

BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIFE, CHARACTER AND MINISTRY
OF
FATHER JOSEPH MEACHAM
THE
PRIMARY LEADER IN ESTABLISHING
THE UNITED ORDER OF
THE MILLENNIAL CHURCH
BY ELDER CALVIN GREEN
1827

Transcribed from Elder Otis Sawyer's
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Zion's Center of Union in
the Kingdom of God on Earth:**



The Shakers of Sabbathday Lake "Chosen Land"

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Have you already read the Biography of Mother Lucy Wright?

Preface

What if I am truly in a position that makes it impossible to become a Shaker in true Gospel order? This question has crossed many serious minds over the centuries. In a world of infinite situations and life scenarios, it is sometimes unavoidably impossible to become a Shaker. The most real life scenarios ever recorded are found in Elder Calvin's Biographic Memoir as well as the three other inspired Shaker biographies he wrote (namely Father Joseph, Mother Lucy and Elder Henry). The outer Order is an Order for individuals who want to live the Shaker life but have a major prevention. May all wisely understand and consider the fact that God can never be fooled. He knows those who merely profess to be in an outer Order situation and those who truly are in such a circumstance.

Three Outer Order Shaker Examples

- A husband who is absolutely unwilling to join the Shakers and refuses to let his wife join Shakerism as well, unwilling to let her go. It is the wife's duty to care for and bless her husband. You are not to have any sexual relation whatsoever. No husband can force a wife to live outside of Virgin Purity against her will. We often find that they willingly let the true Believer who desires to become a Shaker go (the fleshly tie being the only thing they cherished). We find this in the case of Mother Ann Lee herself, whose husband eventually left her alone completely and when he could no longer fulfill his lust with her, in time, was no longer to be seen. Mother Ann was preordained by Eternal Mother Wisdom not to be a sinless virgin until Anointed by that mighty Portion of the Christ Spirit, so that all women could have a true Mother who understands and overcame the common trials of women. All women who desire to come to the Gospel and partake of the Christ Spirit will find a true Spiritual Mother in Ann Lee if they only study her life and the lives of her Gospel Children.
- You feel obligated to take care of a sick Mother, Father or Relative and believe from the heart this is your calling. This type of scenario qualifies one to be a part of the Shaker outer Order recognized by God.
- You are in insurmountable debt. God always makes a way out for the sincere potential Shaker who wants to overcome the penalty of ignoring the original teachings of Jesus Christ (as well as Mother Ann). One is to trust God for their daily bread and life needs. Debt is the highest form of covetousness, greed and faithlessness. Jesus made it clear you cannot serve God and Money. There are many testimonies you shall read if you take Shaker Studies seriously. They clearly show that God will deliver the individual who truly wants to become a member of Zion from debt, through honest work and Wisdom.

Let Father God, Mother Wisdom and your conscience reveal if you are in an outer Order circumstance. Note: All outer Order Shakers have confessed their sins to true witnesses. They are expected to completely join the Church if or whenever their situation permits. An Outer Order Shaker is **not** to hear confession of sins until they become a true Shaker by starting or joining a Shaker community. Enjoy the biography of Father Joseph!

FATHER JOSEPH'S BIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER 1

1. Father Joseph Meacham was born February 11, 1742 at Enfield, Connecticut, U.S.A. (in that day, a British Colony). His father's name was Joseph, a Baptist Elder and a man of respectability.

2. While a child, Father Joseph, showed traits of bright genius and turned mostly to philosophy and religion (his penetration and understanding in both fields was truly extraordinary). He did not obtain a high school education, but this deficiency was more than supplied for by a personal cultivation and improvement of his intellectual faculties and mental powers during his spare time.

3. He had a great reputation for his talents and power of mind. So much that it was then believed that few people were able to maintain an argument with him. When only about 16 years of age, he was sent a considerable distance, to reason with a famous Universalist Preacher, who was thought very powerful in argument. Joseph (young and inexperienced as he was) easily foiled him on his man pleasing theme of Salvation. He was naturally very communicative and intelligent. In his younger days, he delighted much in conversation on religious subjects and philosophy. Though gregarious, he was never to be confused with those who are addicted to light and frothy conversation.

4. Pertaining to religion, he was brought forth in the Baptist Order, becoming a much able preacher in that line. His eloquence and understanding manner of speech caused many to acknowledge that few, if any exceeded him in excellence.

5. As time passed and he grew wiser, his penetrating mind could no longer be satisfied with the old beaten track of religious and formal customs of profession and empty ceremonial ritualistic routines so commonly found among many, if not all of the standing orders: for he saw that they were all lacking of complete salvation. Hence his mind

was much exercised in labor after an increase of light. He wanted to know the way of God more perfectly. He wanted to find the work of full salvation. In consequence of this deeper search, his knowledge and proficiency in religious matters became far more reaching than that of mere religious professors.

6. About the middle of the revolutionary war, the people of America, were seeing war and bloodshed prevail among the professed followers of Christ. They also witnessed them backbiting and bickering against one another. Indeed, those professing to be brethren and followers of the Prince of peace were seen destroying, ravaging and treating each other as miserably as was in their power to do. Because of these facts, many were led to believe that the very foundation of such religious professors was corrupt and rotten. Hence their minds were stirred up to search after something better. These prayers, exhortations and religious awakenings eventually succeeded. Joseph actively participated in these exercises and was very instrumental in increasing that fervency of spirit which had begun among the people.

7. About this time he took a journey to New Lebanon, where there were a number of people who had broken off from old religious sects. These called themselves “**separates**”. These separates appeared to be fervently laboring for the power and life of salvation and were evidently blessed with a good degree of the power and gifts of God.

8. They testified that the Second appearing of Christ and the setting up of his Kingdom was at hand. But their separation and gifts, as usual gave great offense to the formal professors and stirred up great opposition amongst them, so that they strove by all the means in their power, to hinder the progress of the work of the separates. Having formerly had great faith in Joseph as a religious man and knowing his great reputation, they requested him, like Balak (see Numbers 22), to go and curse the people. Joseph went and visited them and attended their meetings; and when he had seen their fervency of spirit and religious exercises, attended by Divine Power, he was fully satisfied that it was of God and that they were blessed rather than cursed. He therefore took for his text the words of Balaam. “How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed?” In preaching to them from these words, he owned the work to

be of God and blessed them, to their great edification and to the great confusion of their enemies.

9. After he had closed his discourse a woman by the name of Lewis, who had been very fervent in the revival, being known to have gifts of prophecy, arose under the operation of Divine Power and said, “And God Almighty bless Joseph Meacham. Joseph’s vine shall outstretch all other vines; and Brethren shall bow down to Joseph’s sheaf”; repeating the substance of Joseph’s dream and Jacob’s blessing at the time found in Genesis.

10. How plainly has prophecy been fulfilled! In the extraordinary work that took place in 1779, at New Lebanon and the adjacent towns. Joseph took a very active and distinguished part and was a leading character. Of all the Preachers who were distinguished in that work, he was esteemed as foremost. In this work, he had many powerful gifts; many prophecies and bright views of the Second Coming of Christ; the setting up of his everlasting Kingdom etc., of which he boldly and publicly testified.

11. But before the end of this year, the extraordinary gifts and power manifested in this work died away and left the subjects of it destitute of that salvation which they had fervently sought and of which they had prophesied. In this state they were greatly troubled and filled with inexpressible tribulation; and while in their meetings they would often call out to Joseph (naming him first) to come forth and lead them into the Kingdom; but this he confessed with the rest, he was not able to do; having himself come, as it were, directly against a wall, where he could see no further way, being hedged up on every side. He however, still kept his faith that he should yet find that Kingdom for which he sought and see the desire of his soul and be satisfied.

12. In the next spring, some of the subjects of the late revival (Talmadge Bishop and Reuben White), having nearly despaired of finding that work of God for which they had sought, started for the west, to purchase some farms in that new country, but instead were providentially led to **Mother Ann’s** little family at Watervliet. Being greatly struck with what they saw there; and believing it to be the work of God, they abandoned their intentions, returned to their former place

and informed the people of what they had seen; whereupon the people of the revival appointed Joseph Meacham and two others to visit the said little family and search out what they were all about and report accordingly.

13. On their journey thither, Mother Ann said, “the first man in America is coming” (this she spoke by revelation); Prepare victuals for him and those with him. On arriving there Joseph proceeded with caution and wisely examined into the faith, principles and discipline of this singular people even to most minute particulars. Mother Ann sent Father James Whittacker to labor with him, who soon saw what a remarkable man he was and after talking with him for a while, returned to Mother and wept: sensing of what importance it was to gain him. Mother sent him again and again until he had used up nearly a day. Joseph’s labor was to measure his light with theirs, to see whether they had in reality the spirit of Christ in his Second Coming. At length, he was fully convinced that these strange people professed and possessed the Spirit, Kingdom and work for which he had so earnestly prayed, sought after and prophesied about. He knew their testimony was indeed the voice of the Son of God. Joseph’s final great objection was that a woman should govern or stand at the head of the Church which thing was so diametrically contrary to the doctrine of Saint Paul the Apostle, who even forbid women to teach in the Church.

14. Father James mentioned the above named objection to Mother Ann; upon which she directed an answer thus, ***“Tell him that in the natural state, the man is first in the government of the family; but when the man is absent, the government belongs to the woman.”*** By this wise answer, Joseph easily caught the beautiful idea, that Christ Jesus in his first appearance, being present, in the body very properly took the lead, but now with Jesus being absent from the earth, the female aspect of the life of Christ was being exemplified as his second appearance in a woman. It was her right to lead and govern the family, or children of the New Creation, which constitutes the true Church of God on earth. He was fully satisfied that Mother Ann was the Bride, the Lambs Wife and soon after, he became a faithful member of the society.

15. Joseph and the others with him, being fully satisfied of this truth, returned and made report to the rest of the people with caution, advising them to go and see for themselves; which they accordingly did: and many were likewise convinced and set out. The first public testimony of the gospel in America, was delivered by Father James, at Watervliet on the well known dark day: May 19, 1780. Talmadge Bishop was the first man who set out to obey the gospel in America; and Molly Alice was the first woman after the testimony was publicly opened; Eleanor Vedder however, lived near Mother Ann's little society and from personal acquaintance with and great love and confidence in Mother Ann, was induced to open her life to Mother Ann about two years before to the dark days. She maintained her faith against an unbelieving husband and died a good believer, many years after. She also had five granddaughters who, before her decease, were gathered to the believers and proved faithful and useful members.

16. Thus began the first opening of the gospel in America. Joseph's wife and children together with his Father and many of his kindred, embraced the gospel. These were the beginning of the Believers Society at Enfield, Connecticut. Shortly after Joseph set out, being full of the spirit he was sent by the gift of God in Mother Ann to be a laborer among believers in various parts, during her ministry and was found to be very useful in laboring with them and greatly gained their confidence.

17. Mother Ann frequently prophesied of the gathering of the Church in Gospel Order; but thought it would not be her lot, nor that of any who came from England to gather the Church, but it would be the lot of Joseph Meacham. Elder Joseph had been a Believer a short time only, before he became an Elder and he saw by revelation that he should be called yet to lead the people. Accordingly, he used himself to great zeal in labors of mortification and abstinence to gain sufficient power of God and a treasure of the gospel so as to be able to lead and protect the people. He had naturally no faculty in the dance and for some time, after much struggle he could not gain a gift. At length he set out with such zeal, that he was determined to labor till he gained the true gift and order if it cost his life. His zeal was answered by obtaining what he sought for; he gained perhaps the most complete, extraordinary and active gift in all

kinds of labor in the worship of God that ever has been gained by anyone. He would labor more like an Angel than a human being. These things can be attested by many living witnesses.

18. After Mother Ann's decease and Father James' succession to the Ministry, Elder Joseph was called on to visit and labor with believers for their protection, even more than during Mother's Ministry, as so much help was gone out of the body. Elder Joseph was consequently almost continually in labors and journeys, so that he was but little of the time with Father James; but had to bear his own burden in a great measure and learn by experience to keep the way of God for himself and others. He was so laborious and active and he gave himself so little time of rest, but traveled with such dispatch, that few if any were ever found able to keep pace with him.

19. So fervently and zealously he labored for redemption and for power over the flesh, that he lost his natural sight for the time and everything looked to him as green as grass; This can be effected by extreme exertion and mental labor, but at length he obtained what his soul so fervently desired, full power over a carnal nature and that resurrection life and power of Christ that enabled him to keep the way of God for himself and for all souls who would acknowledge and obey it; which was fully made manifest by his succeeding ministry.

20. When Father James deceased, the spirit of the world pressed exceedingly heavy against Believers and many of them looked for a great declension, at least from the work of the cross. Some of them said, now James Whittaker is dead, the people will leave their delusion and return back to the good old way, were it not for the Meacham's; but they are so willful that they will keep the people together and keep up the delusion; still they hoped for a great, if not entire falling away. Many of the Believers were also in doubt and fear and some were quite weak, fearing that the gospel would come to an end because their faith was more in the person of Father James than in the revelation of God in him.

21. But God gave an evident sign that he had raised up and anointed Elder Joseph to disappoint those expectations and lead and protect his people; for at the funeral though Elder Calvin Harlow and Elder David Meacham who were thought by many coequal with him, were present

and spoke in a great gift in testimony of the gospel, yet the anointing was evidently most manifested in Elder Joseph; for feeling the great opposition of the world, he was filled with the holy spirit and shook greatly by the mighty power of God; and he declared that this testimony was the gospel of Christ that it was the work of God and would stand, that it could not be overthrown by the wicked that God would protect his people and there would be a great increase. His words were with such power and attended with such evident operations of the Divine Spirit, that it greatly strengthened Believers and struck the World with awe and confounded them. For a time after Father James's death, the Lead appeared to rest jointly on these three Elders; and it was hardly known which of the three were first in the Lead; But the faith of most Believers centered more In Elder Joseph than in either of the others.

22. Elder Joseph returned to New Lebanon with Elder David and Elder Calvin, but they soon went on a visit to various places in the East, where Believers lived. Elder Joseph labored in his gift to purge the Believers in these parts, from evil and to prepare them for a further increase in gospel order; and his labors were evidently blessed and there was a great increase in their minds of the real nature of the work of God, so far that after the return of the other two Elders, they clearly saw that the anointing of the Lord was upon him, for the Lead of his people and came forward and acknowledged him as their Elder and that he was chosen of God as the first in the Lead and that they could not keep the way of God without him; and this was now seen and felt by the spontaneous union of Believers.

23. About this time, Elder Joseph received the immediate revelation of God to gather the Church into gospel Order. He saw by Divine revelation that the time was fully come for the Church of Christ's Second appearing to be gathered in the order of his everlasting Kingdom for the foundation of the second gospel temple to be laid. He also saw by the same revelation, the complete order of the Church of Christ and received a Divine commission to go forth and lay the foundation and to complete it in his day as far as he was able. His revelation was communicated to Believers; and all who were prepared and could do it voluntarily, settled their affairs and disposed of their property as fast as

was necessary and they were able and began to gather first at New Lebanon; December 1787.

24. Here began the gathering of the Church in Gospel Order; the work and true order of the everlasting Kingdom of Christ began to be made manifest; “of the increase of which, to order and establish it, there shall be no end.” Henceforth Elder Joseph was called Father [**2015 Note:** A Father or Mother is a founder of a new Branch or location that practices true Gospel Order, within God’s Zion on Earth. Being that Mount Lebanon was the foundation of the gathering of believers into the visible Zion and Gospel Order of the Kingdom of God on Earth, Joseph Meacham and Lucy Wright became Father Joseph and Mother Lucy. Be assured that Sabbathday Lake “Chosen Land” is a Branch that has never withered. Our offshoot is from this original Kingdom Order and **Foundation** of Zion erected by Father Joseph and Mother Lucy in New Lebanon. This is why we are the visible Center of Union or longest enduring active Community. Sabbathday Lake is a direct foundational offshoot which came into Gospel Order under Father John Barnes and Mother Sarah Kendall. Our Father and Mother literally confessed their sins to Mother Ann Lee and the Elders with her and were sent to establish Church Order under Father Joseph and Mother Lucy in New Lebanon. Any wise builder on the unshakable and firm Shaker foundation understands that all of God’s work in His Kingdom flows through and is attached to the Center of Union at Sabbathday Lake directly or through its extended Branches and offshoots. The prophesied name of Sabbathday Lake given long ago from God during the era of manifestations was “Chosen Land”. Though we are now God’s visible Center of Union, we still to this day acknowledge Mount Lebanon as the spiritual “Holy Mount” because it is the beginning of the restored Church and Kingdom Order, even the little stone of the Kingdom which shall spread throughout the world (see Daniel 2:44). Shakers have been and always will be good record keepers. It is important to note that all true Shaker Communities know exactly how they are connected to the original Mount Lebanon foundation through Sabbathday Lake. Example: A Shaker Community in China was established through confession to Shaker missionaries from a Branch of believers in Michigan whose

founding Father or Mother confessed to the Eldership at the Center of Union in Sabbathday Lake. *End of Note]*

25. **All were exhorted to put their hands to work and hearts to God**, to serve God with all the faculties of body, soul and spirit and to devote themselves with all their temporal property to God in order to build up the Kingdom of Christ. Nothing was done by compulsion, but all by free will offering to God. God will always have a willing people, as none can ever be used by him except by free will. Contrary to whatever may be said by criticizers, or the wicked, the fact will always remain that the Church foundation of this day, or second gospel temple was built by free will offerings, by those whose hearts stirred them up to offer everything to God. This is no new reality, even in the times of Moses in the wilderness, the tabernacle was built in the wilderness by free will offerings and the same goes for Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem.

26. Yea and the hearts of the people were so stirred up, that, like the offerings for the tabernacle, they offered more than could be received consistently, with wisdom. So fully were Believers convinced of the Divine authority of the revelation of God in Father Joseph, by the great power and many gifts that attended his ministration and by the justification that every obedient Believer felt in their own souls, that nothing appeared as too much to do and no sacrifice was too great to make to obtain the blessing of that revelation and an inheritance in that spiritual order, which so evidently flowed from the heavenly world to God's Zion on earth.

27. And here is the true means, power and source by which the Church was begun, built and supported to this day and by which it always must be enlarged and supported; for the true Church can never stand without the revelation of God, leading, governing and protecting. And this revelation must be received by faith in the hearts of souls, which causes them to dedicate themselves and all that they have, as freewill offerings to God to build up and support the Kingdom of Christ. This testimony Father Joseph received by revelation and it was uniformly his testimony.

28. Soon after the Church began to be gathered, Father Joseph saw that a spiritual union must be gained between male and female before gospel order could be fully established in the Church; that “the man was not without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord (See 1 Corinthians 11:11)” —that without this Spiritual Union in Virgin Purity being gained in a joint body, which is directly contrary to the union and works of the flesh, a real travel out of the fallen nature of the flesh could not be experienced, nor the Spiritual Order of Christ’s Kingdom be made manifest—that this spiritual order must first be made manifest in the visible parentage of the Church, before it could be gained in the body. He saw that Lucy Wright was the person whom God had chosen to stand first among the females. She had been recommended by Mother Ann before her decease, as the one chosen for the sisters to pattern their conduct after and take example by.

29. Father Joseph having received this gift and seeing that the time was fully come for the joint parentage of the Church to be visibly established, caused numbers of the people to labor for a spiritual gift and understanding to know who their visible Mother was in the spiritual order of the Church. Not soon after by the moving of the spirit, they spontaneously felt and declared in union that it was Lucy Wright. She was accordingly appointed to stand first among the sisters; and to stand in a spiritual correspondence with Father Joseph, as the first ever joint parentage in the spiritual order of the Church of Christ in the visible order of his Kingdom and Zion established on earth. Thus the true foundation was laid in the Church, for all souls to receive the life of the joint spiritual parentage, to be gotten and brought forth into the true visible order and spiritual union of the gospel.

30. This spiritual union and life is like a consuming fire to all the union and life of the flesh; and hereby souls may travel out of the fallen nature and find full redemption; and thus rise into the very nature and life of Christ; and it is as much impossible for souls to be born out of a fallen nature of the flesh, into the life of the everlasting Kingdom of Christ and become partakers of its order and glory without spiritual parents, as it is for anyone to be born into the natural world without natural parents. This was uniformly the testimony of Father Joseph and

Mother Lucy who visibly represented the Second Adam and Eve, Jesus Christ and the Bride Ann Lee.

31. The joint parentage of the Church was evidently shown by the revelation of God in many figures in ancient days: but the most striking figure may be found in the Prophet Zechariah, Chap 4 representing the Two Olive Trees. The Two Olive Trees represented the Two Anointed Ones; that is Christ manifested in Male and Female. From these the oil of light and life flows to the Church. But the golden oil was emptied into the golden bowl through the two branches.

32. The golden bowl represented the Church of Christ, built up, established and completed in gospel order. And as it could not receive the pure oil, only through the two branches, so it is evident that the two branches represented the joint parentage of the Church; that is the revelation and gifts of God in the line of both male and female, which first began in Jesus Christ and Mother Ann and is continued through the two golden pipes: "The spirit and life of Christ proceeding from the two anointed ones" for the continued building, support and strength of the Church. Without this joint parentage, the Church could never be established in spiritual relation; nor could the order of the New Creation in Christ be made manifest.

33. At the gathering of the Church, the first thing found necessary for a permanent establishment in temporal things was to erect suitable buildings to accommodate the members. This was progressively brought to pass by the zeal of all concerned, through the most extraordinary exertions and many privations. The year in which the Church began to gather, there had been an extraordinary drought which cut the crops of grain very short. As the people were mostly poor, this greatly increased the difficulty of gathering a large number of people together and also supporting workmen gathered from all parts. But the prospect of seeing the foundation of Zion and the second temple laid, was so cheering to them, that nothing could dampen their passion and enthusiasm or mitigate their zeal.

34. At the same time, the spiritual work was going on with fervor and energy through the gift of God administered through Father Joseph; searching and purging out sin, root and branch, as well as through great

labors and many other operations of holy power and Divine movements of the Holy Spirit. They had much exercise in the Worship of God and labored greatly to obtain mortification and death to a carnal nature. The most sharp and powerful reproofs were constantly rolling against the whole mass of the fallen propensities of the carnal man and woman, so as to prepare the members to be as lively stones to be built up a spiritual house, yea, even the habitation of God.

35. The labor required both in spiritual and temporal affairs was so great, that nothing short of the support and many gifts of God administered through Father Joseph and Mother Lucy enabled them to endure all they had to pass through and perform the most important work, which they eventually effected, even the first gathering of the Church. No parallel movement can be found or compared to the united zeal, energy and perseverance of those who by their free will offerings and labor completed the literal foundation of God's Zion on earth. Little distinction of order was observed, for there were not suitable buildings prepared to establish various departments in the Church; neither could it be known or confirmed who was suitable to come forward as Elder Brethren and Sisters, until they had proved themselves and their talents. Being the spiritual order of the house of God could not yet be established; all united and traveled together, while the real order and consequent peace and beauty of the Church yet remained unseen. However, as soon as more buildings were erected and members appeared suitable for the Lead in things spiritual and temporal and the people were prepared for spiritual order, different orders and departments were established and Elders and Leaders appointed in each order.

36. For some time after the gathering of the Church, the direction of all things, both spiritual and temporal, was necessarily vested in Father Joseph and the rest of the Ministry just as it was in the primitive Church; for the members of the Church had not yet traveled to see the temporal order in distinction from the spiritual. When the time did arrive, the Church was spiritually prepared and the order of Deacons was brought forward and established by Father Joseph, to take the charge of the temporal economy of the Church of Christ. The order of spiritual and

temporal things is like soul and body and as the soul ought to be the first lead and direct the body, so the spiritual must lead and protect the temporal.

37. After this was established, different orders and divisions were also established. The Church was divided into first, second and third orders or divisions, prefigured by the first, second and third courts in the Jewish Temple, subdivided into departments and lots for the time being according to the present gift of God. The first order or division was to be the most spiritual degree, which attends less to temporal care and works more indoors reflecting the inner courts of the temple. The second division was to attend more to outward labors; have the charge of farming etc. The third division was to contain the office for all business of a temporal nature between the Church and world, answerable to the outer court of the temple: of course all buying and selling was to be excluded from the first and second courts. These things were given by revelation of God through Father Joseph and laid the foundation by which the true order of the true Church of Christ could operate and serve as a pattern for all other buildings in gospel order, although there will and must be a great increase and many changes (according to time, place and circumstances).

38. The Church at New Lebanon he established as the Center of Union for all others. Through the ministration of Father Joseph, Bishops were sent forth and established over different settlements of Believers. These were appointed as Fathers and Mothers and the same order, as far as convenient, was established in every society. Thus was the Church established as Mount Zion and the believers were like the tribes of Israel round about, having received the Law from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Father Joseph having been the first instrument to establish this order, continued for several years, by a powerful and wise administration, to strengthen and invigorate the body of Christ. He taught, counseled and instructed far and near. His ministration to believers (except at New Lebanon and Watervliet) was chiefly executed and taught through the Parents, or respective Ministers in other communities.

39. In the latter part of 1795, Father Joseph appeared to feel as though his work in this life was drawing to a close (unless he had a further work to do in another opening of the gospel). He went on some journeys to feel the state of the world and see whether or not he could find any prepared for the gospel: but he could find none prepared, neither could he feel any gift to labor spiritually with them.

40. He began to truly comprehend that his earthly work was nearly completed. From this time forward, he began to feel a special concern for the rising generation. He assembled several times with them and took great pains to instruct them in the principles of the gospel. In one of his speeches in 1796: he said, *“I feel a great portion of the sufferings of Jesus Christ on the cross, though I am but a child to him; I know I am not to continue much longer; I know it by revelation. I do not expect to continue long; but there will be those who will be able to keep the way of God, if you will be obedient to your Mother and the Elders.”* He then signified that his health would not admit to his speaking any more to them; but after expressing a most Fatherly tender concern for the protection of the youth and children in a solemn charge, he gave them up to Mother Lucy and the Elders.

41. He frequently said, after he had established the Church, that he had a work to do in the line of opening the gospel; but he was not yet certain whether it was in this world or another, but said he, when I know for sure it is not in this world I shall pass on soon after. He became convinced that his next work in the gospel was not in the body. He frequently said, *“When I am gone, Mother Lucy will grow better in health and will have the gifts of God for you.”* This prediction has been completely fulfilled by her wise and able administration for upwards of a quarter of a century.

42. July 16th 1796. Father Joseph felt impressed to go on a journey eastward and went as far as Harvard, accompanied by Zacheus Stevens, a deacon, where he met the Bishops of each society. He thought that journeying might help his health; and he went on a short journey at sea, but found no benefit therefrom. Hence, after remaining and instructing the Elders there, he gave them his parting blessing and returned again to New Lebanon, July 25. From this time he rapidly declined in health;

indeed it appeared to all who had the privilege to see and converse with him, that his sense was nearly altogether in the heavenly world for some months before he left the body. It could hardly be perceived that he had any natural infirmity: but he appeared like one whose soul traveled out of the natural body. They testified that he was full of love and heavenly gifts to his last end on earth, by his love purity and strong union to the heavenly world, his sense appeared more and more lost to the things of time.

43. They bore witness that he was full of love and heavenly gifts — speaking of the glories and beautiful revelations of heaven— encouraging and strengthening all to persevere in the good Way of God, by setting before them the eternal and inestimable blessings of the gospel; and he gave this precious promise, “I never will leave the Church in spirit; those who suffer with me shall reign with me.” About 24 hours before he ceased to breathe, he said “I hear a heavenly trumpet sound as loud as our large conk-shell, sounds; and Elder Henry who was with him in the ministry, a very spiritually gifted man, was present. Father Joseph asked do you hear the trumpet? Elder Henry answered that he had several times before heard it. Father Joseph then said this trumpet sounds to call me home—soon after this, his soul was evidently entranced with the elements of heaven, until the 16th of August 1796, when it left his clay tenement to return no more, at 4:20 P.M.

44. His funeral was attended the 18th at 2:00 P.M. As he had been such a public character, it was thought best to notify the world and it was judged that 400-500 of the world attended. Only part of the believers could attend for want of room. Elder Henry Clough spake; “I desire the Brethren and Sisters to be calm and not be frustrated in their minds. Our Elder and Father of the Church is gone. He has been our Apostle and Father; one who has gathered the Church; but the way of God will not be lost, but there will be a way for all to be protected who will be obedient and labor to keep the gospel.”

45. To the spectators he said, “Some may think that the work will run out now, because our Elder is gone; but the Work of God will not come to an end because one has completed his work and gone hence. We are that people who have confessed our sins, righted our wrongs and taken

up our cross and followed Christ in the regeneration; and if you want to know any more about us, you must do as we have done; confess your sins, right all your wrongs and take up your cross and follow Christ in the regeneration and then you will know what we really are. The meeting was very solemn and impressive to believers who revered Father Joseph as a true Apostle and Father in Christ.

CHAPTER 2

PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER OF FATHER JOSEPH MEACHAM

1. Father Joseph was in person about 6 feet high; average and well-proportioned though rather slim; with broad shoulders and full breast; his limbs were rather long. He was very straight and graceful in his carriage and walk. He was also very active and endued with uncommon strength. His countenance was open and dignified; his eyes a bluish gray, clear, quick and very penetrating, a bold forehead, his hair a dark chestnut brown; rather dark complexion; comprising altogether an appearance that inspired confidence and called for respect, striking the beholders with a reverential awe.

2. His voice was clear and powerful and very penetrating. When speaking by way of reproof, such was the gift of God which he professed and such the energy of his spirit, that his voice sounded like peals of thunder and his eyes appeared like flames of fire so that it seemed as though they would penetrate the inmost recesses of the heart and the stoutest men would tremble in his presence. Such was the incontestable force of his gospel testimony, that the most able opponents were readily silenced.

3. In manners he was reserved and preserved a dignified silence (when wisdom did not dictate that conversation was proper), yet he was social in conversation, when prudence allowed it, without ostentation. He was gentle and very affable, when his duty did not require a different conduct, but he was persevering and very inflexible when duty called. His Wisdom was remarkable.

4. Mother Ann said he was the wisest man that had been born for several hundred years; and his wisdom in gathering, establishing and building up the Church; in regulating and protecting believers fully verified this saying: “though he was severe against all sin and everything that defiled the temple of God, yet his kindness and charity was exceedingly great”. He knew how to come at lost souls, in every state of their needs. Such was the life of his spirit, that he has been known, when some were under such a state of melancholy heaviness that they could not keep from a death like sleep, even in meeting, he was able to raise them to the point of being wide awake in spirit only by breathing on them, similarly to Jesus ministering the Holy Spirit to his disciples by simply breathing on them. In him the aged found an able counselor, a faithful friend and a protector. In him the young found a kind Parent, a wise and able instructor, exemplifying those qualities that formed a character of whom it might be said in truth and verity, “he was a real and true Father in the Israel of God”. This Godly example was such, that it fully enforced his wise and discreet precepts and instructions.

5. Father Joseph’s wisdom rooted deeply in spiritual things, his profound penetration and knowledge of the mysteries of Godliness were very great, as were his gifts remarkable. Yet considering the early stage of the work of Christ’s second appearing in his day, it must be reasonable to expect a great increase in light and knowledge of Divine things. It is only proper that the nature of those mysteries which have been hidden in all ages should be greater revealed in the further progress of the work. This he foretold would be the case. When it comes to the early period of the work; and the many labors that he had to attend to in his destiny of laying the foundation of the Church and forming the dividing line between the order of the Kingdom of Christ and the order of the world, his light and knowledge surpassed all people in his day.

6. The following incidents among many of the like kind, will show his wonderful discernment and foreknowledge of the state of souls; and the near relation in which he stood as spiritual Parent to members of the Church. At a certain time walking in the dooryard, he was suddenly taken blind, so much so that one of the Brethren had to lead him into the house; then he told what was the cause, saying, “there is one soul now in the Church, that is shut out of the Kingdom of heaven; there is no more sacrifice for him, that I know of, in time or eternity.” The next day a Capable Young man (by the name of Morris Farrington), went off to the world and never returned. Instantly one of Father Joseph’s arms were suddenly struck numb, as if it were dead; he returned and went into the dwelling house and asked the Elders who had gone back to the world? They informed him that a man had just gone from the Church to the world. Another time, while the church was gathering, Father visited an out family by the name of Kibbee, to see if any of them were suitable to become members of the Church. There were several children, two of whom were sons. After viewing them, he said to Gideon the youngest, “you may come to the church to live; but God will take care of Aaron, your Elder brother,” who was soon after taken sick and in a short time died; but Gideon went to the Church and deceased there an aged and good believer. None of the rest of the family were ever gathered to the Church, though all deceased as believers in Shakerism.

7. His revelation pertaining to the future state of the Church was also far seeing. He said that he saw by revelation a perfect church completed on earth and he labored with all his powers to gain and establish its system and order as far as possible. But after having done all he was able, he then found that only one general order (that is the United system) as a foundation had been completed and further predicted that it would take seven general and distinct travels of believers to bring to maturity that perfect church order which he then saw by revelation would ultimately be accomplished. General travels were understood to mean the periods from one general opening of the gospel to another, including all the degrees and changes in each period.

8. There had been scarcely any ingathering to believers for more than ten years, but the spring before Father deceased, when it appeared as if

his soul was viewing the spiritual world and in correspondence with heaven, he foretold that a new opening of the gospel was near at hand, that it would increase until it became very extensive and many souls would be gathered to the Work of God. Therefore those believers who would abide faithful to that time, would then greatly rejoice in the increasing work of salvation. A remarkable incident which took place during one of these heavenly trances we will mention. In the early part of the summer before his decease, Father walked out as far as the lot called the north cow pasture, at the end of the lane, west of the first order's dwelling house and was there taken in a prophetic trance and was laid down on a rock. One of the Physicians knowing his weakness of body, kept watch over him and followed lest some misfortune should befall him; when he came near, he saw Father lying down, seemingly wholly absorbed, the cows had all left feeding and stood around looking at him in silence. The brother said that it appeared as if Father's spirit had attracted them with a reverential awe. After a time, he spake to Father and it recalled his senses; Father then told him what was there revealed to him, of the further work of God exceeding anything he had ever made known before. This incident appears as a harbinger of the power that the spirits of the children of God will have over the lower orders of the animal creation when they have gained their true order.

9. About 3 years after this a few small in-gatherings to Believers began in various places; and there was a gradual increase in numbers until the great opening in the West; and the in-gathering also much increased in the Eastern Societies, so that the numbers of those in the faith (in about 25 years) was nearly threefold more than when the opening began. This diffused great life and joy among all believers who had long been waiting for this to take place.

10. But little had ever been taught; and nothing preached or written of the order and office of a Mother in Christ; But Father foretold that in the next opening of the gospel Mother would be had in remembrance, her order and office would be brought forward and openly declared. This has been fully verified as exactly what has taken place in the period of the general opening of which he prophesied.

11. I learned that he had an inspired view of the order of Father and Mother in the nature of God and also of the Divine Christ in heaven who had been the mediator between him and all his works from the beginning; but through motives of Wisdom did not manifest it publicly, for the time had not yet come. He was the first that ever brought forward the order of the four dispensations (1. Patriarchs, Moses/Law, 2. Christ Jesus and Apostles primitive Church, 3. Falling away of the true Church into Antichristian darkness, 4. Mother Ann and Elders restore the true Gospel of complete self-denial for Salvation/God's Kingdom/Zion on Earth begins).

12. He also had great understanding of the providential work of God in the world; he said that George Washington was really raised up by the hand of God in the order of providence to establish liberty of conscience and open the way for the Kingdom of Christ to arise as much as he, (Father Joseph) was raised up in the spiritual order to establish the foundation of the Church, which was the commencement of the Kingdom of the Saints. **He said further that those who had a prophetic sight of the work that would be effected in the great day of God so much looked for in the world, greatly erred in setting the time so soon for it to be accomplished, they mistook the beginning for the end when all wars would cease, all tyranny would be overthrown and mankind enjoy just and equal rights; but that work of which they had an imperfect sight, would not be accomplished for several hundred years.**

13. To close our narrative of the character of our blessed visible Father of the church, he was so evidently filled with the light, power and wisdom of God, that he had a gift of ministering to souls according to their state and needs with very few words; and all who would receive his gift, received new light implanted in them as well as greater knowledge of the gospel and increasing power over a sinful nature. This is attested by many witnesses now living. Of this extraordinary gift I myself, Calvin Green, am a living witness, by what I received from him in my own soul, when I was about 15 years old. He came into the shop where I was at work, peculiarly noticed me and spoke a few encouraging words, diffusing such a benign, Fatherly feeling that instantly implanted such

love for him in my soul. It far surpassed any love I ever felt before; and also produced in me a new era of heavenly love, light and knowledge of the way and work of God in comparison to which anything I ever received before was but little and meager. He closed with these words, “always remember that the more good you do, the more good you will gain.” I have ever felt sure that this gift was purposely to effect that spiritual object which it did; for it laid the foundation and introduced an element into which has been sown the seeds that have sprung up and produced those spiritual gifts and knowledge to discern those things relating to the work of God which I have received. Thus that gift ministered to me in his few words, has been an inestimable help and blessing all my days and I fervently love and bless him as my Spiritual Father.

14. His zeal and sufferings in his ardent labors, to help souls and establish the Church were so great and such was his energy to set the example of redeeming power, that he truly became a living pattern of redemption; for some time before his decease, he testified publicly that for several years he had not experienced the least emotion of a carnal nature in any case. This he spake as an encouragement to the rising generation. O may all who hear it be encouraged thereby; and may a due portion of his mantle of zeal energy and wisdom, rest upon every Believer.

15. Father often testified that the establishment of the Church, the orders rules and regulations thereof, together with the manner and order of worship, were all made known to him by revelation from heaven. In his teachings to the rising generation, he said you are all called and elected of God with me, to have a part in the gospel and an appropriate lot and order in the Kingdom of Christ is appointed for every one of you. If you are faithful to the end you will hold your birthright and come to the perfect place and order in the heavenly state, that God in the order of providence, created and made you for: there is absolutely no power that can hinder it.

16. You are called to a much higher and greater work and order than to live in the order of generation (populating the earth with your seed) for that belongs to the world, who have not been called by the gospel.

There always will be those who will fulfill the work of generation, until the last soul is born into the world that is to be born. If any of you think you are not called to a higher purpose than fulfilling the natural lower laws and are unwilling to take up your cross, settle with the Church and go away peaceably; do not seek to do the Believers any harm, but above all never speak against your faith, nor against the way of God: this is a sin that will shut souls out from all hope of salvation (more than any amount of sins you can ever commit). Go into the world and do the best you can in that state; after you have suffered enough, to pay the debt of your disobedience which may require a long time of suffering, even if it be a thousand years of suffering, you will still not be as well off as those in the world, that never heard the gospel; for you have lost your birthright to the order of the work of God in which you were called and never can regain it.

17. But there will be a way open whereby you may find some relation to the work of God. Yet such as receive faith and have a real privilege in the gospel, if they lose that privilege by willful disobedience and fall to the world, these can never be saved in the Way which Christ has laid out for his people (daily self-denial and travel from glory to glory). Instead, you must find a back degree of relation to the work of God, by Judgment and sufferings if you ever find any measure of salvation. But such as willfully reject the gospel of this day and turn to the world, speak against and deny their faith, do despite to the spirit of grace, which strove with and implanted faith in them and also display enmity to the work of God and his people; for any character like this, there is no more sacrifice I know of, no way of God for them, neither in time nor in eternity.

18. He also said that if any among the world felt favorable to the work of God among Believers; befriended them and help them in difficulties which might be stirred up against them by reprobates or by the world, this conduct would be a vast help to them when they came into eternity. He lastly said that such would be more prosperous and under more Divine Protection in this world. I have observed this last statement come to pass a great deal and have seen it fully verified.

CHAPTER 3

INSTRUCTIVE PRECEPTS OF FATHER JOSEPH

1. Father in a special and particular manner taught the proper order of the creation of God; both in the natural and spiritual state; that God created distinct spheres for the distinct species of both the vegetable and animal creation, although in connective relation. He said that none of the different species were commingled, but each has their proper order and use, which should never be altered or changed by man. Hence he would not allow of any co-mixture of animals, either beasts or fowls in any way. This marred God's order of creation and could not be blessed by his spirit, but all species should be kept in their own sphere; and so particular was he in this respect that he would not even allow the eggs of one species of bird to be set under another species, because it deranged their created order and produced an unnatural anxiety and confusion which wronged the creature.

2. Father Joseph taught the proper use and kindness to the animal creation as an important duty for the justification of Believers; he expressly testified that if any used unnecessary familiarity with animals, it would not only defile and corrupt their souls and they would have it to labor out of, but it would also corrupt the animals by raising them out of their order and make them rebel against man. On the other hand if any neglected proper care and kindness to their domestic animals according to their order and needs, but left them to suffer, they would certainly have to meet such unkindness by sufferings and repentance, or it would be a real loss to them. But especially if any abused any creature that had life, used unnecessary severity, or was deliberately cruel and tortured them, they would have to feel greater sufferings, in consequence than

they inflicted, for they were created rational and capable of knowing their duty and could make their needs and sufferings known to those who could relieve them. But the poor dumb animals could not complain, so as to obtain redress from man; yet their Creator hears their cries and such abused creatures will be witnesses against their abusers before their Creator in eternity, if not atoned for here; for God imputes such abuses as against that life which he has created, as well as yours and it will have to be atoned for by sufferings, confessions and repentance until the debt is paid.

3. And further that domestic animals were created for the use and benefit of man and not to be abused, for, if rightly used and cared for, they would be useful and generally easily governed; but if any creature either human or brutal could not be properly governed, without much severity, such did not belong to the Church, but should be sent to the world, where the law of severity belongs. These things were abundantly taught during Father's administration, as necessary rules to be observed and kept, in order to guarantee the blessing and protection of God.

4. He also said that it was wrong to commingle any kind of fruit, that it was wrong to graft one kind of fruit into a tree of another kind. I well remember that one of the brethren grafted a pear branch into a thorn bush; but Father would not allow it and therefore it was readily destroyed and the enterprise abandoned. He taught that, in all things, the order of God's work was planned in the best wisdom, both natural and spiritual; therefore his blessing could only be dispensed in the line of the order of his own appointing and any violation of that order would be productive of evil and suffering in some manner.

5. He also said that the order in which God created man was as similar in reference to the appointed times and seasons and manner of producing offspring as the trees of the field, as a duty assigned to his earthly and sensual sphere and for no other purpose; that the violation of this primary order, for the purpose of gratifying a passion, received from an evil influence, was man's original fall; this engendered a derangement and marred the beauty of the whole natural creation, especially in mankind. All unsocialized, unnatural feelings and enmity in the human race, proceeded from this violation of the natural order.

Indeed, all disobedience to parents, guardians and tutors; disrespect and want of kindness to natural parents are its pernicious and harmful fruit. These are sins which will have to be suffered for.

6. If any have been disobedient to their natural parents while under their care, unless they told them to do that which was wrong, it was a sin and such sin must be confessed and repented of before souls can be forgiven, or find a true gospel relation; for the line of blessing in the moral order of nature is through the parents to the children and the elder to the younger. This is manifest by what took place in ancient days; when children were undutiful and displeased their parents, they lost the blessing which they might have had and it was a curse to them; and such as did not reverence and respect the aged, did not prosper in the moral order of the world; this would have to be rectified and repented of, before its effects would cease.

7. But this line of blessing is far more important in the Order of grace, for this order is of eternal duration and effects. All heavenly blessings flow from spiritual parents to their children and from the older order before them to the younger; therefore, if any souls do not acknowledge, honor and obey their spiritual parents in the Lord, such would forfeit the blessing of God and lose their travel in the gospel. And although in the conditions of the Church of Christ, the leading gift might necessarily descend from the older to the younger and the anointing spirit would rest upon such as are chosen and must be acknowledged and respected in its order, yet none of the younger generation could ever prosper and travel fruitfully in the way of God, without exercising dutiful respect and filial kindness towards those who belong to the older generation before them, from whence they have received all the blessings of the gospel. Arrogance, unbecoming and unkind conduct towards them by any of the younger order, will shut such souls out of the Kingdom of heaven, unless restitution is made. This is a doctrine that Father Joseph and Mother Lucy taught in the most earnest and decisive manner.

8. It was Father Joseph's instructions that children residing among believers, should while in childhood, call their parents father and

mother; but when grown up, they might call them by their Christian names.

9. Father Joseph established it as a rule for believers, that children brought up among them should have suitable education for all necessary purposes, according to the proper order and calling of the true Church of Christ, but not be taught unnecessary arts and sciences which naturally draw them back to the world. He expressly said in meeting that, if any had obtained more than common learning, if they thought they were the better for it, in a gospel or virtuous sense, it was a loss to them. Of these words I was an ear witness and they made a lasting impression on my mind.

10. There are at present many and various ideas, concerning the reality, substance and appearance of the spirit world, but the following are Father Joseph's views on that subject. The natural or visible world, in all its elements, is a resemblance of the spiritual world, though all that is there is spiritual substance, yet, to spirits, they have real and substantial earth, water, air, trees of the field, grass of the meadow, flowers of the garden and fruits of the orchard, that they planted and sowed and reaped. They live upon the fruit of their labors as just as we do on earth. Their food is as real and substantial to them as our food is to us. But, in the heavenly state, all these things are superior in virtue, just as eternal is superior to temporal.

11. Father taught in a special manner, that the united order and interest of Believers both spiritual and temporal was an emanation from this Eternal order and therefore was consecrated and sacred; hence it was the duty of every member that enjoyed the privileges of the covenant relation, to devote all their faculties to maintain the united order and interest. He expressly said, if anyone was not more zealous to support the united interest and more prudent and careful in saving it, than they would be of their own private interest, such were not worthy of their privilege in the Church.

12. He testified that the spiritual and temporal go together, like body and soul; that such as were unfaithful, careless and neglecting in temporal things, would be the same in spiritual things. His counsel respecting temporal things was to keep all our premises and everything

belonging to them in due order, neat, clean and in their proper place according to their use. And further to make all our work substantial, useful, plain decent and exemplary, according to our Christian profession and to put no unnecessary or superfluous embellishments upon any of our buildings or articles; that if Believers were extravagant and went beyond the proper medium, in buildings or any of their work, a blessing would not in the end attend such labors, but they would meet with tribulation as the consequence and would have to bear and suffer for such works.

13. He also gave this express warning: Be careful and see that all your writings, for the security of the interest of the Church are made in the strongest and most lawful manner possible; for the time will come, when the enmity of the wicked will be stirred up and especially directed to break up the united interest of Believers and they will do all in their power to effect it. This prophecy has been abundantly fulfilled and thus the wisdom of the instruction is demonstrated.

14. He also particularly taught that no important business nor important journeys should be begun on Friday, nor should any building be raised on that day; for the Savior was crucified, suffered and died on that day of the week and thus finished his earthly work on that day; therefore it was a good day to finish any work, but not to begin that which is of importance; hence this ought to be observed in order to excite our minds to the remembrance of his sufferings to open the way of salvation and that such as did not observe this (after being taught), would suffer loss and what they did in this manner would not finally prosper. He further said that such things should not be put off until Saturday but it was wisdom to make our calculations to be in season and begin such labors in the early part of the week.

15. Father said “The Church is called to be an example of virtue and order to all mankind and if the members thereof are faithful and keep its true order, they will be blessed in all things, spiritual and temporal in their basket and store and the time will come that the world on seeing any such faithful member will say, “*This is a child of Zion*”. In his ministration to establish the Church, he often emphasized the indispensable necessity of all such as had a privilege in the United Order

of Believers, gaining a spiritual union and relation to those with whom they were called to travel, which should far exceed any natural relationship and relation which comes by the order of the flesh; and that this must be superseded and done away in souls before they could find the true Union of the Spirit in the family of Christ. He said that if any held a feeling of natural ties and maintained a union to their fleshly relations and supported a correspondence with them beyond what duty required, it would be an injury to their spiritual union, defile their souls and hinder their travel in the gospel; but as far as real duty required and if they could be a help to draw them to the gospel, it was right and they would be protected from loss in fulfilling that duty.

16. And further, if a member of the Church held any unnecessary union and correspondence with the world it would bring a defilement and a loss upon them that they would have to labor out of or it would hinder their spiritual travel. But when duty required, if they did it in a right spirit they would be protected, yet they should always keep that reserve as not to partake of their spirits, or it would bring loss upon them. Also we ought not to have any union with apostates nor any correspondence with them unless absolutely necessary. We should separate our feelings from all such, however near related, or we could not prosper in the gospel.

17. Father Joseph also taught much about the necessity of carefulness and prudence to preserve our health. He frequently said, "Health and strength of body is the greatest blessing which we can possess next to the gospel itself and if anyone by carelessness and neglect, especially by known imprudence, brought weakness, sickness and premature death upon themselves, this would be a loss that they never could regain in proportion to the degree in which it deprived them of doing the good that they might have done, because our lives, health and strength were given us to serve God and do good. Therefore, we shall be accountable for the use we make of our body, for it was not given us to waste.

18. He also frequently testified that there were no accidents in Christ, but when any misfortune befell any, whether individually or collectively, there was always a cause, something was wrong in the connection, though the misfortune might not always fall upon the ones that were the

cause, but might fall on some who were innocent in consequence of their relative connection with such as were not so. To show this he referred to them that perished for the transgression of Achan and the tribulation which it brought upon all connected therewith, therefore every one ought to have the principle of watchful carefulness in all their ways implanted in their souls to keep them from bringing sufferings upon themselves or others. He said that when any misfortune took place, it ought not to be lightly passed over as if it were a mere chance, but there ought to be a serious feeling of examination, to find out the cause, that a remedy might be applied: In this manner more fear of God would be gained and by a prayerful feeling, his protecting power would be increased over us and many such disasters would be prevented, for this was the true line of blessing and protection.

19. Again Father Joseph said, Do not seek to run before and be above your Brethren and Sisters, who are in union, traveling with you in the gospel, for you will thereby be exposed to feel exalted and thus lose your union and blessing. He also taught that souls, when they had labored to be faithful and done the best they were able, according to their present knowledge ought never to suffer Satan to buffet and cheat them out of their justification but have confidence in God.

20. Father Joseph expressly taught us to be careful in all our ways and to conduct ourselves in such a manner as to act in and show our union in all of our proceedings. When walking together side by side, we should keep step, with the same foot and when two were either walking or riding together, they should never suffer any person of the world, nor an animal of any kind to pass between them, it was a sign that such were not in that union, which the gospel requires and warns that some loss will follow.

21. In all the instructive precepts of Father Joseph, there was no principle or order that he more strictly enjoined and more permanently established than this: that no acting agent, or member of the community of Believers, should in any case contract debts of any kind whatsoever with the world, for he testified that it was an unwise proceeding and that no blessing would ever attend it but on the contrary such dealings involved a ruinous principle. Lastly, he testified that there would be no

order or rule ever given for the guidance of Believers and stand in this dispensation except that which would yet appear reasonable to the rational mind of natural men. These instructions were delivered as solemn and weighty precepts and hence were much spoken of in those days by Father Joseph and the Elders who were contemporary with him. After the Church was established, he said that he saw the particular travel of Believers for 60 years—and hence signified that there would then be an important change. This predicted date brought the time up to the transition period, when the government and leading influence, passed from the first generation of Believers, to the second generation—that is to the immediate descendants of the former, who received the gospel from our first parents.

CHAPTER 4

The following literal extracts from the writings of Father Joseph, may give a general view of his understanding in some degree of various subjects in regard to the work of God and also the increase of the gospel in this day. Everything manifests the same principles and proceeds from the same foundation on which the work of the gospel was first planted.

RESPECTING THE TWO COVENANTS OF NATURE AND GRACE: OR THE ORDER OF THE NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL CREATION.

1st. The order and Covenant was established of God before the world was, for the creation and government of all things, according to his eternal purpose.

2nd. The order and Covenant was established of God in the first Adam: that is in the first man and woman, as the root and foundation in man, for the bringing into being all mankind, according to nature and the

government appointed to man, in the first Covenant, was given to them and their seed, according to that Covenant which respected the order of nature.

3rd. The order and relation of the man and woman, is established of God in the new covenant, that is in Christ, as the second Adam for the restoration and bringing of all things into their order, according to the New Covenant and the government of things appointed to man in the New Covenant is given to them (the Two Anointed Ones) and their seed in the Covenant of promise; and will be fulfilled in due time. The foundation was laid in and by the first, in the day of Christ's first appearance; and in the second, in the day of his Second appearing, which completes the order in the foundation that God hath laid in man for the restoration of all things, according to the New Covenant.

4th. The Covenant of eternal life was established of God in Christ by promise before the world was and the ultimate end for which man was created is in him to be fulfilled in the New Covenant. All the works of God in relation to man and his dispensations to them from the beginning, have had a necessary relation to the end; and he will be honored in all his works, both of nature and grace; both as it relates to the first Adam and the second Adam; but the glory and honor of God is brought to light in Christ by the gospel.

5th. God, in his eternal purpose hath elected a certain number or part of mankind as the first fruits of his creatures, in every manifestation or dispensation of his grace: whether given by promise or in the fulfillment: and mankind in relation to the two Covenants, in all ages have been considered as being of two seeds; the elect or children of God and the children of this world also called the children of the flesh or children of men. The birthright in things spiritual is given to the children of heaven and the birthright in things natural or temporal, was chiefly given to the other for a time or times, according to the appointment of God.

6th. As the ultimate end of all things in the purpose of God relating to man, was to be fulfilled in Christ; all the commands and promises, made and given of God to his people before Christ came, pointed to him as the substance and were to be fulfilled in him by the gospel: all the sacrifices and offerings and religious institutions, which were given before of God, being signs, or types and shadows of things to come, though necessary in their times were at an end when Christ appeared. For as he, in his manhood is the head and firstborn of man in the New Covenant, the foundation of man's salvation and eternal life was laid in him and by him in the day of his first appearing; and as the Everlasting Covenant between God and man is established and secured in him as a mediator; he is head over all things to his Church and will reign till he hath put down all rule and authority, given unto or exercised by man in the first covenant or in the first Adam. Christ will reign until he hath brought all things into subjection unto him and all are as man according to the New or Spiritual Covenant.

7th. That as man is not without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the order and Covenant of God, the first appearing of Christ in man, laid the foundation for his second appearing in man: for as one is necessarily connected with the other in the Covenant of promise, the order could not be complete for the restoration of all things, according to the New Covenant, until the promise was fulfilled in the "Two Anointed Ones" or Chief foundation pillars in the New Creation.

8th. In as much, therefore as God hath fulfilled the promise, both in the first and second appearing of Christ, the foundation is laid and the order of God complete in man according to the New Covenant. This will culminate in the full and final accomplishment of all things that God hath promised in Christ, both as it relates to the establishment of his kingdom and government on earth and the final establishment of all things in that order and state, in which they are to remain forever.

**FATHER'S WORD RESPECTING THE MILLENNIUM OR
WORK OF CHRIST'S SECOND APPEARING**

1. Many in this day are looking for the commencement of the Millennium or latter day of glory, when the Kingdom of Christ will be set up and established on earth; both in things spiritual and temporal. They anxiously await the day that all Antichristian establishments in religious matters and oppressive governments in things temporal or civil, will be overthrown and destroyed and man shall enjoy just and equal rights, both in religious and civil matters. Indeed many also await the day that all war will cease and have an end and universal peace be enjoyed by the kingdoms or nations of men in this world.

2. It is true, according to the scriptures, that the Kingdom and the Dominion and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole heaven, will be given to the Saints of the Most High and that all dominions are to serve and obey him in the latter day. But the Order and manner of the commencement and establishment of the Kingdom of Christ on earth, is not (neither can it be) understood by any but by the revelation of Christ, either immediate in their own souls, or by those who possess it to share. Many may have light, so as to believe they understand the time, according to the scriptures, when the Kingdom of Christ in the latter day is to begin, but the manner may be as contrary to their ideas or expectations as the manner of Christ's first appearing was to the Jews and often end up opposing that which they have been desiring and looking for.

3. It would therefore be wisdom for all who have not received a knowledge of the present work of God in his grace to consider the following matter:

1st That according to the scriptures, the second appearing of Christ and establishment of his Kingdom and government on earth, is a new and further dispensation of God to his people.

2nd That every dispensation of the grace of God to his people, was and is revealed to and by one to others.

3rd It hath pleased God to reveal his purposes relating to his people, to his servants, the prophets and they have foretold the greatest and principal events and changes of times relating to the Church and the powers of this world (even from early and ancient days to the end of days). However, creatures cannot understand the manner of the work of God in his grace, except by receiving it in the day in which it is wrought. Man by the spirit of prophecy may foretell things which he often does not understand (neither the matter nor the manner of which he speaks). Though he may even seem to understand the matter and substance of many things to come, the real manner of things to come are far greater than they usually appear in and of themselves. These greater things can only be understood, interpreted and received by faith. Creatures must be involved in the very work, to understand and comprehend the true meaning of the work of God in their day, that is, the day in which it is wrought.

4th It is clear by the scriptures, that the beginning of every dispensation of God to his people, was in and by a single person; and that others received it by relation. Almost every great reformation from apostasy, hath been wrought in the beginning by one person. It is clear that the second appearing or work of Christ in the latter day, is not to build up any one profession or religious establishment found on earth when he appeared, or to restore the Church to the order and glory of the former first temple or gospel Church. Nay, indeed not, but the second appearing of Christ was to usher in a New and further dispensation in things spiritual and temporal, as thereby given and established, which is called the second house or temple, which will continue to exceed the first in glory as it relates to order, unity and peace eventually filling the world with regenerated saints.

5th It is also evident that the Kingdom that God that has been set up in the latter day, is not in the order or manner of any kingdom, or government that either had been among men, prior to the revealing of the Kingdom of God. It therefore does not build up any other kingdom, government or system; but instead, in its progress, will consume them

all. If those that profess to believe the prophecies that have been given relating to the latter day, were to consider them as they are written and can understand the present signs of the times, making a just application of things past, present and to come, according to the scriptures, they would see that the day and work of Christ in his second appearing is already begun, both in his grace and in his providence.

6th The sanctuary is cleansed and the order and manner of his work in the principal matters of his Church is established. The Lord is now shaking the kingdoms and powers of the earth in order to prepare all to receive his Kingdom in the day in which it is to be revealed or made known unto them.

7th According to the scriptures, the work of the Lord, in the latter day, in relation to his Church, was to **precede** his work in relation to the kingdoms and powers of the earth. The first establishment of Christ in the latter day, was to be in or near the end of the times of the Gentiles. The powers in the line of the fourth beast were in their last dominions (partly strong and partly broken). As prophesied, their power was to remain divided between the rulers and the people in the time of the setting up and establishment of the Kingdom of Christ, as applied to his Church. Yea, they were to remain this way until the stone was cut out of the mountain and the law and order of the Kingdom of Christ as apply to the ways of God governing the world, should go forth unto them, which in the end will break in pieces and consume all their kingdoms and forms of government.

8th It is to be considered that the work of God is progressive; it is a great work from the beginning foundation of his Church until the complete establishment of the worldwide Kingdom as it relates to order and law. It is imperative that his Zion fully understands order internally before they are prepared to manifest the law of Christ to others in outside of God's order (the world), according to their state and high calling.

9th While the Lord is building and establishing his Church, he is at work in his providence shaking and breaking or weakening the kingdom and powers of the earth (See Daniel 7:5, 7 and 21 to the end and Revelation chapters 11-18). Though the wrath of the Lord is revealed against the wicked inventions and works of man, yet as he is merciful to his creatures, he will not wholly leave them without his protection; but will protect a measure of order and government among them, until their lives are fully finished and the true order and manner of government is made known unto them; the establishment of which will be progressive.

10th It was not only necessary that there should be government appointed to man in the first Adam or first Covenant, until the kingdom and government of Christ was established on earth, but also that every manner of government is made known unto man, the establishment of which will be progressive.

11th It was not only necessary that there should be government appointed to man in the first Adam or first Covenant, until the kingdom and government of Christ is established on earth, but also that every means of government appointed to them to the end of their times should have a season to ripen; that the fruit of all may appear in the end of all revelation and changes in the governments of the world. These have therefore been necessary in the hand of God for the accomplishment of his great and glorious purposes, in relation to man.

12th It might be observed that the increase of light, hath occasioned a shaking in religious matters for several ages among the nations that have been the most enlightened, which was preparatory, or leading to the latter day and hath passed from one profession or sect to another. New denominations have appeared every time there is an increase of light. When those who have been wrought upon by a measure of light and conviction, have thought they had received that which was saving grace, they have in general travelled no further, but have gone to building in the state they were in; and having lost their light and conviction soon became at peace with sin and conformed to the rest of the world. I might

have said they became servants of sin, if they had in any measure been saved. Therefore when a further measure and manner of light and conviction hath been given, they have been left behind in the wilderness; that is in the flesh; and have often been left to oppose and fight against the increase of light in those that possessed it.

13th When the day of Christ's second appearing fully came and the true light and gospel Ministry was given, the shaking in religious matters was far greater in them that received the light and power of Christ than any that had been before since the falling away of the Church from the Apostolic faith, power and order. All the spiritual gifts that were given to the church in the day of Christ's first appearing were again restored, or given to the first ministers and pillars of the Church in this latter day.

14th The light, power and gifts of the Holy Ghost were great (especially in the first witnesses). They attended with the word of prophecy in so great and marvelous a manner, that every heart was searched and every one that heard the voice of the witnesses, was tried. The loss of man and the Way and work of salvation, by Christ appeared so great, that what before had been called regeneration, or the new birth, appeared unspeakably short and distant from the real work. That which had been called Church Order, appeared so distant from a true Church gospel order that all who heard and received the witnesses, found that they were still under sin. Though many had been enlightened and thought they had received that which had been called Church order among the most enlightened; the true gospel light and ministry greatly revealed their need of confessing and forsaking their sins. None could build or place any hope of eternal life on what they had previously experienced but all that had received true faith, were to take up their cross against the world, the flesh and all sin, believing that souls must be redeemed, not only from all outward or actual sin, but from the body or nature of sin, in order to obtain everlasting life and peace.

15th Though all true Believers in the present appearing of Christ, took up a full cross against all sin, as above signified in the beginning of their faith, so far as they were then enlightened, yet they found it a great work

and travel, from one degree unto another, to be delivered from every bond of the flesh, so as to be prepared as members of the Church of Christ, according to the order of his Church in this latter day.

16th There was therefore a continual shaking by the increase of light in the Church that was among those who believed, until they were gathered into their own order and lots in Church relation. It is worthy of note that the greater part of adult persons that have believed in the present appearing and work of the Lord, were such as had been most enlightened by a work of preparation; others have been brought into the faith by, or through them. It would have been contrary to the ordinary manner of the work of God with his creatures, to have passed by these that he had been preparing by his spirit to be his first witnesses in this latter day. Indeed it would have not been justice in God to pass by (with no call to the true gospel) those who were earnestly seeking, yet in the greatest depth of Antichristian darkness and superstition, or even those who were whole and prosperous, in the honors, profits and pleasures of this world yet noble and upright. Most others were brought in by connection to the aforementioned souls who accepted their just calling from God to a higher light.

FATHER'S FEELING IN RESPECT TO THE DUTY OF BELIEVERS IN RELATION TO THE WORLD.

1. The next thing in order, is our calling and duty in relation to them that are without. "Now we know that we are of God and the world lieth in wickedness." All, both high and low, rich and poor, ruler and ruled, master and servant in their present state, are dead in sin and are under the influence and reigning power of a carnal mind, which is enmity against God. They are daily fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of their minds, living without God in the world; yea all flesh is corrupt and unclean before God; and souls are wholly unable to help themselves out of that state into which they are fallen.

2. All their works and all their buildings, by whatever name they call them will fall and have an end: for “all flesh is as grass” and nothing but the word of the truth of the gospel, which is revealed unto us, will stand forever.

3. I am sensible, were we to please ourselves and look only to our own present comfort, we should choose to have nothing to do with them, while they live in sin. There is nothing for a Child of God to feel from them but death and darkness and enmity to God and they must perish in their sins, if they do not find mercy and help through the present revelation of Christ and this gospel that is committed to our trust.

4. God hath created them for his glory and given them to his Son by promise in the Covenant of redemption and given his Son to die for sinners and hath paid a ransom for all; but all will not avail them without faith and obedience to the gospel and they must have the means of faith in order to receive it; they cannot come from the state they are in, by any strength, or ability they have in themselves. The way and work of God is at present hidden from their eyes; but must be made known to them in due time; and the revelation of Christ and the opening of the way of salvation for them must go from the Church. The ministration of the power and gifts of God in Christ, must proceed from his body and children in Zion. We are called of God to labor and I might say, stand not only for ourselves, but many thousands of Souls.

5. There was no principle that Father Joseph taught more openly than the confession of every sin; for, he frequently said, with great power, that no sin would ever be forgiven, without an honest confession in the appointed order of God. Said he, It is as impossible for a soul to travel successfully in the gospel, being justified and abiding in the way of God with any known sin unconfessed, as it is for you to create a world and instantly people it while a mortal in clay.

Shaker Communities

THE PROPHECY

A Worldwide Kingdom of God and Zion of His Likeness on Earth (Daniel 2:44).

FOUNDER

Ann Lee, the Bride of Christ (1736-1784) of Manchester, England.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

Virgin Purity, Peace, Justice and Love

Expressed Through: Celibate Life, Complete Confession and Forsaking of all Sin,
Non Resistance, Community of Goods and Divine Order.

BELIEFS

Duality of the Deity, Father and Mother God (Power and Wisdom). The Mighty Dual Spirit, Creator of Life, Light, Truth and Love. Duality of the Christ Spirit, as manifested by Jesus Christ and Ann Lee, Immortal Life, Progress of the Soul, Faithfulness, Lawfulness, Equality of the Genders, Equality in Labor, Equality in Property, Temperance in all things, Justice and Kindness to all Living Beings.

GOVERNMENT

The Head of the Shaker Order is Christ.
Represented in a Dual Order of Leaders, Ministry Elders and Trustees.

COMMUNITY

Serious Minded and Competent individuals who vow to never deny the Father God, the Mother Wisdom, the Son Jesus Christ or the Daughter Ann Lee.

SHAKER MOTTO

Hands to work, and Hearts to God.—ANN LEE

Zion's Center Of Union

