

Understanding Prophecy Q&A

Sandy, Utah

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Denver Snuffer: Comments? You were saying something.

Aaron Kibbie: Is it on? Do you wanna record...? Okay, cool. Yeah, I'll just go top-down from the top of the talk down on my questions. So first thing we mention is foolishness and ignorance, but we don't qualify "What is foolishness and ignorance?" That might be purposeful to leave it vague, but it's still there.

Next thing is that we talk about Nicodemus and his inability to recognize prophecy. Later on, it's talked about how the Sanhedrin (the Pharisees and the Sadducees) are unable to recognize prophecy because they have this expectation that created a trap for them where they were unable to recognize the fulfillment of prophecy outside of the bounds of their understood parameters (or whatever). So...

DS: Yeah, they viewed themselves as being more sinful than they really were.

AK: Right. And a little bit later on, you say that God admonishes us to be open to not solidify our expectations, so we CAN recognize prophecy, but nowhere in the talk do we say, exactly, "HOW do we stay open to recognize the fulfillment of prophecy?" So that's a... Kind of like a... It's like a, "You gotta do this," with, you know: How?

Next is we're talking about the vineyard, and we have the use of *wild* in a positive way and in a negative way, which is itself juxtaposed. Because in the first instance, when we're finding the bad branches—right?—and we're chopping out the bad, and then we're grafting in wild branches with the intent of making the tree strong, with a hope that they will become good to overshadow the bad. But then later on in this allegory, we're now cutting out the wild branches. So to me, it's like, okay, what constitutes badness? And you kind of give some examples of what badness is there...

DS: K, well, let's pause on that because that's a good point. You're actually referring to events that occur earlier in the prophecy of Israel's history. Because Israel had acquired a state of religious staleness that they were the only people who would kill their God—and they killed it—at which point, they reach out to the *wild* (which is when it's positive) in order to bring in Gentiles who would be willing to start where the Lord had ended, which is with the ministry of Jesus Christ because they were converted to it. So Christianity thrived for a season, and the *wild*, it took off, getting nourishment from those roots. All of that is historically behind us. The prophecy point in which I pick it up in this talk is LATE: It's now when everyone... There is no good. It's the statement that Christ makes to Joseph in the First Vision about "There's a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof."

And so we're starting at a point in which the wild has reverted back to being absent of salvation. You can't go anywhere and find good fruit. And so now, given the state of the world (which is really what we want to look at), the last time the vineyard gets worked in, the last time that we have an opportunity to lay up fruit, the last time that He's going to send and labor alongside some servants, that's relevant now to us (assuming we're gonna

be able to produce some natural fruit again). And so that's why I start there. And in that sense, at that moment, the wild is negative. But once you graft it back in... Apparently, that season of Christian apostasy is beneficial to reconnecting up with the roots. And I think, in many ways...

There are those that say that the Book of Mormon was really a product of the early 1830s, answering all of the problems with the then-existing forms of Christianity. And I don't think I would argue with that, because it's pretty clear that in making the abridgment and in the final letters between Mormon and his son, Moroni, he's literally addressing the ills that they foresaw we would confront in our religious traditions today, and gives us answers for them.

AK: Yeah, all I was saying was that there's no clear delineation between when *wild being grafted in* is okay and when we're now treating *wild* as something that needs to be pruned. So the use of the word wild doesn't have... It has a continuous vocabulary, but it... There needs to be some point of delineation to where [indecipherable reading of scripture verses]. So that needs to be clarified in my opinion. But...

There's also the choosing of grafting because... I also wondered, does wild mean not... Because he was talking about, like, wild... It almost sounded like you were describing wild as being those who are not predisposed to the corrupt traditions of some society or religion. That's what it almost sounded like the *good* wild were. And then the wild that became the *bad* wild were those who were entrenched still in their traditions, but they lended strength to the top of the tree so that the roots didn't overpower the other branches. But as they grew—right?—or as the new branches grew and became strong, it now allowed for the pruning of those traditions. But I... That was complete inference. You didn't say anything specific to it so that... I could be totally off my rocker.

And then there was... Okay, that was that question. One thing you said was “good strong roots,” but there was nothing said that defined what “good strong roots” mean.

DS: Abraham and his original covenant.

AK: Okay, cool. So that's right there.

[Reading notes] And then... Already touched on that... Branches...

Oh, the other part is that it might be reasonable to... Well, branches don't have feelings; they don't have emotional attachments to other branches being trimmed, right? And I think that's part of the strength that those traditions kind of allow on top of the good roots but, at the same time, need to be disposed with. But at the same time, you... It's hard to say, “Hey, we're gonna prune you.”

DS: Yeah.

AK: Right? And... Because that sounds very much like excommunication—right?—particularly if the branch is still alive.

DS: Yeah. Fortunately, it's ~~the vineyard~~ the Lord of the vineyard that's deciding what He prunes away.

AK: Right. And I'm not saying one way or another, but a lot of times in that particular parable, I always find a sticking point with WHEN you prune—right?—because hasty, overzealous people are like, “We need to prune you!” Right?

DS: [laughter] Yeah...

AK: It might be reasonable to say that the branches don't have their hands on the shears; that's the job of the servants and the Lord. If you're thinking that you need to be the one who's grabbing ahold of that, then you're falling into the camp of those who have...

DS: Yeah...

AK: ...have decided to be—as you described just slightly later on—being hasty and impatient. And I really am sorry that I'm saying all of this like logorrhea; I'm just vomiting out of the mouth. But anyway...

Whitney Horning: A thought that just came to mind was: How does that relate to “My hand is stretched out still”?

DS: Yeah...

Vern Horning: In regards to the pruning?

WH: Yeah.

VH: Well, I was just gonna say, sometimes the pruning happens, and the people don't even know it happened.

DS: Yeah.

VH: The branch doesn't know.

AK: I think, most of the time, our... I have noticed that our groups kinda self-prune.

VH: That's what I mean, yeah.

AK: I mean, people will gather and then what'll happen is that you'll find that a subset of the fellowship will just go over here. And others will tend to try to find more like-minded people who are sympathetic to whatever they're preaching or believing, and then that creates self-pruned groups.

VH: Well, I was thinking like the Jews, when they rejected John the Baptist and Jesus. They didn't know they were pruned away when it happened.

DS: That's a good point. But they were.

AK: And the seer... You said that... Okay, that one's out of context. I don't have a good one with that one. Sorry, I'm just... I tried to take notes as fast as I could, but...

Oh! I... This one always comes up: Prophecies are only meant to be understood after they are fulfilled. Okay. There's never any sort of nice understanding of “how long after.” And so

these people wondering if they're a part of that expectation trap up above or if they're not caught in...or if they've actually understood the prophecy correctly.

DS: How long do you think was a reasonable length of time following Joseph Smith bringing forth the Book of Mormon, how long should it reasonably take to at least consider the possibility that God was working through him to restore lost truth? I mean, can you do it perfunctorily without reading the book? Can... Are you justified in rejecting the book? Do you need to at least read the book and its claims? And if you read the book and its claims, then do you need to investigate Joseph? Or is it okay to say, "He hasn't been to college and received training for the ministry, and he's not ordained in one of the existing denominations that I recognize, and he's really just an ignorant farm boy who's making pretensions." Well, how long is it after the work began before you need to at least allow the possibility that Joseph Smith was someone who really did come in contact with God?

AK: Umm...that's undefinable.

Tina Kibbie: Individually.

AK: You said earlier... ([talking to himself] Was it early on or later on from there? It was later on)... "Search for God's will for themselves."

DS: Yeah!

AK: Right? So until you are willing to throw your will at the feet of God, I don't think any prophecy can be reasonably understood.

Stephanie Snuffer: The thing that keeps coming up for me is ('cuz we talked a little bit this morning), like, so what comes up for me is "by their fruits," right? So what is a reasonable amount of time between the coming forth of the Book of Mormon—whether you read it or not, whether you lived in, you know, around him or not—eventually, as an individual and someone who has just a natural desire to give their will to God, eventually they will notice, eventually they will see it. Who cares when it is? Who... What does it matter if it's within Joseph's lifetime, whether it's within, you know, whether it's 2023, and you're just finding the Book of Mormon for the first time? I mean, it is absolutely... It is undefinable. And it's going to happen just for the humble, the honest in heart, and those who—no matter where they are, what they're doing, ~~how they're liv...~~ you know, where they're living—they're just the ones who are willing to turn their lives over to God, whatever that looks like for them. And then, in 2023, someone says, "Oh, my gosh. This is the fulfillment of a prophecy," a prophecy that was fulfilled in the 1800s, right?

DS: Yeah, but it's just now coming to your attention.

SS: Yes. So what does it matter?

DS: Yeah.

SS: What does it matter?

AK: It doesn't really matter as much as [whispering] everybody asks that's stupid question.

SS: Right. Exactly!

AK: Right. And...

VH: Or we're living in a time when prophecy is being fulfilled, like you were saying, or events in the Scriptures that seem like they're about to unfold, is it worth speculating/discussing/talking about those? Or is it just... Or do you wait for the gospel doctrine class in the millennium to connect all the dots?

AK: I think it's exactly what Stephanie was said. But that needs to be taught. It's like, you need for yourself to really take and ponder these things, and see how it fits for you in your current form of development. Maybe bookmark it and say, "I'll come back to that later because it doesn't make any sense to me right now." But there's enough people who you care about who have said this is important. So don't rush yourself. Don't be hasty. Don't be impatient. Just mark it as something that you might need to come back to later. I think far too often we try to teach religion like math: First, you learn addition, then you learn subtraction, and ad nauseam, all the way up until, you know, differential calculus. But religion really is what you're ready for at the moment. And sometimes, like, you'll see kids just get stuff that you're like, "What the...?" And I've been struggling with that for years and now my seven-year-old says, "But Daddy, it's..." and you go, "Oh. Oh! Oh my gosh!" Right? And now you feel like, you know, out of the mouth of babes! What...? That's awesome. But so it's like, don't be discouraged that your "how long after" is not really close.

SS: Or different than someone else's.

AK: Yes. Exactly. Because I think that's what divides us a lot and gives us a lot of evil in our groups and stuff is because we don't allow for the individual growth pattern of other people in our fellowships. It's like, "Oh, if you don't believe that then you can't be here," right? And that is...

TK: That's the "stay in your lane."

AK: That's contrary to, I think... Well, I mean, it's contrary to what I think God wants for us because I think He wants for us not to be... He ~~wants to be~~ want us to be as inclusive as possible. And if pruning is necessary, that's His job—right?—or let the other people prune themselves, but try to be good, regardless. Anyway, I'm just being stupid.

Janson Fish: I've got a question. Can I fit one in?

AK: Please.

JF: "Remnant of Jacob." "House of Israel." The same person. Why does the Lord distinguish those groups? I get one is a covenantal name; the other is his birth/given name. But why does He use them interchangeably, it seems, throughout Scriptures? Is it a marker of sorts to, like, identify specific groups? Or is he just using...

DS: Well, Jacob was his given name, but Israel was his new name. In the allegory, the grafting (as he was mentioning a moment ago), you've got wild, and you've got regrafting, and Jacob... He is the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, because

He covenanted with Abraham, and He covenanted again with us, He can covenant again with Jacob, and He gave to Jacob the new name/the covenant name of Israel. Well, in the allegory, using both names is a way of suggesting to the mind... I mean, when Christ says, "Isaiah truly prophesied concerning all things, therefore, he had to prophesy about the Gentiles," the Gentiles' status (when they're wild), they're still Jacob; they're not Israel. They're still Jacob. But you're trying to reclaim it and turn that into some kind of covenantal, familial, back... I mean, we want it to be the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, and the God of Janson, and the God of Aaron, and the God of Taylor. We want it to be the God of all of us. Maybe even the God of Vern. That's a stretch there. I mentioned all the men in the room, except for Vern, so I had to mention him, which now means we're really sexist. But if you go back to the beginning, the name Adam meant both Adam and Eve. So the God of Aaron is really "Aaron and Tina." And the God of Taylor is really "Taylor and Kelsey," and so on. And Janson, I assume his wife too.

JF: I have a wife, Yvette.

Taylor Ward: I've got a question. At the beginning, as well as throughout, we learned that understanding prophecy is: You can't fully understand it until it happens. And although you can search it out, they're unsearchable. But one of the things I learned that you can do is "incline your ear." So I was wondering—I like practical—some practical ways to incline our ear amidst all the stuff all of us have going on every day, practical ways to incline our ear so we can understand the way we need to.

DS: You know, this... The incident involving Nicodemus going to Christ is... It's like... Make Nicodemus *every* man. I mean, what was it...? He's a member of the Sanhedrin. He has all the traditions, he has all the learning, he has all the reasons—just like we all do—to live our lives content and in a rut and to leave all of the "nonsense going on" on the side. WHY did Nicodemus go and flatter Christ and then ask Him questions? And Christ didn't accept the flattery. He went right after Nicodemus.

SS: I think the "incline"... I don't know if I'm answering your question specifically, but the "incline your ear" is... The only thing that's keeping us from knowing (whatever that's gonna look like for everybody) is the fact that we think we already know. It's the fact that we think we already know! I mean, it's "being wrong": Assume you are definitively wrong about everything you know! Because...

DS: Or at least "incomplete."

SS: Yeah, because you actually are, right? If you know anything about your brain, you know that your brain... It's a masterful... (I can't even think of the word.) It fools you all the time; your brain is lying to you 99% of the time. And so, you know, I mean, somewhere between "believe you're wrong all the time" and know at least, you know, at least "believe ~~what you know~~ what you think you know is incomplete," that's how you incline your ear. You just let it all go. Nicodemus comes and questions Christ and flatters Him because he thinks he KNOWS—because he is a member of the Sanhedrin. So he knows! And what he realizes is that he doesn't... What he realizes that he knows is like, "I now know that I didn't know anything. Like, I totally missed it."

VH: So is that the danger of trying to figure out prophecy before it happens, because you get these preconceived ideas that, when it does happen, you'll be blind to the reality?

DS: Why were the Sanhedrin leading the chants, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!?" I mean, they... Not only was the Chief Cornerstone rejected, they were bitter and angry and upset, and they wanted Him killed! I mean, how do you...? How does your religion—which is telling you about the coming of the Messiah—how does your religion turn you into that? I mean, I give Nicodemus a whole lot of credit for coming and actually having a conversation with Christ. Can you imagine what the Sanhedrin—behind closed doors, you know, outside of earshot of Christ—what they talked about and what silly things they repeated that they'd heard about, and the nonsense that...? It's like the people who already made their mind up about Joseph Smith. And they can't tolerate the idea that he was a man of virtue and faithful to Emma and that he was surrounded by vipers that lied about him! We'd rather take ~~his lie~~ or THE lies and project them onto him. I can't imagine what Jesus' reputation inside the Sanhedrin was, other than: He had a devil; He was a devil; He worked with the power of the devil; and He was absolutely opposed to everything good and virtuous and right—so much so that the sorcerer Jesus, the devil worshiper, really did need to be killed for the good of society! We need to protect our people from Him! I mean, how many people entertain really, really stupid, profoundly, strongly-held convictions about Joseph Smith? I mean, I'm amused at the nonsense that gets put on the Internet about me!

SS: Describing the Sanhedrin, what you're describing is the almost insurmountable task of believing "you don't know."

TK: Well, it's becoming like a child, right?

SS: Yeah. Yeah.

TK: So that's the whole purpose.

SS: Yeah. How can you be a member of the Sanhedrin and stand to the side and say, "Why do you guys think you know that? What makes you think you know that?"

DS: In *The Second Comforter*, the chapter about becoming as a little child, I wrote that little children don't "know," but they KNOW that they don't know, and therefore, they're relentlessly curious. We don't have any curiosity about stuff outside of our prejudices because we might have to surrender them!

WH: Well, and I think that brings up, I think, one of the, you know... We talk about paradoxes all the time in this world—right?—and that things are a double-edged sword. So we have this: We need to be curious; we need to assume we don't know. But then how do we, then, avoid being deceived? Because as soon as we become curious and willing to be like a child, we open ourselves up to the deceivers and deception. And so then there's this line that we need to navigate that God fulfills His prophecies, but He uses men to bring it about. So that's one of my questions.

DS: And there are 10,000 people willing to volunteer to claim every sort of...

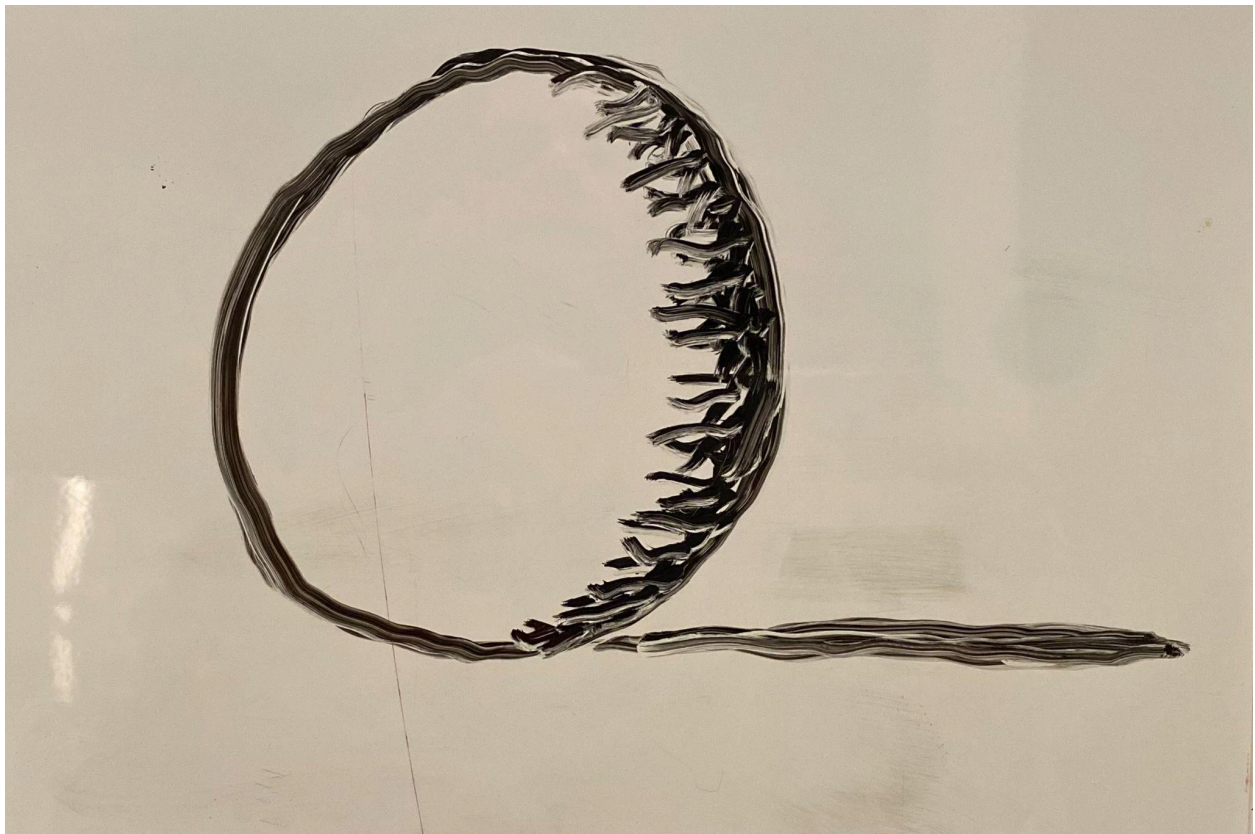
SS: Well, and I think that stays... It, to me, that stays in the area of curiosity, right? Because the minute you close, the minute you hear something that scares you... So fear is HUGE. "Fear" is as big as "thinking you know it already." Those are the two things that are going to damn us all, right? So as soon as you... And it's by their fruits, "by their fruits, you shall know them." Well, you may have to go pretty far down a path to realize that this fruit is stinky, right? But we're so afraid of any kind of mistake that we have to stay on the path, we have to stay on the path. I mean, I believe all the Scriptures, I believe there is one way, I believe the path is narrow, but I don't believe we're supposed to stay... I believe we're supposed to explore. That's how you find the narrow path is by exploring something different. And the reason we don't and the reason this is a big issue is because we think we know already, and we're afraid.

JF: Is that, umm... You quoted Joseph's "search into and contemplate the darkest abyss." What does that mean? Is it that? Is it...?

DS: Look, it's almost impossible to understand anything absent contrasts.

SS: Opposition in all things.

DS: You have to have contrast. If you don't have contrast, you don't know what you're looking at [begins drawing on whiteboard].



If you begin to put contrast onto something, what was once flat and meaningless becomes spherical. And when you begin to put the contrast there, even if it's not apparent, this tells

you there is a light source, and it's out of your view and over here. And so now I know/I comprehend this is spherical, it's not just round; there's a shadow, and there's a source of light, even if I can't see it. And so from what the contrast gives me is the certitude of knowing that there's something out there. A lot of times God is giving us a whole lot of information that we sense, not because the light source is within our field of vision, but because it is impossible for this condition to exist in the absence of the light source.

I went to my father's funeral, and his casket—it's open casket—was sitting there in the room, and as soon as I entered the room, I could point to the exact spot. My father was there but not in the shell. He was there, palpable and with the same radiant presence of his person, his personality, his demeanor, everything; disembodied, and not in the box. And that tells me that death doesn't take us away. That tells me that we survive the separation of the spirit from the body. I mean, you lose someone, and they come visit you. Now, they may not visit you by walking in the door and physically opening and closing material structures, and they may visit you only outside of your range of view, but if they communicate something to you that clearly originates from who they were, then you don't have to have the light sitting in front of you; you can tell by all of the other circumstances that it's there. The “searching into the darkness” means we really have to recognize that there is an opposition. The kind of evil that we see on display in this world implies that there is an opposite and a goodness. The teachings of Jesus Christ... If we took the Sermon on the Mount and we adopted that as our thing, think of all the messes that we've got everywhere in the world right now, think of all the illnesses that we see on display in society, think of all the interpersonal problems that we've had among ourselves, the Sermon on the Mount is a remedy for all of it. Well, the fact that someone in one generation influences multiple accounts of His life, from very different personalities and different vantage points [who] tell us about the existence of this “teacher” who did these things, one generation, and there's this outpouring of historical accounts and, then, teaching accounts that pour out in one generation, and you get now—you know, two millennia later—a book in which His teachings are preserved, and you read them, and you realize that that would cure so much of the world's vanity, evil, conflict; it would cure so much. That tells you that “what we see” vs. “that light,” that Christ was a real historical figure who taught such lofty ideals that you really have no reason to reject His claim to being the son of God. And the witnesses that say He came back from the grave and then reported the statements made by recent witnesses of His resurrection (like Joseph Smith), we don't have any reason to say that light... I mean, I... The presence of evil tells me there is good. The presence of darkness tells me there's light.

SS: So if... Oh, sorry, Aaron, go ahead.

AK: I was gonna say there's no... The analogy of hunger and satiation keeps coming to mind. Food always tastes better when you're hungry, right? And the longer you've been without food, the more willing you are to accept food that's closer and closer to spoiling. And...

DS: That's a GREAT point.

AK: And this analogy keeps on cropping up into my head when I'm thinking about some of the comments you made at the end, which was... And in accordance with Nicodemus' station. He's "full." He's "okay." He's at a point in his life where he's accomplished enough and accomplished a lot, and he doesn't need to prove anything to anyone. But he does recognize greatness. And so he's willing to have conversations that may be in contrast to the mainstream. He's confident enough/he's satiated enough where he's "okay," and he's willing to talk to Christ about things in a way that's blase vs. having real intent. Those who come to Christ who are hungry—who have an appetite to relieve pain and stress in their lives—are willing to accept prophecy sooner, right? And they're willing to get on to something that they feel is affordable (emotionally and physically) for the gains that they are going to feel emotionally, spiritually, and hopefully metaphysically in the life hereafter that will drive them forward, will help them become more than what they are because they are not satisfied. They are not satiated. But then there are those who are satiated, but they know they're missing something, and this is where you have the demonic fruit that is presented by God—and Denver [Joseph] classified it very well as being the flowery, fanciful words that are given by false prophets or false teachers who want you to eat from their hands so that they can pad their pocket with the other, with your resources. And that... It was mentioned over and over again in your talk, and I don't know if it was because of inspiration or because it's the quotations, scriptures, or whatever, but it was mentioned again and again about priestcrafts; I think it was like at least three times. But that is the fanciful and flowery thing that sets an expectation. Those men are setting an expectation to bar you from receiving true prophecy.

DS: And to direct you into their camp and give them power and influence over you.

AK: Yes, so they are flatterers; they are with the intent of building up a kingdom. And they will sell you with the exact same words that are used in the Scriptures: "WE can build Zion. WE can do this baptism that will bring us closer to God. WE TRULY understand the Scriptures. We TRULY understand what is going on. Therefore, these are the things that we're going to get on the outside. And if you participate with me, we can accomplish this great work." And that's where you get cults, right? Where there's a figure who has successfully used flowery and fanciful words, along with flattery, to sell an expectation that is backed 90% by truth, in a lot of ways. And they do go after the hungry, and they do satiate them. And when they are satisfied, they are firmly in the camp of those who would kill Christ.

SS: So what if you combat that by always having this part of you that says, "But what if it's wrong? But what if I'm wrong? But what if he's wrong? What if there's more?"

AK: The first thing that you can recognize when you are inside of a space where expectation has taken over you is 1: When someone brings up something new that is actually rational, you have an emotional response to it, usually fear or disgust or hatred, right? Because now your social base is being threatened. Your... Everything that you have done to teach your children is now being called into question. And you now have to come to grips with the idea that you are a bad father or a bad mother or you've been a bad friend because you have taught someone falsehood that's going to damn them to hell—right?—and the reason why that goes through your head is because that is the expectation that has been given to you by

those wild or wicked or vain, glory-seeking people. They have said that if you don't follow these teachings, you're gonna go to hell. Therefore, if you're following some other teaching, isn't that going to be the same thing? But that's a false teaching in and of itself, teaching you that God is going to hate you for some reason, when in truth, Christ is the master teacher. Everything that we're going through here is a lesson, and either we get it here or we don't; we're gonna get it at some point. But hastiness and impatience, thinking that you have to have everything done now? That's the kind of thing that creates negative emotion, that's anxiety, right? And worry and fear of failure, right? Fear again, right? Those are the things that will lead to bad decision-making. It's no longer a successful cycle. It's now a cycle of emotional reaction to truth, which means that you kind of... You're definitely in a place where you're missing out on something reasonable.

SS: Yeah. Well, and I think, I mean, I think we have the blessing of, like... It's articulated, if we know there's opposition in all things, that's just a word, that's just a statement. There is opposition in all things. It's not a... It's not meant to make you afraid. It's meant to tell you what's gonna happen.

AK: You could say it another way just like Denver did. There's contrast.

SS: Yeah, it is a statement of truth. And in that statement of truth, there is technically nothing to be afraid of, just an awareness that I am going to—if I'm going to pursue this—I am going to experience that. If I'm gonna pursue this, I'm going to experience that.

DS: Contrast grows.

SS: Yeah, it wasn't meant to scare us off. It wasn't meant to say, "Be timid. Be hesitant."

DS: We've been here a couple of hours. I'm concerned that the recording is going on too long for people to be tolerant. But there's some people who haven't said anything (Kelsey) or have said very little (Tina, Whitney). Actually, you too, Janson. Does anyone want to say anything?

JF: I have another question: "First shall be last, last shall be first." Can you... Is there more to that? That keeps popping up through Scripture.

DS: Well, the Jews retained their identity with Israel longer than anyone, and therefore, they are the first in terms of recollection. The Gentiles got lost to that; they became the last because they have completely forfeited any awareness of their identity. But when the end comes, He's going to start by reclaiming Israel and using the cast-off branches that have become wild and redrafting them back into the roots. And then after the Gentiles have been brought back—both by covenant awareness, teaching, acceptance of truth—into the point where they can produce any good fruit, then secondly, the last of the ones who had been first will at last (the Jews and others who've retained the separate identity) are gonna be grafted back in at the end so that the cycle that started with the Jews and went on to the Gentiles is gonna start with the Gentiles and go back ultimately to the Jews.

JF: So the Jews, is it "I self-identify as a Jew; that makes me a Jew"? Or is it a...? Is there a specific bloodline or group of people that...? Like, who's the Jew?

DS: Well...

JF: What does that look like today in today's world? There's a whole lot of stuff going on in Israel...

DS: The easiest answer is that clearly those that self-identify as Jews would be where you would start with it. But there's a whole lot more to that. Yeah, but the easy answer is the obvious one. Is there more to that identity? Well, yeah. But that's a big subject. But it's a worthy question to keep in mind. Yeah.

But Whitney and Kelsey and Tina, what's up? [crosstalk]

Kelsey Ward: I'm a very simple-minded person.

SS: That's lovely. We need a lot more of THAT! Loftiness is...

WH: The thought that's been coming to me in this discussion is charity. So charity for each other when we get things wrong, when we think we've understood prophecy, or we think we're the one who just fulfilled the prophecy. And so charity for that, and then charity for ourselves as we're trying to figure it out. I think about... I personally don't think that Joseph Smith, when he started translating the Book of Mormon, truly understood what he was fulfilling. I think he was just obeying God. God asked him to do something, and he was being obedient to that. And so I think there's a lesson to be learned there.

DS: Yes.

WH: But then also just the thought that when we're bumping into each other, and we're trying to figure all of this out, and we're trying to be obedient to the Lord in the way we think we're supposed to do something, and we're getting it right, or we're getting it wrong, just to have charity for each other.

DS: Yeah. Yeah.

TK: There's one thing that came to mind when listening to the ~~tree~~ of the olive garden allegory was that I watched a documentary not too long ago about how trees in the forest talk to each other, and how there's like a mother tree, right? And then they send out signals and fungus (like through the fungus they can talk to each other), and when someone is struggling, that mother tree, it like tells all the other ones to support. And that kind of goes along. That just came to mind when I'm thinking of that, you know, listening to the allegory again. That's, I think, part of being equal is being equal in helping one another when someone is down, you know, that... So, it goes along the lines of charity.

DS: Yeah.

TK: It's kind of cool to think about.

SS: I'm just quickly gonna interject because I think that's a perfect example of... You know that; you were probably... Maybe Aaron knows that too. But you're the only one at this table that knows that. You're the only one at the table who watched that documentary—

okay?—which is a powerful, powerful explanation of really how God works and how His creation works. We can't be expected to know that. But as soon as you say something like that, what comes to me is like, “Oh, my gosh, look at what I don't know.”

TK: Yeah.

SS: “Oh, my gosh, look at what I don't know!”

TK: [Indecipherable] lack at being that support.

SS: And if I don't know that, and I don't understand that metaphor, and I don't understand how God created the world so that I could have that symbol in my life, then I really can't know much of anything—you know?—and I will spend my life never knowing enough. And so staying in that space of “Wow.”

DS: The guy who might be really interesting to have walk through that allegory is Keith Henderson because he goes and gets cuttings from California and from La Caille and from all over, and then he grows grapes, makes wine.

TK: There's all sorts of cool things [indecipherable].

DS: Thanks all of you for coming.