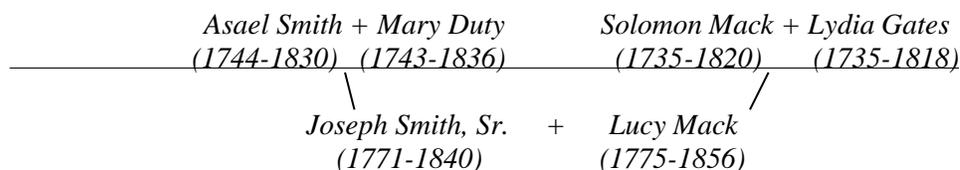


200 Anniversary of Joseph Smith's First Vision Lecture Series

1. Joseph Smith Junior's Family and Historical Background from the Second Great Awakening¹

Joseph Smith's Family Tree



Unnamed, Alvin, Hyrum, Sophronia, Joseph, Samuel, Ephraim, William, Catherine, Don Carlos, Lucy
 (1799-1824)(1800-44)(1803-76)(1805-44)(1808-44)(1810) (1811-93) (1812-92) (1816-41), (1821-82)

\ *Emma Hales (1804-1879)*

Alvin, Louisa+Thadius, Julia+Joseph Murdock, Joseph III, Fredrick, Alexander, Don Carlos, Unnamed Son, David Hyrum
 (1828)(Twins-1831) (1831-1880)(1831-1832) (1832-1914)(1836-1862)(1838-1909)(1840-41) (1842) (1844-1904)

Joseph Smith's Yankee Roots

Joseph Smith, Junior, was born December 23, 1805, in Sharon, VT, on his Grandfather Mack's farm, the fourth child of Lucy Mack and Joseph Smith Senior. The Smiths' stay in Sharon was relatively short-lived, and they moved around the Connecticut River Valley eight times in twenty years.² Unlike the transient nature of Joseph's immediate family, his ancestors lived in the same settled Puritan community. For four generations Joseph's paternal line of Puritans lived as farmers just north of Salem, in Topsfield, Massachusetts. Joseph's maternal ancestors lived in Lyme, Connecticut, for the two previous generations. Large families did not always have land available for each of their children, and such was the case with both of Joseph's grandfathers. His grandparents joined the Yankee

¹ Biographies on Joseph Smith, Jr. that I referenced include: Richard L. Anderson, *Joseph Smith's New England Heritage* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1971 reprint 2003); Hyrum L. Andrus and Helen Mae Andrus, eds., *They Knew the Prophet*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1974); Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1984); *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York City, NY: Random House, 2005); Francis M. Gibbons, *Joseph Smith: Martyr, Prophet of God* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1982); Truman G. Madsen, *Joseph Smith the Prophet* (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1989); Robert L. Millet, ed., *Joseph Smith: Selected Sermons and Writings* (New York City: NY: Paulist Press, 1989); Larry C. Porter and Susan Easton Black, eds. *The Prophet Joseph: Essays on the Life and Mission of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1988); Robert V. Remini, *Joseph Smith* (New York City, NY: Viking Penguin, 2002); Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by his Mother* (1853, Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, reprint 1956); Lavina Fielding Anderson, *Lucy's Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith's Family Memoir* (Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books, 2001); etc.

² Between 1797 and 1816 Joseph Smith, Sr., and Lucy Mack Smith and their growing family moved in a circle around father Asael Smith's home in Tunbridge, VT, before leaving the Connecticut River Valley permanently. In chronological order, they lived in Tunbridge on their own farm (1796), then Joseph Sr. moved the family to Randolph as he became a shop keeper (1802), Royalton (1804), Sharon as a school teacher (1805), Tunbridge, Royalton, then across state lines to Lebanon, NH (1811), and back to VT again farming in Norwich (1814). Finally in the fall of 1816, "the year without a summer," the Smiths moved from New England to Palmyra, New York. Later their clan also moved with the other church members to Kirtland, Ohio, in 1831, and Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1839. Allen and Leonard, *Latter-day Saints*, 24; S. Kent Brown, Donald Q. Cannon, and Richard H. Jackson, eds., *Historical Atlas of Mormonism* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 6.

migration north along the Connecticut River Valley in search of arable land. Like many Americans at the time, Joseph Smith's grandparents and parents did not put down roots for more than a dozen years at a time.³ Worthy of note, even though both families relocated regularly, the extended families remained geographically clustered together. The prominent familial impact became even more powerful because the families often lived in isolated wilderness environments where the family was their major social contact. As a result, Joseph's extended family had a large impact on his ideas and values.⁴

Grandparents: Mack and Smith

As we unfold the impact of Joseph Smith's heritage, we find his grandparents and then his parents cultivating values that developed into his questions. Both of Joseph's grandfathers served on behalf of their country and supported the revolutionary cause of liberty throughout their lives. Joseph remembered that a "love of liberty was diffused into my soul by my grandfathers while they dandled me on their knees."⁵ The story of Grandpa Mack's solo attack on a group of armed Indians during his first enlistment in the French and Indian War was passed on from one generation to the next. Joseph internalized his grandfather's strategy completely enough to enact it himself when attacked by a mob (and had equal success).⁶ Joseph gained more from his grandparents than war stories in different settings; his grandfathers created in him a respect for laws and the liberties both of the land and of God (D&C, 58:21, 98:4; Articles of Faith, 12).

The two families concurred on their devotion to liberty, but differed when it came to religion. Asael Smith (1744-1830) left his Puritan-Congregationalists roots for the more egalitarian and rational thought of Universalism. The move to Universalism was popular in the region as five Congregational local clergymen converted to Universalism in 1790, the year before the Smiths arrived in VT. Asael and his oldest two sons, Jesse and Joseph, Sr., helped organize a Universalist society in Tunbridge. The society lasted for only two years, after which the Smith men returned to the Congregational meetinghouse, although Asael and his oldest sons maintained their new beliefs and mistrust of traditional Christianity.⁷ The doctrine of Universalism reacted against the Calvinistic-Reformed roots of New England by preaching a universal atonement and salvation for all.⁸ This democratic theology flourished in VT

³ In 1791, VT entered the Union as the fourteenth state. That same year, in their late forties, with eight children in tow, Asael and Mary Smith purchased their first eighty-three-acre farm in Tunbridge, VT. Smith's maternal grandparents, Solomon and Lydia Mack, tried various occupations in Gilsum and Montague, NH, and then moved across the state line briefly to Tunbridge, VT, before returning to NH.

⁴ Anderson, *Smith's Heritage*, 1: "Joseph Smith's religious and ethical heritage came to him in two ways: by some degree of contact with grandfathers and grandmothers and directly in the perpetuation of family traditions by his own parents."

⁵ Smith, *History of the Church*, 5.498.

⁶ Anderson, *Smith's Heritage*, 8. According to Solomon Mack's autobiography, he was traveling with a single companion through a forest when he came upon four hostile Indians only "150 yards ahead, armed with knives, tomahawks, and guns." With nothing more than nerve and a walking stick, Solomon yelled to his companion, who trailed one-hundred yards behind, as well as to the Indians: "'Rush on! Rush on! Brave boys, we'll have the devils! We'll have the devils!'" He ran toward them, and when his companion came in sight, he remembered it "gave them a terrible fright, and I saw them no more. But I am bound to say the grass did not grow under my feet." Joseph Smith recalled the story years later in Palmyra when he repeated this portion of history by attacking challenges with the same strategy. His mother's biography described a "large company of men well-armed came rushing up to the house" to steal the newly acquired golden plates: "Joseph threw open the doors, and taking a hint from the stratagem of his grandfather Mack, hallooed [*sic*] as if he had a legion at hand, in the meanwhile 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 on the mob that it struck them with terror and dismay. And they fled before the little Spartan band into the woods, where they dispersed themselves to their several homes" (Lucy Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, 112).

⁷ Larry C. Porter and Susan Easton Black, eds. *The Prophet Joseph: Essays on the Life and Mission of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1988); 4-6.

⁸ The basic belief of nineteenth-century Universalism was stated in the 1803 NH convention: "We believe there is one God, whose nature is love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness" (Anderson, *Smith's Heritage*, 133). Within the first

where the population lacked an aristocracy. Among the more established Christians in southern New England, Universalism was viewed as a religious cult. Asael's religious affiliation did not hinder his community standing as he was repeatedly elected to manage town affairs—serving as a selectman, highway surveyor and town moderator.⁹

Enough inhabitants of the “Green Mountains” modified the Puritan religion of their forefathers to the degree that the rest of New England referred to VT as a hotbed of heresies.¹⁰ VT's society was very young; two-thirds of all VT residents in 1800 were under twenty-six.¹¹ Their youth and mobility catalyzed change—including religious change. Both grandfathers fell into that category as they left the religion of their forefathers—just as Joseph Smith, Junior, did again two generations later. Underlining Asael Smith's belief was his faith in God. He communicated his belief in Christ in a letter to his wife Mary:¹² “Put your whole trust solely [in Him. He neve]r did nor never will forsake any that trusted in him.”¹³ At the same time, Asael embraced Enlightenment thinking and encouraged his sons to learn from Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason*. Unlike Paine, however, Asael incorporated his love of God and reason into a harmonious balance. In a letter written in 1800 at age fifty-six, he attempted to pass onto his children his respect for God by counseling them to consider the “immortality in your souls”:

And now my dear children, let me pour out my heart to you and speak first to you of immortality in your souls. Trifle not in this point: the soul is immortal. You have to deal with an infinite majesty; you go upon life and death. Therefore, in this point be serious. Do all to God in a serious manner. When you think of him, speak of him, pray to him, or in any way make your addresses to his great majesty, be in good earnest. Trifle not with his name nor with his attributes, nor call him to witness to anything but is absolute truth; nor then, [sic] but when sound reason on serious consideration requires it.¹⁴

Asael's correspondence suggests that he was a concerned father and lived a life of faith and piety as well. Regarding the choice of religious affiliation, he leaves it open to each child—according to their personal study of scripture, and their own reasoning, and feelings.¹⁵

The core of Asael's letter focused on coming to Christ. Without out rightly debating religious questions, Asael's written testimony discussed many religious issues of the day. He believed that Christ alone could save, without “mixing any of their [man's] own righteousness with his.” He did not name it, but he also denounced the Calvinistic doctrine that only a certain number of the elect were saved. Asael did not see himself as a heretic but rooted his thoughts on his need for a Redeemer. He also urged his children to realize their personal need for a Savior:

First I would wish you to search the Scriptures and consult sound reason and see if they (which I take to be two witnesses that stand by the God of the whole earth) are not sufficient to evince to you that religion is a necessary theme. Then I would wish you to study the nature of religion, and see whether it consists in outward formalities, or in the hidden man of the heart; whether you can by outward forms, rites and ordinances save yourselves, or whether there is a necessity of your having help from any other hand than your

decade of statehood, VT culturally accepted Universalism in Tunbridge. The Universalists, in fact, shared the same church building with the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Baptists. This practice, however, was overturned March 13, 1809, when the Congregationalists forbade the Universalists to worship in their meeting house (*ibid.*, 134).

⁹ Bushman, *Beginnings*, 24.

¹⁰ In 1774 Connecticut's General Association of Ministers (which consisted mainly of Reformed ministers) toured the region of VT and began a major missionary effort to reclaim the inhabitants religiously. Their efforts did not stop the population from enthusiastically purchasing deistic works like Ethan Allen's *The Only Oracle of Man* (published in 1784) and Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* (published in three parts 1794, 1795, and 1807). Bushman summarized, “the grip of the old Puritan faith had been broken in VT” (*Beginnings*, 28).

¹¹ Whitney Cross, *The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1950), 6.

¹² Asael intended to have the letter delivered as a “posthumous address to his family” because he was worried about the reception of some of his opinions. Though, he did not die for thirty years. Smith, *History*, 1.8-9.

¹³ Anderson, *Smith's Heritage*, 120.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 160. Asael's writing reflects the style of the day of people who are literate, but not well educated.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 161. Asael wrote: “As to religion, I would not wish to point out any particular form to you; but first I would wish you to search the scriptures and consult sound [reas]on, and see if they (which I take to [be] two witnesses that stand by the God of the whole earth) are not sufficient to evince to you that religion is a necessary theme. Then I would wish you to study the nature of religion, and see whether it consists in outward formalities, or in the hidden man of the heart.”

own. If you find that you stand in need of a Savior, Christ saith: "Look unto me and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth." Then look to Him, and if you find from scripture and sound reason that Christ hath come into the world to save sinners, then examine what it was that caused him to leave the center of consummate happiness to suffer as he did—whether it was to save mankind because they were sinners and could not save themselves or whether he [came] to save mankind because they had repented of their sins, so as to be forgiven on the score of their repentance. If you find that he came to save sinners merely because they were such, then try if there is any other [sinner] so great that he cannot save him.¹⁶

Asael concluded his letter with a summary of his religious convictions and parental counsel to follow "scripture and sound reason."¹⁷ He believed that these two keys acted as a witness of God and could lead to faith in Christ. Asael's repeated instruction to consult both the scriptures and reason appears to be motivated from the religious answers he found and hoped to pass onto his beloved children. He preached the need to believe and live one's convictions and thereby honor God as one's father: "Do all to God as to your father, for his love is ten thousand times greater towards you than ever any earthly father's could [be] to his offspring."¹⁸

Asael's ties to his children were extremely important to him. As his family grew, he strove to keep them physically and emotionally close. He provided adjacent farms for his oldest three sons (including Joseph, Sr.) in Tunbridge. When the clan left New England for western New York between 1815 and 1816, six of his children and their families all settled in St. Lawrence County, with Lucy and Joseph, Sr., settling nearby in Ontario County, New York. The majority of the next generation also moved together to Kirtland, OH, between 1831 and 1836 to migration with believers in the restoration.¹⁹

Religious feelings were also strong in Joseph's maternal line. His grandmother, Lydia Mack (1735-1818), was the oldest daughter of Deacon Daniel Gates of the Congregational Church.²⁰ Lydia followed his footsteps into the congregation and was the main source of religious and academic instruction for her eight children.²¹ Her husband remembered,

She, besides instructing them in the various branches of an ordinary education, was in the habit of calling them together both morning and evening, and teaching them to pray; meanwhile urging upon them the necessity of love towards each other, as well as devotional feelings towards him who made them. In this manner my first

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 124-125: "But mind that you admit no others as evidences but the two that God hath appointed, viz., scripture and sound reason . . . But if these two witnesses testify to you that God is just to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works; then believe them. And if you can believe that Christ [came] to save sinners and not the righteous Pharisees or self-righteous; that sinners must be saved by the righteousness of Christ alone, without mixing any of their own righteousness with his, then you will see that he can as well save all as any. And there is no respect of persons with God, who will have all mankind to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, viz., that 'there is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.' And when you believe this you will enter into his rest, and when you enter into his rest you will know what that rest is, and not before. And having gotten this evidence that God is true, be still adding to your evidence and enjoy your present assurance. Do all to God as to your father, for his love is ten thousand times greater towards you than ever any earthly father's could [be] to his offspring."

¹⁸ Ibid., 126.

¹⁹ Ibid., 26. The move to Kirtland was an exodus to follow Smith's religious gathering of Mormons. Bushman summarized, "of the thirteen members of the Asael Smith family, seven accepted the Mormon faith, three died before they had an opportunity, and three rejected it. John Smith, who was baptized in 1832 was the first to join the church" (Ibid., 198). Joseph Smith, Jr., recorded in his journal May 18, 1836—the day when his widowed grandmother, Mary Duty Smith, arrived in Kirtland, "It was a happy day, for we had long prayed to see our grandmother and uncles in the Church." Smith, *History*, 2.443.

²⁰ Ibid., 33, explains that Deacon Daniel Gates formalized his religious convictions in his will: "I would . . . commit my soul into the hands of God, who gave it, hoping and believing that I shall obtain remission of all my sins through the alone merits of Jesus Christ, my only Savior, and that for his sake I shall be admitted into life eternal."

²¹ Lydia's husband Solomon Mack wrote of her, "As our children were deprived of schools, she assumed the charge of their education, and performed the duties of an instructress as none, save a mother, is capable of. Precepts accompanied with examples such as hers, were calculated to make impressions on the minds of the young, never to be forgotten." Ibid., 34.

children became confirmed in habits of piety, gentleness, and reflection, which afforded great assistance in guiding those who came after them, into the same happy channel.²²

Traditional Christian values were fostered in the Mack home by their mother; however, with repeated household moves into sparsely-populated regions without ministers, Lydia emphasized piety over formal church attendance—there simply were no churches to attend. The fruits of her labor were evidenced by the fact that her oldest son, Jason Mack, became a lay preacher at age twenty, and her daughter Lovisa had a vision of “the Saviour, as through a veil.”²³ Lydia’s youngest, Lucy (the Prophet Joseph’s, mother), hungered for religious conversion, especially during her teenage years when she experienced the death of her two older sisters. Seeking for religious answers was another trait passed onto her son, Joseph, Junior.

Lydia’s husband, Solomon Mack (1735-1820), on the other hand, traveled frequently and did not find religious answers until late in his life.²⁴ In 1810 at the age of seventy-five, Solomon experienced a religious conversion: “God did appear for me and took me out of the horrible pit and mirey [*sic*] clay, and set my feet on the rock of Jesus Christ.”²⁵ He published his testimony as a missionary pamphlet in 1811 and devoted the rest of his life to sharing the “Good News.” The final lines in Solomon’s pamphlet express his commitment to serving the Lord:

The remainder of my days, I mean to spend in my father’s service though a poor cripple . . . I have a love to all rich and poor, kings and nobles, black and white, come all to Jesus my friends, come to Jesus and he will in no wise cast you off; oh! Come come, how sweet is the love to Jesus—how beautiful is the love of God. This invitation is from my heart.²⁶

The sincerity of Solomon’s rough writing communicated his “love of God.”

Because Joseph lived in close contact with his Mack grandparents for his first eleven years, he knew of his Grandfather Solomon’s testimony and service first hand, as well as through his published tract. While Solomon’s grandchildren and great grandchildren learned of Solomon’s faith, his children learned of his tenacity and perseverance in the face of hardship. His grim endurance drove him to start over again and again after several unsuccessful business ventures. Lucy inherited faith from her mother and perseverance from her father. She used both as she fought through every hardship and trial in her life. In turn, she passed these same strengths to her son Joseph. The impact of Joseph’s extended family’s religious convictions lasted beyond his youth; most of his uncles, aunts, and cousins joined his religious movement and held positions of authority.

Joseph Junior’s Immediate Family

Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack met in Tunbridge, VT, and married on January 24, 1797. An examination of their lives shows a strong work ethic built on a spiritual core. Joseph, Sr., insisted on religious “services” each night and morning where the family read the scriptures, sang hymns and kneeled in prayer.²⁷ In Lucy’s autobiography, she recollected, “Whilst we worked with our hands we endeavored to remember the service of & the welfare of our souls.”²⁸ Lavina Fielding Anderson, the most exhaustive biographer of Lucy Mack Smith, described her “as a model of domestic spirituality, a model drawn directly from her New England culture about proper behavior for pious women.”²⁹ The Smith’s fifth son, William, the only son to live to an old age, remembered that his mother “made use

²² Ibid., 35.

²³ Bushman, *Beginnings*, 18.

²⁴ Solomon Mack spent several years as a seaman. This was a common lifestyle according to historian Daniel Howe: “New England Yankees made themselves one of the world’s great seafaring peoples. . . . Seaport Americans earned livings not only as merchant sailors but also as fishermen, whalers, and shipwrights.” Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America 1815-1848* (NYC, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 47.

²⁵ Bushman, *Beginnings*, 16.

²⁶ Anderson, *Smith’s Heritage*, 67.

²⁷ Bushman, *Beginnings*, 37. Anderson, *Lucy’s Book*, 38. The practice of daily devotionals was recorded by both Lucy and her son William. Daily prayer, “both morning and evening,” which was also consistent with Lucy Mack’s childhood under the tutelage of her mother, Lydia Gates Mack. During the winter of 1830-31 between twelve and twenty neighbors attended the devotionals. (Ibid., 34-35). According to first-hand accounts, Joseph Smith continued this same practice of evening family devotionals in his home. Andrus, *They Knew the Prophet*, 147.

²⁸ Anderson, *Lucy’s Book*, 323.

²⁹ Ibid., 17.

of every means which her parental love could suggest, to get us engaged in seeking for our soul's salvation."³⁰ Most importantly for this study, the boy Joseph also perceived his parents' efforts to teach Christianity. In a brief autobiography he wrote in 1832 at age twenty-six, only one sentence dealt with the first decade of his life, and it singled out his religious education at home: "[My] goodly parents spared no pains to instructing me in the Christian religion."³¹ For young Joseph worship of God was a daily devotion.

The Smiths' religion was more visible at home than at church. Often, they lived in unsettled areas without a meeting house. Their church attendance was sporadic at best and divided between different denominations. Lucy yearned for the association with a church and investigated different denominations over the years. In 1802 after a disappointing Presbyterian service she concluded, Thither I went in expectation of obtaining that which alone could satisfy my soul—the bread of eternal life. When the minister commenced, I fixed my mind with breathless attention upon the spirit and matter of the discourse, but all was emptiness, vanity, vexation of spirit, and fell upon my heart like the chill, untimely blast upon the starting ear ripening in a summer sun. It did not fill the aching void within nor satisfy the craving hunger of my soul. I was almost in total despair, and with a grieved and troubled spirit I returned home, saying in my heart, there is not on earth the religion which I seek.³²

A VT minister agreed to baptize Lucy without requiring that she join a specific denomination, thus enabling her to fulfill the biblical command without committing herself to a creed.³³ When the family moved to Palmyra, New York, there was one church building belonging to the Presbyterians, and Lucy and three of her children (Hyrum, Sophronia, and Samuel) attended services there.³⁴

Joseph Smith Sr's Seven Dreams

1. "I seemed to be traveling in an open, barren field, and as I was traveling, I turned my eyes towards the east, the west, the north and the south, but could see nothing save dead, fallen timber. Not a vestige of life, either animal or vegetable, could be seen; besides, to render the scene still more dreary, the most death-like silence prevailed, no sound of anything animate could be heard in all the field. I was alone in this gloomy desert, with the exception of an attendant spirit, who kept constantly by my side. Of him I inquired the meaning of what I saw, and why I was thus traveling in such a dismal place. He answered thus: 'This field is the world, which now lieth inanimate and dumb, in regard to the true religion, or plan of salvation; but travel on, and by the wayside you will find on a certain log a box, the contents of which, if you eat thereof, will make you wise, and give unto you wisdom and understanding.' I carefully observed what was told me by my guide, and proceeding a short distance, I came to the box. I immediately took it up, and placed it under my left arm; then with eagerness I raised the lid, and began to taste of its contents; upon which all manner of beasts, horned cattle, and roaring animals, rose up on every side in the most threatening manner possible, tearing the earth, tossing their horns, and bellowing

³⁰ Bushman, *Beginnings*, 39.

³¹ Dean C. Jessee, *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, ed. (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1984), 10.

³² Lucy Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, editor's introduction from 1853 manuscript, np. The 1901 edition is less dramatic and ends, "I therefore determined to examine my Bible, and taking Jesus and His disciples for my guide neither give nor take away." Lucy Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, 36.

³³ *Ibid.* Lucy does not name the minister or his denomination. Full church membership "was often a closely guarded privilege," but many more people attended services. Howe, *What Hath God Wrought*, 39.

³⁴ Milton V. Backman, Jr., *Joseph Smith's First Vision: Confirming Evidences and Contemporary Accounts*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1971, 1980), 184. Palmyra was home to at least four denominations (Presbyterian, Methodist, Quakers, and Baptist), but in 1820 all but the Presbyterian congregations met in homes or schools until meetinghouses were built. Lucy "joined" that group, but looking at the church records, is not clear what that level of membership she held. Richard Lloyd Anderson "First Vision Through Reminiscences" *BYU Studies*, vol. 9 (Spring, 1969), 9.3, 403.

most terrifically all around me, and they finally came so close upon me, that I was compelled to drop the box and fly for my life. Yet, in the midst of all this I was perfectly happy, though I awoke trembling.”³⁵

2. “I came to a narrow path. This path I entered, and, when I had traveled a little way in it, I beheld a beautiful stream of water, which ran from the east to the west. Of this stream, I could see neither the source nor yet the mouth; but as far as my eyes could extend I could see a rope, running along the bank of it, about as high as a man could reach, and beyond me was a low, but very pleasant valley, in which stood a tree such as I had never seen before. It was exceedingly handsome, insomuch that I looked upon it with wonder and admiration. Its beautiful branches spread themselves somewhat like an umbrella, and it bore a kind of fruit, in shape much like a chestnut bur, and as white as snow, or, if possible, whiter. I gazed upon the same with considerable interest, and as I was doing so, the burs or shells commenced opening and shedding their particles, or the fruit which they contained, which was of dazzling whiteness. I drew near and began to eat of it, and I found it delicious beyond description. As I was eating, I said in my heart, 'I cannot eat this alone, I must bring my wife and children, that they may partake with me.' Accordingly, I went and brought my family, which consisted of a wife and seven children, and we all commenced eating and praising God for this blessing. We were exceedingly happy, insomuch that our joy could not easily be expressed. While thus engaged, I beheld a spacious building standing opposite the valley which we were in, and it appeared to reach to the very heavens. It was full of doors and windows, and they were all filled with people, who were very finely dressed. When these people observed us in the low valley, under the tree, they pointed the finger of scorn at us, and treated us with all manner of disrespect and contempt. But their contumely we utterly disregarded. I presently turned to my guide and inquired of him the meaning of the fruit that was so delicious. He told me it was the pure love of God, shed abroad in the hearts of all those who love him, and keep his commandments. He then commanded me to go and bring the rest of my children. I told him that we were all there. 'No,' he replied, 'look yonder, you have two more, and you must bring them also.' Upon raising my eyes, I saw two small children, standing some distance off. I immediately went to them, and brought them to the tree; upon which they commenced eating with the rest, and we all rejoiced together. The more we ate, the more we seemed to desire, until we even got down upon our knees and scooped it up, eating it by double handfuls. After feasting in this manner a short time, I asked my guide what was the meaning of the spacious building which I saw. He replied, 'It is Babylon, it is Babylon, and it must fall. The people in the doors and windows are the inhabitants thereof, who scorn and despise the Saints of God because of their humility.' I soon awoke, clapping my hands together for joy.

"Traveling a short distance further, I came to a narrow path. This path I entered, and, when I had traveled a little way in it, I beheld a beautiful stream of water which ran from the east to the west. Of this stream I could see neither the source nor yet the mouth, but as far as my eyes could extend I could see a rope, running along the bank of it about as high as a man could reach, and beyond me was a low but very pleasant valley in which stood a tree such as I had never seen before. It was exceedingly handsome, insomuch that I looked upon it with wonder and admiration. Its beautiful branches spread themselves somewhat like an umbrella, and it bore a kind of fruit, in shape much like a chestnut bur, and as white as snow, or, if possible, whiter. I gazed upon the same with considerable interest, and as I was doing so, the burs or shells commenced opening and shedding their particles, or the fruit which they contained, which was of dazzling whiteness. I drew near and began to eat of it, and I found it delicious beyond description.”³⁶

³⁵ Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith, Revised and Enhanced*, edited by Scot Facer Proctor and Maurine Jensen Proctor, 47

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 48-50

3. "I dreamed" said he, "that I was travelling on foot, and I was very sick, and so lame I could hardly walk. My guide, as usual, attended me. Travelling some time together, I became so lame that I thought I could go no further. I informed my guide of this, and asked him what I should do. He told me to travel on till I came to a certain garden. So I arose and started for this garden. While on my way thither, I asked my guide how I should know the place. He said, 'Proceed until you come to a very large gate; open this, and you will see a garden, blooming with the most beautiful flowers that your eyes every beheld, and there you shall be healed.' BY limping along with great difficulty, I finally reached the gate; and on entering it, I saw the before mentioned garden, which was beautiful beyond description, being filled with the most delicate flowers of every kind and color. In the garden were walks about three and a half feet wide, which were set on both sides with marble stones.

One of the walks ran from the gate through the center of the garden; and on each side of this was a very richly carved seat, and on each seat were placed six wooden images, each of which was the size of a very large man. When I came to the first image on the right side, it arose and bowed to me with much deference. I then turned to the one which sat opposite me, on the left side, and it arose and bowed to me in the same manner as the first. I continued turning, first to the right and then to the left, until the whole twelve had made their obeisance, after which I was entirely healed. I then asked my guide the meaning of all this, but I awoke before I received an answer."³⁷

4. and 5. "He received two more visions, which would probably be somewhat interesting, but I cannot remember them distinctly enough to rehearse them in full."³⁸
6. "I thought I was walking alone; I was much fatigued, nevertheless I continued traveling. It seemed to me that I was going to meeting, that it was the day of judgment, and that I was going to be judged. When I came in sight of the meeting-house, I saw multitudes of people coming from every direction, and pressing with great anxiety towards the door of this great building; but I thought I should get there in time, hence there was no need of being in a hurry. But, on arriving at the door, I found it shut; I knocked for admission and was informed by the porter that I had come too late. I felt exceedingly troubled and prayed earnestly for admittance. Presently I found that my flesh was perishing. I continued to pray, still my flesh withered upon my bones. I was in a state of almost total despair, when the porter asked me if I had done all that was necessary in order to receive admission. I replied that I had done all that was in my power to do. 'Then,' observed the porter, 'justice must be satisfied; after this, mercy hath her claims.'
- "It then occurred to me to call upon God, in the name of his Son Jesus; and I cried out, in the agony of my soul, 'Oh, Lord God, I beseech thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, to forgive my sins.' After which I felt considerably strengthened and I began to mend. The porter or angel then remarked that it was necessary to plead the merits of Jesus, for he was the advocate with the Father, and a Mediator between God and man. I was now made quite whole and the door was opened, but on entering, I awoke."
7. "I dreamed," said he, "that a man with a pedler's budget on his back, came in and thus addressed me: 'Sir, will you trade with me today? I have now called upon you seven times, I have traded with you each time, and have always found you strictly honest in all your dealings. Your measures are always heaped and your weights over-balance; and I have now come to tell you that this is the last time I shall ever call on you, and that there is but one thing which you lack in order to secure your salvation.' As I earnestly desired to know what it was I still lacked, I requested him to write the same upon paper. He said he would do so. I then sprang to get some paper, but in my excitement, I awoke."³⁹

³⁷ Ibid., 64– 65; Anderson, *Lucy's Book*, 319.

³⁸ Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*, 66.

³⁹ Ibid., 68

Time Line of Joseph Smith Jr.'s early Life⁴⁰

1805	Dec 23	Born at Sharon, Windsor County, Vermont to Joseph and Lucy
1811		Family moved to Lebanon, New Hampshire
1813		Contracted typhus fever which developed into osteomyelitis Leg operation by Dr. Nathan Smith and the Dartmouth Medical team
1816		Family moved to Palmyra, New York
1820	Spring	First Vision in the family Maple tree grove in Palmyra, NY
1823	Sept 21	First Moroni visitation
	Nov 19	Death of brother Alvin
1827	Jan 18	Married Emma Hale at Bainbridge, New York
	Sept 22	Obtained Book of Mormon plates
	Dec	Moved to Harmony, Pennsylvania
1828		116 pages of Book of Mormon lost
	June 15	Son Alvin born; died same day
1829	April 5-6	Samuel Smith and Oliver Cowdery arrive in Harmony, PA, Joseph "Conducts business" To purchase the small farm on Isaac Hales' property, with Oliver's signature as witness
	April 7	Oliver begins as scribe in translation the Book of Mormon
	May 13	Aaronic Priesthood received
	June	Finished Book of Mormon translation
1830	March	Book of Mormon published
	April 6	Church organized in Fayette NY
	June	Visions of Moses revealed
	Dec	Writings of Moses revealed
1831	Jan	Moved to Kirtland, OH

⁴⁰ Dean Jessee, *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 62, adapted.