



## Smith Family Home Evening

It must have been a remarkable family home evening. The family consisted of 11 people; father and mother, and 9 children ranging in age from 25 to an infant, all gathered in the confines of a small rustic log cabin on the pleasant autumn evening of September 21.

They passed the evening before the log fireplace “conversing upon the subject of the diversity of churches...and the many thousand opinions in existence as to the truths contained in the scriptures.” It must have been a lively discussion as not only as the world so divided on religion but so too was the family.

They were not all of one united belief—though they were a bible-reading, God-fearing family accustomed to daily religious devotions in the home. There was confusion and disagreement among members of the family with regard to religion and religious practice.

What the family could not have known in the midst of their earnest discussion was the great turmoil that roiled the soul of their third son, only 17 years of age. His soul, he later said, was wounded. He felt condemned for his sins and weaknesses. Though only a boy, he felt that he had offended God. He said nothing of this to the family but was observed to be “in quite a serious and contemplative state of mind.”

The discussion wound down and the family of Joseph Smith Sr. retired to bed for the night. Young Joseph Jr. was too wrought up to sleep. Somewhere around midnight, while the family slept all around him, Joseph knelt to pray to know of his state and standing before God.

It was on that eventful night, September 21, 1823, that Joseph Smith Jr. was visited of the angel Moroni. This night, and the day that would follow, would prove to entirely change the course of Joseph’s life—as well as that of his family.

Interestingly, on the very next night the family would come together again to talk about religion,



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this time listening to Joseph as he described the wonderful things that had been revealed to him by the angel of God.

The family was melted to tears and the “sweetest union and happiness pervaded [their] house.” They believed him, especially his older brother Alvin, and because they believed him it would be the beginning of many joyous family discussions on the subject of religion.

The Lord later said to Joseph, “I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth.” I am a witness to this principle—let a family talk in faith about God in the home and He will enter that home.

Source: <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/lucy-mack-smith-history-1844-1845/40>

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Email draft: Events of monumental importance to members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints took place around September 21-22. These are anniversaries worth remembering. I hope this jogs a memory of your own experience with the Book of Mormon.