

Lucy Mack Smith

Beginning in the year 1819,¹ there was a great revival of religion around Palmyra, New York, which extended to all denominations in the surrounding country. Many people came forward and presented themselves as seekers after religion. While these things were going forward, our son Joseph's mind became considerably troubled with regard to religion; and the following extract from his history will show the state of his feelings, and the result of his reflections on this occasion: [She then inserted Joseph Smith's account of his First Vision as found in *The Pearl Of Great Price*, *Joseph Smith-History*].

From this time until the twenty-first of September, 1823, Joseph continued to labor with his father, during which time he suffered every kind of opposition and persecution from the different orders of religionists, for reporting that he had a vision in which God the Eternal Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, communed with him.

On the evening of the twenty-first of September, Joseph retired to his bed in a serious and contemplative state of mind. He shortly betook himself to prayer and supplication to Almighty God, for a manifestation of his standing before him, and while thus engaged he received the following vision: [She inserted Joseph's account of the two initial appearances of the Angel Moroni, as recorded in *Joseph Smith-History*, then continued:]

When the angel ascended the second time, he left Joseph overwhelmed with astonishment, yet gave him but a short time to contemplate the things which he had told him before he made his reappearance, and rehearsed the same things over, adding a few words of caution and instruction. The angel then told him to tell his father all which he had both seen and heard.

The next day my husband, Alvin, and Joseph, were reaping together in the field, and as they were reaping Joseph stopped quite suddenly and seemed to be in a very deep study. This being quite unusual and strange, it attracted the attention of his father, upon which he discovered that Joseph was very pale.²

My husband, supposing that he was sick, told him to go to the house, and have his mother doctor him. He then started, but being weak and unable to proceed he lay down, when the angel visited him again and asked, "Why did you not tell your father that which I commanded you to tell him?"

Joseph replied, "I was afraid my father would not believe me."

The angel rejoined, "He will believe every word you say to him."

Joseph then promised the angel that he would do so; and he related to his father all that had passed between him and the angel the previous night and that morning.

Having heard the account, his father charged him to attend strictly to the instructions he had received from the heavenly messenger.

Soon after, Joseph went to the hill Cumorah, where the Angel Moroni again appeared and, among other things, showed him, by contrast, the difference between good and evil, and likewise the consequences of both obedience and disobedience to the commandments of God, in such a striking manner, that the impression was always vivid in his memory until the very end of his days; and that ever afterwards he was willing to keep the commandments of God.

The angel also told him that the time had not yet come for the plates to be

brought forth to the world; that he could not take them until he had learned to keep the commandments of God – not only willing, but able to do so. The angel bade Joseph to come to this place every year, and he would meet him and give him further instructions.

That evening, when family members were altogether, Joseph made known to them all he had communicated to his father in the field and also of his finding the record, as well as what passed between him and the angel.

The next evening we again gathered to hear of Joseph's experiences, but before proceeding he charged us not to mention out of the family that which he was about to say to us. The world was so wicked that when they came to a knowledge of these things they would try to take our lives; and that when we should obtain the plates, our names would be cast out as evil by all people.

From this time forth, Joseph continued to receive instructions from the Lord, and we continued to get the children together every evening for the purpose of listening to him. I presume our family presented an aspect as singular as any that ever lived upon the face of the earth – all seated in a circle, father, mother, sons and daughters, and giving the most profound attention to a boy, eighteen years of age, who had never read the Bible through in his life: he seemed much less inclined to the perusal of books than any of the rest of our children, but far more to meditation and deep study.

During our evening conversations, Joseph would occasionally give us some of the most amusing recitals that could be imagined. He would describe the ancient inhabitants of this continent, their dress, mode of traveling, and the animals upon which they rode; their cities, their buildings, with every particular; their mode of warfare; and also their religious worship. This he would do with as much ease, seemingly, as if he had spent his whole life among them.

On the twenty-second of September, 1824, Joseph again visited the place where he found the plates; and supposing that the only thing required to possess them was to be able to keep the commandments of God, – and he firmly believed he could keep every commandment – so he fully expected to carry them home. Therefore, uncovering the plates, he put forth his hand and took them up. But the unhappy thought darted through his mind that probably there was something else in the box which would be of some pecuniary advantage to him. So he laid them down for the purpose of covering the box.

He then turned to take the Record, but it was gone. He was much alarmed and kneeled down and asked the Lord why it had been taken from him, upon which the Angel appeared and told him that he had not done as he had been commanded, for he had been told not to lay the Plates down, or put them for a moment out of his hands.

After conversing with the angel, Joseph was permitted to raise the stone again, and he immediately reached out to take them, but was hurled back upon the ground with great violence. When he recovered, the angel was gone, and he arose and returned home weeping for grief and disappointment.

Being aware that we would expect him to bring the plates home with him, he was greatly troubled, fearing that we might doubt his having seen them. As soon as he entered the house, my husband asked if he had obtained the plates.

He answered, "No, father, I could not get them."

His father then said, "Did you see them?"

"Yes," replied Joseph, "I saw them, but could not

take them."

"I would have taken them," rejoined his father with much earnestness, "if I had been in your place."

"Why," said Joseph in a subdued tone, "you do not know what you say. I could not get them, for the angel of the Lord would not let me."

Joseph then related the circumstance in full, which gave us much uneasiness, as we were afraid that he might utterly fail to obtain the Record through some neglect on his part. We therefore doubled our diligence in prayer and supplication to God, in order that he might be more fully instructed in his duty, and be preserved from all the wiles and machinations of him "who lieth in wait to deceive."

On the 15th of November, 1823, our oldest son, Alvin, became ill with the bilious colic, and a physician administered a heavy dose of calomel³ that lodged in his stomach, which four other physicians could not get to move.

When Alvin, who manifested greater zeal and anxiety regarding the Record than any of the rest of the family, knew that he would die, he expressed his love to each family member, stating to Joseph: "I want you to do everything that lies in your power to obtain the Record. Be faithful in receiving instruction, and in keeping every commandment that is given you."

Soon after Alvin's death a man started laboring in the neighborhood to effect a union of the different churches, in order that all might be agreed and thus worship God with one heart and with one mind. This seemed about right to me, and I felt much inclined to join with them; in fact, most of the family appeared disposed to do so.

But from the first Joseph utterly refused even to attend their meetings, saying, "Mother, I do not wish to prevent your going to meeting, or any of the rest of the family's; or your joining any church you please; but, do not ask me to join them. I can take my Bible, and go into the woods and learn more in two hours than you can learn at meeting in two years, if you should go all the time."⁴

A man by the name of Josiah Stowell then came from Chenango county, New York, to get Joseph to work for him, in digging for a silver mine.⁵ He had heard that Joseph had the means to discern things invisible to the natural eye.⁶

Joseph endeavored to divert him from his vain pursuit, but he was inflexible in his purpose and offered high wages to those who would dig for him in search of the said mine, and still insisted upon having Joseph work for him. Accordingly, Joseph and several others returned with him and commenced digging. After laboring for about a month without success, Joseph prevailed upon him to cease his operations, and it was from this circumstance of digging for a silver mine that the very prevalent story arose of Joseph having been a money digger.

While Joseph was in the employ of Mr. Stowell he boarded a short time with Isaac Hale, and became acquainted with his daughter, Miss Emma Hale, to whom he immediately commenced paying his addresses and subsequently married.

A few months after Joseph returned from Chenango county, my husband sent him to Manchester on business. As he set off early in the day, we expected him home at most by six o'clock in the evening.

On returning late that night he threw himself into a chair, much exhausted. My husband immediately exclaimed, "Joseph, why are you so late? has anything happened to you? we have been much distressed about you these three hours."

Presently Joseph smiled and said in a calm tone, "I have taken the severest chastisement that I have ever had in my life."

My husband, supposing that it was from some of the neighbors, was quite angry and observed, "I would like to know what business anybody has to find fault with you!"

"Stop, father, stop," said Joseph, "it was the angel of the Lord. As I passed by the hill Cumorah, where the plates are, the angel met me and said that I had not been engaged enough in the work of the Lord; that the time had come for the record to be brought forth; and that I must be up and doing and set myself about the things which God had commanded me to do. But, father, give yourself no uneasiness concerning the reprimand which I have received, for I now know the course that I am to pursue, so all will be well."

On the twentieth of September, 1827, Mr. Joseph Knight and his friend Stowell came to see us, and they tarried until the twenty-second.

On the night of the twenty-first I sat up very late, as my work rather pressed upon me. About twelve o'clock Joseph came and asked me if I had a chest with a lock and key. I knew in an instant what he wanted it for, and not having one I was greatly alarmed. But he said, "Never mind, I can do very well for the present without it – be calm – all is right."

Shortly after this Joseph's wife passed through the room with her bonnet and riding dress; and in a few minutes they left together, taking Mr. Knight's horse and wagon. I spent the night in prayer and supplication to God, for the anxiety of my mind would not permit me to sleep.

At the usual hour I commenced preparing breakfast. My heart fluttered at every footstep, as I now expected Joseph and Emma momentarily and feared lest Joseph might meet with another disappointment. I trembled so with fear lest all might be lost in consequence of some failure in keeping the commandments of God, that I was under the necessity of leaving the room in order to conceal my feelings.

When Joseph and Emma returned and he saw this, he said, "Do not be uneasy, mother, all is right – see here, I have got a key."⁷

I knew not what he meant, but took the article of which he spoke into my hands and examined it.

He took it again and left, but said nothing respecting the Record.

The next day one of the neighbors asked Mr. Smith many questions concerning the plates. I will here observe that no one ever heard anything from us respecting them, except a confidential friend⁸ whom my husband had spoken to about them some two or three years previous.

My husband soon learned that ten or twelve men were clubbed together, with one Willard Chase, a Methodist class leader, at their head. And what was still more ridiculous, they had sent sixty or seventy miles for a certain conjurer to come and divine the place where the plates were secreted.

The next morning my husband concluded to go among the neighbors to see what

he could learn with regard to their plans. The first house he came to he found the conjuror and Willard Chase, together with the rest of the clan. Making an errand, he sat down near the door, leaving it a little ajar. They stood in the yard near the door and were devising plans to find "Joe Smith's gold Bible." The conjuror was much animated, though he had traveled sixty miles the previous day and night.

Presently the woman of the house became uneasy at the exposures they were making and, stepping through a back door, called in a suppressed tone loud enough to be heard by Mr. Smith, "Sam, Sam, you are cutting your own throat."

At this the conjuror bawled out at the top of his voice, "I am not afraid of anybody – we will have them plates in spite of Joe Smith or all the devils in hell."

Mr. Smith then left the house and returned home where he related what he had heard.

He asked Emma if she knew whether Joseph had taken the plates from their place of deposit, or if she was able to tell where they were. She said she could not tell where they were, or whether they were removed from their place.

"If you get me a horse," said Emma, "I will go and see him."

Joseph kept the Urim and Thummim constantly about his person, by the use of which he could in a moment tell whether the plates were in any danger.

Just before Emma rode up, Joseph, from an impression he had, came up out of a well he was digging and met her.

Emma told him what had transpired; he looked in the Urim and Thummim and saw that the Record was still safe. Yet he concluded to return with his wife, as something might take place that would render it necessary for him to be at home.

On arriving, he found his father pacing the ground near his door. Joseph said, "Father, there is no danger – all is perfectly safe."

The plates were secreted about three miles from the Smith home. Finding an old birch log much decayed, except the bark, which was in a measure sound, Joseph had used his pocket knife to cut the bark with some care, then turned it back and made a hole of sufficient size to receive the plates. He replaced the bark, after which he laid some old stuff across the log in order to conceal the place in which they were deposited.

Joseph, on coming to them, took them from their secret place and, wrapping them in his linen frock, started for home.

After proceeding a short distance, he thought it would be safer to leave the road and go through the woods. Traveling some distance, he came to a large windfall, and as he was jumping over a log, a man sprang up from behind it and gave him a heavy blow with a gun. Joseph turned and knocked him down, then ran at top speed.

About half a mile farther he was attacked again in the same manner. He knocked this man down in like manner and ran on. But before he reached home he was assaulted a third time.

In striking the last man he dislocated his thumb, which, however, he did not notice until he came within sight of the house, when he threw himself down in the corner of the fence in order to recover his breath.

As soon as he was able, Joseph arose and came to the house, still altogether speechless from fright and fatigue. He locked up the Record, then threw himself on the

bed; and after resting a little, so that he could converse freely, he related his recent adventure to his father, Mr. Knight, Mr. Stowell and many others who had collected with the view of hearing something regarding the strange circumstances that were taking place. He showed them his thumb, saying, "I must stop talking, father, and get you to put my thumb in place, for it is very painful."

When Joseph got the plates, the Angel said: "Now you have got the Record into your own hands, and you are but a man, therefore you will have to be watchful and faithful to your trust, or you will be overpowered by wicked men; for they will lay every plan and scheme that is possible to get it away from you, and if you do not take heed continually, they will succeed. While it was in my hands, I could keep it, and no man had power to take it away! But now I give it up to you. Beware, and look well to your ways, and you shall have power to retain it, until the time for it to be translated."

That of which I previously spoke, which Joseph termed "a key," was indeed the Urim and Thummim. It was by this that the angel showed him many things, which he saw in vision, by which he could also ascertain the approach of danger, either to himself or the Record.

Soon after this Joseph came in from work one afternoon and handed me the Breast-Plate, spoken of in his history. It was wrapped in a thin muslin handkerchief, so thin that I could feel its proportions without any difficulty. It was concave on one side and convex on the other, and extended from the neck downwards as far as the center of the stomach of a man of extraordinary size. It had four straps of the same material, for the purpose of fastening it to the breast, two of which ran back to go over the shoulders, and the other two were designed to fasten to the hips. They were just the width of two of my fingers (for I measured them), and they had holes in the end, to be convenient in fastening. After I examined it Joseph placed it in the chest with the Urim and Thummim.

Shortly after this circumstance, Joseph came to the house in great haste, stating that a mob would be there that night, if not before, to search for the Record, and that it must be moved immediately. Soon afterwards Alvah Beaman came in, from the village of Livonia, a man in whom we reposed much confidence, and who was well worthy of the same. Joseph told him his apprehensions of a mob being there that night and that they must prepare themselves to drive them away; but that they first had to secure the Record and the Breast-Plate.

It was determined that a portion of the hearth should be taken up, the Record and Breast-Plate be buried under it, and the hearth be relaid to prevent suspicion.

No soon was this done than a large company of men, well armed, came rushing up to the house.

Joseph threw open the doors, and taking a hint from the stratagem of his grandfather Mack, halloed as if he had a legion at hand, giving the word of command with great emphasis while all the male portion of the family, from the father down to little Carlos, ran out of the house with such fury upon the mob that it struck them with terror and dismay and they fled before the little Spartan band into the woods where they dispersed to their several homes.

In a short time Joseph received another intimation of the need to remove the Record and Breast-Plate from the place wherein they were secreted. He therefore took them out of the box and wrapping them in clothes, carried them across the road to a

cooper's shop and laid them in a quantity of flax which was stowed in the shop loft, after which he nailed up the box, tore up the floor of the shop and put it under the same.

As soon as night came, the mob arrived and commenced ransacking the place. They rummaged round the house and all over the premises, but did not come into the house. The next morning we found the floor of the cooper's shop torn up and the box which was laid under it shivered in pieces.

Not long after this incident Joseph began making arrangements to translate the Record. The first step he was instructed to take was to make a *facsimile* of some of the characters that were called reformed Egyptian and send it to some of the most learned men of this generation and ask them for the translation thereof.

He requested me to inform Martin Harris that he had got the Plates and that he desired to see him.

I related the errand on which I had come to Mr. Harris, and he said he would see Joseph in a few days.

At this his wife exclaimed, "Yes, and I am coming to see him, too, and I will be there on Tuesday afternoon, and will stop over night."

On Tuesday afternoon Mrs. Harris made her appearance; and as soon as she was well seated she began to importune my son relative to the truth of what he had said concerning the Record, declaring that if he really had any Plates, she would see them, and she was determined to help him publish them.

He told her she was mistaken – that she could not see them, for he was not permitted to exhibit them to any one except those whom the Lord should appoint to testify of them.⁹ "And, in relation to assistance," he observed, "I always prefer dealing with men, rather than their wives."

This highly displeased Mrs. Harris, for she considered herself altogether superior to her husband, and she continued her importunities. She would say, "Now, Joseph, are you not telling me a lie? Can you look full in my eye and say before God that you have in reality found a Record, as you pretend?"

To this Joseph replied, "Why, yes, Mrs. Harris, I would as soon look you in the face and say so as not, if that will be any gratification to you."

Then she said, "Joseph, I will tell you what I will do, if I can get a witness that you speak the truth, I will believe all you say about the matter; and I shall want to do something about the translation – I mean to help you any way."

Soon afterwards Alva Hale, Joseph's brother-in-law, came to our house from Pennsylvania, for the purpose of moving Joseph to his father-in-law's.

During the short interval of Alva's stay with us, he and Joseph were one day at a public-house in Palmyra transacting some business. Mr. Harris came in, stepping up to my son and, taking him by the hand, said, "How do you do, Mr. Smith," then took a bag of silver from his pocket and said again, "Here, Mr. Smith, is fifty dollars; I give this to you to do the Lord's work with; no, I give it to the Lord for his own work."

"No," said Joseph, "We will give you a note. Mr. Hale, I presume, will sign it with me."

"Yes," said Alva, "I will sign it."

Mr. Harris, however, insisted that he would give the money to the Lord, and

called those present to witness the fact that he gave it freely and did not demand any compensation, that it was for the purpose of helping Mr. Smith to do the Lord's work.

Joseph in a short time arranged his affairs and was ready for the journey. The Record and Breast-Plate, for security, he nailed up in a box, then put them into a strong cask; and after filling the cask with beans, headed it up again.

When Joseph had sufficient time to accomplish the journey and transcribe some of the Egyptian characters, it was agreed that Martin Harris should follow him – and that he (Martin) should take the characters to the East, and call on all the professed linguists to give them an opportunity to display their talents in giving a translation of the characters.

When Mrs. Harris heard of what her husband contemplated, she resolved to accompany him. But he concluded that it would be better to go without her, and he left quite suddenly, in company with my son, Hyrum.

Mrs. Harris soon missed her husband, and came to me for the purpose of ascertaining if I knew where he was. I told her what he had said concerning his leaving, suppressing, however, his remarks pertaining to her.

On hearing this she became highly exasperated, and charged me with planning the whole affair. I protested against it, asserting that I had nothing to do with the plan, nor the execution of it.

In a short time Mr. Harris returned, and his wife's anger kindled afresh at his presence. A young man by the name of Dikes was paying attention to Miss Lucy, Martin's oldest daughter, to which Mrs. Harris was decidedly negative. But at this crisis a scheme entered her brain which changed her deportment. She told him if he would manage to get the Egyptian characters from Mr. Harris and transcribe them, and bring her the transcript, she would consent to his marriage to her daughter.

To this, Mr. Dikes cheerfully consented, and received the promised reward.

When Mr. Harris began to prepare to go to Pennsylvania the second time, to write for Joseph, his wife told him that she was going to accompany him. Having no particular objections, he said that she might do so, and stay one or two weeks. To this she cheerfully agreed.

But the first time Martin exhibited the characters before named, she took out of her pocket an exact copy of the same and told those present that "Joe Smith" was not the only one who was in possession of this great curiosity. She continued this course until they arrived at Joseph's home.

As soon as they arrived, Lucy informed Joseph that her object was to see the plates and she would never leave until she had done so. She then began to ransack every nook and corner of the house – chests, trunks, cupboards, etc. And Joseph had to remove the Breast-Plate and Record from the house, and secret them elsewhere.

While Mrs. Harris remained in the neighborhood she did all in her power to injure Joseph in the estimation of his neighbors – telling them that he was a grand imposter, and that he had seduced her husband into the belief that he (Joseph) was some great one, with a design on her husband's property.

In returning home, she went from place to place, and from house to house, telling her grievances, and declaring that Joseph Smith was practicing a deception upon the people.

Martin having written some one hundred and sixteen pages for Joseph, then asked permission of my son to carry the manuscript home with him, in order to let his wife read it, as he hoped it might have a salutary effect upon her feelings. Joseph being willing to gratify his friend as far as he could, consistently, inquired of the Lord to know if Martin might do so, but was refused.

Mr. Harris was not satisfied, and, at his urgent request, Joseph inquired again; but received a second refusal. Still, Martin persisted, and Joseph applied again.

The Lord then permitted Martin to take the manuscript on condition that he would exhibit it to none, save five individuals who belonged to his family.

Mr. Harris was delighted, and bound himself by a written covenant of the most solemn nature that he would strictly comply with the injunctions he received.

Shortly after Martin left, Joseph's wife became the mother of a son, who, however, remained with her but a short time before he died; and Emma seemed, for some time, more like sinking into the mansion of the dead. Her situation was such that for two weeks Joseph slept not an hour in undisturbed quiet.

Emma then began to recover. But as Joseph's anxiety about her began to subside, another cause of trouble forced itself upon his mind. Mr. Harris had been absent nearly three weeks, and Joseph had received no intelligence whatever from him, which was contrary to their arrangement when they separated.

In a few days Emma mentioned the subject and desired Joseph to go and get her mother to stay with her, while he went to Palmyra to learn the cause of Martin's absence and silence.

Joseph consented and took the first stage toward Palmyra. And he began to contemplate the course Martin had taken, and the risk he (Joseph) had run in letting the manuscript go out of his hands. It could not be obtained again, in case Martin lost it through transgression, except by the power of God, which was something Joseph could hardly hope for; and that by persisting in asking the Lord he perhaps fell into transgression, and had thereby lost the manuscript.

When he thought of these things he was troubled in spirit and his soul moved with fearful apprehensions. Sleep fled from his eyes, nor had he any desire for food, for he sensed that he had done wrong.

There was only one other passenger in the stage. Observing Joseph's gloomy appearance, this man inquired the cause of his affliction and offered to assist him if his services would be accepted. Joseph thanked him for his kindness, and stated that he had been watching some time with a sick wife and child, that the child had died, and that his wife was still very low; but refrained from giving any other explanation.

Nothing more passed between them upon this subject until Joseph was about to leave the stage, at which time he remarked, that he still had twenty miles further to travel on foot that night, it then being about ten o'clock.

To this the stranger said, "I have watched you since you first entered the stage, and I know that you have neither slept nor eaten since that time, and you shall not go on foot twenty miles alone this night."

The stranger continued, "I feel that your constitution will be inadequate to support you. You will be in danger of falling asleep in the forest, and of meeting with some awful disaster."

Joseph thanked the gentleman for his kindness, and, leaving the stage, they proceeded together. When they reached our house it was nearly daylight. The stranger said he was under the necessity of leading Joseph the last four miles by the arm; for he was too exhausted to support himself any longer, and he would fall asleep as he was walking along, every few minutes.

The stranger then said he would thank us for a little breakfast for himself, for he was in a haste to resume his journey.

When Joseph had also taken nourishment, he requested us to send immediately for Mr. Harris, which we did. We supposed that he would be there to eat the family breakfast with us, for he generally came in haste when he was sent for.

At eight o'clock we set the victuals on the table, while expecting him every moment. We waited till nine, and he came not – till ten, and he was not there – till eleven, still he did not make his appearance. But at half past twelve we saw him walking with a slow and measured tread towards the house, his eyes fixed thoughtfully on the ground.

On coming to the gate he stopped, instead of passing through, got upon the fence and sat there some time with his hat drawn over his eyes.

At length he entered the house, soon after which we sat down to the table, Mr. Harris with the rest. He took up his knife and fork as if he were going eat, but immediately dropped them.

Hyrum stated, "Martin, why do you not eat; are you sick?"

Upon which Mr. Harris pressed his hands upon his temples, and cried out in a tone of deep anguish, "Oh, I have lost my soul! I have lost my soul!"

Joseph, who had not expressed his fears till now, sprang from the table exclaiming, "Martin, have you lost that manuscript? Have you broken your oath, and brought down condemnation upon my head as well as your own?"

"Yes; it is gone," replied Martin, "and I know not where."

"Oh, my God!" said Joseph, clinching his hands. "All is lost! all is lost! What shall I do? I have sinned – it is I who tempted the wrath of God. I should have been satisfied with the first answer which I received from the Lord, for he told me that it was not safe to let the writing go out of my possession."

He wept and groaned, and walked the floor continually.

At length he told Martin to go back and search again.

"No," said Martin, "it is all in vain; for I have ripped open beds and pillows; and I know it is not there."

"Then," Joseph stated, "must I return with such a tale as this? I dare not do it. And how shall I appear before the Lord? Of what rebuke am I not worthy from the angel of the Most High?"

The next morning Joseph set out for his home. We parted with heavy hearts, for it now appeared that all which we had so fondly anticipated, and which had been the source of so much secret gratification, had in a moment fled, and fled forever.

I well remember that day of darkness, both within and without. To us the heavens seemed clothed with blackness, and the earth shrouded with gloom.¹⁰ I have often said within myself, that if a continual punishment, as severe as that which we experienced on that occasion, were to be inflicted upon the most wicked characters who ever stood upon

the footstool of the Almighty – if even their punishment were no greater than that, I should feel to pity their condition.

History of Joseph Smith By His Mother, Lucy Mack Smith (Salt Lake City, 1954), 68-69, 74, 77-92, 99-129, 131-132.