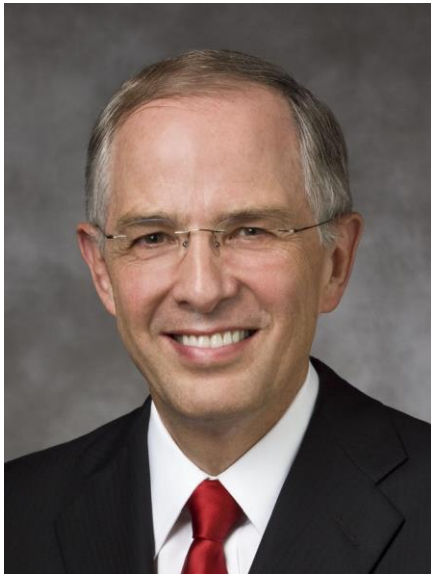


22 The Father and the Son Appeared to Joseph Smith

Sunday, November 1, 2020



Joseph Smith— History 1:14–17



“To the youth listening today or reading these words in the days ahead, I give a specific challenge: Gain a personal witness of the Prophet Joseph Smith. ... Read the testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Pearl of Great Price. ... This is Joseph’s own testimony of what actually occurred. Read it often. Consider recording the testimony of Joseph Smith in your own voice, listening to it regularly, and sharing it with friends. Listening to the Prophet’s testimony in your own voice will help bring the witness you seek” (“Joseph Smith,” Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2014, 30).

Gospel Topics Essays

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Are Mormons Christian?

Becoming Like God

Book of Mormon and DNA Studies

Book of Mormon Translation

First Vision Accounts

Joseph Smith's Teachings about Priesthood, Temple, and Women

Mother in Heaven

Peace and Violence among 19th-Century Latter-day Saints

Plural Marriage in Kirtland and Nauvoo

Plural Marriage and Families in Early Utah

The Manifesto and the End of Plural Marriage

Peace and the Priesthood

First Vision Accounts

Joseph Smith recorded that God the Father and Jesus Christ appeared to him in a grove of trees near his parents' home in western New York State when he was about 14 years old. Concerned by his sins and unsure which spiritual path to follow, Joseph sought guidance by attending meetings, reading scripture, and praying. In answer, he received a heavenly manifestation. Joseph shared and documented the First Vision, as it came to be known, on multiple occasions; he wrote or assigned scribes to write four different accounts of the vision.

Joseph Smith published two accounts of the First Vision during his lifetime. The first of these, known today as Joseph Smith—History, was canonized in the Pearl of Great Price and thus became the best known account. The two unpublished accounts, recorded in Joseph Smith's earliest autobiography and a later journal, were generally forgotten until historians working for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints rediscovered and published them in the 1960s. Since that time, these documents have been discussed

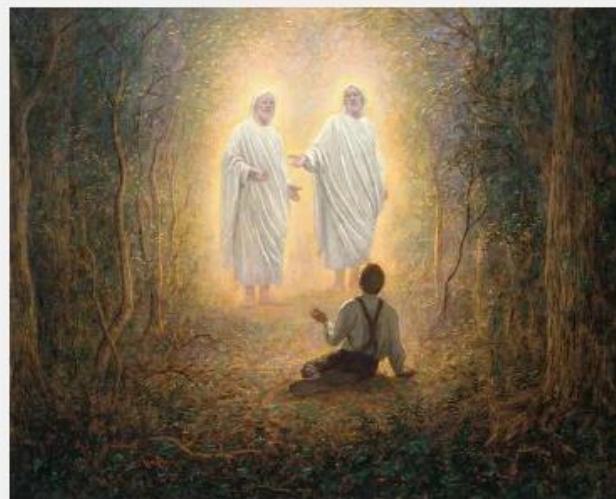
Different Accounts of Joseph Smith's First Vision

Posted on [2017/01/15](#) by [mikedayherriman](#)

First Hand Accounts

I am not worried that the Prophet Joseph Smith gave a number of versions of the first vision anymore than I am worried that there are four different writers of the gospels in the New Testament, each with his own perceptions, each telling the events to meet his own purpose for writing at the time. I am more concerned with the fact that God has revealed in this dispensation a great and marvelous and beautiful plan that motivates men and women to love their Creator and their Redeemer, to appreciate and serve one another, to walk in faith on the road that leads to immortality and eternal life. (Gordon B. Hinckley, "God Hath Not Given Us the Spirit of Fear," *Ensign*, Oct 1984, 2).

Critics of Mormonism have delighted in the discrepancies between the canonical [1838 PGP] account and earlier renditions, especially one written in Smith's own hand in 1832. For example, in the 1832 version, Jesus appears to Smith alone, and does all the talking himself. **Such complaints, however, are much ado about relatively nothing. Any good lawyer (or historian) would expect to find contradictions or competing narratives written down years apart and decades after the event.** And despite the contradictions, key elements abide. In each case, Jesus appears to Smith in a vision. In each case, Smith is blessed with a revelation. In each case, God tells him to remain aloof from all Christian denominations, as something better is in store. (Stephen Prothero, *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 171).



Joseph's vision of the Father and the Son – 1820

Second Hand Accounts of The First Vision

[1840 Orson Pratt Account](#)

[1842 Orson Hyde Account](#)

[1843 Levi Richards Account](#)

[1843 David Nye White Account](#)

[1844 Alexander Neibaur Account](#)

[1879 John Taylor Account](#)

[1888 George Q. Cannon Account](#)

[1890's Edward Stevenson Account](#)

[1893 Charles Walker Account](#)

[1832 Joseph Smith History Account](#)

[1835 Joseph Smith History Account](#)

[1838 Joseph Smith History Account](#)

[1842 Joseph Smith's Wentworth Letter](#)

[Why the different accounts of the First Vision should not shake your faith](#)

Joseph Smith's First Vision Accounts



Source: FAIRMORMON.ORG

Finding Relevance and Application

