

Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the land.” Thus these descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim grew together upon this American continent, with a sprinkling from the house of Judah, from Mulek descended, who left Jerusalem eleven years after Lehi, and founded the colony afterwards known as Zarahemla and found by Mosiah—thus making a combination, an intermixture of Ephraim and Manasseh with the remnants of Judah, and for aught we know, the remnants of some other tribes that might have accompanied Mulek. And such have grown up on the American continent. But we are not informed that the Prophet Joseph and the first Elders of this Church who were called and chosen of God to bear the Priesthood and lay the foundation of this work, were descended from any portion of those remnants that peopled America anciently, and whose history is given us in the Book of Mormon. Yet we find in the Doctrine and Covenants the declaration concerning the first Elders of this Church, that they were of the house of Ephraim; and another passage referring to the wicked and rebellious, says, they shall be cut off from among the people, for the rebellious are not of the seed of Ephraim. And there is a passage in the Book of Mormon which is a part of the prophecy of Joseph written on the plates of brass and quoted by Lehi, concerning the Prophet Joseph Smith, who, it says, was to be raised up in the latter days to translate the records of the Nephites, and whose name should be Joseph, and who should be a descendant of that Joseph that was sold into Egypt, and also that that should be the name of his father.

Now if the Prophet Joseph Smith was that chosen vessel out of the loins of Joseph, it may be asked by some, what evidence have we of this lineage? I answer, the testimony of God, the best of all testimony, for no record kept by mortal man can be equal to it; and that, too, by reason of that quaint but sensible old maxim, “it takes a wise man to know who his father was, but a fool may find out who his mother was.” And even if we had the lineage of the fathers, it would not be as sure and certain to us as the word of the Lord. For he has had his eye upon the chosen spirits that have come upon the earth in the various ages from the beginning of the world up to this time; and as he said to Abraham, speaking of the multitudes of spirits that were shown unto him in heavenly vision, you see that some are more noble than others? Yes. Then you may know there were some others still more noble than they; and he speaks in the same manner of the multitude of the heavenly bodies; and said he to Abraham, thou art one of those noble ones whom I have chosen to be my rulers. The Lord has sent those noble spirits into the world to perform a special work, and appointed their times; and they have always fulfilled the mission given them, and their future glory and exaltation is secured unto them; and that is what I understand by the doctrine of election spoken of by the Apostle Paul and other sacred writers: “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Such were called and chosen and elected of God to perform a certain work at a certain time of the world’s history and in due time he fitted them for that