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Acquiring Gammorah
Doctrine and Covenants 46, 85,
and 121
Blessing the Church Worldwide

THE
RELIGIOUS
EDUCATOR

PERSPECTIVES ON THE RESTORED GOSPEL

VOL 6 NO 2 • 2005

Family History:
A Conversation with
Elder D. Todd Christofferson

"The very creation of the earth and our experience here would be utterly wasted but for the eternal union of families that family history and temple work make possible."

THE
RELIGIOUS
EDUCATOR
PERSPECTIVES ON THE RESTORED GOSPEL



RELIGIOUS STUDIES CENTER
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

PROVO, UTAH

VOLUME 6 NUMBER 2

2005



“As I have studied the history of family history in this dispensation, it is easy to see the hand of the Lord at work, especially at critical junctures when it was important for the next step to be taken.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson

ON THE COVER:

**Family history is symbolized
by aspens with their vast network
of interconnected roots.**

The *Religious Educator* is published three times a year by the Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. This publication serves the needs and interests of those who study and teach the restored gospel of Jesus Christ on a regular basis. The distinct focuses are on teaching the gospel; publishing studies on scripture, doctrine, and Church history; and sharing outstanding devotional essays. The contributions to each issue are carefully reviewed and edited by experienced teachers, writers, and scholars.

Articles are selected on their appeal to and appropriateness for religion professors at each of the Brigham Young University campuses, seminary and institute teachers, and other gospel teachers of adults and young adults. In every issue, we plan a selection of articles that will be helpful and appealing to this diverse audience. The beliefs of the respective authors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

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Those manuscripts that meet all criteria and appear to fill current needs will be peer reviewed and will receive a friendly, but careful, review. Authors will then be notified of the decision about publication. This process generally takes four to six months, and publication will generally occur within a year after acceptance has been received.

If an article is accepted, authors will be notified and asked to provide photocopies of all source materials cited, arranged in order, numbered to coincide with endnotes, and highlighted to reflect the quotations or paraphrases. Photocopies of source material must include title page and source page with the quotations used highlighted.

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Editors' Introduction

Two hundred years ago this year, Joseph Smith Jr. was born in Sharon, Vermont. Little did the world know the impact he would have or the legacy he would leave. With Elder John Taylor, we proclaim that the Prophet “has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men, than any other man that ever lived in it” and that he left a “fame and name that cannot be slain” (D&C 135:3). This issue celebrates the truths of the Restoration from a variety of perspectives.

First, we look at family history and temple work, a crowning achievement of the Prophet. Elder D. Todd Christofferson shares his views gained while serving as executive director of the Family and Church History Department. Next, we look at “forever families” as seen through the eyes of Douglas and Barbara Smith, a former member of the Seventy and general Relief Society president.

Seminary teacher Cameron J. Packer takes readers on a photographic journey to the Hill Cumorah to witness its changes in appearance over time. This article features the story of the Church’s acquisition of this sacred property.

As the keystone of our religion, the Book of Mormon testifies of the Creator and helps us understand how “all things denote there is a God.” But how can we see the message beyond the symbols, and how can we reinvigorate our scripture study? Articles by Bruce A. Roundy, Robert J. Norman, and R. Mark Mattheson offer suggestions.

Turning to the Doctrine and Covenants, we get detailed insights into revelations to the Prophet Joseph Smith on gifts of the Spirit (section 46), the law of consecration (section 85), and counsel to priesthood holders (section 121).

We conclude with two articles on the growth of the Church worldwide, including an interview with Ross H. Cole of the Church Educational System and stories of faith that Kathy K. Clayton tells of the Saints in Abundancia, Paraguay.

Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, Editor-in-Chief
R. Devan Jensen, Executive Editor
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