

For Twenty-Three Years PPC Has Warned That Joseph F. Smith Was Misleading the Saints

By David M. Price

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As our new booklet, “Indisputable,” details, Joseph F. Smith—an elder in the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) and a great-grandson of Joseph Smith Jr.—is a key leader in the Brazil group, which falsely claims that the Angel Moroni delivered the golden plates and sword of Laban to them. While Brother Joseph is well-intentioned, PPC (Price Publishing Company) has long believed that he is in error and that persons who follow him will be misled.

According to discussions at various open forum meetings, as well as our own research, the Brazil group now appears to be forming a church organization. Their lead man, Mauricio Berger, has indicated that the presidency of the church should consist of four persons. He is apparently their seer (aided by an assistant seer), and the group has set apart Smith as their prophet-designate. That development meshes with suspicions that were raised twenty-three years ago when Brother Smith visited Richard and Pamela Price at the Bookstore. After that visit, Pamela typed and signed the following note:

Conversation with Joseph Frederick Smith (Church of Christ—Temple Lot) March 26, 1996

He said twice that he loved us, but we were going in the wrong direction.

He said he might have to get rid of some excess baggage and he is willing—and others will have to also.

He said he may be the “servant” in Doctrine and Covenants 98 [6–9, who is to be instrumental in redeeming Zion and gathering the righteous]; he isn’t sure but said he might be that servant. He said that twice.

So twenty-three years ago, Brother Smith told Richard and Pamela Price that staying in the RLDS Church and promoting the independent Restoration branches was “the wrong direction.” He implied that the Church would need to “get rid of some excess baggage” and indicated that he was possibly the wise steward and ruler (see DC 98:8b) who would be instrumental in the redemption of Zion. But Brother Smith cannot be that prophetic servant, for as shall be shown, his theology is in error and his spiritual discernment is lacking.

Again, according to discussions at various open forum meetings, as well as our own research, the Brazil group is now calling for members of all Restoration churches to set aside their differences and unite under them. They are to build the Zion temple on the true temple lot—now owned by the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) in Independence, Missouri. In addition, this group also claims to be engaged in translating a part of the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon, and they have issued dire prophetic warnings of utter destruction should the Saints reject their teachings.

For over two decades, PPC has warned of the hazards of following Brother Smith. He has never been an RLDS member or minister, nor has he been baptized or ordained by authorized priesthood representing any Restoration branch.¹ Due to his past membership and ordination in the Church of Christ (Temple Lot), he has been influenced by false beliefs. This church believes that Joseph Smith Jr. fell into apostasy in the early 1830s, that he probably was a polygamist, and that he was a “fallen prophet.” Thus, they reject most of

1. See the two articles by Richard Price for more information about Joseph F. Smith never being a member of the RLDS Church.

his revelations from about the Kirtland era onward. In addition, they reject the Doctrine and Covenants and instead use the older and less complete Book of Commandments, which was published in 1833. They also reject the Inspired Version. They have no seventies, and they teach that the Church should have neither high priests, evangelist-patriarchs, or a First Presidency. Thus, they reject the Presidency of Joseph Smith III, as well as the reorganization of the Church under him. Without a Presidency, the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) believes that prophecies to the whole Church may come through any member—even those not in the priesthood! How Brother Joseph F. will be the prophet of a new church with three other presidents, when his native denomination teaches that the true Church should have no Presidents, remains to be seen.²

These doctrines are causing problems, for Brother Smith is now being invited into the pulpits of Restoration branches, where he is introducing such false beliefs. On January 27, 2018, while speaking from the rostrum during the open forum at the Zarahemla Branch in Independence, Missouri, Brother Smith stated:

We've struggled for 185 years in darkness [since late 1832 or early 1833]. If you go back to Section 83, verse 8 [given in September 1832 at Kirtland], the Church came under condemnation because they would not obey the commandments of God. And we have never gone back and tried to straighten out any of the problems. So we've been in darkness for 185 years. (<http://www.ustream.tv/playlist/275296/video/112310380> timestamp 00:06:17-00:06:50)

The verse Brother Smith quoted indeed says that until the Saints “repent and remember . . . the Book of Mormon and the former commandments,” the Church will be under condemnation. But the very next verse promises that those who repent and obey shall be forgiven and become righteous! So instead of seeing this scripture as a constant reminder to all generations to repent and remain valiant in testimony for the building of the Kingdom, Brother Smith has twisted its meaning to match the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) doctrine. He states that the entire Church not only

2. For more information about the beliefs of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot), see page 10.

Church of Christ (Temple Lot) Beliefs Greatly Differ from RLDS Beliefs

By David M. Price

There does not seem to be one source to reference for the beliefs of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot). However, from extensive research of many sources, it appears that this church teaches the following:

- Joseph Smith was a “fallen Prophet” and most probably was a polygamist, which would make him an adulterer.
- The Inspired Version of the Bible is not true and is not to be used as scripture.
- The RLDS Doctrine and Covenants is largely wrong because none of Joseph Smith’s revelations after 1833, nor those of Joseph Smith III or Israel A. Smith, are to be considered divine. Only the Book of Commandments (with Joseph Smith’s revelations prior to 1833) is to be used.
- The Church was never authorized to have a President-Prophet or a First Presidency. Joseph Smith Jr., Joseph Smith III, etc., were all wrong to accept ordination to that office. Since they believe that the office of President-Prophet is false, so is the belief that it should be filled by a father-to-son lineal descendant of Joseph Smith Jr.
- Since the Church can have no Prophet-President, prophetic messages binding on the entire Church may be received through any member, regardless of priesthood ordination or gender.
- Since the Church can have no Prophet-President, the Church is to be led by the Quorum of Apostles. The RLDS belief that apostles can only be called and ordained by a functioning Presidency is false.
- They do not believe in high priests and patriarch-evangelists. Thus, they do not believe in patriarchal blessings. They also do not believe in seventies. However, they have “evangelists” who function similarly to the RLDS seventies.
- There was no reorganization of the Church by Joseph Smith III in 1860. Instead, they believe that Granville Hedrick became its reorganizer and leader in 1863. The Church of Christ (Temple Lot), and not the RLDS Church, is “the only true church.”
- The Kirtland Temple was not commanded to be built by God.

For a detailed comparison of their beliefs to those of the RLDS Church on high priests and the Book of Commandments, see *Our Beliefs Defended* by Apostle J. F. Curtis, which can be purchased from the Restoration Bookstore.

went astray and was condemned exactly 185 years ago, but that all the generations of Saints from then until now have suffered under that condemnation of darkness. Such a belief discounts the miracle of the Church being regathered, reorganized, and blessed under Joseph Smith III! Brother Smith indicates that the condemnation on the Church will be lifted and the darkness will be dispersed *only* by following what he preaches.

For decades, he has called for the important differences in belief between the Restoration churches to be “set on the shelf” so all can unite under his interpretation of things. Such counsel is especially disturbing when one considers how many times Jesus admonished His followers to actively separate themselves from doctrines, teachers, prophets, and churches that taught false doctrines!

The question of which church is true and which church’s priesthood is authoritative is of utmost importance. Yet, Brother Smith does not seem to have a proper understanding of that subject, especially as it relates to priesthood authority within the independent Restoration branches of the RLDS Church. The following transcript is from an exchange between Vance Snively (a PPC employee and an elder at the Glendale Restoration Branch) and Joseph F. Smith, which transpired at the Odessa Restoration Branch in Odessa, Missouri, on May 26, 2018. They were debating the subject of the true Church (Church of Christ—Temple Lot versus RLDS) and priesthood authority:

Vance: “The main thing is the authority.”

Joseph: “Are you still in the Reorganized Church?”

Vance: “Yes sir, I am.”

Joseph: “The C of C?”

Vance: “No sir.”

Joseph: “Well, because the C of C is the Reorganized Church.”

Vance: “No, the C of C is the Community of Christ.”

Joseph: “No, technically speaking it is.”

Vance: “They maintain . . .”

Joseph: “You came out . . .”

Vance: “They maintained the trademark.”

Joseph: “*You came out of that Church without your priesthood!*”

Vance: “My authority came down through the Reorganization.”

Joseph: “OK, but you left the Reorganization.”

Vance: “*I didn’t leave the Reorganization—the Community of Christ and their leaders left the Reorganization.*”

Joseph: “Whatever!”

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F64o4yybV-U&app=desktop>, audio time mark 04:11:35–04:12:08; italics added)

Joseph F. Smith’s failure to comprehend the nature of the authority of priesthood in the independent Restoration branches is startling. He stated his opinion that loyal Restorationists who were forced out of the RLDS Church buildings and who now worship in independent Restoration branches have “left the Reorganization.” He also said that all such priesthood “came out of that Church without . . . priesthood.” This is deeply disturbing! The special servant of Section 98, who shall preside over the redemption of Zion and be a Prophet of the true Church, would not exhibit such wrongfulness and lack of wisdom.

Since Joseph F. Smith was recently set apart as the Brazil group’s prophet-designate, we thought it very timely to relate the above accounts. In addition, we believe it is important to reprint our earlier articles about him to remind the Saints of his history of doctrinal errancy, and to urge them—as we have for decades—to not follow his false teachings.