

Lecture 8: A Broken Heart and Contrite Spirit

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All right, so, let's begin. I wanna remind you that when we were in Orem, we talked about priesthood, and I'd like you to keep in mind some of the material that was 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 of section 84:

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. (D&C 84:19-20)

And 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 that that higher priesthood does is done as an ordinance—because once it has 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, within 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 fullness of his glory. (ibid, vs. 21-24)

I remind you (we've talked about this before), *the glory of God is intelligence, or in other words, light and truth* (D&C 93:36), therefore, the "rest" is to be filled with His glory or, in other words, filled with Light and Truth—or to comprehend things that you do not at present comprehend without the **benefit** of the glory of God.

Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also. (ibid, vs. 25)

And thus, at that point ended the expectation anciently that there might be Zion.

Now, I want you to think about (because this is a topic that's going to recur throughout today) what the words mean: *...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 tend to think of God as very loving and benign after the sacrifice of Christ. And these words seem to be*

“Old Testament-like” and not “New Testament-like.” But understanding, hopefully (when we get through today), more about the nature of God's ire and God's approval... Disapproval from God feels terrible.

When we were looking at the reaction that people have (in the last day of judgment) to standing in the presence of a just and holy being and feeling awful, I pointed out to you that in that passage, God was doing nothing other than existing. But the disappointment in the mind of man is so exquisite that it is likened by Joseph Smith to a *lake of fire and brimstone*.

Therefore, God *in His wrath* has simply withdrawn. He's taken a step back because we're not suited to be in His presence. Therefore, having God withdraw is a matter of feeling **keenly** that absence, that rejection.

This incident is being described in modern revelation (in section 84), but the incident itself occurred back in the book of Exodus. This is 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. (Exodus 20:18-21)

They did not want to encounter Him, not because the presence of God is so terrible that it drives men from Him—because Moses approached Him—but because the evidence of His presence makes us internally evaluate **who** and **what** we are. And although we can lie to ourselves about how good we really are, when the measuring stick against which you compare yourself is God, all of us come short. Even when the Lord Himself testifies to you that your sins are forgiven, you still recognize that you fall short. To the extent that you have confidence in the presence of the Lord, it is wholly derivative from Him. He **has** to strengthen you because if He does not, all of us would retire in shame.

Doctrine and Covenants section 124 has a revelation given in January of 1841 to the saints (at that point in Nauvoo), offering something to the saints in that day that is relevant to the history that unfolded thereafter. Beginning at verse 28, the Lord says through Joseph:

For there is not a place...on earth that he ["He" here being the Lord, God—that he] 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... (D&C 124:31)

See, this commandment was unto everyone who at that point 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”] 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. (ibid, vs. 31-32)

It's interesting that in verse 31, it says *your baptisms*, and in verse 32, it says *your baptisms for your dead*—which 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.

If you skip to 34, talking about this proposed temple to be constructed:

For therein are the keys of the holy priesthood ordained, that you may receive honor and glory... (ibid, vs. 34)

...honor being the promise from God into the afterlife, respecting what you can expect to receive from God as an oath and as a covenant; *glory* being intelligence—or knowledge and understanding, Light and Truth—things that were not comprehended but which God hoped to have the Saints, at that point, comprehend.

Well, He gives to us (in this same revelation) a measuring stick by which we can determine if we satisfy the requirements that the Lord has set forth. And the measuring stick is this, beginning in verse 44—well, verse 43, probably, we should begin:

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. (ibid, vs. 43)

So, they contemplated it, the Lord approved it, and this would become a spot where the Nauvoo temple was to be constructed.

***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... (ibid, vs. 44-45, emphasis added)*

...they being the people; *they* being those that He had chosen to lead them; *they* being, in this instance, the Prophet Joseph Smith and the one who would be appointed to receive priesthood and be appointed to hold the sealing power in this revelation, Hyrum Smith—the one who was designated to be the successor to Joseph Smith in the event of Joseph's death, and the one whom the Lord would take first: Hyrum. Joseph died knowing that 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 fulfill 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 practice before me, saith the Lord. (ibid, vs. 45-58, emphasis added)*

So, if you get out the history and you look at the events that occurred between 1841 and the death of Joseph on June 27th of 1844—and you ask yourself whether or not the Saints went to and built the House that had been commanded and did it with the kind of dispatch and the timeframe that was allowed that allowed the House of the Lord to be constructed—and **if** you look at the history to find where it was that the Lord **came into that House** (because it was **Him** that was required in order to restore what had been lost; because it was **Him** that was required to be there in order to return the glory to the House of the Lord; because it was **Him** that would bestow upon the saints the fullness of the priesthood; because it was the **Lord, Himself**, that required a place at which He could meet with His people)—and then once Joseph and Hyrum were dead, if you look at the history of what occurred in Nauvoo and ask yourself, Were they blessed? Were they protected? Or did they experience (in the ordeals that drove them out of Nauvoo and into the wilderness, and the suffering that ensued there)... If, instead, you see *cursings, wrath, indignations, and judgments* upon the head of the saints, then **you** can reach a considered conclusion about whether or not we, in our day, mirror what happened at the time of Moses, and we, in our day (just as in the day of Moses) elected to say, “You—Joseph, Hyrum—**you** go talk to the Lord for us”—because when we consider the glory of the House of the Lord, it is no more desirable to us to go and ascend there as it was for those ancient Israelites to climb up the mountain (where there was thundering and lightnings and earthquakes underway).

Well, I'm going to make some assumptions for purposes of trying to get us back—back, able, and open—to consider some things about our present plight. I know that you think (some of you) that we **never** denied the idea of “continuing revelation” for even the members of the Church—and that there is some... There is some reason to draw a contrast between the ancient Israelites and ourselves, because we believe that **we** can receive revelation. But let me read you a quote (a quote that has been used in criticism of me with some regularity). Here's the quote; it's 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. (*Conference Report*, October 1918)

And so it is, that that 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 Twelve. And there is a Quorum of Seventy, and that Quorum of Seventy forms a quorum equal in authority with the Twelve. And then there is the High Council that is established as a group equal in authority with the Quorum of the Twelve and the First Presidency. And that all of those are considered to be equal in holding the “keys of the kingdom,” to the extent that such a thing is claimed. And God, in His wisdom, saw fit (before I was thrown out) to call me into a quorum equal in authority with the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, the Seventy. But unlike them, **I** did not exercise control, dominion, and authority over another person so that the priesthood I hold could be regarded as having come to an end. “Amen” to the priesthood or the authority of those that exercise unrighteous dominion. And so, if you want to lawyer this, I can tell you, **I** hold the keys of the kingdom. But I don't lawyer it. And I make no such claim. You, on the other hand, get subjected to this kind of criticism and this kind of nonsense on a regular basis.

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 Joseph and Hyrum breathed 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), are 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 gets fulfilled by what **you** do. Whether or not you **fulfill** those prophecies is dependent upon whether you will, like the ancient Israelites, elect not to go up. Or whether you—like Moses, like Joseph, like Hyrum—choose instead to forsake your sins and to 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 (...it's probably a good thing, because if you did, you'd be overwhelmed at the insults that come in). But among all those emails, I can tell you that there are a number who have borne testimony that since reading the book *The Second Comforter* and since taking seriously the promises that are 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 through this material today, you'll have confidence in your own ability to rise up.

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

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

Well, assuming all of that, what shall we do? Well, turn to Alma chapter 12 (a great chapter, by the way). And since this is already taking longer than I had hoped, I'm gonna insert in the ~~transcript~~ [paper] the verses in Alma chapter 12, between 9 and 11, that talks about, "if you harden your hearts, you get less; but if your heart is soft and open, you get more."

You're the regulator that determines whether, on the one hand, you get more or whether, on the other, you get less. And some of those who have come today with a hard heart are gonna find themselves being condemned in the day of judgment, because you were 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 includes those who are present today, come back from this experience and say, "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 years, in the coming eons, in the coming experience to be a minister, to bring salvation to pass to others. None of us will 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 on; the challenge is in front of you. You better have ears to hear. God will judge you, but more importantly, you will judge yourself.

Well, skipping then over verses 9 to 11, I'm gonna go to... Beginning at 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**. (Alma 12:28, emphasis added)*

He **wants** us to know! The glory of God is intelligence or, in other 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 the angels] caused men to behold...his [God's] glory. (ibid, vs. 29, emphasis added)*

So, the office of the angels is 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 being intelligence or, in other words, Light and Truth).

Ultimately, the greatest truth **is** God Himself. And if you entertain angels (and if the angels instruct you and if you have been in their presence), you acquire from them the strength, the fortification, the knowledge—or in other words, the ordination—by which you're able to go on and pass by them (because they surely are sentinels) and enter into the Glory of the Lord. And so, if you will give heed to the process, it really should not matter that you

are left in a dispensation in which the only authority gives you the ministering of angels. Because the ministering of angels is sufficient to bring you into the glory of God—if you will receive them, **if** you will 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.*** (ibid, vs. 30, emphasis added)

It's part of the title to the first book I wrote, [*The Second Comforter:*] *Conversing with the Lord Through the Veil.* That's the object; that's what the "lesser priesthood" can equip you to accomplish—left behind with nothing but a relic...

And what did Joseph say about all the prophets of the Old Testament? He said they **all** held Melchizedek Priesthood, and they were **all** ordained by God Himself because they functioned inside a society that was defective, limited, excluded from the presence of God. But **not those who received and entertained angels.** They were brought up to where they need to be, and **God Himself ordained them.** Should you not have 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 earthquakes, despite the fact you do not believe yourself to be worthy? You're still capable of coming aboard.

Look at Moroni chapter 7, beginning at verse 29:

*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 [to] repentance [repentance], ...to fulfill and to do the work of the **covenants** of the Father... (Moroni 7:29-31, emphasis added)*

...because when you move **from** repentance, you move **into** covenants (which is why we needed to speak about that in Centerville; which is why **this** process has been undergoing for 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**).

*...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. (ibid, vs. 31-32, emphasis added)*

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, the confidence that you likewise can do so—so that the covenants that are made by the Father can be brought to pass. Fortunately—fortunately... Aaronic Priesthood is exceptionally durable, fortunately, unlike Melchizedek Priesthood (which can only be exercised with extraordinary care and delicacy—the purpose of Melchizedek Priesthood being, as I talked about in Orem, to bless; the purpose of Aaronic Priesthood being 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 used with great regularity. And 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... as a... 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. And **everyone** will take up with Him their concerns and not with one another.

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 just wanna read it because it outlines what's 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 [know] that I am.

Knowing the Lord! *This is life eternal to **know** thee, the only wise and true God and...Christ, whom thou hast sent* (John 17:3, emphasis added). Knowledge; knowledge of the things of God—and in this context, this knowledge **is** salvation; this knowledge **is** the fullness of the Gospel. Forsake your sins; come to Christ; call on His name; obey His voice; keep His commandments. “Obey His voice,” in your instance, may be very different than “obeying His voice” in my life, because your circumstances are entirely peculiar to you. You're living your life, and I'm living mine. You're asked to minister in **your** family, to minister in **your** neighborhood, to function among **your** friends, to deal with people that **you** know. And I, on the other hand, am required not only to do **that** but also to come and talk to you good people (which, whether you believe me sincere or not, I would much rather not have been asked to do—but apparently, in the economy of God, no one else is willing to do it).

Go to Ether chapter 3. I wanna define what the promise of *know[ing] that I am...* (And by the way, those are the words that He uses in section 93: *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 [there's the definition; that's 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. (Ether 3:13-14, emphasis added)*

This is the definition. This is what the promise means. And then, look 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...showed unto him. (ibid, vs. 18, emphasis added)*

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. (ibid, vs. 19, emphasis added)*

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—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, just to remind you—because this is an important reminder 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 wanna skip to verse 12.

*I, John, saw that he received not...the fulness at the first, but received grace for grace; And he received not...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...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, ...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; ...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 [to] 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, [that] **you shall receive grace for grace.** (D&C 93:12-20, emphasis added)*

That's what **you** do to worship! That is how **you** are to worship! We grow in grace as we exhibit the grace that has been given unto us. And 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's completing the translation of the record that his father said would be included within his father's book, the Book of Mormon, but his father did not translate—and so Moroni translated and included it within the Book of Mormon. And as he's wrapping up his translation, he includes a dialogue. It's a very sobering dialogue in Ether chapter 12, beginning at verse 36:

And it came to pass that I prayed [this is I, Moroni, the translator; this isn't Ether. This is Moroni's interlude—I 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. (Ether 12:36-38)

Did you see what just happened? Moroni begged the Lord to give unto the Gentiles grace. And the Lord says, "It doesn't matter to you." He **did not** give Moroni what he asked for! He **did not** promise 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 be given the 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. ...then shall ye know that I have seen Jesus, and that he ha[s] talked with me face to face, and that [he's] told me in plain humility, even as a man telleth another in mine own language, concerning these things. (ibid, vs.38-39)

This is that Lord who, when you get past the thunderings and the 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 to comfort you. It's **you** that presents the barrier. It's **you** that presents the fear—and that rightly so, because we ought to fear. But what we should fear is our own weakness and our own sins. Because 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 you, the Gentiles, who are gonna 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...Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of them, may be and abide in you forever. (ibid, vs. 40-41)

He asked for grace to be given. God cannot give it. Then he turns, and he says, “You Gentiles, please, seek for His grace; it cannot otherwise be given you.” The Book of Mormon's assessment of us is sober indeed. And the arrogance with which we read that book blinds us to the predicament in which we find ourselves.

The plea: “seek for grace.” It is through grace that we obtain charity. It is through charity we're able to bless others. Because the fact of the matter is you can't bless anyone (nor hold that priesthood that is primarily designed to administer blessings and not cursings) unless you have charity for others, unless you are willing to do things you would rather not do, unless you are willing to subordinate your will to the will of the Father. Because it is the purpose of the Father to bless all of His offspring. Therefore, it is only through grace you 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 need to seek Him **beforehand** so that you can rejoice at His appearing. Look at Doctrine and Covenants section 38. Here's where He promises His general appearing: *But behold, verily, verily...* This is verse 7 and 8 of D&C section 38:

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, *jealousies*—because we just hate it when someone has anything more than we have. And we ought not be envious; we ought to rejoice in whatever it is that someone else has been given by the Spirit. We tend to be contentious, even in the blessings that we get. We have to strip ourselves from that. And *fears*, because fear... There really are, in the end, only two emotions: one is love, and the other is fear. And everything that derives from fear is negative, ultimately devolving into hatred. But it's foundation is fear. And on the other hand, there is love. If you look at the Plan and the squabble in the pre-existence, it was fear that motivated the rebellion. It was fear that motivated the adversary to become the accuser of the brethren and to shout this whole thing down. And it is jealousy that motivates the success that anyone achieves in this life if they happen to

repent. Because he seeks the misery of all mankind, that they might be like unto him (see 2 Nephi 2:18). Strip yourselves of jealousies and fears. (Here in the greater Las Vegas city, they do strip themselves, but it's not jealousies and fears.)

*...and humble yourselves before me, for ye are not sufficiently humble [ooh... we're going to have to look at this very carefully in the verses that we consider after this, you're not sufficiently humble], the veil shall be rent and you shall see me and know that I am [God]—not with the carnal neither [the] natural mind, but with the spiritual. For no man has seen God at any time in the flesh, except **quicken**ed by the Spirit.. 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. (D&C 67:10-14, emphasis added)*

Joseph Smith may have left, and he may have taken authority with him, but he laid hands upon people, and he conferred upon them the blessings of the priesthood. He could not give to them the priesthood itself, but he could confer upon them the blessings of the priesthood, and that persisted for some considerable time.

The Aaronic Priesthood got passed along. The Aaronic Priesthood functions. The Aaronic Priesthood is around (at least until rebellion ends it). But Melchizedek Priesthood is something by order of magnitude that is much greater.

No man has seen God at any time in the flesh, except quickened by the Spirit (ibid) is further elaborated upon in the Book of Moses chapter 1, verses 14 and 15. (I'm not gonna go there. I'll put it into the ~~transcript~~ [paper].) But the fact of the matter is: One of the keys for being 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 the adversary may appear to be an angel, but it does not require your transfiguration in order to be in his presence. But on the other hand, in order to be in the presence of God, it requires an alteration in the natural man. Which is why when Paul comes back, he says, "Whether in the body or out of the body, I don't know" (see 2 Corinthians 12:2). It is as real, it is as physical, it is as tangible as the podium. However, the alteration of the man makes what **was** physical cease to be the same as it was before. I'll elaborate on that in the ~~transcript~~ [paper]. Look...

- *Strip yourselves [of] jealousies and fears.*
- *Humble yourselves before me.*
- *[You're] 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 yielded from that particular furrow? Strip yourselves! Don't envy those who sit in the chief seats. They're

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. That “sanctifies yourself” because you become disconnected from this place.

...that your minds become single to God...

...single to God, meaning that He occupies a place of priority in which He is central to you. Not that you neglect your family; you can't do that. Not that you neglect your labors; you cannot do that. When we talk about families and marriage tomorrow in St. George, you find out just how central **that** is to all of this. But 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.

*Sanctify yourselves that your [mind] become single to God, and the days **will** come [when] 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.* (emphasis added)

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 will come. And when He comes, He comes **suddenly** to His temple, which temple ye are. 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 touch everything, we need to go to the book of John chapter 14—two verses. Chapter 14, verse 18, 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's saying, “I'm not gonna 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*** (emphasis added). Christ is saying that's the intention.

And so that we can have the definition given through Joseph, go to Doctrine and Covenants section 130 discussing this verse. D&C 130, verse 3:

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.

The promise was designed to have this actually happen. This is why Doctrine and Covenants section 93, verse 1 says what it says. This is what the fullness of the Gospel consists of. You can take all your rights and ordinances, you can take all your abidingly deep mysteries—Adam God and the topography of Kolob and...

And by the way, that whole thing about Kolob is so mangled! Kolob was a star. Kolob was a star within sight. From the vantage point of the earth, which is the entire astronomy revealed to father Abraham... It's entirely earth-based, looking upward. From the vantage point of the earth, looking up at that day—because the precession of the equinoxes changes the alignment of the stars, okay?—Kolob was a star. Abraham knew the name of the star. God said to Abraham, "You see that star? From where you sit, looking there..." It's 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! K? "Tim is in the direction of my index finger." He's not on my index finger! He's some considerable distance there away from. **That's** the direction. So, if you know the topography of Kolob, you still don't know where God resides. Because where He resides is in a place hidden in the North. If I were telling you where the throne of God is today... I could tell you that, but I would use a different star. Because in our day, it has a different name. And in our day, it has a slightly different alignment because of the precession of the equinoxes. He's out there, but He's in a place that is hidden in the North. And it will require the heavens to be rolled to like a scroll before you finally see past the veils that prevent us from seeing it.

But by that time, if you're unprepared, it's too late. Because the glory will be such that you cannot abide it. And when the Lord appears, preliminary to the rolling together of the scrolls, He will appear in a hole that is unveiled, in which the glory of God in His return is behind Him, along with concourses of angels.

(I hate this, because I'm just getting ready to change subjects. And so, now, here we are....)

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

But I have to tell you, some of the people that are driven—in desperation—to try and improve their circumstances (that are 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 our plenty and in our conceit about our own goodness, think ourselves better than them, when the truth of the matter is, more than anything else, it is our humility that qualifies us. More than anything else, it is our sincere apprehension of just how weak, how vulnerable, how easily distracted we are.

(I need to have them change the disks. Like I said before, we're only gonna take a short break; so, if you have business to do, go conduct it. Thank you.)

In this next increment, I wanna remind you that the account that we're reading (in the record of Ether) occurred **before** Christ came. Christ was an expectancy in the future; He was not a historical figure from the past. Okay? The faith that is being exhibited by the brother of Jared in this account is faith in an unfulfilled future-expectancy. If you think that you have a thin basis for faith in Christ because you didn't live at the time He did, think about how difficult it would be to have confidence in this Redeemer whose life was still future. The 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 that He made during mortality, the temptations that He faced, the dilemmas that He confronted—all of which are testified of concerning Him **now**—none of that was known at the time of the book of Ether being 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 and elaborated-upon words of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price. Therefore, when you read this third chapter of the book of Ether, you should recognize that you come to this challenge with a significantly greater collection of advantages (**if you will receive them and use them in that fashion**) than the one who composed the record that Moroni abridges here. Okay? 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. We're gonna turn over to Ether chapter 4. And this is a dialogue between Moroni and the Lord as he's doing his translation and abridgment of this record. And 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...heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are.

This doesn't promise you that you'll receive the record of the brother of Jared. This promises you that what you're going to receive is: *I will manifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations*, [and then I should probably read this again 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...heavens and of the earth.*

Well, so, we're going to look at Ether chapter 3. Remarkably, remarkably, the very first verse gives us something of interest. I'm gonna begin about halfway through the first verse of Ether chapter 3, where it says that he (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... (Ether 3:1)

So, I did an experiment yesterday while we were walking. And I picked up not 16, but 20. And I figured out what it would take in order to carry 20 small stones in my hand to the top of the mountain, and I'm able to do it. I have 20 stones in my hand. We turn them into like, well, we... Painters and fanciful folk who want to do such things, they turn them into these egg-shaped crystal balls. When's the last time you came in from the refrigerator in the garage into the kitchen and carried 16 eggs in your two hands? How would you get up the mountain with those in your hands? Okay? They were not behemoths; they were *small* things.

But even more interesting is what I just read to you. He takes them to the *top of the mount[ain]*, and *cried again unto the Lord*. This is the tenth 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/prayer" appear. When the voice of Moroni emerges into the narrative, the word "prayed" appears in ~~Mormon's~~ [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 to 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 rather "crying out" unto the Lord.

Keep that word in mind. Eleven times it's mentioned in the book of Ether in the account that's dealing with the brother of Jared. The only time the word "prayer" appears is in the interlude. That's the way you can know that Moroni is abridging a record that belongs to someone else. Because he doesn't use the same word as the person whose record he's abridging. He uses "prayer"—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... (ibid, vs. 2, emphasis added)*

Crying, asking Him not to be angry, reducing himself to being merely a servant.

...because of his weakness before thee (ibid).

What is this man's attitude? How is this man approaching the throne of God? What does he view himself as? 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, this attitude that this man possesses that tells you his heart is right before God?

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

...for we know that thou art holy [this is the contrast: my weakness/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. (ibid)

"I'm doing what you asked because you commanded me. I don't think myself qualified, but I'm obeying what you told me to do." This is the attitude of the man. This is what the heart of the man reflects. And these words are 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. (ibid, vs. 3)

There is no pride here. There is no resentment for being chastened. There is acceptance of the chastening hand of God. There is no proclamation that this man is worthy. Quite the opposite, he says he is unworthy. There is no resentment for having been punished. It is the opposite—he recognizes that every stumble along the way is justified, is reasonable, is earned, was appropriate because God, who cares for His children, upbraids and disciplines His children.

I have a daughter who has more energy than, um, than she ought. And having finished her undergraduate as a Phi Beta Kappa (again, the product of her energy), she came home and needed a project. And there weren't enough projects, so she became a foster parent for the Humane Society. And she brought home a big dog, who we all suspected that this guy was

pretty intelligent, but man, was that dog stubborn—a very likable, very pretty animal, but stubborn. And he got adopted 'cause he's photogenic.

Then she brought home a female dog, and this female dog was totally... I mean, I think we should have named her "Tasmanian Devil," but her name was Blue. She's a Blue Heeler, and so she has all the attributes of a Blue Heeler (which, really—they do not bite the heels of cattle; they herd cattle; they open their mouths, and they hit with their teeth the heels of the cattle, in order to herd them around).

And she had all of the psychological makeup that's required in order to engage in that hazardous line of occupation. And this dog, bless its heart, was **so eager** to please. Disciplining her was simple; you just had to indicate you weren't happy, and oh, it about killed the poor animal. But she's **so full of energy** that she couldn't help but drag the mulch bag out in the middle of the lawn and reduce it to shreds, and engage in excavation projects to find out exactly "how was the sprinkler system really put together, and do you **really** needed a valve in that location? And by the way, what would that valve taste like?"

I mean, when she finds out that we don't **like** that behavior, oh, she was so apologetic—and I could not bring myself to do anything other than (by the voice) to say, "What are you doing?" And she responded to tone of voice, and oh, she was on her back, "You have to love me still! Please, please, you have to love me still! Right? You do love me?"

That dog reminded me of the relationship which the brother of Jared recognize exists 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 arise out of our culture are good indeed when, in fact, that behavior on display in the halls of heaven would be deeply offensive. And some of the things that we think are offensive to God are not at all. Not at all! And so, our righteousness at best is pseudo-righteousness. And much of what we feel guilty about was given to us in order to give us an experience down here. And it 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 their fellow man at the tower of Babel. Mankind had been engaged in inordinate wickedness, and he doesn't distinguish between what they had done and what the residue of people had done in their migration. I also want you to notice that nowhere in this verse 3 is there anything like the proud descendants of Nauvoo here. There is nothing that claims that they are chosen or that 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 he was in the Liberty Jail. Mind you, the Liberty Jail... He had been there, suffering, through wintertime; it was now in the spring, when Joseph had no date in mind in which he would go free—or even if he **would** go free—or whether the original order of execution would be carried out, even though he'd been kept in jail for many years without it having been

carried out. In these circumstances, verse 7 and 8 of D&C 121: *My son...* (that alone ought to be reassuring to Joseph, of course):

My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a...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 being told, *endure it well*. You think you have challenges, you think you have difficulties, you think you face dilemmas in your life? Endure it well. Your adversity and your afflictions are gonna be for a small moment, and then, if you endure it well, something better is going to come.

And then, as if it weren't enough reason, turn to 122, verse 8:

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 that were carried by the Son. He faced burdens that were inordinately greater than yours. All of us should be tested to our limits. All of us should be “proven” by the experiences that 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’s the way it 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. (Ether 3:4-5)

He’s not asking for this in order to have a light show. He’s asking for this out of pity and concern, charity and intercession for others who will 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’s not doing this for himself. He’s doing it on behalf of his people.

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

Think about what it means to have 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. And then for God to say you are free to choose to do with what He’s lending to you whatever it is that **you** choose to do. Think of the patience of our God. Think of the meekness of our God. And think about the test that you are presently taking to prove who

and what you are and 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 will be done, to endure the abuses that God allows to take place in order to permit His children to gain experience so that, in the long run, they can ultimately know the difference between good and evil and, on their own, **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 that is currently underway. And think about what it is that you, in your life, should be choosing and doing, desiring and holding to your breast.

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. (ibid, vs. 6)

Now, I wanna pause—because the only thing that the brother of Jared ever sees at this point, the only thing that comes... The Lord may stretch forth His hand, but the only thing that is seen is His finger, okay?

It's not... I mean... I really love 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. But it's simply based upon a fanciful connection between the dialogue at the veil in the temple ceremony and this incident here.

But the hand of God never emerges. What emerges (and you can read it—it's in this verse 6; it's again in verse 9)... The Lord asks him, "Did you see more than this?" He says, "No, it's the finger." However, I put one of the stones in my hand. Let's assume for a moment that I have eight and eight. Okay? And let's assume that you touch it. It's impossible to touch the stone that's in your hand without **feeling** that the stone has been touched. Okay?

We read this record, and we don't notice what's really going on. Here they are, in my hands, eight and eight, and the finger of the Lord touches the stones 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) that there are any more stones left to be touched. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen. This record, read in fairness, 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 last stone, 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... (ibid)

That's the way in which the Lord chose to manifest Himself, because He came 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... (ibid, vs. 6-8)

(Hello? Can you hear me? Yeah.)

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. (ibid)

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. And knowing it, it frightened him. He's intruding into space that he didn't want to intrude into, and he felt convicted that somehow that was something he ought not know.

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? (ibid, vs. 9)

...my finger. Sawest thou more than this?

And he answered: Nay... (ibid, vs. 10)

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? (ibid, vs. 10-11)

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 that the brother of Jared have faith in what's going to happen. He's gonna show him “all things.”

...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. ...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...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 [to] 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 [same] likeness of the same body even as he showed himself unto the Nephites. (ibid, vs. 12-17, emphasis added)*

So, 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 “temperature” (excuse me, that’s a **scientific** word)—scriptural word is “quickened.” In one condition, it is quickened; in another condition, it is less quick. But in science, the difference between the two is “temperature.”

God dwells in everlasting burnings. In order to be with or near Him, a man must be “quickened” in order to endure the 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 77:2 includes the statement: *...that which is spiritual being in the likeness of that which is temporal; ...that which is temporal in the likeness of that which is spiritual.*

D&C 88, verses 15 to 16: *...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 Kirtland (or excuse me, in Nauvoo). But when he translated it in Nauvoo, he knew the definition of what a “soul” was, that is, *[a] spirit and [a] body*. When he translated the book of Abraham... In Abraham chapter 3, verse 23, speaking of those in the pre-existence, he says: *God saw these **souls** that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These [will I] 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 yet in the beginning to be in **this** condition. And it’s speaking about *the noble and great* (ibid).

By the way, I talked before about the definition of “rulers” in the Gentile world, and that’s someone who exercises authority over them. 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. 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 would 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 is his audience**]. But Melchizedek having exercised mighty faith, ...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 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. (emphasis added)*

First, he received this priesthood. Second, he preached repentance. But nothing would have happened except for, third, the people who heard him **did** repent. And because of that, people who are described as having *waxed strong in iniquity*, people who are described as being captivated by *abomination[s]*, people who have *all gone astray* turned out to be the very people among whom this City of Peace got established. But **they** did it. They did it by **repentance**. This isn't something Melchizedek pulled off, this is something that the **people** accomplished, and they accomplished it because of **their repentance**.

I want you to contrast that with another group. This group is in Mosiah chapter 12. Mosiah chapter 12, beginning halfway through verse 12. This is people reacting to the message that Abinadi was delivering to them. They're accusing Abinadi, and they're 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 [by] this man? ...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. ...behold, we are strong, we shall not come into bondage, or [being] taken captive by our enemies; yea, and thou hast prospered in the land, and thou shalt also prosper. (Mosiah 12:12-15)

Here is the pride, here is the vanity, here is the very thing which, had the people to whom Melchizedek spoken, 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're 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 that you have. The fact of the matter is **you** (generally, not specifically,

because there are some to whom this absolutely does not apply—your hearts are right before God—but there aren't many)...

You have been handed this tradition, and the wicked one cometh, and he takes away Light and Truth, and he does it because of the false traditions you've been handed. The greatest among us is wholly inadequate. The greatest among us can't 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 isn't 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 that **you** present, potentially, to the universe. Before you get in a position to enjoy the status that God offers to us all, you need to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, exactly like Paul said. You need to purge, remove, reprove.

This attitude we see in this man in this account, this **is** the man of God! Christ may be the prototype of the saved man, but I know of no record anywhere in scripture that exposes the heart of the real disciple of Christ as well as does this chapter expose 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, coming up to this moment—despite the fact the Lord came to Adam-ondi-Ahman and administered comfort to Adam in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman... **Here** He came and showed Himself as He truly was: as a pre-existent spirit, possessing a soul as tangible as man's, and ministered to him in a way which (if you understood what it takes for a quickened being to condescend into the presence and make Himself known as He does here) was an enormous sacrifice by our Lord.

Verse 18, *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 [shown] unto him* (Ether 3:18 emphasis added). This is how God is known: by His works. It's not the lightning show; it's not the shaking on the mountain. It's the great works that proceed forth from Him.

Think about what He did when He appeared unto the Nephites. God introduces Him three times before the people who are there were finally able to listen with their ears and hear the introduction. And then, after the introduction is given, they still see Him descend; and He descends, dressed in white, down and stands before them. Despite the introduction, despite the descent, despite Him standing in front of them, what the people think is, "This must be an angel."

Clearly, He has arrived in a way that is extra-human. He's manifested Himself being able to use the law of gravity in a way that we can't. He descends; He stands there—but none of them are overwhelmed. None of them fall down and worship Him. None of them do anything but look at Him. He's so plain, so ordinary, so commonplace in the appearance that He makes, that when they see Him, they stand there, and they look (rather like tourists) at this man dressed in white who is now appeared to them. And He says, "Here's who I am." He introduces Himself in Third Nephi chapter 11, verse 11 three times. In order to tell you who He is, three times 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. Even standing in front of them, He bears testimony of someone greater than Him.

It is the humility of the individual standing in front of them and His introduction of Himself in Third Nephi that brings them to their knees. They fall down, at that point, and worship Him. Because when He opens His mouth—and you see what He is and who He is and what proceedeth forth out of the heart of that man—you know you are listening and looking at God indeed. And they fall down, and they worship Him.

*...because of the many great works which the Lord [God]...showed unto him [this man knew he was God]. And [then] 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. (Ether 3:18-20, emphasis added)*

God is known by his many works. Faith gives way to knowledge. He ministers to him. Notice that verse 18, **ministered** unto him even as he **ministered** unto the Nephites. Verse 20: *...he did **minister** unto him.* Christ has a ministry. His ministry is not yet complete. His ministry includes coming and bearing testimony; and that ministry continues, as we looked at. Turn to 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 Heaven and of Earth], and all things that in them are. (Ether 4:7)

This is the ministry of the Lord. This is the comfort that He would have that He promises to bring us.

This text that we're looking at 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. But most importantly, it exposes the attitude that is possessed by the person who comes back to be redeemed. It tells you, not directly—it tells you indirectly by telling you what he 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 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 that as a gift—because it surely is.

'I give unto men weakness that they may come unto me, and if they'll humble themselves and come unto me, I'll make weak things strong.' That's also... (Excuse me, did I just knock

it? Okay.) That's also in the book of Ether. And that's in an aside in which Moroni is complaining that the Gentiles aren't gonna believe this book; the Gentiles aren't gonna believe this record; they're gonna say this stinks; they're... Ether chapter 12, verse 26:

And when I had said this, the Lord [God] 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. (Ether 12:26-27)

That's an unavailability. That's an inevitability. You stand in the presence of a just and holy being, you're gonna realize your weaknesses. You're gonna recognize what you lack.

*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. (ibid, vs. 27, emphasis added)*

How do weak things become strong? Not by fighting the battle that you're going to lose. It's 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. *But it is given unto men... Fools mock, ...they shall mourn. I...* This is Christ speaking: "I give unto men weakness for one purpose." *I give unto them weakness that they may be strong.*

The anvil you're dragging around? That anvil was given to you. Don't curse it. Pray for God to come and lift it. You're never gonna 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. It's a gift—not for you to act upon and 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), "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 man who went in. There are people who say, "Oh yeah, in Nauvoo he got carried away with all kinds of things..." We'll talk more about that tomorrow. We'll talk more about this idea of marriage, and we'll 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 that we looked at, at 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—it involved several generations. You do not kill a man like Joseph (by 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's real! I gave you a description of His demeanor. I gave that last time, and I'm reiterating again, here, some of the things about 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 to have faith and confidence in Him.

(So, we'll take a 5 minute break—and we'll then finish this up.)

Here, in moments, you'll be able to go feed the one-armed-bandits [slot machines], and I've seen the photos on the wall as I walked up here. Some guy won 48 thousand dollars in a slot, and the look on his face was ecstasy. So, you'll be released to engage in that folly shortly.

There's 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 last 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 and we look at this incident, it suddenly begins to have a connection to it.

This is in Alma chapter 22; it involves 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 [did he] prostrate himself upon the earth, **and cried**, [and cried] mightily, saying... (Alma 22:17)*

It's not the words of the prayer that provoked or gathered the attention of heaven (though the prayer is in fact needed, relevant, and exactly what the Lord answered). It's what came before.

This is the king. This is the king that can have people killed if he chooses to do so. This is the one who—**like God**—among his people exercises the power of life and death. This is the one who can exact from them taxes. This is the one who has absolutely no reason to do what he's doing here. But look what he does. He prostrates himself upon the ground, and he "cries out mightily." He doesn't pray. He mirrors exactly what the brother of Jared did when he approached God in the depths of humility and in the sincerity of his heart, showing absolutely his 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. When the display is an extension of what is in the heart, that 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. This King was so overtaken by what he had heard that he was not ashamed to prostrate himself in front of the 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.

*O God, Aaron hath told me that there is a God; and **if** there is a God, and **if** thou art God... (ibid, vs. 18, emphasis added)*

Do you see this? This isn't someone who's certain. This is someone who is convicted of his own inadequacy. It may not be that you don't know enough; it may actually be that you know too much that's wrong. It may be that what you lack... It's all gonna be erased and started over anyway. If you could gaze into heaven for five minutes, you'd realize that people that have been writing about this stuff since the beginning of time (who haven't 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's gonna be erased. God's gonna re-order it. You're gonna see things in a completely different light when it happens. It's not that you're brilliant and a shining light of knowledge. It's what's in your heart, and how has your heart been prepared, and if your heart is open to receive.

Sometimes I'm amazed by my own idiocy—because I have argued with God, 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 that the Latter-day Saints really are. He wanted to qualify me to say, "You claim to hold authority. I held authority equal. If I did not abuse mine, and you abused yours, then the kingdom has been taken from you. But it's been taken from you and not left. It still exists."

And I'm not gonna start another church, and I don't intend to compete with the Latter-day Saints, and I don't intend to overthrow them. That's God's work, and it's up to Him. We do not need another church. The only thing we need are penitent people. The only thing we need are people with their hearts right. Go attend... There's someone here from the Baptist church; 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 in the break that at the end, the people that were invited to the wedding feast aren't gonna be ready and aren't gonna come. They're just gonna be indifferent. It's gonna be the byways. Right now there's one group that the Lord wants to have my voice sounding to. That's in a corridor, and it's very narrowly confined. And they're the first ones to hear what I have to say. We're gonna put it on the Internet. It's available for anyone. I don't care where you are in the world, when you read the words that I'm speaking (or you

hear what is recorded in the materials that Doug is kind enough to put together), the message is to all. It begins here; it sounds here, but it will echo outward.

And I don't care if no one gives me credit for any of this stuff. It is the truth that matters! It's never been about me. It's been about the doctrines of the Restoration. It's been about the truth that rolled forth through the prophet Joseph Smith. And it's been about the act of God in offering salvation 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 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 man—nor do I anticipate that there will ever be another need to rename the priesthood. My belief is that, should we have Zion, the priesthood ought to return to its original 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.

I will give away all my sins to know thee, ...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. (ibid)

And then look what happens when he recovers—because as he was *struck as if he were dead*, he's converted. The Lord ministers to him! And in verse 23:

*...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. (ibid, vs. 23, emphasis added)*

This is what happens when converted to the Lord. You **can't stand** to look about you and see other people who are left in the dark. You want to **invite them**, rather as Nathaniel was invited, "Come and see for yourself." **You** come to the Lord; **you** come, and see for yourself. This little bit of **skeptical** praying, *if [there's] a God, ...if thou art God, will [you] make [your]self known to me*—**that worked**—not because this is a magic incantation...

Those folks who go through ceremonies think that ceremonies have some powerful mojo, some compelling voodoo. But the purpose of the ceremony is to teach you a **precept**. The **precept** is what you ought to find within your heart. Rites and ordinances are intended to testify to a greater truth. It was anciently among the Jews; it is an Aaronic priesthood function to turn around and look at the ordinances as if it were an end in itself, It is **not** an end in itself. It is intended to be a symbol reminding you of some great truth concerning our God.

Capstone of the ceremonies that were restored through Joseph—involving a dialogue between you and the Lord in which you're brought back into His presence, and then, following that, you're taken away, and you're sealed 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 of this is possible because God does, in fact, intend to preserve you and all those associations that you prize, so long as they're worthy.

Don't think that you lack the faith! If **this** king, with **this** prayer, can go to God and can ask and get an answer—that's not the impediment. **The impediment is the pride of your heart, the hardness of your heart, the self-reliance that you think that you own, 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. This is Mark chapter 9. In... Beginning at verse 17, there's this fellow who comes to Christ and says,

Master, I have brought...thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; [the spirit overtakes him]: and he foam[s at the mouth], [he] gnash[es]...his teeth...I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; ...they could not. [And Christ says], O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? [they brought the boy unto Him and He] saw him, straightway the spirit [tore] him; and he fell on the ground, ...wallowed foaming. ...he asked [the] father, How long [has it been] since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it...[casteth] him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on [him], and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. ...straightway the father of the child cried out, [cried out] and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. (Mark 9:17-24)

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.* I have a desire; I have a willingness, but it is so fragile! It is so frail. I don't think it's enough!

That's not the problem. Cry out! Ask Him! Remember, His disciples who'd been following Him, His disciples who were His faithful followers—His disciples **couldn't fix** this boy. And they'd given up everything to come and follow Him.

Jesus healed him. After the incident the disciples came to Him and said, *Why could [we not] cast him out? [Christ answered to] them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but...prayer and fasting.* (Mark 9:28-29, emphasis added)

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 that you can accomplish this??

Because **you** don't fall prostrate, crying out with tears. 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, but in Matthew he picks up... 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 [come] not out but by prayer and fasting. (Matthew 17:19-21)

Faith as a grain of mustard seed was what the Lord said they needed. The defect does not consist in the absence of faith in the Lord. The defect consist in 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 “depths 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; 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’s **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. There is every reason to give to someone who would ultimately be willing to “give the rain to fall on the righteous and the wicked and make the sun to shine on both the righteous and the wicked” the power of God, because the power of godliness consists in this kind of a heart—and in this kind of a heart, God can accomplish anything.

All of these examples... The petition that is made to God is not prayer. All of these examples are crying out to Him. In Romans—Romans chapter 4—he’s talking about father Abraham; and in verse 3, he talks... *Abraham believed God, ...it was [ac]counted [un]to him for righteousness.* Faith was reckoned to Abraham **for** righteousness. Verse 13: *a promise, that he should be [an] heir of the world, was not to Abraham, 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... He inherited it all, the world—he’s 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 [were] 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. (Romans 4:17-21)

There was no proof that 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 has said He intends to do?

The very day that they have looked forward to, from the beginning of the days of Adam down 'til now (as we looked at in Centerville)—you doubt that God can bring this to pass? You doubt that 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, in this city... Salvation comes to you today by the word of God, and you doubt that 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.

This 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, really. In First Samuel chapter 17: the entire armies of Israel had been put to shame. And David (bringing cheese and bread to his brothers) hears what's going on, and he says, “Well, I'll go out, and I'll smite that godless Philistine.” And so it was that in verse 34 of chapter 17 of First Samuel:

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 [the] 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 [defiled] 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 [the] Philistine. (1 Samuel 17:34-37)

So, this is David, who had every confidence—despite everyone else hanging back, looking across the valley, and saying, “Um... I'll pass.” David says, “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. I mean, there's no difference here, really.” Because David did not see this necessarily as a conflict between man and man, mano a mano. He saw this as a conflict between man and God. And all that was required was that 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:

David girded his sword upon his armor, and...assayed to go; for he had not proved [them]. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him [he got rid of 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, ...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. (ibid, vs. 39-40)

So, on his way out to the battle, he stops at the brook, and he picks up five stones. Okay? Skip ahead to verse 49:

David put his hand in his bag, ...took thence a stone, ...slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead. (ibid, vs. 49)

He needed **one**. David needed one. David approached him by picking up **five**. **David believed** that the Lord would kill Goliath, but David picked up five stones. He had enough faith, but it doesn't mean he had such confidence that he armed himself with one stone—'cuz when you cross the brook and you head on in, where are you gonna find another smooth stone? And it's a smooth stone—preferably round—that's gonna carry the trajectory true. He's a slinger. He knew that he needed that kind of a stone. So, as he crossed the brook, he picked up five.

Don't think... 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're **you**. They have the same insecurities as **you**. "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, ...the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, ...it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, ...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 minister to him. Joseph would later see him in the Celestial kingdom, but it was in the throes of death when angels ministered to brother Alvin.

Stephen, when he was being stoned, had the heavens opened to him. In the last moments of his life, suffering a brutal form of execution, he's praying—because he's so filled with the

spirit by what he's beholding, having the heavens open to him—that he's praying for those who were in the process of killing him.

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 thing 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 it is He evaluates whether someone has purified themselves before Him. This is a story that the Lord makes up in chapter 18 of Luke, telling a parable to those who trusted in themselves that they were righteous. Beginning at verse 10.

*Two men went...into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, ...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...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. (Luke 18:10-14, emphasis added)*

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 are entirely based on 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 spitefully 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 while they mocked Him and they ridiculed Him 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.

If we're 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? And 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's 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 control; over that 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 needs to be said will get through to you. But your relationship and your accountability is not to me; it's to Him. Therefore, be persuaded. Be persuaded.

Now I want to cover a couple things that may seem disconnected, but they've come up:

We don't have opening hymns, and we don't have closing hymns; and we don't have prayers. You can read the sermon of the Lord, and He didn't have opening prayers before He delivered His sermon. He came, He delivered a sermon, and He left.

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

When we are on the 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 to keep it holy**. So, someone was put out—if they listen to this tape, they get an answer to their “put out.”

In Christ's example of praying (I'm talking about His **example** now; I'm not talking about what **He said**)—Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount, told you that prayer ought to be done in secret. *When thou prayest...* This is Matthew 5 [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. ...when ye pray, [do not use] vain repetitions, [and so on]. (Matthew 6:5-7)

So, 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 Bruce R. McConkie was the visiting general authority for. 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, 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 in 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; 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 say: "Lord teach us how to pray." They witnessed Him praying. (I'll insert it in the transcript [paper]. 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 was known, the content of the prayer was gone. What He said was not known. There are two examples that we have.

- We have the example that He gives us in the Sermon on the Mount, which is largely in response to the question of "Teach us how to pray." He tells you how to pray.
- And then there's the forlorn prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, where He's begging to have the cup removed from Him.

When our Lord prayed, even though prayers might have lasted overnight, they were in private. He lived what He taught. He did what He said. And I don't want to tempt people to surrender to 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's in heaven, and He looked... His eyes were lifted up.

Go to John, back to chapter 11 again. This is in 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 by lifting His eyes up.

Now, I understand in some of the examples of contrition that we've looked at that they fell prostrate onto the ground. I know that they had bowed themselves saying that they didn't (in Christ's example) not so much beat on their breast and not so much as lift their eyes up to heaven. But the presumption implicit in the example the Lord gives is that His eyes **should** be lifted up to heaven when He's addressing the Father.

How would you like it [Denver turns to the wall and talks with his back to the audience, very muffled] if I talked to you like this? Maybe I'll finish the talk this way. [He returns to the microphone.]

Look, pray to Him. 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 can 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. **And** that law is as **easily accessible** by the father of king Lamoni as it is accessible to the father of the young man who was overtaken and fell into the fire and fell 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**. And 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. And 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* (1 Nephi 15:9). And like Laman and Lemuel, they establish for themselves, with their iron necks and their brass brows, an inability to look up unto God and be saved.

Look, I've finished the content that I'm required to deliver. I hope some of you come to hear what I have to say tomorrow. I understand it'll be a tighter fit. (Of course, I don't know that all of you have any intention of showing up.)

But 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 so 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 don't need any man to say unto you, "Know the Lord," for you'll all know Him.

I end in the name of Jesus Christ. (And I apologize, but we have a sick daughter that we need to get back to who is about two hours away by drive, and my wife and I are gonna take off. I hope not to have to do that tomorrow—maybe hang around a few minutes—but today I need to take off.) Thank you all.