

to their nets, that instead of pursuing the high calling of “fishers of men,” that they again become common fishermen. They comprehended not the words of the Savior to them. But after his death, he appeared to them, and they began to understand then what he had previously told them. We did not understand either what Joseph meant when he told us he was going to be taken away. But so it was, and when it came, we knew too well his meaning, for sorrow and gloom rested upon all Israel. The question may be asked, Why was this necessary? There may be more than one reason; one, however, is, the dispensation already ushered in is the dispensation of the fullness of times; and like preceding ones, the men who have been called upon to open them up, had to seal their testimony with their blood, Joseph had to do the same. But those who took his life, and those who assented to it, will have to pay the bill. He held the keys of the Priesthood, and had a work to perform in the spirit world, as Jesus had. When he was put to death, and while his body lay in the tomb, he went to the spirit world to introduce the Gospel to the spirits there, that they might have the opportunity of either receiving or rejecting it, and be judged according to men in the flesh. And it will be the privilege of every son and daughter of Adam, sometime of their life, either in the body or in the spirit, to hear the glad tidings of great joy proclaimed to them, for God is just and is no respecter of persons. Joseph, then, standing at the head of this dispensation holds the keys of the Priesthood pertaining to this time, and it was a duty that the God of heaven required of him to open up the Gospel to those in the spirit world

who had not received it. And there is no greater duty resting upon the Latter-day Saints today than that of building Temples, and officiating therein for the dead as well as the living. Said Paul, in support of this doctrine, “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?” There is no doubt or obscurity in the minds of the Latter-day Saints respecting this principle, it has been made plain unto our understanding by the light of revelation. The Adversary, well knowing the nature and importance of the mission of this Prophet of God, put it into the hearts of wicked men to kill him, and in taking his life they thought they were putting an end to “Mormonism.” They reasoned from their human standpoint, for such might have been the case if this work were the creation of man. But the hand of God was over him and the work that he established, and it is his work and he directs it, and those who want to find fault with it, or any part of it, should enter complaint against God, for he is its Author; we are merely the instruments in his hands in carrying it on.

After the martyrdom of our beloved Prophet, the Twelve Apostles stepped forward, in the magnitude of their calling, and assumed the Presidency of the Church, and, as a Quorum, they led it, with President Young as President of that Quorum, for several years before there was an organization of the First Presidency; and when this organization was effected, with Brigham Young as President of the Church, he continued to preside for the space of thirty-three years, until the time of his death, notwithstanding the combined efforts of the