

A Broken Heart and Contrite Spirit

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I want to remind you that when we were in Orem we talked about priesthood. I'd like you to keep in mind the material addressed in Orem as we proceed today.

Doctrine and Covenants section 84 has a description of events at the time of Moses, beginning at verse 19. *"And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest."* [By the way, I should add as a parenthetical thought, "the ordinances thereof," is far more expansive than simply a set of rites or rituals, because when the higher priesthood is present on the earth, everything done by the higher priesthood is an ordinance. Once it is been ordained by God to take place, and God's hand is behind what takes place, those events under the direction of that priesthood is all an ordinance, and therefore in them you find the power of godliness.]

"And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live. Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God; But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory." [We have talked about this before, "the glory of God is intelligence, or another words Light and Truth,"¹ therefore, "His rest" is to be filled with His glory. In other words, to be filled with Light and Truth, or to comprehend things you do not at present comprehend. The purpose of the glory of God is to reveal hidden things and bring greater understanding.²]

"Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also." [At that point ancient Israel's expectation ended anciently. For them, there was no possibility for Zion.]

I want you to think about what comes next. This is a topic we will revisit today. These words mean a great deal: *"therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness."* [And He did this in "His wrath." We think of God as very loving and benign, after the sacrifice of Christ. These words seem to be "Old Testament like" and not "New Testament like." Today, hopefully, when we get through the discussion, we will all know more about the nature of God's ire and God's approval. Likewise, His disapproval feels terrible.]

In a prior talk we looked at Mormon 9: 2-5. We considered the reaction people will have in the last day of judgment. Those verses describe what it will be like to stand in the presence of a just

¹ D&C 93: 36.

² Alma 12: 9-10.

and holy being while unprepared. They will feel awful, even condemned. However, I pointed out in that passage God does nothing other than exist. The disappointment in the mind of man is so exquisite that Joseph Smith compares it to a lake of fire and brimstone.³

Therefore, God “in His wrath” simply withdrew from ancient Israel. He took a step back because the people Moses led were not suited to be in His presence. Therefore, God withdrawing is how His “wrath” manifests itself. If He withdraws from you, that should be felt keenly as an absence and rejection.

The incident referred to in modern revelation about Israel’s rejection (section 84), is set out in Exodus chapter 20, beginning at verse 18: *"And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was."*

The Israelites Moses led did not want to encounter Him. This was not because God’s presence is so terrible it drives men from Him. That cannot be true because Moses approached Him, Joseph, Abraham, Isaiah all approached Him. However, God’s presence makes every man evaluate who and what they are. Although we can lie to ourselves about how good we are, when the measuring stick used is God, we are unable to deceive ourselves. When the comparison is to God, all of us come short. Even when the Lord testifies to you that your sins are forgiven, you still recognize you fall short. To the extent a man has confidence in the presence of the Lord it is wholly derived from Him. He must strengthen you, because if He does not, we would all retire in shame.

Doctrine and Covenants Section 124 is a revelation given in January 1841. In it the Lord offered to the Saints a return of “the fullness” which had been lost. Beginning at verse 28, the Lord said through Joseph: *"For there is not a place found on earth that he ["He" being the Lord] may come to and restore again that which was lost unto you, or which he hath taken away, even the fulness of the priesthood."*

Skipping to verse 31: *"But I command you, all ye my saints, to build a house unto me..."* [See, this commandment was unto everyone who at that point, who claimed to be a Saint. All of them, every one of them, was put under the equal burden: *"to build a house unto me."*]

"...and I grant unto you [all of “you” meaning all those claiming to be Saints] a sufficient time to build a house unto me; and during this time your baptisms shall be acceptable unto me. But behold, at the end of this appointment your baptisms for your dead shall not be acceptable unto me; and if you do not these things at the end of the appointment ye shall be rejected as a church, with your dead, saith the Lord your God." [It's interesting that in verse 31 it says *"your baptisms,"* but in verse 32 it says instead *"your baptisms for your dead."* This suggests that after verse 31, if we fail in verse 32, that our baptisms will continue to be acceptable, but our vicarious work would not, and the Church would then be rejected.]

³ See *TPJS* p. 357.

If you skip to 34, talking about this proposed temple required to be constructed: "*For therein are the keys of the holy priesthood ordained, that you may receive honor and glory.*" ["Honor" being the promise from God which would follow us into the afterlife. It comprises what you can expect to receive from God because of His oath and covenant. The word "glory" refers to intelligence, or knowledge and understanding. Glory is Light and Truth. It includes those things not presently understood, but which God offered to the Saints, at that point.]

Well, He gives to us in this same revelation a way in which we can determine if those Saints met the requirement the Lord has set. Here is the measurement, beginning in verse 43: "*And ye shall build it on the place where you have contemplated building it, for that is the spot which I have chosen for you to build it.*" [So they contemplated a place to build it, the Lord approved the place they chose, and this would become the spot God would consecrate.] "*If ye labor with all your might, I will consecrate that spot that it shall be made holy. And if my people will hearken unto my voice, and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people, behold, verily I say unto you, they shall not be moved out of their place.*" ["They" being both the people, as well as "they" being also those chosen to lead them. "They" who had been chosen included both the Prophet Joseph Smith, and his brother, Hyrum. Hyrum was the one appointed in this same revelation to receive priesthood and be appointed to hold the sealing power.⁴ Hyrum Smith was the one designated to be the successor to Joseph Smith in the event of Joseph's death.⁵ However the one the Lord would take first was the successor, Hyrum. Joseph died knowing his successor had first fallen.]

"If, then they shall not be moved out of their place. But if they will not hearken to my voice, nor unto the voice of these men whom I have appointed, they shall not be blest, because they pollute mine holy grounds, and mine holy ordinances, and charters, and my holy words which I give unto them. And it shall come to pass that if you build a house unto my name, and do not do the things that I say, I will not perform the oath which I make unto you, neither fulfil the promises which ye expect at my hands, saith the Lord. For instead of blessings, ye, by your own works, bring cursings, wrath, indignation, and judgments upon your own heads, by your follies, and by all your abominations, which you practise before me, saith the Lord." [Examine the history of the events between January 1841 and the death of Joseph on June 27 of 1844. Ask yourself whether or not the Saints used every effort to built the House they were commanded to build. Following the revelation did the Saints apply the required effort in the timeframe allowed by God for the House of the Lord to be completed. Look into the history of Nauvoo and see if you can find when the Lord came to the temple there. He was required to come, according to the January 1841 revelation, because He alone could was restore what had been lost.⁶ It was Him who was required to come to return the glory to the House of the Lord. It was Him who would bestow upon the Saints the lost fullness of the priesthood. It was the Lord Himself that required a place at which He could meet with His people. Once Joseph and Hiram were killed what happened to the Saints in Nauvoo? Were they "blessed" following the martyrdom? Were they protected and not moved out of their place? Was the place consecrated for their sake? Or did

⁴ See D&C 124: 124.

⁵ See D&C 28:7; 124: 94-95

⁶ D&C 124: 28.

they experience, in the ordeals that drove them out of Nauvoo and into the wilderness, suffering? Do the events reveal the Saints suffered cursings, wrath, indignations, and judgments upon their heads? Read the events and you reach a considered conclusion about whether we, in our day, mirror what happened at the time of Moses. Did we not in our day, just as in the day of Moses, elected to say, “you, Joseph and Hiram, you go talk to the Lord for us” because we will not do what was asked of us? When in our day the Saints counted the cost and considered the glory of the House of the Lord, it was no more desired by then it was for those ancient Israelites to climb up the mountain where there were thunderings, lightnings and earthquakes underway.]

I'm going to make some assumptions for purposes of trying to get us back, able and open to consider some things about our present plight. I know some of you think the LDS Church has never denied the idea of continuing revelation for even lay members of the Church. I also know there is some reason to draw a contrast between the ancient Israelites and ourselves, precisely because we claim to believe we can receive revelation. But let me read you a quote, a quote that has been used in criticism of me with some regularity. It is from Joseph Fielding Smith: *"When revelation comes for the guidance of this people, you may be sure that it will not be presented in some mysterious manner, contrary to the order of the Church. It will go forth in such form that the people will understand that it comes from those who are in authority. It will not spring up in some distant part of the Church and be in the hands of some obscure individual without authority."*

This quote is used to challenge my authority, to preach, teach, exhort and expound. If you want to lawyer this, as some of those, even who preside over the Church want to do, then I would remind all of those who hear or read this that, in the Church, the First Presidency has a quorum which is equal in authority with the First Presidency, and that is the Quorum of the 12.⁷ And there is a Quorum of 70, which likewise forms a quorum equal in authority with the 12.⁸ And then there is the High Council that is established as a group equal in authority with the Quorum of the 12 and the First Presidency.⁹ All of these separate groups are considered to be equal in holding the authority of the church, which is the definition of the keys of the kingdom.¹⁰ God in His wisdom saw fit before I was excommunicated from the LDS Church to call me into a quorum equal in authority with the First Presidency, the Quorum of the 12, and the 70. Unlike these others who dismissed me from the church, I did not exercise control, dominion and authority over others. The priesthood I hold cannot be regarded as having come to an end, if I was excommunicated without just cause. "Amen" to the priesthood or the authority of those that exercise unrighteous dominion.¹¹ So if you want to lawyer this, I can tell you, I hold the keys of the kingdom. But I don't want or need to lawyer it. It is not necessary for me to make such a claim. I do not intend to preside over anyone. I do not intend to claim the right to control any

⁷ D&C 107: 24.

⁸ D&C 107: 26.

⁹ D&C 107: 37.

¹⁰ Dallin H. Oaks, *The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood*, April 2014 General Conference, stated in relevant part: "Priesthood keys are the authority God has given to priesthood [holders] to direct, control, and govern the use of His priesthood on earth." (Quoting from M. Russell Ballard, *Men and Women in the Work of the Lord*, New Era, Apr. 2014, 4.)

¹¹ D&C 121: 37.

other man, nor to direct them. You, on the other hand, get subjected to this kind of claim and this kind of treatment regularly. For me, it has thankfully ended.

I have one and only one desire, to try to persuade you to believe in the Restoration through Joseph Smith. It is not and has never been completed. It is a work yet before us. It is a work largely neglected since the time of Joseph and Hyrum took their last breath. The prophecies that were delivered to Joseph Smith, both by Christ in the First Vision and by Moroni on the night of the first visit, (which we began this with, in Boise, Idaho) should be a rallying cry for us to rise up and lay hold upon things. It's a rallying cry, a prophecy that does not fulfill itself. It will only be fulfilled by what you do. Whether or not you fulfill those prophecies is dependent upon whether you, like the ancient Israelites, elect not to go up into God's presence. Or whether you, like Moses, like Joseph, like Hyrum, choose instead to forsake your sins and move forward even in the face of your own weakness and unworthiness. There isn't one of us in this room that should not kneel before the presence of a just and holy being. There isn't one of us who, if instructed to stand before Him, would not keenly feel the inadequacy of doing so. Not one of us. But there are some here who have been in His presence, myself included.

You don't read my email and that's probably a good thing, because if you did, you'd be overwhelmed at the many insults that come in. But among all those emails, some are filled with gratitude. I can tell you there are a number who have borne testimony that since reading the book, *The Second Comforter*, and since taking seriously the promises made through Joseph and in the Scriptures, there are a number who like me, have a witness of our resurrected Lord. It can and it does happen. And hopefully as we get to this material today you will have confidence in your own ability to rise up.

Let's make some assumptions for our purposes today. First, let's assume that we are like ancient Israel. Let's assume we were also left outside of God's presence when He offered to come and dwell generally among the Saints back in Nauvoo. Let's assume this was not what God wanted for us.

Let's assume that these things have, just like they did anciently, "kindled God's anger" as we read about in D&C 84:24. Let's assume we have now, as a body of believers, generally been left with something lesser, which is just like what was described in D&C 84: 26. Therefore, under these assumptions, only the lesser priesthood, which includes within it the ministering of angels, was left for us just like ancient Israel.

Well, assuming all of that, what shall we do? Turn to Alma chapter 12, a great chapter by the way. Alma 12: 9-11 that talks about if you harden your hearts you get less. But if your heart is soft and open, you get more:

"And now Alma began to expound these things unto him, saying: It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him. And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of

God until he know them in full. And they that will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction. Now this is what is meant by the chains of hell."

You are the regulator that determines whether on the one hand you get more, or on other hand if you get less. Some of those who have come today with a hard heart are going to find themselves being condemned in the day of judgment, because you are given an opportunity to have a soft heart and you elected knowingly not to do so. Can you imagine your shame when you, in a council that will include those present today, come back from this experience and confess, "Yes, I was there, but I didn't believe. Yes, I was there, but I wouldn't accept it." None of us would vote to sustain you in the coming eons, in the coming experiences after this probation, none of us will want you to be a minister to bring salvation to pass for others. None of us will then have confidence in you. Soften your heart now. Today is the day of salvation. This is the moment you came down here to face. The test is underway, the challenges are in front of you. You better have ears to hear. God will judge you, but more importantly, you will judge yourself.

Well, skipping to verse 28. "*And after God had appointed that these things should come unto man, behold, then he saw that it was expedient that man should know concerning the things whereof he had appointed unto them.*" [He wants us to know! The glory of God is intelligence, or another words, Light and Truth, which is knowledge of things. He wants us to know these things.] "*Therefore [because this is God's desire] he sent angels to converse with them, who [this is referring to the angels] caused men to behold of his [God's] glory.*" [So the office held by angels includes the duty to educate and to prepare, and then to cause man, who receive and entertain the angels, to then behold the glory of God.]

The glory of God is intelligence, or in other words Light and Truth.¹² Ultimately the greatest truth is God Himself. If you entertain angels, and the angels instruct you, and if you have been in their presence, you acquire from them the strength, fortification, knowledge, or in other words the ordination, making it possible for you to go on and pass by them. They surely are sentinels which can bar entry. You must pass them by to enter into the glory of the Lord.¹³ And so, if you will follow this process, it really should not matter if we are in a dispensation in which priesthood authority is limited to the ministering of angels. Ministering angels are sufficient to bring you into the glory of God, if you will receive and give heed to them. That's the office of their ministry, that's what they're responsible to do. "*And they began from that time forth to call on his name; therefore God conversed with men.*" [As part of the title to the first book I wrote the phrase, *Conversing with the Lord Through the Veil*, was included. That is the objective, that is what the "lesser priesthood" can equip you to accomplish. Even if the remaining priesthood left behind is nothing but a remnant of what was offered us.]

What did Joseph say about all the prophets of the Old Testament? He said they all held Melchizedek priesthood, and were all ordained by God Himself.¹⁴ They ministered in a society

¹² D&C 93: 36.

¹³ D&C 132: 19.

¹⁴ TPJS, p. 180-181.

that was deficient, limited, excluded from the presence of God. But those who received and entertained angels were brought up to where they needed to be for redemption. God Himself ordained them. Should you not likewise have this same hope? Should you not rise up above the level of those who are content to have less? Should you not be willing to mount up on that fiery mountain? Despite the thunderings and lightnings, despite the earthquake; despite the fact you may not believe yourself to be worthy, you're still capable of coming aboard.

Look at Moroni chapter 7 beginning at verse 29: "*And because he hath done this, my beloved brethren, have miracles ceased? Behold I say unto you, Nay; neither have angels ceased to minister unto the children of men. For behold, they [the angels] are subject unto him, to minister according to the word of his command, showing themselves unto them of strong faith and a firm mind in every form of godliness. And the office of their ministry is to call men unto repentance, and to fulfil and to do the work of the covenants of the Father...*" [Because when you move from repentance you grow into covenants. This is why we spoke about that subject in Centerville. These subjects flow into one another. This is why these talks are given during the last year, unfolding how you get back into the presence of God. Because it surely is necessary for there to be a rescue mission, and the rescue mission is designed to raise you, to elevate you, to redeem you.]

"...to fulfil and to do the work of the covenants of the Father, which he hath made unto the children of men, to prepare the way among the children of men, by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him. And by so doing, the Lord God prepareth the way that the residue of men may have faith in Christ, that the Holy Ghost may have place in their hearts, according to the power thereof; and after this manner bringeth to pass the Father, the covenants which he hath made unto the children of men." [In a word, those who receive and entertain angels have an obligation then, to declare the words so that others might likewise have faith in Him. That word having been declared unto you, gives you the hope, the faith and confidence, that you likewise can do so. This is so that the covenants made by the Father will be brought to pass. Fortunately, Aaronic priesthood is exceptionally durable. Fortunately, unlike Melchizedek priesthood (which can only be exercised with extraordinary care and delicacy), Aaronic priesthood endures weaknesses and abuse. The purpose of Melchizedek priesthood, as I talked about in Orem, is to bless. The purpose of Aaronic priesthood is to condemn and to judge, and to set a law by which men can condemn themselves. Having the authority to do that to yourself is remarkably durable, and unfortunately used with great regularity to do just that. Those that have it generally abide by so lesser a law, that they wind up judging and condemning one another, and parading before God as a march of fools, yelling and yammering, pointing and blaming, complaining and bitching, about what everyone else's inadequacies are. The purpose of Melchizedek priesthood is to sound the signal: "Know ye the Lord." And eventually, that sermon will be heard by enough, that there will be none left who need to be told, "Know ye the Lord," for they shall all know Him.¹⁵ Then everyone will take up with Him their concerns, and not with one another.]

Track 7

¹⁵ Heb. 8: 11.

Go to Doctrine and Covenants section 93 and look at verse 1. I've treated this at some length in what I've written, but I want to read it because it outlines what is required: *"VERILY, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am."*

Knowing the Lord! *"This is life eternal to know thee, the only wise and true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."*¹⁶ [Knowledge of the things of God—in this context knowledge is salvation,¹⁷ this knowledge is the fullness of the Gospel. Forsake your sins, come to Christ, call on His name, obey His voice, and keep His commandments. Obeying His voice in your situation, may be very different than obeying His voice in mine. Your circumstances are entirely peculiar to you. You are living your life and I am living mine. You are asked to minister in your family, to minister in your neighborhood, to function among your friends, to deal with people that you know. I, on the other hand, am required not only to do that in my circumstances, but also to come and talk to you good people. Whether you believe me sincere or not, I would much rather not have been asked to do this. But apparently, in the economy of God, no one else was willing to do it.]

Go to Ether chapter 3. I want to define what the promise made in Section 93 is of "know that I am." You need to know "the I am." Verse 13 of Ether chapter 3: *"And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord showed himself unto him, and said: Because thou knowest these things ye are redeemed from the fall; [that is the definition, that is what redemption is] therefore ye are brought back into my presence; therefore I show myself unto you. Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son. In me shall all mankind have life, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name; and they shall become my sons and my daughters."*

This is the definition, this is the what the promise means. Then look at what happens in verse 18: *"And he ministered unto him even as he ministered unto the Nephites; and all this, that this man might know that he was God, because of the many great works which the Lord had showed unto him."* [This is the definition of the glory of God. This is the definition of Light and Truth, to know these things, to know these things about God.] *"And because of the knowledge of this man he could not be kept from beholding within the veil; and he saw the finger of Jesus, which, when he saw, he fell with fear; for he knew that it was the finger of the Lord; and he had faith no longer, for he knew, nothing doubting."* [He had faith yet in things he was commanded to do, because they had not yet happened. But he no longer had faith in the existence of Christ, because that had been replaced by knowledge of Him. Knowledge supplants faith.]

We looked at John's testimony in Doctrine and Covenants section 93, and we need to look at that again to remind you before we get to the next point. Between section 93 verse 7 and verse 20, he describes the process by which Christ was called to be the Son of God. I want to skip to verse 12.

¹⁶ John 17: 3.

¹⁷ "A man is saved no faster than he gets knowledge..." *TPJS*, p. 217.

"And I, John, saw that he received not of the fulness at the first, but received grace for grace; And he received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness; And thus he was called the Son of God, because he received not of the fulness at the first. And I, John, bear record, and lo, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove, and sat upon him, and there came a voice out of heaven saying: This is my beloved Son. And I, John, bear record that he received a fulness of the glory of the Father; And he received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him. And it shall come to pass, that if you are faithful you shall receive the fulness of the record of John. I give unto you these sayings that you may understand and know how to worship, and know what you worship, that you may come unto the Father in my name, and in due time receive of his fulness. For if you keep my commandments you shall receive of his fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace." [That is what you do to worship! That is how you are to worship! We grow in grace as we exhibit the grace that is given unto us. We do so in order for us to obtain, likewise, the fullness.]

Now here's a sober moment that I want to remind you about, which need not continue. Go to Ether chapter 12. This is Moroni as he is completing the translation of the Jaredite record his father said would be included as part of his father's book, *the Book of Mormon*. But his father did not translate that record. So Moroni translated it and included within *the Book of Mormon*. And as he is wrapping up his translation he includes a dialogue between himself and Christ. It is a very sobering dialogue in Ether chapter 12 beginning verse 36: *"And it came to pass that I [this is I Moroni, the translator, this isn't Ether, this is Moroni's interlude] prayed unto the Lord that he would give unto the Gentiles grace, that they might have charity. And it came to pass that the Lord said unto me: If they have not charity it mattereth not unto thee, thou hast been faithful; wherefore, thy garments shall be made clean. And because thou hast seen thy weakness thou shalt be made strong, even unto the sitting down in the place which I have prepared in the mansions of my Father. And now I, Moroni, bid farewell unto the Gentiles."*

Do you see what happened in the exchange? Moroni begged the Lord to give unto the Gentiles, grace. And the Lord says, "It doesn't matter to you if I do not give the Gentiles grace." Christ did not give Moroni what he asked for! He would not promise that the Gentiles would receive grace! The Lord could not do that, because it would abrogate both the law (grace for grace), and our agency, because we are free to choose. Therefore, the Gentiles inherited the Restoration with no promise from Christ to Moroni, that those who would receive this record would receive grace of God. That is dependent upon you.]

"And now I, Moroni, bid farewell unto the Gentiles, yea, and also unto my brethren whom I love, until we shall meet before the judgment-seat of Christ, where all men shall know that my garments are not spotted with your blood. And then shall ye know that I have seen Jesus, and that he hath talked with me face to face, and that he told me in plain humility, even as a man telleth another in mine own language, concerning these things." [This is that Lord who, when you pass through the thunderings and lightnings, you will speak with. He talks in plain humility. It is not His position to cause fear in your heart, but to bring to you comfort. His purpose is not to

leave you comfortless, but to come and comfort you.¹⁸ It's you that imposes the barrier. It's you that brings the fear. That is rightly so, because we ought to fear. But what we should fear is our own weakness and our own sins. Our greatest sin is our ignorance.]

"And only a few have I written, because of my weakness in writing. And now, I would commend you...[this is Moroni commending us, the Gentiles, who are going to receive this book] ...I would commend you to seek this Jesus of whom the prophets and apostles have written, that the grace of God the Father, and also the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of them, may be and abide in you forever." [He first asked for grace to be given. God cannot give it and therefore would not promise it. Then he turned to us and he asks, "You Gentiles, please, seek for His grace, it cannot otherwise be given you." *The Book of Mormon's* assessment of us is sober indeed. The foolish arrogance with which we read that book blinds us to our predicament.]

The plea from Moroni to us is to, "seek for grace." It is through grace we obtain charity. It is through charity we are able to bless others. Because the fact of the matter is you cannot bless anyone or hold that priesthood primarily designed to minister blessings and not cursings, unless you have charity for others. This is never given unless you are willing to do things you would rather not do, thereby offering a sacrifice to God. You do not get trusted by God to hold this honor unless you are willing to subordinate your will to the will of the Father. It is the purpose of the Father, and the purpose behind His higher priesthood, to bless all of His offspring. Therefore, it is only through grace you can acquire what you need to be of use to God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ.

God will make a general appearance to judge the world. You should seek Him beforehand so that you can rejoice at His appearing. In Doctrine and Covenants section 38 beginning at verse 7 He promises His general appearing: *"But behold, verily, verily, I say unto you that mine eyes are upon you. I am in your midst and ye cannot see me; But the day soon cometh that ye shall see me, and know that I am; for the veil of darkness shall soon be rent, and he that is not purified shall not abide the day."* [We all will see Him, and some will survive, but some others will not abide the day, but all will know Him. He is coming. You will see Him, but you must be prepared in order to do so.]

Go to Doctrine and Covenants section 67 beginning at verse 10: *"And again, verily I say unto you that it is your privilege, and a promise I give unto you that have been ordained unto this ministry, that inasmuch as you strip yourselves from jealousies and fears..."* [See, on the one hand are "jealousies," because we hate it when someone has anything more than we have. We ought not be envious, we ought to rejoice in whatever good thing someone else has been given by the Spirit. We tend to be contentions, even in the blessings given by God. We have to strip ourselves from that. And "fears," because there really are in the end only two emotions: one is love and other is fear. Everything derived from fear is negative, ultimately devolving into hatred. But the foundation of hatred is fear. On the other hand there is love. If you look at God's Plan and the fight it led to in the preexistence, it was fear that motivated the rebellion. It was fear that motivated the adversary to become the accuser of the brethren. It was fear behind his opposition

¹⁸ See John 14: 18.

to this whole process now underway. It is jealousy behind opposition to the success anyone achieves in this life. We see jealousy aimed against anyone who repents. Because the adversary seeks the misery of all mankind,¹⁹ that they might be like unto him. Strip yourselves of jealousies and fears. Here in the greater Las Vegas area, they do strip themselves, but it's not of their jealousies and fears.]

"...and humble yourselves before me, for ye are not sufficiently humble [We are going to have to look at this very carefully in the verses that we consider after this because you're not sufficiently humble] the veil shall be rent and you shall see me and know that I am—not with the carnal neither natural mind, but with the spiritual. For no man has seen God at any time in the flesh, except quickened by the Spirit of God. Neither can any natural man abide the presence of God, neither after the carnal mind. Ye are not able to abide the presence of God now, neither the ministering of angels; wherefore, continue in patience until ye are perfected. Let not your minds turn back; and when ye are worthy, in mine own due time, ye shall see and know that which was conferred upon you by the hands of my servant Joseph Smith."

Joseph Smith may have left, and he may have taken authority with him, but he laid hands upon people and conferred upon them the blessings of the priesthood. He could not fully give them the priesthood he held, but he could confer upon them the blessings of the priesthood. He could, after all, seal others. He was, in that sense, ordained by God as the Holy Spirit of Promise.²⁰ Therefore Joseph's blessings given to others persisted for some considerable time even after we lost Joseph.

The Aaronic priesthood, of course, could and did get passed along. The Aaronic priesthood functions needed to remain, and they have. The Aaronic priesthood is around, at least until man's rebellion ends it.²¹

On the other hand, Melchizedek priesthood is something by order of magnitude much greater. It cannot be controlled or handled except in righteousness.²²

"No man has seen God at any time in the flesh except quickened by the Spirit," is further explained in the Book of Moses chapter 1 verses 14 and 15: *"For behold, I could not look upon God, except his glory should come upon me, and I were transfigured before him. But I can look upon thee in the natural man. Is it not so, surely? Blessed be the name of my God, for his Spirit hath not altogether withdrawn from me, or else where is thy glory, for it is darkness unto me? And I can judge between thee and God; for God said unto me: Worship God, for him only shalt thou serve."*

¹⁹ 2 Ne. 9: 9.

²⁰ See D&C 132: 7.

²¹ Even if lost by an organization, when it was restored it was destined to remain until still future events occur. See JS-H 1: 69, also footnote of Oliver Cowdery. Therefore some individuals will retain this power, even if all organizations rebel against God.

²² D&C 121: 36.

Lucifer may pretend to be an angel of light.²³ He can deceive by this pretense.²⁴ But when he appears making this pretense²⁵ he can be seen by man in our present, mortal state. We do not need to be overshadowed by the glory of God to protect and transfigure us when the deceiver appears. One of the keys to be able to distinguish between an appearance of the Lord, and the appearance of the adversary, is that the adversary may come clothed in white, and may appear to be an angel, but it does not require transfiguration to be in his presence. On the other hand, in order to be in the presence of God, it requires an alteration in the natural man. This is why when Paul saw God he wrote, “whether in the body or out of the body, I don't know.”²⁶ It is as real, it is as physical and as tangible as this podium. However, the alteration of the man makes what was physical cease to be the same as it was before. Despite the change, because it is “physical” to the one experiencing it, Moses declared God’s glory was upon him and he was “transfigured” by God.

Do what God asks: Strip yourselves of jealousies and fears, humble yourselves before God, you are not sufficiently humble! Let's learn from their failure! Let's not repeat it! Why do we need to keep plowing the same line over and over, through the same rocky soil, when no fruit has ever come from that barren ground? Strip yourselves! Don't envy those who sit in the chief seats. They are rather to be pitied. Gain your own grace with God as Moroni asked you to do. God alone decides when, where and how He will reveal Himself to you.

Look at D&C 88 verse 68. *"Therefore, sanctify yourselves..."* [You have to rise up to accomplish that. Sanctify yourselves by your stripping of jealousies and envies; by your humility before Him. Offer what He asks: a broken heart and contrite spirit.²⁷ That sanctifies you because you disconnect from this place and connect to heaven.]

"... that your minds become single to God..." ["Single to God" means He occupies a place of priority, He is central to you. It does not mean you neglect your family, you can't do that.²⁸ Nor should you neglect your labors, you can't do that.²⁹ When we talk about marriage and families in St. George tomorrow, you will find out just how central all of this is to the Gospel. We needed to lay all this out before we finally get to the topic of family and marriage. If you've not noticed, these lectures come in incremental levels of holiness. Therefore, marriage gets left until we get further down. Coming to know the Lord, and becoming a suitable spouse are interrelated subjects.]

"Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will." [He is in charge. We don't dictate this. We prepare and then we wait. We prepare and we do everything we know to get ready for it, but He surely

²³ 2 Ne. 9: 9.

²⁴ D&C 128: 20.

²⁵ 2 Cor. 11: 14.

²⁶ See 2 Cor. 12: 2-4.

²⁷ 3 Ne. 9: 20; 12: 19; Ether 4: 15 and Moroni 6: 2.

²⁸ D&C 83: 4.

²⁹ D&C 83: 2.

will come when He determines it is right. When He comes, He comes suddenly to His temple,³⁰ which temple ye are.³¹ He will come to you. Have faith! Be believing! Seek for Him! This is that day in which these things need to happen.]

So that we cover everything, we need to go to the Gospel of John, chapter 14 verse 18 where the Lord says: *"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."* [This is Christ talking to the Apostles about what He intends to do on the other side of his death, burial and resurrection. He says, I'm not going to leave you comfortless, I will come to you!] And then verse 23: *"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."* [Christ is saying that is His intention.]

Now go to Doctrine and Covenants section 130 verse 3 where it discusses this verse: *"John 14:23—The appearing of the Father and the Son, in that verse, is a personal appearance; and the idea that the Father and the Son dwell in a man's heart is an old sectarian notion, and is false."* [Christ's promise will actually happen.]

This is why Doctrine and Covenants section 93 verse 1 makes the promise you will see Christ's face. This is the fullness of the Gospel. You can take all your rights and ordinances, take all your deep mysteries, and all your rules, they testify to one thing: Redemption comes by knowing God.

We have infantile "mysteries" we banter about. I've heard speculation about the typography of Kolob, for example. By the way, that whole thing about Kolob is mangled! Kolob was the name of a star Abraham could identify. Kolob was a star within sight from the vantage point of the earth. The entire astronomy revealed to father Abraham was geocentric. It was entirely earth-based, looking upward. From the vantage point of the earth, looking upward in Abraham's day, the astronomy oriented Abraham. In our day, because the precession of the equinoxes, the alignments of stars have changed. Abraham already knew the name of the star. God said to Abraham, You see that star? From where you sit, looking there, the Throne of God is in that direction.³² It was like saying, Okay, from where my thumb is, looking that way, Shay is sitting by my thumb. That doesn't mean Shay is on my thumb! He's some considerable distance from my thumb! Tim is in the direction of my index finger. He's not on my index finger! He's some considerable distance away from it, but that's the direction. Because it was "nigh" to God, it is located among what is called "unchanging" stars, because they never set. They are continually in view from the earth. Therefore they "govern" those below them.³³ They move "more slowly" because their revolutions and movements take thousands of years from our vantage point.³⁴

³⁰ Mal. 3: 1.

³¹ 1 Cor. 3: 16.

³² Abr. 3: 3.

³³ Id.

³⁴ Abr. 3: 4.

Even if you know the typography of Kolob, you still don't know where God resides. Where He resides is in a place hidden in the North.³⁵ If I were identifying where the throne of God is located today, I would refer to a different star. In our day it has a different name. In our day it has a slightly different alignment because of the precession of equinoxes. The Throne of God is out there, but is in a place that is hidden in the North. It will require the heavens to be rolled like a scroll³⁶ before you finally see past the veils now in place. But by that time, if you are unprepared, it's too late. Because the glory will be such that you cannot abide it.³⁷

When the Lord appears, preliminary to rolling together the heavenly scrolls, He will first appear in an unveiled opening. The glory of God will be visible around and behind Him, along with concourses of angels.³⁸

Now if you can discover what that alignment is then you can figure out where the Throne of God is presently located. But that is up to you. I've been given no such obligation or permission. But I can tell you there is a specific location. God exists. Abraham was walked through the geography of heaven, reckoned from the vantage point or viewpoint of the earth. When you leave here, one of the obligations you have is to find your way back. In finding your way back, you need to be able to avoid those spirits who seek to bring you back into captivity.³⁹ If you're brought back into captivity, you may find yourself again in a Telestial kingdom, or, as the temple narrative puts it: "the world in which you presently reside." That's a rather unpleasant thing to think about. You may find yourself a casino in Las Vegas, talking about things that really matter, in a place in which such things are not at all treasured.

I should add, some of the people who are driven in desperation to try and improve their circumstances sitting downstairs, if ministered to in a kindly way, some of those people have a heart that is better prepared for receiving the truth, more tender and poignant because of the circumstances of their life, than are the hearts of many of us, who in are plenty. In our conceit about our own goodness, we mistakenly think ourselves better than them. When the truth of the matter is, more than anything else, it is humility that qualifies us before God. More than anything else, it is our sincere apprehension of just how weak, how vulnerable, and how easily distracted we are.

I want to remind you the account that we are reading in the record of Ether, occurred before Christ came. Christ was a future expectancy, not an historical figure from the past. The faith exhibited by the brother of Jared in this account is faith in an unfilled future expectancy. If you think you have a thin basis for your faith in Christ because you didn't live in His day, think about how difficult it would be to have confidence in a Redeemer whose life was still future. The

³⁵ Lucifer's ambition was to return and triumph there, for that is where God resides. See 2 Ne.

24: 13

³⁶ D&C 88: 95; Rev. 6: 14; Isa. 34: 4.

³⁷ D&C 63: 34.

³⁸ See Jude 1: 14; Matt. 24: 30; D&C 76: 63.

³⁹ "A man is saved no faster than he gets knowledge, for if he does not get knowledge, he will be brought into captivity by some evil power in the other world, as evil spirits will have more knowledge, and consequently more power." *TPJS*, p. 217.

details of the date and time of His birth were unknown. The circumstances of Him coming into mortality, the ministry and the sermons that He delivered, the sacrifices and the healings He gave during mortality, the temptations He faced, the dilemmas He confronted, all were unknown and unaccomplished. You know a great deal concerning Him now. None of that was known at the time the book of Ether was composed.

You have greater evidence. You have a greater testimony in front of you concerning Christ, than did this man. You have greater reason to believe in Christ, than did this man. You have far more witnesses and justification for having confidence in the promises of Christ. You unlike him, have the New Testament, you have *the Book of Mormon* including his record in front of you. You have Joseph Smith's revelations and Joseph Smith's testimony. You have the temple rites, with their ceremonial depiction of the return back into the presence of the Lord through the veil. You have restored again to you, partially, *the Book of Enoch in the Pearl of Great Price*. You have restored to you, a far more complete account of Abraham's testimony in *the Pearl of Great Price*. And you have a great deal more of the corrected account of Moses in *the Pearl of Great Price*. Therefore, when you read this third chapter of *the Book of Ether*, you should recognize you come to this challenge with a significantly greater collection of advantages, if you will receive them and use them, than the one who composed the record Moroni abridged here. Keep all of that in mind.

You should be able to muster like faith. Look at what it says will happen if you do that. Turn over to Ether chapter 4. This is a dialogue between Moroni and the Lord as he's doing his translation and abridgment of this record. Starting in verse 7: "*And in that day that they shall exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, even as the brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me, then will I manifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations, saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are.*" [This does not promise you that you will receive the record of the brother of Jared. It promises, if you have the faith, then God will:] "*manifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations* [I should probably read this the way I would punctuate it, to be consistent with what I said last time: *saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God the Father of the heavens and of the earth.*"]

We return to Ether chapter 3. Remarkably, the very first verse gives us something of interest. This is about halfway through the first verse of Ether chapter 3: The brother of Jared, "*did molten out of a rock sixteen small stones; and they were white and clear, even as transparent glass; and he did carry them in his hands upon the top of the mount, and cried again unto the Lord, saying:*"

I did an experiment yesterday. While we were walking, I picked up not 16 but 20 stones. I figured out what it would take in order to carry 20 small stones "in my hands to the top of the mountain." I was able to do it easily. I have 20 stones in my hand right now. Unlike the stones of the brother of Jared, I did not "molten" them. Instead I chose stones which were formed by a lava flow melting the soil to form these stones. They were "molten" by God.

Artists and fanciful folk who want to do such things, turn these into egg sized crystal balls. When is the last time you came in from the refrigerator of your garage to the kitchen carrying 16 eggs in your two hands? How would you get up the mountain with stones of that size in your hands? The “molten stones” were not behemoths, they were “small stones” according to the scriptures.

Even more interesting he took them to the top of the mountain and *"cried again unto the Lord."* This is the 10th time in the record of the brother of Jared, in which, he "cries" unto the Lord. Throughout the record of the brother of Jared, never once does the word "pray" or "prayer" appear as part of the record.

When the voice of Moroni enters into the narrative, the word "prayed" appears in Moroni's aside. But in the record of the brother of Jared, he does not ever use the word "pray" or "prayer," he "cried."

Consider for a moment, the difference between being someone who prays unto God, and someone who cries unto God. Consider the position in which the petitioner has voluntarily placed himself, when instead of coming in prayer, he comes crying out unto the Lord.

Keep that word in mind. Eleven times it is used in the *Book of Ether* to describe the brother of Jared. The only time the word “prayer” appears is in Moroni’s interruption. That is the way you can know Moroni was abridging a record written by somebody else. Moroni does not use the same word as the person whose records he was abridging. He uses "prayer"—but only one time.

This is what he cried out: *"O Lord, thou hast said that we must be encompassed about by the floods. Now behold, O Lord, and do not be angry with thy servant..."*

Crying, asking Him not to be angry, reducing himself to be merely a servant, because of his *"weakness before thee."* What is this man's attitude? How is this man approaching the throne of God? How does he view himself? How does he regard God? Why does this man have such faith? Why does this man attract the attention of God? Why is God willing to speak to such a man, such a vessel as this? What is it about this attitude of this man that tells you his heart is right before God?

He was willing to receive. Some of you fear your own weakness. You are closer to God than those who are self-confident, proud of their understanding, and think themselves better than others.

"...for we know that thou art holy. [This is the contrast, “my weakness,” compared to “your holiness.] and dwellest in the heavens, and that we are unworthy before thee; because of the fall our natures have become evil continually; nevertheless, O Lord, thou hast given us a commandment that we must call upon thee, that from thee we may receive according to our desires." [He said he was doing what God asked him to do. God commanded him. He did not think himself qualified, but was obeying what God told him to do. This is the attitude of the man. This is what the heart of the man reflects. These words explain why he “cries” to God.]

"Behold, O Lord, thou hast smitten us because of our iniquity, and hast driven us forth, and for these many years we have been in the wilderness; nevertheless, thou hast been merciful unto us."

O Lord, look upon me in pity, and turn away thine anger from this thy people, and suffer not that they shall go forth across this raging deep in darkness; but behold these things which I have molten out of the rock."

There is no pride here. There is no resentment at being chastened. There is acceptance of the chastening hand of God. There is no proclamation by the man that he was worthy. It is quite the opposite, he declares he is unworthy. He has no resentment for having been punished. It is the opposite, he recognizes every stumble along the way is justified, is reasonable, is earned, and was appropriate. Because God, who cares for His children, upbraids and disciplines His children.

I have a daughter who has more energy than that she ought. After finishing her undergraduate as a Phi Beta Kappa, (again the product of her relentless energy), she came home and needed a project. There were not enough projects at home, so she became a foster parent for the Humane Society. She brought home a big homeless dog. We all suspected this fellow was pretty intelligent, but man, was that dog stubborn. He was a very likable, very pretty animal, but stubborn. He was adopted because he's photogenic.

Then she brought home a female dog, and this female dog was totally the opposite. I think we should have named her "Tasmanian Devil," but her name was Blue. She is a Blue Heeler, so she has all the attributes of a Blue Heeler. They herd cattle. It is a mistake to think they bite the heels of cattle. They are bred to herd cattle and they open their mouths, and hit with their teeth at the heels of the cattle to herd them.

Blue has all of the psychological makeup required to engage in that hazardous occupation. And this dog, bless her heart, is eager to please. Disciplining her was simple, you just had to indicate you weren't happy, and it about killed the poor animal. But she is so full of energy that she couldn't help but drag the mulch bag out into of the middle of the lawn and reduce it to shreds. She also has engaged in a major excavation project to find out exactly how the sprinkler system is put together. She clearly questioned whether we really needed a valve at the location she found it. She also wondered what the valve tasted like?

When she found out we don't like that behavior, she was so apologetic. I could not bring myself to do anything, other than by the voice to say, What are you doing!?! She responded to the tone of voice and she fell onto her back, as if to cry: "You have to love me still! Please, you have to love me still! You do love me, right?"

That dog reminds me of the relationship which the brother of Jared recognized between even the best intentioned of us, and God. We don't know enough to be "good" in His sight. We aren't intelligent enough. We think that some pseudo-virtues that are part of out of our culture are good indeed. Some of that behavior, if displayed in the halls of heaven, would be deeply offensive.⁴⁰ Some of the things we think are offensive to God, are not at all. Not at all!⁴¹ And so our righteousness at best is pseudo-righteousness. Much of what we feel guilty about was given to us

⁴⁰ Rising to honor a religious man is offensive to God.

⁴¹ Taking God's name in vain does NOT involve "swear words" but instead cloaking a false message with the pretense of God's approval.

in order to give us the humility to come to God. These weaknesses will not last past the resurrection.

Included within the experience of the brother of Jared as you read verse 3 of chapter 3, is the events that originally separated them from the fellow man at the tower of Babel. Mankind had been engaged in such inordinate wickedness they were punished. The record does distinguish between what Jared's people had done and the others driven away from the tower. I also want you to notice that nowhere in this verse 3 is there anything like the proud descendents of Nauvoo. There is nothing that claims they are chosen, or they are worthy of something other than chastening. There is none of that.

Turn back to Doctrine and Covenants section 121. This is a letter Joseph composed while in Liberty Jail. Mind you he was in Liberty Jail and had suffered through wintertime and it was now in the spring when the letter was composed.

Joseph had no release date in mind, or even if he would go free. He did not know if the original order for his execution would be carried out. He had been kept jailed for many months, in a state of suspension. In these circumstances, verses seven and eight were received by revelation: "*My son, [that alone ought to be reassuring to Joseph] My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment; And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes.*" [Endure it well! Joseph, in the extremity of Liberty jail was told, "endure it well." You think you have challenges, difficulties, and you face the limits of what you can bear. Endure it well. Your adversity and your afflictions are going to be for a small moment, and then if you endure it well, something better is going to come.]

Then, as if it weren't enough reason to end self-pity, turn to 122 verse eight: "*The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?*"

If you think that your burdens that you carry are great, remember the burdens carried by the Son. He faced burdens inordinately greater than yours. All of us should be tested to our limit. All of us should be "proven" by the experiences we endure. The only way to test some things is to destroy them. The only way to test you through mortality is to cause mortality itself, with the eventual coming of death. That is the way this probation works.

Look at verse 4 of Ether chapter 3. "*And I know, O Lord, that thou hast all power, and can do whatsoever thou wilt for the benefit of man; therefore touch these stones, O Lord, with thy finger, and prepare them that they may shine forth in darkness; and they shall shine forth unto us in the vessels which we have prepared, that we may have light while we shall cross the sea. Behold, O Lord, thou canst do this. We know that thou art able to show forth great power, which looks small unto the understanding of men.*" [He was not asking for this to see a light show. He asked for this out of pity and concern, charity and intercession for others who would otherwise be left in the dark. He is trying to do something to bless and benefit others in a very practical way. He hopes to make the lives of others better. He was not doing this for himself. He was doing it on behalf of his people.]

Therein also lies something very important about the attitude of this man, that tells you why God had respect for this man.

Think about what it means to be given the power of God. Think about what it means for God to be able to do all things, including sustaining you from moment to moment by lending you breath. With that great power, God says to us, "You are free to choose to do whatever it is that you choose." Think of the patience of our God. Think of the meekness of our God. And think about the test you are presently taking to prove who and what you are. Ask whether or not, in the circumstances of this test, you are proving that you can be trusted to have the meekness, to have the patience, to endure in humility what must be done. Will you endure the abuses God allows to take place in order to permit His children to gain experience? Do you respect God's plan so that in the long run we can all ultimately know the difference between good and evil? Will we voluntarily choose to love the good and to stay away from the evil.

Think about that. And think about this record, and think about the test currently underway. Think about what it is you in your life should be choosing, doing, desiring and holding to your breast. What do you love?

"And it came to pass that when the brother of Jared had said these words, behold, the Lord stretched forth his hand and touched the stones one by one with his finger." [Now I want to pause because the only thing that the brother of Jared ever sees at this point, is His finger. The Lord may stretch forth His hand, but the only thing seen is His finger.]

I really love LDS writer Catherine Thomas. I love her books, I own them, I've read them, and I like what she did with the brother of Jared at the veil.⁴² However, it is simply based upon a fanciful connection between the dialogue at the veil in the temple ceremony and this incident here.

The hand of God never emerges, only His finger. You can read it in verse 6 and again in verse 9. The Lord asks him, "Did you see more than this?" "No," he answers, "just the finger." I put one of the stones I used in my experiment into my hand. Let's assume for the moment I have 8 in one hand and 8 in the other, as the brother of Jared. Let's assume someone else touches it in my hand. It is impossible to touch the stone in a man's hand without the one holding the stone feeling it has been touched.

We read this record, but we fail to notice what was really happening. They were in his hands, eight and eight, and the Lord touched them one by one with His finger. Now, there is nothing in this record that suggests that after the last stone gets touched, or after the stone the Lord was touching at the moment that the finger is seen, there were anymore stones remaining to be touched. They were touched. First one, then another, one by one. Sixteen times this was repeated. This record read fairly suggests to me that the brother of Jared stood there and witnessed 15 of the 16 stones, felt the touch on 15 of the 16 stones, before on the very last stone

⁴² The article, titled *The brother of Jared at the Veil*, is included in *Selected Writings of M. Catherine Thomas*, Deseret Book, (Salt Lake City, 2000), beginning at p. 99. She begins with overly broad assertions about LDS temples.

he saw the finger of the Lord. Think about that for a moment. Think about coming into contact, admittedly through a stone, but coming into contact with the Lord when He manifests Himself for the first time to man physically. Think about that.

"And the veil was taken from off the eyes of the brother of Jared, and he saw the finger of the Lord; and it was as the finger of a man, like unto flesh and blood..." [That is the way the Lord chose to manifest Himself in this incident. He appeared "like flesh and blood" because He came physically into contact with 16 stones.]

"...and the brother of Jared fell down before the Lord, for he was struck with fear. And the Lord saw that the brother of Jared had fallen to the earth; and the Lord said unto him: Arise, why hast thou fallen? And he saith unto the Lord: I saw the finger of the Lord, and I feared lest he should smite me; for I knew not that the Lord had flesh and blood." [It frightened him to realize that the God who controls all things had flesh and blood. This was a great secret that ought not get out, and now he knows it. Knowing it frightened him. He thought he was intruding into space he shouldn't and he felt convicted that somehow, that was something he ought not know.]

"And the Lord said unto him: Because of thy faith thou hast seen that I shall take upon me flesh and blood; and never has man come before me with such exceeding faith as thou hast; for were it not so ye could not have seen my finger. Sawest thou more than this? And he answered: Nay." [He didn't see the hand, he saw the finger, and he didn't see more than this.]

"Nay; Lord, show thyself unto me. And the Lord said unto him: Believest thou the words which I shall speak?" [This is a necessary prerequisite, because what the Lord is about to speak to him will be covenantal. When it comes to prophecy, covenants, commitments by God, what He's about to do requires the brother of Jared to have faith in God's true nature. He needed to have a correct understanding of God's attributes. This was required before God could show him all things. This is an incident right out of the Lectures on Faith we discussed in Idaho Falls.]

"And he answered: Yea, Lord, I know that thou speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth, and canst not lie. And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord showed himself unto him, and said: Because thou knowest these things ye are redeemed from the fall; therefore ye are brought back into my presence; therefore I show myself unto you. Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son. In me shall all mankind have life, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name; and they shall become my sons and my daughters. And never have I showed myself unto man whom I have created, for never has man believed in me as thou hast. Seest thou that ye are created after mine own image? Yea, even all men were created in the beginning after mine own image. Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh. And now, as I, Moroni, said I could not make a full account of these things which are written, therefore it sufficeth me to say that Jesus showed himself unto this man in the spirit, even after the manner and in the likeness of the same body even as he showed himself unto the Nephites."

What was the body Jesus showed Himself unto the Nephites in? What is the difference between water as a solid, water as a liquid, and water as a gas? The difference between that, if you want to take a scriptural word, is "quicken." In one condition it is quickened, in another condition it is less quick. In science the difference between the two is "temperature" or heat.

God dwells in everlasting burnings.⁴³ In order to be with or near Him, a man must be "quicken" to endure His presence. Does that mean that in a quickened state, it is impossible for a quickened being, to manifest itself in a solid form? Well, take a look at Doctrine and Covenants section 131 verse 7. *"There is no such thing as immaterial matter. All spirit is matter, but it is more fine or pure, and can only be discerned by purer eyes; We cannot see it; but when our bodies are purified we shall see that it is all matter."*

Doctrine and Covenants section 77 verse two includes the statement: *"...that which is spiritual being in the likeness of that which is temporal; and that which is temporal in the likeness of that which is spiritual."*

D&C 88 verses 15 and 16: *"And the spirit and the body are the soul of man. And the resurrection from the dead is the redemption of the soul."* [This definition was given by revelation to Joseph Smith in 1832. Three years later in 1835, Chandler came through and sold the mummies to Joseph Smith. He did not bother translating the end part of *the Book of Abraham* as we have it, until the 1840s in Nauvoo. By the time he translated in Nauvoo, he knew the definition of a "soul." It was the spirit *and the body*. When Joseph translated *the Book of Abraham*, in Abraham chapter 3 verse 23, speaking of those in the preexistence he rendered it: *"God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits."* They were souls, possessing therefore a spirit and a body. And they were spirits because they had not come down to this level as yet, in the beginning, to be in this condition. These are identified as "the noble and great" ones.

I talked before about the definition of "rulers" in the Gentile world, and that is someone who exercises authority over someone else.⁴⁴ In the vernacular of both *the Book of Mormon*, and in the vernacular found here, "rulers" in the house of God have nothing to do with dominion over someone else. A "ruler" is someone who teaches.⁴⁵ A ruler is someone who is able to give an accurate gauge by which to measure things. A ruler is someone who teaches the truth. If you want to be a ruler in the house of God, then you have to be someone who declares and teaches the truth.

Take a look at Alma chapter 13 because this is where it becomes very important for us. Alma chapter 13 beginning at verse 17: *"Now this Melchizedek was a king over the land of Salem; and his people had waxed strong in iniquity and abomination; yea, they had all gone astray; they were full of all manner of wickedness. [This was his audience.] But Melchizedek having exercised mighty faith, and received the office of the high priesthood according to the holy order of God, did preach repentance unto his people. And behold, they did repent; and Melchizedek*

⁴³ See D&C 137: 2-3.

⁴⁴ Luke 22: 25.

⁴⁵ See 1 Ne. 2: 22.

did establish peace in the land in his days; therefore he was called the prince of peace, for he was the king of Salem; and he did reign under his father."

First he received this priesthood. Second, he preached repentance. But still nothing would have happened except for, third, the people who heard him did repent. Because of that Melchizedek was a prince of peace. His people were described as having waxed strong in iniquity. His people were captivated by abominations. His people had all gone astray, but turned out to be the very people who established this City of Peace. But they did it. They did it by repentance. This isn't something Melchizedek pulled off, this is something the people accomplished, and they accomplished it because of their repentance.

I want you to contrast that with another group. This group is described in Mosiah chapter 12, beginning halfway through verse 12. This was people reacting to the message Abinadi delivered to them. They accused Abinadi, saying, "*And he [Abinadi] pretendeth the Lord hath spoken it. And he saith all this shall come upon thee except thou repent, and this because of thine iniquities. And now, O king, what great evil hast thou done, or what great sins have thy people committed, that we should be condemned of God or judged of this man? And now, O king, behold, we are guiltless, and thou, O king, hast not sinned; therefore, this man has lied concerning you, and he has prophesied in vain. And behold, we are strong, we shall not come into bondage, or be taken captive by our enemies; yea, and thou hast prospered in the land, and thou shalt also prosper.*"

Here is pride, vanity, and here is the very thing which, had the people to whom Melchizedek spoke, had they done this, there would have been no City of Peace, there would have been no Salem, there would have been no second Zion.

You generally hail from a tradition that assures you that you're in the right way. You generally come from a tradition that says you are better than others. You are able to look down your nose at other people who stumble about in the dark, because they don't have all the great truths you think you have. The fact of the matter is, you generally, not specifically, are not right before God. Of course, there are some to whom this absolutely does not apply, whose hearts are right before God, but there aren't many.

You have been handed this tradition. Understand, however, the wicked one cometh, and he takes away Light and Truth and he does it because of the false traditions you have been handed.⁴⁶ The greatest among us is wholly inadequate. The greatest among us cannot be trusted with the power of God, not yet anyway. The greatest among us is still in need of repentance. Every one of us should walk fearfully before God, not because God is not generous, but because what He offers can turn you into a devil. The only way to be prepared and not fall, is to realize the enormous peril you potentially present to the universe. Before you get in a position to enjoy the status God offers to us all, you need to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, exactly like Paul said.⁴⁷ You need to purge, remove, and reprove. This attitude we see in this man in this account (the brother of Jared), this is the man of God! Christ may be the prototype of the saved man, but I

⁴⁶ D&C 93: 39.

⁴⁷ Philip. 2: 12.

know of no record anywhere in all of scripture that exposes the heart of the real disciple of Christ as well as this chapter exposes the heart of this man. This is what we should become. This is why the Lord could open up to him. This is why this man became, in the history of the world, up to that moment, the one God revealed the most about Himself. This is despite the fact the Lord came to Adam in Adam-ondi-Ahman and administered comfort to Adam in the Valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman.⁴⁸ Here He came and showed Himself as He truly was, as a preexistent spirit, possessing a soul as tangible as man's. Christ ministered to him in a way, which, if you understood what it takes for a quickened being to condescend to show Himself as He does here, you would appreciate this was an enormous sacrifice by our Lord.

Ether chapter 3, verse 18: "*And he ministered unto him even as he ministered unto the Nephites; and all this, that this man might know that he was God, because of the many great works which the Lord had showed unto him.*" [This is how God is known: by His works. It is not the lightning show, nor the shaking on the mountain, but it is the great works that proceed forth from Him.]

Think about what He did when He appeared on to the Nephites. God introduced Him three times before the people who are there were finally able to listen with their ears and hear the introduction.⁴⁹ Then after the introduction was given, they still see Him descend dressed in white to stands before them. Despite the introduction, despite His descent, despite Him standing in front of them, all the conclude is, "This must be an angel."⁵⁰

Clearly He arrived in a way that is extra-human. He manifested Himself as being able to use the law of gravity in a ways we can't. He descended, stood before them, but none of them were overwhelmed. None of them fall down and worship Him. None of them do anything but look at Him. He was so plain, so ordinary, so commonplace in the appearance He made, that when they saw Him, they stood rather like tourists staring at this man dressed in white who appeared to them.⁵¹ Then He spoke and told them who He was. He introduced Himself in 3 Nephi chapter 11 verse 11. Three times, in order for Him to tell who He is, He talks about obeying the will of the Father, suffering the will of the Father in all things, glorifying the Father by taking upon Himself the sins of the world.⁵² Even standing in front of them, He bore testimony of someone greater than Him.

It was the humility of the individual standing in front of them, and His introduction in 3 Nephi, that brought them to their knees. They fall down at that point and worship Him.⁵³ Because when He opened His mouth and they understood what He was, and who He was, and what proceeded forth out of His heart, they knew they were listening and looking at God indeed. Then they fell down and they worship Him.

⁴⁸ D&C 107: 54-55.

⁴⁹ See 3 Ne. 11: 3-7.

⁵⁰ 3 Ne. 11: 8.

⁵¹ Id.

⁵² He "drunk out of the bitter cup which the Father hath given" Him. He "glorified the Father in taking upon [Himself] the sins of the world." He "suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning." See 3 Ne. 11: 11. This is who He is: the obedient Son of the Father.

⁵³ 3 Ne. 11: 12.

"...because of the many great works which the Lord had showed unto him [This man knew he was God] And because of the knowledge of this man he could not be kept from beholding within the veil; and he saw the finger of Jesus, which, when he saw, he fell with fear; for he knew that it was the finger of the Lord; and he had faith no longer, for he knew, nothing doubting. Wherefore, having this perfect knowledge of God, he could not be kept from within the veil; therefore he saw Jesus; and he did minister unto him."

God is known by his many works. Faith gives way to knowledge. He ministered to him. Notice that in verse 18, *"he ministered unto him even as he ministered unto the Nephites."* Verse 20: *"he did ministered unto him."* Christ has a ministry. His ministry is not yet complete. His ministry includes coming and bearing His testimony, for that is the testimony of Jesus we should receive while in the flesh.⁵⁴ That ministry continues.

Look at chapter 4 verse 7. *"And in that day that they shall exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, even as the brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me, then will I manifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations, saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are."* [This is the ministry of the Lord. This is the comfort He promises to bring us.]

This text in Ether chapter 3 is probably the best single text in existence to study about gaining the knowledge of God, and the process by which it is gained. Most importantly, it exposes the attitude possessed by the person who comes back to be redeemed. It tells you, not directly, it tells you indirectly by telling you what the brother of Jared did. Go thou and do likewise.

Everything that you have been put through, and every challenge that you have been given, and every weakness that you possess, have all been given to you in a studied way to bring you, hopefully, to your knees. To bring you, hopefully, to feel the chastening hand of God, so that you, in your day, in your circumstance, can look upon it all as a gift, because it surely is.

*"I give unto men weakness that they may come unto me, and if they humble themselves and come unto me, I'll make weak things strong."*⁵⁵ That is also in the book of Ether. It is an aside in which Moroni was complaining that the Gentiles were not going to believe his book. Moroni feared the Gentiles were not going to believe this record but would notice its weaknesses.

Ether chapter 12 verse 26: *"And when I had said this, the Lord spake unto me, saying: Fools mock, but they shall mourn; and my grace is sufficient for the meek, that they shall take no advantage of your weakness; And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness."* [That's unavoidable. That's an inevitability. You stand in the presence of a just and holy being, you will realize your weaknesses. You are going to recognize what you lack.]

⁵⁴ D&C 76: 74.

⁵⁵ Paraphrasing Ether 12: 27.

"I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them."

How do weak things become strong? Not by fighting a battle you are going to lose. It is by appreciating as the brother of Jared did, the fact that none of us can come into the presence of God without feeling keenly this scripture. *"Fools mock, but they shall mourn."* This is Christ speaking. *"I give unto men weakness, [for one purpose], I give unto them weakness that they may be strong."*

That anvil you are dragging around was given to you by God as a gift. Don't curse it. Pray for God to come and lift it. You are never going to be able to get far carrying it anyway. You may not even be able to lift it, but in the economy of God, that is a gift. A gift! Not for you to act upon, nor to surrender to, but for you to fight against in humility and meekness and to say, "I'm not winning. I haven't won. It goes on and on, and yet still I fight against it."

When will you finally come to Him and cry out? When, in the bitter anguish of your soul, like Joseph Smith in Liberty jail, will you cry out, "How long must I endure this? How long do I have to suffer from the abuse of the guards? How long do I have to sit inside a gated room, in a dungeon, to hear stories about the rape of the people who followed me? And the murder of the people that believed what I was teaching?"

How long did Joseph's heart break in Liberty Jail? He emerged from that ordeal a fundamentally different man than the one who went in. People who say, "Oh yeah, in Nauvoo he got carried away with all kinds of things." We will talk more about that tomorrow. We will talk more about this idea of marriage, and will touch upon the notion of plurality of wives. We'll brush up against that tomorrow.

Look, these Scriptures, these invitations, these prophecies, and this message that began in Boise and will conclude in Phoenix. This message is inviting you to do what was originally prophesied as this dispensation began. We looked at those prophecies in the beginning in Boise, Idaho. The game's afoot. The challenge is underway. The opportunity is here.

There was a price that had to be paid first involving several generations of delay. We could not kill a man like Joseph through the conspiracy of his followers without forfeiting an opportunity. But that moment has come to an end. And a new moment is upon us. And if you'll hear it, I can declare to you, in the name of our Lord, that the day of salvation has once again arrived! Have faith! Be believing! He is real! I gave you a description of His demeanor. I gave that last time, and I'm reiterating it again here about some of His attributes. Come to Him! Seek for Him! Have faith in Him! You have more reason to have faith and confidence in Him right now than the brother of Jared did in his day.

There was an incident that I think one word, one word in this incident really explains a great deal of what I have been talking about in this installment. This is an event that occurs within *the Book of Mormon* that may seem otherwise, quite puzzling. But now that we've looked at the Ether

chapter 3 material, and we go back to look at the incident, it suddenly begins to have a connection together.

This Alma chapter 22 involving Lamoni's father, the King. I want you to look at the father beginning in verse 17 of Alma chapter 22: *"And it came to pass that when Aaron had said these words, the king did bow down before the Lord, upon his knees; yea, even he did prostrate himself upon the earth, and cried mightily, saying:"* [It was not the words of the prayer that provoked the attention of heaven. Although his prayer was in fact needed, relevant, and exactly what the Lord answered. It was what came before.]

This was the King. The King who could have people killed if he chose to do so. This was the one who, like God among his people, exercised the power of life and death. This was the one who could exact taxes from them. This was the one who had absolutely no reason to do what he did here. Look what he did. He prostrated himself on the ground and he "cried out mightily." He didn't pray. He mirrored exactly what the brother of Jared did when he approached God. In the depths of humility and in the sincerity of his heart, he showed absolutely an appreciation for the difference between himself on the one hand, and God on the other.

Don't mistake me, I do not think it is necessary to physically engage in this kind of display. But when the display is an extension of what is in the heart, it is absolutely fine. But when what is in the heart is right, it doesn't matter how it's displayed, because God looketh on the inner man.⁵⁶ This King was so overtaken by what he had heard, that he was not ashamed to prostrate himself in front of the foreign missionaries. He was not ashamed to cry out in the depths of humility. He didn't care who saw it. He didn't do this for to be seen. He didn't care that he was being seen. He did this because at that moment, that was what he was. He was seeking grace from the throne of grace.

Then we read his prayer: *"O God, Aaron hath told me that there is a God; and if there is a God, and if thou art God..."* [Do you see this? This is someone who isn't at all certain. This is someone who was convicted of his own inadequacy. It may not be that in your case you don't know enough, it may actually be that you know too much that is wrong. It may be that what you lack comes from your own false beliefs. It will all be erased and started over anyway, if you happen to gaze into heaven for five minutes, you realize that people who have been writing about this stuff since the beginning of time who have not gazed into heaven, don't know what they're talking about. The suppositions and the connections and the ideas that get floated around, are not only false, many of them are offensive to God. They're not right. The board is going to be erased. God's going to re-order it when He ministers to you. You are going to see things in a completely different light when it happens.]

It is not that you are brilliant and a shining light of knowledge to qualify you to know God. Instead it is what is in your heart. How has your heart been prepared? If your heart is open to receive, because it is broken, and your spirit contrite, then you are read.

⁵⁶ 1 Sam. 16: 7.

Sometimes I'm amazed at my own idiocy, because I have argued with God one time preferring Mormon doctrine to the truth! Sometimes I think that the Lord had that in His heart all along. He wanted to qualify me in a way that would make me typical of every man who finds himself in the predicament of the Latter-day Saints. He wanted to qualify me to say, "You claim to hold authority. I held authority equal. If I did not abuse mine and you've abused yours, then the kingdom has been taken from you." But it's been taken from you and not left. It still exists. Just no longer where the institution claims it exists.

I'm not going to start another church, and I don't intend to compete with the Latter-day Saints, and I don't intend to overthrow them. That is God's work, and it will be up to Him to decide how useful the various Mormon churches are to His purposes. But it is clear to me we do not need another church. The only thing we need are penitent people. The only thing we need are people whose hearts are right. If someone is here from a Baptist church, then go attend your Baptist Church. Go attend your Mormon church. There's good in all churches, but study the doctrines of the Restoration and get to know God, and then go and do what He would have you do.

I was pointing out at the break about the people who were first invited to the wedding feast aren't going to be ready and aren't going to come.⁵⁷ They are just going to be hostile or indifferent to their invitation. They will be slain.⁵⁸ It's going to be people on the byways who will come.⁵⁹ Right now there's one group that the Lord wants to hear my voice. They are in a small corridor, and it's very narrowly confined. They are the first ones to hear what I have to say. Not many are interested, and those who hear about it are largely hostile, even angry. The LDS Church opposed these talks. The threat of excommunication was based, in part, on the demand I not give these talks.

I'm going to put all the talks on the Internet so the invitation will be available for anyone, no matter what byway they occupy. I don't care where you are in the world, when you read the words I'm speaking, or you hear what is recorded through Doug's efforts, you are likewise invited. The message is to all. It begins here, it sounds here, but it will echo outward.

I don't care if no one gives me credit for this message. It is the truth within the message that matters! It's never been about me. It's been about the doctrines of the Restoration. It has always been about the truth that rolled forth through the prophet Joseph Smith. This is about the acts of God offering salvation to us in our day. Ultimately, it will be about the establishment of a city of refuge. Not now, but by and by. There aren't enough converted yet, it's too weak. But in that day, there still won't be a need for another church. There still won't be some reason to say, I want to sustain someone. God and God alone will be sustained in that day, not me and not any other man.

Nor do I anticipate in the city of refuge there will ever be another reason to rename the priesthood. My belief is that, should we have Zion, the priesthood ought to return to its original

⁵⁷ Matt. 22: 2-6.

⁵⁸ Matt. 22: 7.

⁵⁹ Matt. 22: 8-10.

name, “The Holy Order after the Son of God.” If some great man wants to step forward and rename it after himself, I'm not going to gather.

Returning to the king’s prayer: *"I will give away all my sins to know thee, and that I may be raised from the dead, and be saved at the last day. And now when the king had said these words, he was struck as if he were dead."*

Look what happens next. When he recovers, because as he was struck as if he were dead, he was converted. The Lord ministered to him!

And in verse 23: *"And the king stood forth, and began to minister unto them. And he did minister unto them, insomuch that his whole household were converted unto the Lord."* [This is what happens when you are converted to the Lord. You can't stand to look about you and see other people left in the darkness. You want to invite them, rather like Nathaniel was invited to, "Come and see for yourself."⁶⁰ You come to the Lord, you come and see for yourself. This little bit of skeptical praying, whether there is a God, and “if thou art God, will you make yourself known to me?” That worked! But not because this is a magic incantation, instead because the king cried out with a broken heart and contrite spirit.

The folks who go through religious ceremonies often mistakenly think they have some powerful mojo, some compelling voodoo. But the purpose of ceremony is to teach you some inner precept, a powerful truth. The precept is what you ought to find in your heart. Rites and ordinances are intended to testify to a greater truth. Anciently among the Jews there were Aaronic priesthood rites. But they viewed their ordinances if they were an end. Rites are not an end. They are intended to be a symbol reminding you of some great truth concerning our God.

The capstone of the ceremonies restored through Joseph involves a dialogue between you and the Lord in which you are symbolically brought back into His presence. Then, following that, you are sealed as a married couple for eternity. Those are lofty concepts. They are powerfully portrayed in the ordinances and the rites. They are intended to convey to you the reality that all this is possible, because God does in fact, intend to preserve you, and all those associations that you prize, so long as they are worthy.

Don't think you lack the faith! If this King, with this prayer, can go to God and ask and receive an answer, your faith is enough. That is not the impediment. The impediment is the pride of your heart, the hardness of your heart, the self-reliance you think you have, the traditions that bind you down, the arrogance of your heart, the unwillingness to cry out mightily to God, and then to be open to receiving an answer. This was enough, and you too, can do enough.

The Lord tells a story in Mark chapter 9, beginning at verse 17. There was a fellow who came to Christ and asks, *"Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. He*

⁶⁰ In response to Nathanael’s inquiry about whether anything good could come from Nazareth, Philip said, “Come and see.” John 1: 46.

answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

You don't need more of what you already have. Why are you here? (Well, most of you. Some have come only to criticize and gather information. Some of you in the hardness of your heart are going to come to the point, where, in the day of judgment, you will look back on this moment and realize, "I damned myself by the hardness of my heart and the bitterness of my soul, because I came to judge a man whose heart was right before God, and mine was not." Your heart will be broken in that day.)

But look at this man whose heart was broken on this day. He cried out. *"Lord I believe help thou mine unbelief."* [You have a desire, you have the willingness, but it is so fragile! It is so frail that you don't think it's enough! That's not the problem. Cry out! Ask him!]

Remember His disciples who had been following Him, who were His faithful followers, those disciples couldn't fix this boy. Those disciples had given up everything to come and follow Him. They knew much more than this man. But their knowledge did them no good.

Jesus healed the boy. After the incident the disciples came to Him and said, *"Why could we not cast him out?"* Christ answered them and said, *"This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."*

Why do you have to be afflicted by prayer and fasting, if you're a follower of the Lord, in order to get to the point you can accomplish this? Because you don't fall prostrate, crying out with tears from a broken heart and a contrite spirit. If this man, in this condition, can say, *"I believe, help thou mine unbelief."* If this man can do this and have the Lord on his behalf work a miracle, you too can believe enough, you too can accomplish what you desire, you too can come to Him.

Matthew covers the same incident. This is Matthew chapter 17, beginning at verse 19: *"Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."*

Faith as a grain of mustard seed is what the Lord said they needed. The defect does not consist in the absence of faith in the Lord. The defect is the arrogance and hardness of the heart that prevents you from crying out, in the realistic and anguish of your heart, looking to God who is trying to bring you to Him. That depth of humility, that status of being someone who is utterly harmless, that condition in which you present no threat to the righteous, you are harmless as a dove, and you seek only the betterment of others. That is who God is, and what you must

become in order for God to be able to redeem you to be like Him. That involves you voluntarily changing to be that person, by your submission to Him. Because there is no reason to give to the proud, the vain, and the warlike, the ability to torment and to afflict others because they have authority from God. There is every reason to give authority only to someone who would ultimately be willing to give the rain to fall on the righteous and the wicked, and to make the sun shine on both the righteous and the wicked. They can be trusted with the power of God, because the power of godliness consists in this kind of a heart. And in this kind of heart God, can accomplish anything.

In all of these examples the petition made to God is not called prayer, but are instead crying out to Him. In Romans chapter 4, Paul writes about father Abraham. In verse 3 he explains Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Verse 13 talks about God's promise that Abraham would be an heir of the world not to him or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Because Abraham believed in God, he trusted in Him, therefore he inherited it all, all of the world, he is the father of the righteous!

Beginning with verse 17: *"(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."*

There was no proof an aged, "dead," that is, now impotent old man, could sire a child with a barren, post-menopausal, Sarah. But Abraham doubted not, and you have before you, promises spoken by the voice of an angel concerning the things God has in store for your day, and you doubt? And you question, and you think God not able to bring about what He intends to do?

The very day all the prophets have look forward to, from the beginning of the days of Adam down till now, (as we looked at in Centerville) are upon us. You doubt God can bring this to pass? You doubt what I have been talking about since we began in Boise, and have now arrived here? If God can send someone to declare these things to you, in the confidence and the faith and the knowledge that I'm speaking to you on His errand, and I can do it in this room, in this building housing a casino, in this city built on gambling and desperation, salvation comes to you today by the word of God. You doubt God cannot make a holy place somewhere that has not been trodden under the foot of the Gentiles? You doubt that God cannot bring to pass His work in culminating the ages? Have the faith of a grain of mustard seed, because it is coming, it is going to happen, and if you lack the faith, you will not be invited.

The promises required Abraham to endure the test of his faith. It is not easy. I want to take you back into an incident, remarkable in its own way. It is in 1 Samuel chapter 17. The entire armies of Israel were put to shame. David brought cheese and bread to his brothers, and overheard what was going on and said, "Well, I'll go out and smite that godless Philistine."

1 Samuel chapter 17, verse 34. *"And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine."* [This is David, who had every confidence, despite everyone else hanging back, looking into the valley said, "We will not go." But David said, "Yeah, I'll go out. I'll take care of him. I've killed a bear, I've killed a lion, I could kill this guy. There's no difference here, really." David did not see this as a conflict between man and man, *mano a mano*. He saw this as a conflict between a mere man and God. All that was required was for someone go out there who believed in God, and God would take care of the fight. The battle is the Lord's! It always has been. The battle is the Lord's, and therefore the Lord is able to deliver. But, here is where it gets interesting.

Skip to verse 39: *"And David girded his sword upon his armor, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him. (so he got rid the sword, got rid of the armor, he got rid of everything) And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine."* [On his way out to the battle, he stopped at the brook and picked up five stones.]

Skip ahead to verse 49: *"And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead."* [He only needed one. David needed but one. David had picked up five. David believed the Lord could kill Goliath, but David picked up five stones. He had enough faith. It did not mean he had such confidence he armed himself only with one stone. After crossing the brook you will not find smooth stones. The brook wears them down, grinds them to be round and smooth. You need a smooth stone for the trajectory to be true. He was a slinger and knew he needed that kind of stone. So as he crossed the brook, he picked up five, not one.

In all of these examples, you see exactly the same thing! You see you. That's what you see. Oh, the great and the mighty and the powerful, and the miraculous and the wonderful, and the ones about whom we read, they are you. They had the same insecurities as you. One says, I'll give away all my sins to know you. That's a bargain worth making, and then it's a bargain worth keeping.

Be believing. You have faith enough, but also have faith enough in what we read earlier. I want to read it again. *"Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will."* (D&C 88:68) He and not you control that.

I remarked during the break to someone and I'll reiterate it again here. Many of those to whom these promises are made will receive the vindication of the promise in the last moments of their

life. Alvin, as he lay dying, had angels come and minister to him. Joseph would later see him in the celestial kingdom,⁶¹ but it was in the throes of death when angels ministered to his brother Alvin.

Stephen, as he was being stoned, had the heavens opened to him. In the last moments of his life, suffering a brutal form of execution, he was praying. He was so filled with the Spirit of what he beheld that he prayed for those who were in the process of killing him.⁶²

St. Francis of Assisi, living in an apostate era, in an apostate church, believed and followed the Sermon on the Mount. His heart was pure and as the last month of St. Francis life drew to a close, angels came and ministered to him. Our idea of what it takes to be pure before God is not the same as God's view of what it takes to be pure before Him.

Turn to Luke chapter 18, because there the Lord pretty much tells you how He evaluates whether someone has purified themselves before Him. This is a parable the Lord gives found in chapter 18 of Luke, telling about those who trusted in themselves that they were righteous.

Beginning at verse 10. *"Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."*

God can only exalt the meek, because only the meek can be trusted. This is what it means to sanctify yourself. Our idea of purity and Christ's idea of purity are based on very different criteria. Why is meekness required of a God, by a God? What would happen if God Himself were not patient, willing to suffer abuse and be rejected? What would happen if God were egotistical? What would happen if God did not return blessings for cursings? What would happen if God were not exactly what He preached in the Sermon on the Mount? What if God did not bless those who despitely used and abused Him? What would happen if God did not submit Himself to fall into the hands of wicked men to be despised and rejected? And then to be killed in shame, hanging naked on a cross, in full view of the world, while people spit upon Him, and mocked Him and ridiculed Him, and saying, "If you really are what you say you are, come down from the cross, then we will believe."

Woe unto all those who say, If you really are who you say you are, when the voice of God is sounding in their ears. They would have rejected the Lord as well. They would have crucified the Lord as well. They are not His sheep because they do not hear His voice. If they were His sheep they would hear His voice.

⁶¹ D&C 137: 1-5.

⁶² Acts 7: 59-60.

If we are required to develop the attributes of Christ, how is it possible for us to do so, unless God patiently tries to persuade us to voluntarily be like Him? How can you hope to be like Him, if you refuse to be persuaded?

God came as one of the weak things of this world. The only way He is ever going to invite you is through one of the weak things of this world, speaking in weakness, asking you to be persuaded. It doesn't matter how earnest I am, I know my standing before God. What matters is your willingness to be persuaded. Over that I have no control, and want no contro. I simply put the case as the Lord has put it to me, in the hopes that what He has to offer, and what He says need to be said will get through to you. Your relationship and your accountability is not to me, it's to Him. Therefore, be persuaded. Please, for your own sake, be persuaded.

Now I want to cover a couple things that may be disconnected, but they've come up so I am going to address them:

We don't have opening hymns and we don't have closing hymns, and we don't have prayers. You can read a sermon of the Lord from the New Testament or the Book of Mormon, and you will see He didn't have opening prayers before He delivered the sermon. He came, He delivered the sermon and He left.

There is no choir to get you ready. There was no opening prayer or closing prayer. I thought we should do that, and I was told, "No, we don't do that." He didn't do it, I'm on his errand, therefore I'm doing it His way.

When we are on a Sabbath, which has happened on one occasion in these talks, and will not happen again, we did have an opening song, we did have an opening prayer, we did have a closing prayer to honor the Sabbath day and keep it holy. So if someone was put out about that, if they listen to this recording, they will have their answer.

In Christ's example of praying, (I'm talking about His example now, I'm not talking about what He said on the subject.) Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount told you that prayer ought to be done in secret. This is Matthew 6 beginning at verse 5. *"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."*

Look, I've given opening prayers in sacrament meeting, I've given opening prayers in High Council meetings, I've given opening prayers in Stake Conferences, I've given opening prayers one time in a meeting with Bruce R McConkie who was the visiting general authority, I've given opening prayers in a lot of settings and I have to tell you, when praying in secret, I don't have to worry about what anyone else thinks about my vocabulary, content, incomplete sentences, dangling participles, or stupid notions. I don't have to worry about any of that. It is between me

and God. But when I'm standing on the corner, or at the pulpit, or before people and praying, (you may be better than I am), but I have never been able to pray in public in those settings, without at least some concern about the words coming out of my mouth and their effect upon the audience. I have always felt like I was delivering more of a sermon than a prayer to God. That's a weakness I have that you may have too. Christ deals with that by how He teaches us to pray.

Our Lord's example of prayer was so private that His disciples had to come to Him and ask: "*Lord teach us how to pray.*" They witnessed Him praying. I'll insert it in the transcript. I'll give you the examples. When the Lord went to pray, He went out alone, apart. Sometimes He spent all night praying. But the fact that He prayed, while that fact was known, the content of the prayer was lost. What He said was not known. There are two examples that we have. We have the example that He gives on the Sermon on the Mount that is largely in response to the question of, "Teach us how to pray." He tells them how to pray. Then there is the forlorn prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane where He begs to have a cup removed from Him.

When our Lord prayed, even though His prayers may have lasted over night, they were in private. He lived what He taught. He did what He said. And I don't want to tempt people to surrender the same weakness I have, and that is, to do so for to be seen of men, simply because men are listening.

Go to John chapter 17. This is another thing about the prayer. The prayers of Christ. John chapter 17 verse 1. This is the Great Intercessory Prayer. "*These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven.*" [When Christ prayed, He didn't bow His head or fold His arms. He addressed His Father who is in heaven as His eyes were lifted up.]

Go to John chapter 11 verse 41. "*Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.*" [Again, addressing His Father while lifting His eyes upward.]

Now I understand in some of the examples we've looked at they fell prostrate onto the ground. I know they bowed themselves, and beat on their breast, and not so much as to lift their eyes up to heaven. But even there the presumption implicit in the example used by the Lord is that man's eyes should be lifted up into heaven when he's addressing the Father.

How would you like it if I talked to you like this? [Turns to the wall and talks with back to audience.] Maybe I'll finish talk this way. [Returning.]

Look, pray to Him and realize that as you reach up to Him, He would rather reach down to you with greater enthusiasm than any of you could muster. But in order to establish the necessary conditions for our development, there was a law ordained before the foundation of the world upon which all blessings are predicated. That law is as easily accessible by the father of King Lamoni, as it is accessible to the father of the of young man overtaken and falling into the fire, and into the water. It is as accessible to the brother of Jared as it is accessible to you. Because when the law before the foundation of the world was ordained, it was intended for all men to possibly receive of God's fullness. If receiving of His fullness required a course in rabbinical reasoning, or an advanced theological degree, there would be almost none who are saved. But *the*

Book of Mormon gives us account after account. What happens to those who do not possess the required soft heart and willingness to bow? They come away saying, "God maketh no such thing known unto us." Like Lehman and Lemuel, they establish for themselves, using their iron necks and their brass brows, the inability to look up to God and be saved.

I have finished the content I was required to deliver here. I hope some of you come to hear what I have to say tomorrow, I understand it will be a tighter fit. Of course, I don't know if any of you have any intention of showing up. So, let me end by bearing testimony to you that this is not so far away that you cannot lay hold on it. This is not so far away that you can't likewise receive it. This is not distant.

"For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." (Deuteronomy 30:11-14)

Receive the Holy Ghost, and it will reside in you. Receive what God offers and then you won't need any man to say unto you, "Know the Lord," for you will all know Him.

I end in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.