude.

### **Intellectual Development**

First, Joseph F. grew in his knowledge of the world and its ways. Though his formal education had been meager, the Lord provided opportunities for Joseph F. to educate himself enough throughout his life, as one tributary wrote, to have "read widely, spoken with men of many minds, and . . . thought deeply. Of broad and generous sympathies with everything that is noble and good, he has acquired a culture, which none dares question."<sup>15</sup> There is ample evidence of this intellectual preparation throughout Joseph F.'s missions. During his first mission, he seemed to be reading constantly—at least, his diaries convey that idea. Not only did he study religion, but "Joseph F. read voraciously in history, philosophy, poetry, the classics, current events, virtually anything he could acquire. He regularly perused the LDS-oriented newspapers *Deseret News* and *Western Standard*, reading each issue in its entirety whenever he received copies by mail. Other publications he occasionally came across included the *Mormon*, *London News*, *New York Weekly Times*, *Harper's Magazine*, and *Zion's Watchman*."<sup>16</sup> On his British mission he continued to read as much as he could.<sup>17</sup> "As a direct result of the print culture of which he eagerly partook, Joseph F. gained an enlarged vocabulary, a broader knowledge of the world, and a greater appreciation of his own LDS culture."<sup>18</sup>

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He also grew through his own writing—of letters, diary entries, mission reports, and even occasional lines of doggerel. Consider, for example, the ludicrous letter Joseph F. drafted to Joseph C. Rich, fellow missionary and son of Apostle Charles C. Rich, while in Britain:

Humbly deprecatingly and appologetically imploring your Extreem leniency and benevolent paliation of my unpardonable inadvertancy in procrastinating to such an incorrigable extention, my feeble essay to expaciate in acknowledgement of your eloquential acrafamptical but brief, curt, communication of the 13th inst.

I assume an unnormal and sedentary position to inchovate my allocutionary and Chirographical elaborations to you. Perhaps I ought to perpetrate essoine for arrata prior to farther procedure, but feeling sanguin your knowledge of the inamplitude of my escritoir will elicit from your high-toned benevolence, sentiments of alleviation anti-animadversion and non-annui, I greatly avoid the exigency of the case.<sup>19</sup>

Numerous pages of Joseph F.'s diaries were devoted to new vocabulary words, verb conjugations, inspirational poetry, and handwriting practice. Additionally, Joseph F. meticulously catalogued the natural wonders, curiosities, and historically significant events he observed while on his missions. In the Sandwich Islands these included the 1856 eruption of Mauna Loa on the Island of Hawaii; tours of sacrificial temples, lava tubes, and live volcanoes; and news received of disasters at sea and scandals in the Hawaiian royal family.<sup>20</sup> While in Britain, Joseph F. noted marriages and deaths in the British royal family, industrial tragedies, news of the American Civil War, and other sundry happenings.<sup>21</sup> Traveling through New York City in July 1863, Joseph F. described the fear and chaos of the riots that broke out in response to the Union's imposition of conscription during the Civil War.<sup>22</sup> And numerous times in his diaries Joseph F. described the plays, circuses, grand estates, curiosity displays, zoological menageries, and architectural wonders he observed while in Europe.<sup>23</sup> Each mission expanded his vision of the world, providing the foundational experiences that would help him one day lead an increasingly global church.

### **Defender of the Faith**

The second attribute in which Joseph F. was prepared was a fiery commitment to the defense of Mormonism. He regularly studied the history of the Church and

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availed himself of opportunities to argue against the Church's critics. While on the island of Molokā'i in 1857, Joseph F. spent an entire evening in heated repartee with Samuel Gelston Dwight, a Presbyterian minister. By Joseph F.'s own account, "Some fiew [*sic*] gesticulations and feats of the strength of the Lungs [were] performed," lasting until midnight. "I told [Dwight] he was bigoted, that [refusing to read a tract defending plural marriage] was not 'proving all things and holding fast to the good,' and that he who judges a matter before he heareth, is not wise. I told him a person who would do so was not a man, 'what is he then?' said Mr Dwight. a 'monkey,' said I."<sup>24</sup> Joseph F.'s own first cousin, Josephine Smith, incurred a tirade of testimony when she criticized the Utah Mormons in a letter; Joseph F. replied, "Do you not know that Mormonism is the foundation upon which I have built? The Life of my soul, the sweetest morsel of my existance, the highth of my pride and ambition? *it is!* . . . —hear it ye worlds! —I KNOW IT IS TRUE!"<sup>25</sup> Additional heated exchanges took place in Britain: with Joseph F.'s uncle James Fielding, with distant family, and with relatives of Church members.<sup>26</sup> In each encounter, Joseph F. was challenged in several ways: first, in his reasoning and explanation of the gospel, and second, in controlling his temper. Joseph F. acknowledged the nature of his temper; when confronted by a distant cousin's husband, who was ignorant of his beliefs, Joseph F. recorded, "I never was so insulted and managed my rather unmanageable temper well."<sup>27</sup> While he eventually gained a reputation as a "fiery radical" during his years in the apostleship,<sup>28</sup> these early preparatory experiences help to illustrate why, by the time he reached the presidency, he could answer the criticisms and questions of the most powerful men and media outlets in America without batting an eye.<sup>29</sup>

### **Family Man and Faithful Friend**

Biographers have often focused on the loneliness that attended Joseph F. following the loss of his mother; however, a close examination of his letters and diaries clearly illustrates a third attribute of triumphal preparation: that Joseph F. began early in his life to build an extensive network of kinship and friendship; a network that would expand throughout his life to include hundreds of immediate and extended family members, in addition to the countless individuals who regarded Joseph F. as a friend. In addition to writing to dozens of friends and family members in California and Utah, Joseph F. regarded his fellow Sandwich Islands missionaries with the highest esteem, rejoicing in the time they spent together both at mission



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conferences and in the field.<sup>30</sup> He also found joy in his relationships with his siblings. Joseph F. exchanged numerous letters with his half brother, John Smith (who became Presiding Patriarch of the Church while Joseph F. was away), his half sister Sarah Griffin and her husband, Charles, and his sister Martha Ann Smith, who married William J. Harris in 1857. Joseph F. also regularly followed developments in the efforts to help his half sister Lovina emigrate to Utah from the east.<sup>31</sup>

Church leaders and other mentors at home provided friendship, direction, and counsel. Joseph F. exchanged letters with Apostles George A. Smith (his father's first cousin) and Heber C. Kimball (whom Mary Fielding Smith had married before the exodus to Utah); he was familiar with Brigham Young, who occasionally read the young missionary's letters, and he cherished the stanzas of poetry written to him by Eliza R. Snow.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, one of his most lasting relationships had its inception during this time: he began corresponding with George Q. Cannon, who was running the Latter-day Saint newspaper *Western Standard* and publishing religious literature (including the Hawaiian-language Book of Mormon) in California at the time. They would later serve together in the First Presidency for more than twenty years.

Joseph F. especially felt love and praise in the words of two of his mother's siblings, Joseph Fielding and Mercy R. Thompson. Fielding wrote to his nephew in early 1857: "I have rejoiced to behold the Grace of God which has been manifested in your Communications generally . . . and I can truly say that your Success in your Mission has been and is [a] Matter of much rejoicing with myself and my Family." Thompson wrote to Joseph F. a few months later: "I cannot help having something like a Mother's feelings [toward you] for I have but one on Earth who seems any [d]earer to me than yourself [i.e. Mary Jane Thompson, her daughter], and I do not hesitate to say that I believe you have not many who feel more deeply interested in your welfare than myself."<sup>33</sup> Joseph F. continued developing relationships as a British missionary, adding his own spouse to the myriad missionaries, Church leaders, and family members he strove to love. While it would not be until later that he met one of his most devoted friends, Charles Nibley, the seeds were planted on Joseph F.'s British mission for one of his and Nibley's favorite pastimes: the game of checkers. Joseph F. bought a checkerboard in October 1860 and developed this talent by playing—time and time again—against British Saints, fellow missionaries, and traveling companions.<sup>34</sup>

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One could argue that the loss of his family and his early separation from loved ones led him to surround himself with many friends and a large posterity. At the very least, we see evidence that the Lord placed many people in his path; people that could both buoy him up in challenging times and have their lives blessed by associating with him.

### **Love for the Saints**

A fourth, and closely related, attribute of triumph is evident in Joseph F.'s development of an immense love for members of the Church, first in his mission fields and later throughout the Church. Edward H. Anderson noted at the close of Joseph F.'s life that he had been "ever anxious for the welfare" of Church members and that "even in the midst of the cares, burdens and anxieties of his active life weighing heavily upon him, he was never known to be too busy to give counsel, experience, testimony, helpful ideas, [and] sympathetic consideration to workers or members of the Church who called upon him."<sup>35</sup> He cultivated this "sympathetic consideration" first in the Sandwich Islands and British Isles, where he spent the better part of nine years serving others and being served by them in turn. His diaries are replete with touching stories of service, such as the time when Church member Jonathan Napela gave Joseph F. the shoes from his own feet, and the many instances of small gifts given to Joseph F. by poor sisters among the British Saints.<sup>36</sup> Equally compelling is the love Joseph F. reciprocated. When leaving the Saints on Maui in 1856, Joseph F. recorded, "I then arose and attempted to speak, but was over come with tears for the first time [and] the saints joined me in a brief and hearty show of tears; . . . we shuck [shook] hands with some before whom we had often stood to proclaim our message, as we suppose now for the last time."<sup>37</sup>

His heart ached for individuals facing severe trials, like the Englishman whose wife was labeled insane and incarcerated, leaving five children.<sup>38</sup> And yet he began to learn that those most in need of his help were unrepentant sinners. He developed a reputation as a powerful counselor and speaker, a "preacher of righteousness."<sup>39</sup> He realized during his missionary years that withholding chastisement could be more detrimental to Church members than injuring their pride. He often berated members who left the Church or spurned its teachings and had to bridle his passion to avoid speaking himself hoarse. Joseph F. was cautioned by his brother John (who had received reports on Joseph F.'s preaching style from their distant cousin,

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Silas S. Smith), “When you preach dont hollow [holler] so loud and do take care of your lungs [just] because you are young dont think you can stand every thing and cannot be wore out.”<sup>40</sup> Certainly, Joseph F. expended immense effort in learning the principles of the gospel and communicating them to the Saints whom he loved so deeply, growing that love throughout his life.

### Revealer of Truth

Lastly, Joseph F. began early in life to develop his spiritual ears, evidence of preparation for his role as a revelator. In 1856, while reflecting with melancholy on prior commemorations of the 24th of July, he concluded “I must content myself and obey the voice of the good shepherd [*sic*] that said ‘he that loveth his Father, his Mother his friends his lands &c, more than he loveth me he is not worthy of me,’ I pray his spirit to be with me, that [I] may for ever listen to his voice, and the world let go where it will.”<sup>41</sup> Joseph F. had numerous spiritual experiences on his missions, experiences that would strengthen his testimony of the restored gospel and of the Lord’s watchful care. For example, at a Sabbath meeting on the island of Hawaii, during a season of loss and depression for the young missionary, Joseph F. recorded that he “was made to rejoice, for the spirit bore testimony to [him] of the work of the Lord.”<sup>42</sup> In myriad other diary entries, he documented the presence of the Holy Ghost in his own activities and in the midst of the Saints.<sup>43</sup>

It was as a missionary that Joseph F. learned to rely on dreams as a source of inspiration, comfort, and counsel from the Lord. The story of his so-called “dream of manhood” has been quoted many times (and incorrectly remembered as occurring on Joseph F.’s mission to the Sandwich Islands),<sup>44</sup> but an earlier dream from his Hawaiian mission provided similar inspiration during a discouraging season. After reflecting on the abject poverty of the Hawaiian Islanders, and his own poverty following a terrible fire in 1856, he dreamt that Brigham Young met him outside the “old Tithing store” at the corner of South Temple and Main Street in Salt Lake City, surprised to find the young missionary home already. “You are going back a gain [*sic*] in the morning, are you not?” asked Brother Brigham. Joseph F. replied, “yess [*sic*] if you want me to.” With that, Brigham refused to shake hands and went off. Joseph F. concluded, “I have not finished my mission yet,” and woke the next morning recommitted to the work.<sup>45</sup>

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Numerous dreams followed. Some seemed sources of counsel; others filled him with a sense of foreboding.<sup>46</sup> By the time he received the vision of the redemption of the dead that would be later canonized as Doctrine and Covenants 138, Joseph F. would be well acquainted with the revelatory medium of dreams. The proximity to the spirit which made possible his 1918 vision was indeed developed over a lifetime.

### **Conclusion**

I have not intended this list of preparatory categories and principles to be comprehensive. Certainly we could note Joseph F.'s early experiences in Church leadership, fiscal responsibility, musicality, organization, or other areas. At any rate, his life is exemplary of that which we hope is taking place in our own lives: over time, he became something that the Lord prepared him to become—and that he *chose* to become. A story is often recounted of the time period following his mother's death: he wrote to Samuel L. Adams in 1888 that he (Joseph F.) had been like “a comet or a fiery meteor, without attraction or gravitation to keep [him] balanced or guide [him] within reasonable bounds.”<sup>47</sup> While Joseph F. certainly meant this simile to illustrate his self-destructive capacity, we could note that he truly did become a comet, a meteor—a shining light for many whom he influenced—once he realized the potential the Lord saw in him. He found guidance within the bounds of the gospel, within the bounds of the preparatory experiences the Lord provided him in his early life and beyond.

### **Notes**

The title of this paper is loosely based on Scott Kenney's “Before the Beard: Trials of the Young Joseph F. Smith,” *Sunstone* 120 (November 2001): 20–42. The author would like to thank David Grua and Ben Park for their feedback in the writing process.

1. John A. Widtsoe, “An Appreciation,” in *Gospel Doctrine: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Joseph F. Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1919), 644–45.
2. Robert L. Millet, “The Vision of the Redemption of the Dead,” in *Hearken, O Ye People: Discourses on the Doctrine and Covenants* (Sandy, UT: Randall Book, 1984), 253.
3. Scott G. Kenney, “Before the Beard: Trials of the Young Joseph F. Smith,” *Sunstone* 20 (November 2001): 23, 25; Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and R. Q. Shupe, *Joseph F. Smith: Portrait of a Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 20–21; Francis M. Gibbons, *Joseph F. Smith: Patriarch and Preacher, Prophet of God* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book,

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- 1984), 26–27; and *Teachings of the Presidents of the Church* (Salt Lake City: Intellectual Reserve, 1998), xv.
4. Keith B. McMullin, “The Power of the Aaronic Priesthood,” *Ensign*, November 2011, 48. The original reflection on baptism is given by Joseph F. Smith, in Conference Report, April 1898, 65–66.
  5. Patriarchal Blessing of Joseph F. Smith, 1852, holograph, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT. John Smith was a brother of Joseph Smith Sr. and thus Joseph F.’s great-uncle. He served as Patriarch of the Church from 1847–54, and in ten years as local and Church Patriarch he issued 5,560 blessings. See Irene M. Bates and E. Gary Smith, *Lost Legacy: The Mormon Office of Presiding Patriarch* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1996), 115–18.
  6. As Robert Millet ably phrased it, the vision “confirms and expands upon earlier prophetic insights concerning work for the dead; it also introduces doctrinal truths not had in the Church before October of 1918.” See Millet, “Vision,” 259–63.
  7. Joseph F. Smith, diary, April 17, 1856; April 21, 1857; May 5, 1857; and July 11, 1857, in “My Candid Opinion”: *The Sandwich Islands Diaries of Joseph F. Smith, 1856–1857*, ed. Nathaniel R. Ricks (Salt Lake City: The Smith-Pettit Foundation, 2011), 25, 94, 99, and 112; and Joseph F. Smith, diary, July 27, 1860; May 14, 1862; September 1, 1862; May 14, 1863; and July 2, 1863, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.
  8. His five wives (excluding Levira Annette Clark Smith, who divorced him without children in 1867) bore him forty-three children (and an additional five were adopted). Shortly before his death, he spoke to his gathered progeny: “When I look around me and see my boys and girls, whom the Lord has given to me . . . I have reached the treasure of my life, the whole substance that makes life worth living. I have a family I am proud of, every individual member of it I love.” Joseph Fielding Smith, *Life of Joseph F. Smith, Sixth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1938), 477–78; see also 487–90.
  9. See Edgar T. Lyon, “How Authentic Are Mormon Historic Sites in Vermont and New York?,” *BYU Studies* 9, no. 3 (1969): 341–50.
  10. While most biographers have discussed each of these missions, few have utilized Joseph F.’s own words in analyzing the positive changes each mission brought about in his life. Gibbons devotes two chapters to the Sandwich Islands mission and portions of an additional two chapters to the British mission, though he mostly includes stories taken from Joseph Fielding Smith’s biography of Joseph F., which did not rely on Joseph F.’s diaries (see Gibbons, *Joseph F. Smith*, 26–44 and 47–64; and Joseph Fielding Smith, *Life of Joseph F. Smith*, 164–92, 196–205). Holtzapfel and Shupe spend less than five pages on the Sandwich Islands mission and a mere three paragraphs on the British mission, citing only five total Joseph F. Smith diary entries (*Portrait of a Prophet*, 21–26, 29–31). Kenney’s 2001 article does refer to the Joseph F. diaries, though it is confined primarily to discussing hardships faced by Joseph F. during the Sandwich Islands mission and the development of marital troubles between Joseph F. and his first wife, Levira, during the British mission. Kenney, “Before the Beard,” 25–30.
  11. Gibbons, *Joseph F. Smith*, 40; see also Kenney, “Before the Beard,” 25–30; and Holtzapfel and Shupe, *Portrait of a Prophet*, 21–26, 29–31.

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12. See Kenney, "Before the Beard," 23; Holtzapfel and Shupe, *Portrait of a Prophet*, 20–21; and Charles W. Nibley, "Reminiscences," in *Gospel Doctrine*, 655–56.
13. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Life of Joseph F. Smith*, 164; and Gibbons, *Joseph F. Smith*, 27.
14. Joseph F. Smith to George A. Smith, October 20, 1854, correspondence, George A. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
15. Widtsoe, "An Appreciation," 650–51. On Joseph F.'s formal education, see Kenney, "Before the Beard," 23–25. Joseph F. is sometimes regarded as an anti-intellectual, based on his role in both the First Presidency's proclamation "On the Origin of Man" (1909) and the so-called "BYU Crisis" of 1908–11, when he supported Brigham Young University's disciplining of several popular professors who had taught evolution and "higher biblical criticism." Yet, as this section elucidates, he strove to learn as much as he could about the world around him, interpreting it through the lens of faith. See Thomas M. Martin, Duane E. Jeffery, and Randy L. Bennett, "'Christ Is Scientist of This Earth': President Joseph F. Smith's Attitudes and Policies toward Science," in Thomas G. Alexander, ed., *Times of Transition: Proceedings of the 2000 Symposium of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History of Brigham Young University* (Provo, UT: Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History, 2003), 75–81; and Richard Sherlock, "Campus in Crisis: BYU, 1911," *Sunstone* 13 (January–February 1979): 10–19.
16. "My Candid Opinion," xiv.
17. Dozens of references to his reading various works appear in the British mission diaries. See Joseph F. Smith, diary, 1860–63, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
18. "My Candid Opinion," xiv–xv.
19. Joseph F. Smith, draft of letter to J. C. Rich, July 27, 1861, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
20. Joseph F. Smith, diary, May 20, 1856; April 19 and 29, 1856; August 22, 1856; December 25, 1856; and February 14, 1857, in "My Candid Opinion," 31, 26, 27, 50, 70, 81.
21. See examples in Joseph F. Smith, diary, December 16, 1861; March 10, 1863; January 27, 1862; and September 27, 1862, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
22. Joseph F. Smith, diary, July 13–18, 1863, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
23. See examples in Joseph F. Smith, diary, October 20, 1862; April 15, 1863; January 26, 1862; October 3, 1861; and August 29, 1862, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
24. See Joseph F. Smith, diary, June 29, 1857, in "My Candid Opinion," 109–10.
25. Josephine was a daughter of Don Carlos Smith and had relocated to California during the Mormon exodus. She remained estranged from the Church, though she would stay in touch with Joseph F. throughout their lives. See Josephine Smith to Joseph F. Smith, July 22, 1857, correspondence; and Joseph F. Smith to Josephine Smith, September 1, 1857, correspondence, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library, emphasis in original. See also "My Candid Opinion," 122n15.
26. Joseph F. Smith, diary, April 23–25, 1862, and December 22, 1860, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
27. Joseph F. Smith, diary, April 23, 1862, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
28. See Nibley, "Reminiscences," in *Gospel Doctrine*, 658.
29. See *Proceedings Before the Committee on Privileges and Elections of the United States Senate in the Matter of the Protests against the Right of Hon. Reed Smoot, a Senator From the State of Utah*,

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- to Hold His Seat*, 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904), 1:80–389; see also John P. Livingstone, “Prophet under Fire: President Joseph F. Smith Handles the Media,” in Alexander, *Times of Transition*, 43–54.
30. See, for example, Joseph F. Smith, diary, August 11, 1856; December 17, 1856; April 8, 1857; and October 4, 1857, in “*My Candid Opinion*,” 48, 69, 90, 131.
  31. See “*My Candid Opinion*,” 49n67, 75n27, 122n14.
  32. See “*My Candid Opinion*,” 75n27; and Eliza R. Snow, “Lines address’d to Elder Joseph Smith, Missionary to the Sandwich Island[s],” July 20, 1855, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library. The fact that the poem was not destroyed in the 1856 fire that took most of Joseph F.’s letters and personal effects indicates that he valued the poem enough to keep it with him rather than store it in his trunk at the mission headquarters on Lanai.
  33. Joseph Fielding Smith to Joseph F. Smith, January 6, 1857, correspondence; and Mercy R. Thompson to Joseph F. Smith, May 3, 1857, correspondence, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
  34. See examples in Joseph F. Smith, diary, October 25, 1860; November 9, 1860; February 4, 1861; and July 1, 1863, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
  35. Edward H. Anderson, “Last of the Old School of Veteran Leaders,” in *Gospel Doctrine*, 684.
  36. See Joseph F. Smith, diary, March 1, 1856, in “*My Candid Opinion*,” 13; and Joseph F. Smith diary, November 29, 1860; August 17, 1861; December 26, 1861; and February 25, 1862, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
  37. Joseph F. Smith, diary, March 30, 1856, in “*My Candid Opinion*,” 20. See another tender moment in Joseph F. Smith, diary, September 29, 1857, in “*My Candid Opinion*,” 129.
  38. Joseph F. Smith, diary, September 2, 1860, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
  39. See *Gospel Doctrine*, vi; and Nibley, “Reminiscences,” in *Gospel Doctrine*, 661.
  40. See examples of chastisement in Joseph F. Smith, diary, July 27, 1856, and January 26 and 27, 1857, in “*My Candid Opinion*,” 45–46 and 76; and Joseph F. Smith, diary, February 24, 1861, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library. On Joseph F.’s preaching style, see John Smith to Joseph F. Smith, November 3, 1856, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
  41. Joseph F. Smith, diary, July 24, 1856, in “*My Candid Opinion*,” 45.
  42. Joseph F. Smith, diary, June 26, 1856, Joseph F. Smith Papers, MS 1325, box 1, folder 3, Church History Library.
  43. See numerous examples from the Sandwich Islands mission in Joseph F. Smith, diary, January 27, 1856; February 8 and 24, 1856; March 6, 9, and 19, 1856; April 8, 1856; May 25, 1856; June 1, 8, and 29, 1856; July 23, 1856; August 7, 10, 30, and 31, 1856; September 6, 14, and 21, 1856; October 19, 1856; December 7, 1856; January 18, 1857; February 1, 1857; March 15, 1857; April 19 and 28, 1857; May 3, 1857; and August 9 and 23, 1857, in “*My Candid Opinion*,” 9, 10, 13–15, 17, 22, 32–34, 40, 45, 47, 48, 52–55, 61, 67, 75, 77, 86, 93, 96, 97, 118, 121. Additional examples from the British mission can be found in Joseph F. Smith, diary, September 9, 1860; January 6, 1861; November 10, 1861; December 15, 1861; May 25, 1862; June 29, 1862; and October 7, 1862, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
  44. The original dream took place during Joseph F.’s British mission; see Joseph F. Smith, diary, January 13, 1862, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.

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45. Joseph F. Smith, diary, July 5, 1856, in “*My Candid Opinion*,” 41.
46. See, for example, Joseph F. Smith, diary, June 6, 1856, in “*My Candid Opinion*,” 34; and Joseph F. Smith, diary, December 22, 1860; January 23, 1863; and April 27, 1863, Joseph F. Smith Papers, Church History Library.
47. Joseph F. Smith to Samuel L. Adams, May 11, 1888, quoted in Kenney, “Before the Beard,” 23.