

Things to Keep Us Awake at Night
General Conference Address
Denver Snuffer
St. George, Utah
19 March 2017

Where are the Adolpho's sitting? Mahalo!

We face the same test as all others have ever faced from the days of Adam down to the present. Things never change. From the time of Adam, the roles have been filled by different persons in different ages but the conflict is perpetual and the same battle continues from age to age. You can even lift the arguments that are made from one epoch and put them into the next and they fit. It doesn't change.

Adam taught his posterity the gospel and Satan, imitating an angel of light, declared himself to be a son of God and taught this doctrine, "believe it not." And most of Adam's posterity did not believe.

Enoch received a message from God, and the record that Enoch left behind says, "*and all men were offended because of him.*"

Noah taught the same gospel as was taught "in the beginning" to Adam but his audience claimed "we are the sons of God" and they would not hearken to the message that came through Noah.

Abraham obtained the same rights that were "belonging to the fathers" or to Adam in the beginning, including holding the right of the first born that came down from the first father, Adam. *"And those who claim the gospel of Abraham is less than the gospel given to Adam are a false message bourn by a false messenger. Mark it: If they don't repent for preaching that message in opposition to what the Lord declares both in scripture and by my voice they will regret it."* Unfortunately, Abraham's own family; that is his fathers, his uncles, utterly refused to hearken to his voice.

Moses saw God face to face and he talked with him. God gave Moses a work to do. Satan tempted Moses to instead worship him, even declaring to Moses, "*I am the only begotten, worship me.*" When Moses rejected this demand, his message from God was opposed by sorcerers and magicians who "did in like manner with their enchantments," duplicating signs shown through Moses over and over again in the record in Exodus. Even after delivering Israel from Egypt, the Israelites wished they had died in Egypt rather than being delivered and freed. And of course, what might have happened – given the qualification of Moses to bring it about – did not happen because the people that he led were unwilling to rise up as they were invited.

Christ was opposed by Satan who demanded that He worship him, and then He was opposed by religious leaders of the people. The people He went to save conspired to kill Him and ultimately brought that about.

Joseph Smith was, and is, opposed by those who claimed to follow him, or to belong to a church that was founded by him. If you don't understand the extent to which the opposition to Joseph Smith arose out of those claiming to be Mormons, take a look at the book *A Man Without Doubt* and you'll see that Joseph's greatest opposition came from those who claim to follow him.

Opposition in scripture seems clear, but when we struggle in our environment, it becomes much more difficult to make decisions about what is right, what is wrong, what is good, what is bad, what is of God, what is deception, what is truth, and what is false. That is not a correct understanding because the scriptures may reveal the conflict in sharp contrast but it was no different in that day than it is today. Deciding between opposing sides was not any more clear to those living at the time the scriptures were written than the opposition you encounter every day of your life.

The scriptures were written by or about prophets who took clearly opposing positions from those who were deceived. The clarity you read in scripture is because the views and opinions of prophets were used to tell about the events. But as the events happened, those living at the time had to have faith to distinguish between truth and error, to believe or to ignore a message from the Lord. It is no different for them than it is for the dilemma that we face today. Does the message invite or entice you to believe in Christ and to do His works? Does it get presented in a way that displays patience, long-suffering? Does it use gentleness and persuasion, meekness and love, and consistency with the revelations and commandments found previously in scripture? Or does it appeal to your vanity, to your arrogance? Does it make you proud of yourself, or does it make you instead wish you were a better person?

Humility is absolutely required to progress. The more we think we understand, the less willing we can become to receive more. Joseph said, "*It is the constitutional disposition of mankind to set up stakes and bounds to the works and ways of the Almighty.*" He also said, "*I never heard of a man being damned for believing too much but they are damned for unbelief.*" James 4:6 says, "*God resisteth the proud but giveth grace unto the humble.*" Damnation is limiting progress or stopping progress. Setting up boundaries to what the Lord can do is voluntary damnation. No matter how much you believe you know, if you will be humble you will learn a great deal more. We must continue progression or, if we don't, we accept damnation and that, too, voluntarily.

Earlier dispensations have had scripture projects. Adam with Seth composed a book of remembrance written by "the spirit of inspiration."

Enoch kept a record of the patriarch's generations, priesthood, and Adam's prophecy about everything that would befall man till the latest generation of mankind.

Abraham received the records of the fathers or the first patriarchs which is how he knew about, inquired into, sought for, and ultimately obtained the right of the first born belonging to the first father or to Adam, in a fullness, and thus continued what began in the beginning.

Moses was handicapped by centuries of slavery separating him from Abraham. And so Moses re-wrote an account of the creation, and of Adam, and of the first generations. He established a new body of commandments adapted to the capacity of Israel at that time, and then the people voted in order to accept these as their governing principles.

Nephi was told recovering the scriptures for his people was essential, otherwise they would dwindle and perish in unbelief. When the record that Nephi was able to obtain on the brass plates was studied, it included an account of the creation, Adam and Eve, and God's dealings with mankind down to the time of Lehi, including their genealogy and prophecies of Joseph of Egypt.

When Christ visited with the Nephites, He asked them to bring to Him their scriptural records so that He could review it. He reviewed the things that they brought that constituted their scriptures and He commanded them to fix omissions that had been made in the record. Christ then dictated two chapters of additional scripture to be added to the Nephite record. Only then did He expound all things to them using the scriptures.

With these predecessor events to inform Joseph Smith, in more recent history, Joseph Smith, like Moses who restored the account beginning with Adam and the first generations, Joseph restored the Book of Mormon as his first assignment. But he was required also to revise the Bible. Joseph referred to the revision of the Bible using the term "the fullness of the scriptures." The Book of Mormon he called "the Book of Mormon." The revision to the Bible he called "the fullness of the scriptures."

In the minutes of an October 1831 conference Joseph made this statement, "*God had often sealed up the heavens because of covetousness in the church. Said the Lord would cut his work short in righteousness and except the church receive the fullness of the scriptures they would yet fall.*"¹

The fullness of the scriptures, or the Bible he was then revising, has never been fully in print. Even the version that has been published by the RLDS Church misses several of the revisions Joseph made. All of them, and in addition a handful of revisions that Joseph made orally during talks that he gave in the Nauvoo era, for the first time are published in the new set of scriptures, in the volume, the Old Testament, and half the volume called the New Testament and the Book of Mormon. The fullness of the scriptures, without which the church would fall, are for the first time now available.

¹ JSP, *Documents Vol 2: July 1831-January 1833*, p. 85

The people who acknowledged Joseph teachings, also like God's people before them, accepted the new, and then expanded the scriptures. This is the process by which scripture expansion took place:

On 17 August 1835, the Doctrine and Covenants, including the *Lectures on Faith*, were sustained. This is a quote from that event: "*It was deemed necessary to call the general assembly of the church to see if the book be approved or not by the authorities of the church that it may if approved become a law of the church and a rule of faith and practice of the same.*"²

The church published an account explaining how the sustaining of the original *Doctrine and Covenants* occurred. I am going to read from an article in the *Ensign* because it contains some important information. This is a fellow who worked on the *Joseph Smith Papers* Project years before the *Joseph Smith Papers* Project was underway (and who uncovered dilemmas in the record of the history of the LDS church, including the lack of certitude in the Church's account about how the sealing power got restored. If you think that the ambiguities about the claims to have the sealing power in the LDS church are glaring, you're not alone. One of the scholars involved in the *Joseph Smith Papers* Project concludes the same.) The explanation provided in the LDS Church's *Ensign* is as follows: "Since the book was to be presented at the conference of 17 August 1835, several priesthood leaders were apparently given unbound copies to read ahead of time. They were then able to testify at the conference, to the truthfulness of the revelations. After hearing the testimonies, the whole conference voted, first as quorums, then as a congregation to accept the book as arranged. Our present section 134 was also unanimously voted into the publication, as was the section on marriage penned by Oliver Cowdery, which was deleted from the book in 1876 and replaced by Section 132 on the Eternal Marriage covenant. Members who could not attend the conference were informed by the publication of the high counsel minutes of the 17 Aug 1835 in the *Doctrine and Covenants* itself and in the *Latter Day Saints Messenger and Advocate*, the Kirtland newspaper."³

I have a real problem, as I hope many of you likewise have a real problem, with the concept that some man or men can vouch for something and say, "*Trust me, it's gonna be GOOD for you to go ahead and take the pill we're asking you to swallow.*" The view that replaces that is the view no one of us is greater than another. No one has the right to dictate. No one has the right to tell you, "*trust me.*" Instead, everything is being made available in advance for everyone to view so that no one need stand, as was done in the ceremony on the 17th of August when the *Doctrine and Covenants* was first sustained, when the audience only heard second-hand people telling them, this is a good thing, go ahead and adopt it, without ever having had the opportunity to review it. We ask no such thing. And none of us should expect to be treated that way. We're all equal, we're all accountable, and we all should be shown the respect of being allowed the opportunity to review, and that review critically and to comment and to make suggestions, and to advance criticisms and to deliberate, so that

² JSP, *Revelations and Translations Vol 2*, p. 307

³ *The Story of the Doctrine and Covenants*, Ensign, December 1984, Robert Woodford

when the end of this is reached and people raise their hand to accept it as the basis for governing a body of believers, a body of equal believers, a body of believers who respect one another, they do so knowingly and they do so with the full light of understanding and not trusting some group to tell them, "*Trust us — we're not going to let you read it, but we're telling you — it's good stuff.*" You're going to be able to read, to pray, to examine, to criticize, and to determine that for yourself.

In 1876, Orson Pratt published a new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants making numerous changes including adding 22 sections, among which was section 110, for the first time. He altered the text from the third-person to the first-person for section 110. No sustaining vote was taken to approve the changes to that addition. It was simply done and published.

In the October 1880 general conference, President George Q. Cannon held up copies of the *Doctrine and Covenants* and *Pearl of Great Price* and said, "As there have been additions made... by the publishing of revelations which were not contained in the original edition, it has been deemed wise to submit these books with their contents to the Conference, to see whether the Conference will vote to accept the books, and their contents as from God and binding upon us as a people and as a church.' Then Joseph F. Smith moved that that be done, it was seconded, and the congregation voted affirmatively." That is published in the *Deseret Evening News* in October 1880.⁴

In the 1921 edition, which is referred to as the Apostles' Edition [of the *Doctrine and Covenants*] – it's a title that's given because by 1921 it was abundantly clear to everyone that the apostles had completed their overthrow of the church and that it belonged exclusively to them. In 1921 the Apostle's Edition of the D&C eliminated *Lectures on Faith* without a vote by a general assembly. In 1921 the Lectures on Faith were removed, "not because they were called in question, for they are excellent lectures of great value on the principles of faith, but because they were not revelations."⁵ That was the story that was told, and therefore, what had one time been adopted as the rule of faith was eliminated simply by fiat, just like they said *trust me* in the beginning to get it adopted without people reading it, so likewise it was removed but it was done without a vote.

In April 1976, N. Eldon Tanner, during a Saturday afternoon session, as part of sustaining Church leaders, got approval for Sections 137 and 138. [Section] 137, in the form that is published in the LDS version of the scriptures, is an excerpt from a larger revelation given to Joseph. The larger version of the same document is provided in its entirety, rather than as an excerpt, in the proposed Doctrine and Covenants.

As we stand here today (or sit, as the case may be) there is not a single church, body, congregation, or assembly anywhere that has published and is claiming as their body of governing scriptural material, a set of scriptures which includes: 1. The *Lectures on Faith*, 2.

⁴ *Deseret Evening News*, 11 October 1880, p. 2, col. 4

⁵ Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl, *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1957, p. xvii

Fully print the fullness of the scriptures for every revision Joseph made to the Bible, 3. Faithfully reproduce the original revelations and their original wording, and 4. Adapt punctuation for the Book of Mormon text that avoids imposing doctrinal errors, or which function to govern the existing fellowships among us. But there is a draft, and it's available for your review, and you'll have at least half a year to review it.

Today's project began more than a year before I was directly involved with it. Chris [Hamill] said that there were two groups that functioned independent of one another, and that's true enough, but there was one fellow, on his own, who began this project – as daunting as it is, alone – before he discovered that there was a group working and then he joined their group. For the most part the work was done by two different groups. Significantly, they felt themselves called to do this. "*If ye have a desire to serve God ye are called to the work*" was included over and over again in sections of the current LDS version of the scripture.

These two independent groups, called only by the spirit to do the work, began and completed their work about one week apart without knowing of each other. One of the two groups brought the finished product to me and gave it to me, telling me they wanted me to publish it and they wanted to remain anonymous. They don't want their names to be included. That group had asked me for permission to include some of the material that I have written and I told them, "Do what you want with it."

I began the process of reviewing what they had done, and it was markedly different than the current set of LDS scriptures. But I had only had it for about a week, and I had not accomplished much at all in reviewing it when the second group put their preliminary project up somewhere and Adrian Larsen made note of it on his blog. I was surprised to find out there was a whole 'nother project out there, and I'm sitting here with an electronic version of the whole thing. I contacted Adrian and I said, "Do you know who is doing that project?" I had heard rumors that there was a scripture project, like I'm sure many of you had heard rumors. But I didn't know who was doing it and I thought the one delivered to me was it. It turns out there was another one altogether different.

Adrian gave me the contact info for Chris Hamill, who stood up here and is going to take criticism for all this, and he is welcome to it.

I contacted Chris and said, "Have you had anything to do with...?" and he had nothing to do with, and so I said, "Look, this probably ought to be something more than two groups. We probably ought to do something to assemble the parts." It was still, I think, over the holidays. At my office everyone who was local came to my office and met face to face. Everyone who was in far-flung parts of the world, including across the ocean, who participated in this work joined in on a notebook computer screen and we had a meeting of everyone.

As it turns out, each group had faced essentially the same group of questions but they had reached slightly different conclusions for good and sufficient reasons to them. But as they reasoned together – one example is both had concluded that *Lectures on Faith* needed to be

put back into the *Doctrine and Covenants*. One group however, had concluded that the catechisms (the questions and answers) would be eliminated because those were simply pedagogical tools (or teaching tools) used in the School of the Prophets to try and prompt the students in the School of the Prophets to be able to retain the content of the lecture, so that wasn't necessary. They had eliminated the questions and answers. The other group had included everything, including questions and answers, because at least one person and perhaps more, but one gave voice to the argument [and] said there was some slight ambiguity between the *Lectures on Faith* and the question-and-answer which allows you to reach a more fulsome interpretation of the meaning of the lecture itself when you consider the question and the answer, and he found value in the catechism. As a consequence of that discussion, everything from the original *Lectures on Faith*, including the catechism, is now included in the proposed set of scriptures just as it was in 1835.

In addition, one group was aware (as Chris read to you) that Joseph Smith had announced the intention of publishing both the New Testament and the Book of Mormon in a single volume and the other group was unaware of that. Therefore they reached agreement that that is the way it ought to be done. Questions about sourcing, questions about what was and what was not to be included, how to authenticate, what steps were taken by one group, what steps were taken by another group, what solutions were reached. They reasoned together. Then there were the difficulties of spelling. It is annoying to spell "vail/veil" two different ways, particularly when veil has a well-known accepted spelling today. There was also the spelling of the name of "Noah", N-O-E or N-O-A-H. The decision was made to standardize all spellings and to use modern convention so that to the modern eye it looks familiar.

Both agreed that they would work together to review again from beginning to end, after they had adopted the same protocols, the entire project. And so more than a year's worth of work was then redone and re-reviewed by both groups from beginning to end. What you are getting is a chance to review the entire project, gone through carefully twice by teams. Each team reviewed it internally repeatedly while they were doing it.

When it comes to scripture, corruption happens. Each new dispensation is responsible for fixing the canon of scripture to reclaim truths, to correct errors and to adopt guiding principles applicable to their day. Again, remember the statement Joseph Smith made at the [1831] conference: "*God had often sealed up the heavens because of covetousness in the church, said the Lord would cut his work short in righteousness and except the church receive the fullness of the scriptures that they would yet fall.*"

Sustaining is planned to happen at the next conference after a chance has passed for review of the material. This is necessary for the gentiles to claim they have accepted a covenant and a law. "For behold I say unto you that as many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord and as many of the Jews as will not repent shall be cast off for the Lord covenanteth with none such save it be with them that repent and believe in His Son who is the Holy One of Israel. ...*For the time speedily cometh that the Lord will cause a great division among the people and the wicked will he destroy. And He will spare his people,*

yea even if it so be that He must destroy the wicked by fire –“ (2 Nephi 30:2, 10, emphasis added).

Zion will include people who are willing to receive revelations from God and obey commandments. God does this to bless His people. *“Blessed are they whose feet stand upon the land of Zion, who have obeyed my Gospel; for they shall receive for their reward the good things of the Earth and it shall bring forth in its strength. And they shall also be crowned with blessings from above, yea, and with commandments not a few and with revelations in their time –they that are faithful and diligent before me.”* If you want Zion you necessarily must want commandments and you must necessarily be willing to receive revelations, and you must set aside your covetousness and receive the fulness of the scriptures if you plan to not fall.

If you take a look around at all those who claim they descend in faith from a tradition which reckons from the prophet Joseph Smith, every one of them is in a state of disrepair. It is like Joseph's last dream of his farm, overgrown with weeds, with the siding of the barn falling off, which is a vision of Joseph's not published in any current set of scriptures adopted by anybody but is included among the things that are in the proposal that we would have you make or adopt as a rule of faith.

If you go to 3 Nephi 21 (which is going to be a different chapter if you adopt a new set of scriptures.) As an aside, I got my set of these. My intent was to read it with a red pen and only mark what I thought needed to be fixed. I didn't get in it very far before I'm highlighting. There are no cross-references, I'm writing my own cross-references. I'm treating them like I treat scripture. So far I haven't noticed anything that needs correcting because I've been so distracted by the substance of what I'm reading in there. You're going to have to fix anything. I'm otherwise distracted. When I study the scriptures, and when I read the scriptures or I quote from the scriptures, I'm familiar enough with them so that – in the Book of Alma, if you're looking at your set of scriptures, it's on the left hand, it's on the back side of the turn page: *“It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart...”* I see where it is in my head because I'm familiar with them. D&C 130, right hand side, far right column, top of the page: *“There is a law, irrevocably decreed before the foundation of the earth, upon which all blessings are predicated –* “ and so on. I can't find that in here. I don't know where any of the material that I know and can quote. For me this is a journey into new terrain. I get more out of looking at these because I cannot read them with anything other than a fresh set of eyes. They are completely different than what I'm so familiar with. I don't know when the last time the scriptures seemed new to you, surprising to you. These are surprising to me. They are like a gift to have come into existence. I think if you'll pick them up with an open heart and with a desire to learn something you are going to be taken on an exciting journey into the restoration itself that has become flat, stale, and unprofitable in what is going on around us.

Christ's prophecy in the 21st chapter of 3 Nephi of the scriptures that we're familiar with – I would have no clue how to find or cite it in there. By the way, if these ever get adopted, from

then on I intend only to cite from them, and then if you're reading something I've written or said you're going to have to go in here and figure out how to tie it back into what we've got in other publications. I'm not going to do that for you. You're going to have to pick them up.

Christ said that it behooveth the Father that it should come forth from the Gentiles. He says, "*...the Gentiles, if they will not harden their hearts, that they may repent and be baptized in my name and know the true points of my doctrine, that the Gentiles may be numbered among my people.*"

In the dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland temple, Joseph Smith dedicated the temple and identified the Latter-day Saints as "*we who are identified with the Gentiles.*" If we enter into – as gentiles – a covenant so that we know the true points of Christ's doctrine, then the gentiles who do so may be numbered among my people. "*And when these things come to pass it shall be a sign unto them that the work of the father hath already commenced. ...In that day for my sake shall the Father work a work which shall be a great and marvelous work among them. And there shall be among them those that will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them. ... It shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause him to bring forth unto the Gentiles, they shall be cut off from among the people who are of the covenant.*"

Joseph Smith brought forth words that have never been preserved or accepted. It's high time that some people, however few, do so. It is high time that you and I do so.

"Wo be unto the Gentiles except they repent. ...At that day, whosoever will not repent and come unto my beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, Oh House of Israel." It has been a gift that the people before have failed, because the clock hasn't been ticking but if a people adopt a covenant and receive what has been restored, the clock will begin to tick.

"If they will repent and hearken unto my words and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them." "Church," not, as sister Adolfo explained, [an] institution. "Church," as she explained, meaning a spiritual body of believers. "Church" as defined by the Lord in the revelations, not "church" as defined by filings with the corporate Secretary of State identifying an institution that owns property. If you want one of those, go choose, there is an infinite variety. We want that group of believers, that assembly who accept covenants from God and who are spiritually connected, not institutionally connected.

Many of us suffer from post-traumatic religious stress. We don't need to go there. We don't need to repeat their mistakes. We should learn from them. I don't care who it is among us. I don't care how soft your heart is, or how inclined you are to follow God. The institutions are such a perfect mouse trap that if I were to call any one of you to be the newest member of the Quorum of the Twelve or the new president of the Relief Society, you couldn't fix it. It cannot be done. The only way is to begin anew and to learn the sad lessons of where it takes you if you go down one route. No matter who it is you trust at the beginning, everything is susceptible to corruption and abuse. Therefore we need to be equal, we need to be on the same footing.

If we will repent and “hearken unto my word and harden not our hearts, I will establish my church among them and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among THIS remnant.”⁶ “This the remnant of Jacob unto whom I have given this land for an inheritance.” It is talking about the gentiles but it’s talking establishing His word, which is a prerequisite to establishing His people. “Numbered among this the remnant of Jacob unto whom I have given his land as an inheritance. And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob and also many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city which shall be called the New Jerusalem. Then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in who are scattered over all the face of the land unto the New Jerusalem and the power of heaven shall come down among them and I also will be in their midst. At that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea even the tribes which have been lost which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.”⁷

Take another look on your own at 3rd Nephi chapter 21, and in particular pay attention to how the words in the covenant play into the fulfillment of the prophecies and the reclaiming of the gentiles to become part of His covenant [people] and then those who likewise inherit, as their possession, this land.

Recognize that if you want a sign that the work of the Father has commenced, I can think of no more tangible, physical sign to hold up than that the work has commenced and is now available for your review, and if you will receive it can become a covenant that the Lord intends to vindicate.

Remember that there are more scriptures that are coming. 2 Nephi 29:11-13 tells us that there are records that are out there that have been kept by yet other parts of the ten tribes that are yet to be gathered in. The Book of Mormon itself has significant omissions that are intended to come forth at some future date. But the record that has been given is given to test and to try the people to see if they will accept it.

As Paul Durham mentioned, no one took seriously the Book of Mormon, really until Hugh Nibley. I wrote about that in *Eighteen Verses*. When David O. McKay approached Hugh Nibley he wanted to know if he serious about believing in the Book of Mormon. How can you do that because no one was reading, studying or believing in it.⁸

With respect to this project, expect there will be opposition. There will be imitation and pretenders. There will be both deceived and deceivers who will be emboldened because there is always a necessary opposition in all things. It doesn’t happen any other way. Therefore don’t be surprised when, on the one hand, when you take a step in one direction that there isn’t a step taken in the opposite. But at the end of all this, assuming there is some group, however small – as Gideon and his group were reduced from 32,000 to 10,000 to 300; whatever remained was sufficient for the triumph.

⁶ 3 Ne. 21:22, emphasis added

⁷ 3 Ne. 21:22-26

⁸ See, Boyd Jay Peterson, Hugh Nibley: *A Consecrated Life*, Kofford Books: Salt Lake City, 2002

Everyone is free to vote when we have reached the end of the line and they are free to reject it. But if there is some small group who are willing to enter into that covenant, whatever that number is, that will be sufficient. I hope those who remain opposed will allow those willing to enter into a covenant to depart in peace because we've allowed the LDS Church, or any of the other various sects to Mormonism, to depart from us in peace. I hope that those willing to vote are likewise given the opportunity to depart in peace.

Now I'm going to change topics and clarify a few points.

Sustaining of a priest is only required in order for that priest to function outside a family and as part of a larger fellowship of believers. Inside the family there is no such requirement. I did not go to the trouble of being sustained by anyone until someone outside of my immediate family asked me to perform a priestly function. At that point I told them, while I'm perfectly at liberty inside my family; I have to meet the criteria. So I had to delay what they had asked and I had to go and get sustained because I'm now acting outside of my family. Until that time it wasn't necessary to do so. Many of you were qualified before I was but God spares no one. I would not dare proceed without meeting the criteria once the criteria had been set.

Seven women must sustain, one of whom is the wife, if the man is married. This ought to be done; we haven't talked about this but it ought to be done. I've talked with people on the scripture group about this. Before sustaining, in any fellowship group, you should first ask if any are opposed. If there are people who are opposed, they should be given the opportunity to explain the reasons before there is any further vote taken, so that they know why there is opposition. Those who vote to sustain should consider the opposing views and the opposition reasons, and deliberate about that before they go forward. But if seven women are still willing to sustain, go forward.

There are three steps. The first is ordination. Any man holding priesthood can ordain another man; anyone can do this. The second, if you're functioning outside of a family, is sustaining, which requires seven women. Thirdly, and this can be done at any time, confirmation, which must come from heaven. Heaven must ratify.

All these should precede performing any ordinance in a fellowship. You should keep a record of the line of authority from the one who does the ordination. I would have a written certificate signed by the seven women proving the sustaining vote, and everyone involved should record it in their personal records, particularly when the Lord confirms the authority to the man, he ought to keep that in his personal record.

I'm changing subjects again: There is an effort to collect funds for a temple project that transcends every group. Other than that one "transcending each group project," there is no other general fund or aggregation of funds between fellowships. Each fellowship is independent in their own funds. There is no general fund collected even at these

conferences. But conference sponsors may ask for donations to help defray the cost of the conference. That's up to them.

The relief from the donations for "the poor among you" refers to the poor among the individual fellowship. If there are no poor among you, then excess donations should go to the temple, but they can be shared as your fellowship determines by common consent, and that's up to you, using your common consent.

When a temple exists, there will be a box in the main courtyard where people can make donations. Donations to the temple will go for two purposes: First is maintenance and repair of the temple. Second, that fund, when that happens in that time and those circumstances, is a general fund for the poor. That fund can be called upon by any fellowship needing assistance with their poor. Anyone who is part of any fellowship is entitled to a request for assistance from that excess temple fund.

There are entirely local and independent fellowshipping groups that are comprised primarily of family and friends. That's the way that this has and will operate, with only two exceptions. First, conferences can be called that are area-wide, region-wide, or general. Like this one and the one in Boise, and the one coming up this next September in Boise, those are all general and everyone is invited to come to those. Those things operate in addition to local fellowships.

Secondly, the temple by its nature is general and is the one place that involves all believers, wherever they are located throughout the world. When the temple is functioning, there will be general conferences regularly conducted there. It should be expected also, when the temple is fully organized and operating, that there will be festivals or feasts that will be observed whereas, in the present state of things, such things are not yet expected observances.

I don't think the Lord cares whether you want to practice or not, that would be up to you. But the Lord has plans for a temple that go beyond what you might associate typically with a temple from some of your past experiences.

Funds that are donated to build the temple are going to be fully transparent. At present, the GoFundMe site is public and the funds donated to there are open and public. But in time every cent that is donated will be fully accounted for. The Lord requires a record of donations and expenses. They are supposed to be gathered and ultimately maintained at the temple, and be open for inspection, and I expect will be disclosed at some point online when the full accounting can be made.

Now I want to refer to a verse, and refer to this verse in the context of the temple. Apply these words solely and exclusively for a moment to the temple. "*Do not expect to eat the bread or wear the garment of the laborer in Zion.*"⁹ If you oppose the work, if you stay your

⁹ D&C 42:42

hand, if you refuse and others do the labor, don't expect to eat the bread or wear the garment.

Now, I want to address the Spirit of Elias, Elijah and Messiah. Or in other words, work to be accomplished by those operating under the mandate of the Aaronic, Melchizedek and Patriarchal division of labor.

Let me reiterate it again, because there is at least one angry foolish soul out there who persists in redefining the terms when I have defined the terms. So let me be yet again redundant:

Joseph spoke of three divisions of priesthood.¹⁰ He entitled these the Aaronic, the Melchizedek and the Patriarchal. Joseph defined the greatest of these as Melchizedek priesthood because it comprehended all others. I'm not using, and have not used, and have explained before, since Melchizedek has acquired a definition in the heads of Latter-day Saints, I'm not going to try and extract for the bull the line of thought that reckons from that. I'm just leaving that alone and saying, Okay, let me re-define the terms. In my re-definition of the terms, Aaronic refers to the least of these, Melchizedek refers to the next level of these, and Patriarchal refers to the greatest of these, in my nomenclature, not Joseph's.

I do this, as I have explained, because in the beginning, there was a unitary priesthood. It was the Holy Order After the Order of the Son of God. But in order to prevent the too frequent repetition of the name of the Son of God it got renamed, first after Enoch and then later after Melchizedek. But it is referring to one original, unitary priesthood which is the Holy Order After the Order of the Son of God. Yet Joseph spoke about three great divisions. In the beginning, because the first patriarchs had that original unitary fullness of the priesthood after the Order of the Son of God, and because Abraham acquired the rights of the fathers or the first father, Adam, and therefore like Adam held the Holy Order After the Order of the Son of God, I use the term "Patriarchal" priesthood to refer to that original fullness, and to nothing else. I divide them up into three categories and three nomenclatures using those terms.

There is the Spirit of Elias, there is the Spirit of Elijah and there is the Spirit of Messiah. These three great spirits unfolded in the work of God in the generations of man in a steady descent. They will be likewise inverted like a chiasm and return in an ascent so that at the end it will be as it was in the beginning. "Now this same Priesthood, which was in the beginning, shall in the end of the [earth] also," was the prophecy that Father Adam gave, Enoch quoting Adam, and Moses quoting Enoch, the prophecy being contained in the *Book of Moses* or soon, in the *Book of Genesis*.

The first spirit was the spirit of Messiah. Adam dwelt in the presence of God. Adam represents that original fullness. Adam was the first man. Adam received instructions and

¹⁰ See TPJS, pp. 335-341, a discourse on March 10, 1844

spoke to God face to face. He dwelt in a temple, from which he was cast out, but he dwelt in a temple. Therefore, Adam represents the Spirit of Messiah.

The Spirit of Elijah is represented by Enoch who, when the Earth was threatened with violence and men were to be destroyed because of the wickedness upon the face of the Earth, was able to gather a people into a city of peace, and to have the Lord come to their city of peace and remove them from the coming violence and destruction. He is a type of the Spirit of Elijah because Elijah would likewise later ascend in the fiery chariot into heaven. He is a type of the Spirit of Elijah, because it is the Spirit of Elijah in that ascent into heaven that must prefigure the return of the Spirit of Messiah in the last days in order to gather a people to a place that God will acknowledge, will visit and will shield from the coming violence that will involve the destruction of the world. And so Enoch becomes the great type of the Spirit of Elijah, although the name "Elijah" is associated with a man who lived later still but who duplicated, among a hardened people in a fallen world, the same achievement as Enoch had accomplished, albeit Enoch did so with a city, and Elijah did it as a solitary ascending figure, yet it will be Elijah and his spirit which, in the last days, will likewise prepare a city for salvation and preservation.

Then there is the Spirit of Elias which is represented by Noah, in which everything that had gone on before was lost. Things begin anew and Noah begins a ministry of attempting to preserve what was before by preaching repentance. And so Noah as the messenger, or the Elias, bears testimony of what once was.

In the end, before the Lord's return, these same three spirits need to have been brought into the world, in order for the completion of the plan that Adam prophesied about and that was in the heart of the Lord from before the foundation of the world. The Spirit of Elias declaring the gospel has to come again into the world, and it did in the person of Joseph Smith, and in the message that he brought, and in the scriptures that he restored, and in the message and the practices that he was able to bring about, however short-lived that success may have been. Elias and the Spirit of Elias came through Joseph Smith into the world.

We have yet to take the Spirit of Elias seriously enough to move on to receive something further. But we are now facing a crossroads in which it may be possible to restore again and continue the work and move forward. Moving forward successfully however, will require the Spirit of Elijah. This time the Spirit of Elijah is not to prepare a people so that they might ascend into heaven but instead to prepare a people so that those who come will not utterly destroy them. There must be a people prepared to endure the burning that is to come. Just as Enoch's people were prepared, shielded and brought worthy to ascend so as not to be destroyed by the flood, the Spirit of Elijah must prepare people in order for them to endure the day that is coming that shall burn the wicked as stubble. That will be people living in a place of peace and they will be the only people who are not at war one with another. They will be people who accept a body of teachings and allow them to govern their daily walk; both with each other and with God, so that they receive "commandments, not a few" and "revelations in their day" because that is what the people of Zion must necessarily be willing to do.

We are promised that one will come who will be part of Jesse and part of Ephraim who will set in order, whose identity will be established by the work accomplished and not by the foolishness and prideful claims made by someone who has done nothing. If the work is done, once it's completed, you might be able to guess. But any fool can run around claiming themselves to be whatever their peculiar schizophrenia allows them to claim.

The third spirit that is to return is that spirit which was in the beginning. It is the Spirit of Messiah, this time the Messiah Himself. This time He will come to His house. He will dwell there. Everything must be prepared in order for Messiah to return. And so in the end, as it was in the beginning. Adam being a type who represents dwelling in the presence of God, or the Spirit of Messiah. In the end it will be Messiah Himself who returns to dwell among a people who are prepared. This is a chiasm. It is returning to the beginning as the work of the last days walks backward in time to the point where it all began.

Elias goes before to prepare for a greater work that is coming after, just as the Aaronic ordinances go before. Joseph Smith said the Spirit of Elias was revealed to him, but "the Spirit of Elijah holds something more. It holds the revelations, ordinances, endowments and sealings necessary to accomplish turning the hearts of the fathers to the children by securing an unbroken thread between the living and the fathers in heaven. This can only be done in a temple prepared for that purpose." I'm reading Joseph. Without sealing of living children to the fathers in heaven, who dwell in glory and who sit upon thrones, the return of the Lord with Enoch and the other thousands who will accompany him would result in none escaping the judgments to come.

I do not like the gentile reaction to the word or understanding of "not lawful" or the term "forbidden." I think those words convey an idea that today can be easily misunderstood. I think I would prefer those words to be understood that: it is not wise to tell gentiles because they will abuse it when they learn it. It is because of that potential for abuse why man is not capable of making it known but is only to be understood by the spirit. When it comes to a person by the power of the spirit, it comes to them in a way that helps them understand who our Lord is and what He is about.

Likewise, the word "dominion" in the understanding of the gentile can convey the impression of a prison warden who is exercising control over captives. I think the word "dominion" should be understood instead to convey the idea of a gardener who is responsible for making the garden thrive and grow and bear fruit. To be clear, the three greatest examples of wielding "dominion" in the correct manner that we should understand it are, first: Christ, who is probably without any peer, unquestionably the greatest example of one holding the greatest dominion, and who also likewise showed the greatest example of how to wield dominion. He beseeched people to believe. He pled with them for their own good. He knelt to serve them. He denied that He had a kingdom of this world. He tried to prepare people for a better one. But He was more intelligent than they all and He was the greatest of them all, unquestionably holding the greatest dominion and He wore it as a light thing. His yoke was easy.

Adam likewise, after Christ in this world, held the greatest dominion. But Adam taught and pled and instructed but did not abridge the agency of his children, even when one of his sons killed another of his sons. Adam did not execute Cain. Cain was sent away. Adam held dominion, but he exercised that like our Lord, pleading for the best interest of others, inviting and enticing them, hoping for their best interests.

Then there is Moses, who is called in scripture “the meekest of all men,” and gentiles depict him as a bully and a strongman. Yet Moses saw no reason to be jealous when others were out prophesying; would that all men would do that. Moses, like Adam, like Christ, is an example of how the word “dominion” should be understood.

All three were gardeners responsible for trying to make their garden thrive, grow and bear fruit. In reality, those who have held the greatest dominion given by God have all lived lives of meekness and service. They were the opposite of what gentiles regard as a strongman, the opposite.

To be clear on what we are trying not to do, which implies what we are trying to do, I want to use a verse from The Book of Mormon. We have to avoid what is explained in Church then in scripture:

“The time speedily shall come that all churches which”...and now here’s a list of the “whiches” that must be avoided because it’s going to end with “need fear and tremble and quake.” They are going to be brought low in the dust. They are going to be consumed as stubble, and this is according to the words of the prophet. That’s where it’s going. This is the list of the stuff that identifies those churches which will be burned up. We can’t do this:

~“built up to get gain.” The people who put on this conference sacrificed, and lost money to do so. The people who put this project together volunteered their time to do so. I helped contribute in order to make 25 complete sets of these available for any of those of you who cannot afford to purchase them online. My assumption is that there are young marring couples with children, or perhaps single mothers, who can better use the money than spending it on getting a set of scriptures. And for at least 25 of those, money has been gathered, books have been purchased and they are out in the lobby. I think not all of them were taken yesterday. If there is anyone with a financial need they are free and available online as an electronic version. But in my view, particularly in households with children, these are important to have as objects in the household for the children to see. They are going to assume a form that is less hefty than this. You may as well have the gold plates with this stuff. Eventually we are going to have onion-skin, and the size is going to shrink, and they will be a lot easier to carry around. You won’t look like a pharisee if you happen to have your scriptures with you, and you won’t need to work out in order to be able to take them places. But for now, and until they get sustained and they get printed in a more portable and carrier-friendly version, we want to make sure that anyone that can’t afford it gets a copy. If there are still some left, someone reading about the proceedings of this conference online and identifies, through the website that will be available, the need, they

will send them to fellowships anywhere in the world. They are only in English at the moment. I'm sure there are volunteers who are willing to do that in the future. "Built up to get gain" is the one thing we don't do. If you participate in a fellowship you're probably losing money. If you're conducting a conference you're probably losing money. If you are giving talks as I do, or you are writing as I do, or you are assisting in projects as I do, you are probably losing money. I think you'd be surprised at how much money I've lost trying to do some good in the world. I won't tell you the number because I think that ought to remain between me and the Lord. Far from being supported, I work hard to produce a living so I can afford to do some preaching.

There are churches that are built up to get gain. We can't do that. We shouldn't even tempt one another to do that. Realize that every one of us is required to sacrifice and that is a good thing. That is a godly thing. It is a reflection of the sincerity of your heart. If you are losing money because of this, then you are probably pleasing the Lord. And if you are building something up to get gain well, I read you the punch line; you are going to be burnt like stubble, so enjoy the gain.

~"And all those who are built up to get power over the flesh...." Now, having power or influence is as deceitful a thing as riches. I married me a critic and she don't let me to get proud. We spent two hours hiking. I have joked (she has heard this, a lot of people heard me say this) that my wife "can bitch the varnish off wood" and that's a really good thing. She has trolled for criticism of me, doesn't matter how unfair, doesn't matter how untrue. But she will use that to question, to explore, to require a response to. Some of the most interesting stuff I've ever been involved with are private conversations between me and my wife in which I am on the defense! Since I have no influence with her apart from being able to persuade, and since it is my constant requirement to persuade, to explain, it doesn't matter that there are some people out there who think I have some kind of big whammy influence. The truth of the matter is I believe it is absolutely required of me, every time, to persuade, to use gentleness and meekness, to demonstrate knowledge, and I do not cut myself any slack in requiring of me what I would expect of any man who advances a proposition and declares it to be true. One of the things my wife is constantly on the patrol for is: "Is this your opinion? Is this your best guess? Is this based on evidence that you've got, or does this come from the Lord? Because if it's any of those first things then shut up! But if it is that last thing, then help me understand, because that becomes touchy proposition and we want to be sure on that."

I do my best not to get any power over the flesh or, in other words, to put myself to the burden of persuasion. I've been trying to expound scriptures in everything that I've done, and I've been backed into a corner by the Lord on occasion and forced to say something that isn't just expounding scripture, and I hate that. I hate it when I'm put in that proposition. Because I would much rather tell you what is in the mind of the Lord using the body of scripture to persuade you so that, as one question asked over there: "Who are you?" that won't matter. It shouldn't matter. There is only one thing that matters: what does the Lord expect of us? What does the Lord expect of you? What does the Lord expect of me? Let's figure that out and then do that.

I don't care if a group of people get together and accomplish the work. As the work was winding down there were several imponderables that weren't known how to solve the problem. One of them involved about a two hour long discussion between me and Mike Hamill. He wrote up something following that and that's in here. Mike Hamill's name is on that because after I had spent two hours explaining the proposition to him, I didn't want to write it up and he was willing to do so. He wrote it up; he sent it to me as an email. I made very small edit changes because he really got the gist of it, he really got it correct, then I sent it back to him. He wrote it; therefore his name is on it. There was another about an hour and forty-five minute discussion between me and Jeff Savage on a point that had come up. Fascinating point, and we spent time doing that. Once again, Jeff Savage... I didn't want to write it. I'm a busy guy and I didn't want to take that time. It was clear in his mind. He wrote it and he actually wrote it up in a way that was better than the way in which I would have written it. My wife would have edited it. She cuts out words all of the time. But his name is on it because he wrote it but it wasn't done just freelance, it was done with a lot of discussion and understanding preceding it. Just knowing the right question requires a lot of thought.

~"Built up to become popular in the eyes of the world..." As far as I'm concerned it doesn't matter whether we have 10 people, 300 people, 10,000 or 32,000, it doesn't matter. What matters is that we get it right. If we get it right, God will provide the increase. So "built up to become popular in the eyes of the world" is an irrelevancy and it may sap you of the kind of redemptive power necessary for your religion to matter.

~"Those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world..." We can't do that.

~"And to do all manner of iniquity. Yea in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil are they who need fear and tremble and quake. They are those who must be brought low in the dust. They are those who must be consumed as stubble. And this according to the words of the prophets."

So let me read the list again of what we are not to be. (I've got just another moment and then we're going to take a break, and then I'm going to sit down and we're going to answer some questions that have been given, for the last bit of this.) The list of what we are to avoid: We cannot be built up to get gain, we cannot be built up to get power over the flesh, we cannot be built up to become popular, we cannot seek the lusts of the flesh or the things of the world, and we cannot do all manner of iniquity. Those are the things that must be avoided and those who avoid it, however few, however small, that is who the Lord is looking for. That is the group who will be inclined to gather, receive commandments and obey them.

And then finally, this is leftover from Boise. I didn't have enough time there. When it comes to signs, faith does not get produced by signs. You can't do that. That is why Pharaoh never got impressed. Signs are inconsequential. Whatever the sign is – it was like brother Pratt was explaining. So what, bad weather happens all the time. The plagues are still going on in Egypt. The remarkable nature of the sign is that it happened on cue, not that the sign

happened. I'm having a conversation with a fellow. It involves a true gospel principle. We're standing in the back parking lot of my office while we are finishing the conversation. I say, "Do you see the dove sitting atop the pole in the distance?" And when he saw the dove it took off. It flew clockwise one circle around us and it landed back on the pole. To him it was a sign. To me it was a sign. If it was a crow and it went counterclockwise I would say, "Hey, there's something wrong with you. The Lord told me I'd be okay but I'm pretty sure..." Signs are not controlled by men but are God's to give as God determines. Signs are not supposed to be the subject of boasting. Some of the most remarkable signs that have been given to me are silently recorded in my journal but are astonishing. Signs exist. Many of the signs recorded in the lives of believers may be unknown to you, but nevertheless there are signs in rich abundance among believers today. The adulterous are the ones who seek signs, according to our Lord, and He said it twice. We know he said it twice because Matthew's account includes him saying that to two different audiences on two different occasions. Adulterers are sign seekers.

I would include within the definition of the adulterous, as did the Lord, those who commit adultery in their heart; hence the need to reject polygamy by men. It is adultery in your heart to continue to entertain the possibility that you will one day have 72 virgins, or whatever the hell it is that you have going in your skull. Just get rid of that crap. It does not belong in the life of a meek and a humble man, it doesn't belong there.

It is supposed to be a 15 minute break. Let's start again at quarter to twelve. I plan to get out of here by 12:30 so be forewarned. If you can get the books now do it but if not this place is still going to be available for a few hours thereafter.

[End recording]

[Transcription Kiyoko Ball v2.0]