

Podcast Episode 22: New Jerusalem

QUESTION: What is the New Jerusalem? Where will it be? What will happen there? And how will the New Jerusalem become Zion?

DENVER: Well, they who come will burn up those who are unprepared. And therefore, what should we be doing in order to make sure that we are included among those who are prepared?

I want to look more into Enoch. So let's go back to the book of Moses. Moses chapter 7, beginning at verse 60: *"And the Lord said unto Enoch: As I live...."* This is covenant language. This is God swearing by his own life. This is God promising that if He lives, so shall this word live. If He's alive, He shall vindicate what He's about to say.

"As I live, even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, to fulfil the oath which I have made unto you concerning the children of Noah; And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve; And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, even unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem. And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there." These are they who, when they come, will burn up those unprepared for their coming so that it leaves neither root nor branch.

"We will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other; And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest. And it came to pass that Enoch saw the day of the coming of the Son of Man, in the last days, to dwell on the earth in righteousness for the space of a thousand years; But before that day he saw great tribulations among the wicked; and he also saw the sea, that it was troubled, and men's hearts failing them, looking forth with fear for the judgments of the Almighty God, which should come upon the wicked" (Moses 7:60-66).

This is the Lord describing to Enoch what would happen by way of covenant, the Lord swearing “as I live, even so will,” and He tells him what’s going to come to pass in the last days. This is among the promises that were made to one of the fathers. And this *is* one of the fathers. And these are the covenants whose time is now upon us. This is the day in which we need to be prepared, so that those who went before and ascended up the ladder can return and fall upon your neck and kiss you, and you fall upon their neck and kiss them-- a sacred embrace through the veil, evidencing fellowship between you here and them there, the Lord promising and covenanting these things are going to happen.

But notice, there has to be a tabernacle. He has to come and take up His abode. There has to be preparation made. These things require some effort to be made here in order to prepare for His return. If there is no one here who is willing to engage in what's necessary to bring this to pass (because everyone looks around and expects someone else to do it), then you're neglecting the duty that's devolving upon you as one of those who was assigned to come down in this day, in order to honor the fathers and honor the Lord by allowing the covenants that have been made to be fulfilled.

A restoration through Joseph Smith and the promises that were made to the fathers and the statement that was made by Moroni to Joseph on the evening that he came to him and talked about and reworded the promise given through Malachi-- all of these are pointing to something that is at this moment still incomplete, a work that is at this moment still undone, a project that remains for us (if we will receive it) to finally receive. Because the way in which Zion is going to come about is going to necessarily be something that is so comfortable and so familiar on the earth as a pattern, reflecting what it is that exists in the heavens, that they who come not only do not burn them up, but they fall upon them, and they kiss their necks. Because at last, they have a sister and a brother on the earth united by belief, united by covenant, united by knowledge, united by light and truth, or in other words, the glory of God, which is intelligence.

Because the purpose of the Gospel has always been to inform, to edify, to raise up, to instruct. It was never meant to be reduced to something that is merely repetitious. It was intended to challenge you to your very core. And what you do and what you think and how you act-- it’s intended to make you godlike in your understanding. It’s about preserving a family of gods. It’s about creating a circumstance in which it is possible that the work which began an eternity ago can continue to go on for an eternity from now because you were saved, because you were redeemed, because you tied into that same connection that unifies all of the Gods who have gone before.

There is absolutely no reason to gather in order to fail again. We do not need another Jerusalem. We do not need another Rome. We do not need another Antioch. We do not need another

Kirtland. We don't need another Jackson County; we don't need another Nauvoo; and we certainly don't need another Salt Lake. We need Zion. And there's no reason to gather if the gathering is going to be to fail again.

I want to remind you, however, that throughout the scriptures, when it comes to the establishment of Zion, there is no such thing as "hastening the work." It can't be done in haste. 3 Nephi chapter 20, the Lord speaking, verse 42: *"For ye shall not go out with haste nor go by flight; for the Lord will go before you, and the Lord God of Israel shall be your rearward."* This is the Lord speaking. He's quoting Isaiah, but it is the Lord speaking.

Doctrine and Covenants 101:68-69: *"Nevertheless, as I have said unto you in a former commandment, let not your gathering be in haste, nor by flight; but let all things be prepared before you. And in order that all things be prepared before you, observe the commandment which I have given concerning these things-- Which saith, or teacheth, to purchase all the lands with money, which can be purchased for money."* There's going to be an excess, ultimately, from your gatherings if you will undertake it. And there will be a place prepared but not in haste.

Going back to 3 Nephi, in chapter 21 verse 29: *"And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward."* It cannot be done in haste.

But look at what gets done if it is done in the way in which the Lord would have it be done. Doctrine and Covenants section 133, beginning at verse 25, is the description of the results if there is a people who get prepared. This will be the result-- 133 beginning at 25: *"And the Lord, even the Savior, shall stand in the midst of his people, and shall reign over all flesh. And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence. And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep. Their enemies shall become a prey unto them, And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land. And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants. And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence. And there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory [in this context, it's an ordinance] even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim. And they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy. Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel, and the richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim and his fellows"* (D&C 133:25-34).

Ephraim the proud; Ephraim the headstrong; Ephraim the one who is constantly in rebellion. Ephraim must come back, must heel to, must at last allow the Lord to rule over him. Because

Ephraim has got to rise up in order for this to happen-- not in haste; never in haste-- "crowned with glory," or in other words, with intelligence, or in other words, light and truth or the knowledge of God, so that no one need tell you, "Know ye the Lord," because you're all going to know Him, from the least to the greatest.

Going back to 3 Nephi chapter 21: *"But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance"* (verse 22). "They" are the gentiles. "They" are Ephraim-- you.

"And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem. And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem. And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in their midst" (3 Nephi 21:23-25).

The word "powers of heaven" is talking about the angels. In this circumstance, "the power" is singular, not only because they are "one" but because among them will be our Lord Himself. And where He is, there is the Power of Heaven, and it is singular. *"And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people"*(3 Nephi 21:26). Because when you gather to hear what you're going to hear there, this is the final stage in the Father's work. This is the work that requires holiness to accompany even its teaching.

"Verily I say unto you, 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. Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name. Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance. And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward" (3 Nephi 21:26-29).

Again and again, the notion that this work can be hastened is denounced. Again and again, it's to be a place in which the preparations are done first. Again and again, it suggests that before we can gather together, we must have that heart, that mind, which can make us one.

Turn back and look at the results. Doctrine and Covenants 45, beginning at verse 65: *"And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which*

shall hereafter be appointed unto you. And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God; And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion....” They won't come to it because to go there is like Acts 5. You cannot endure that environment if you're abiding a telestial law. You would be consumed.

“...And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety. And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another. And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand. And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy” (D&C 45:65-71).

Think about what it would take to transplant various populations from various locations (not in haste) with everything having been prepared in advance. And in our currently fragmented society, unless you're willing to experiment with your own effort to live the law of tithing by organizing yourselves and governing yourself, miscellaneous groups will never make it, but people of God will.

Doctrine and Covenants 65:5, *“Call upon the Lord, that his kingdom may go forth upon the earth, that the inhabitants thereof may receive it, and be prepared for the days to come, in the which the Son of Man shall come down in heaven, clothed in the brightness of his glory, to meet the kingdom of God which is set up on the earth. Wherefore, may the kingdom of God go forth, that the kingdom of heaven may come, that thou, O God, mayest be glorified in heaven so on earth, that thine enemies may be subdued; for thine is the honor, power and glory, forever and ever. Amen” (D&C 65:5-6).*

If you read that and you know that the Lord is going to come to that, you realize that He cannot come unless it exists. If it doesn't exist, He cannot come to it. If He cannot come to it, then He delays the day of His coming. And generation after generation may come and go, never having accomplished what the Lord invites us to do, what the Lord invites us to be.

Moses 7-- this is the Lord speaking to Enoch in a vision, recorded subsequently by Moses by revelation. But it is a restoration of the book of Enoch, and the conversation speaker is the Lord, beginning in Moses 7:60, *“And the Lord said unto Enoch: As I live, even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, to fulfil the oath which I have made unto you*

concerning the children of Noah.” This is the Lord's oath to Enoch. He’s going to come-- He’s going to come in the last days.

“And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be had among the children of men, but my people will I preserve; And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood”-- a thing that is possible now by you sitting at a keyboard anywhere in the world. You can cause the truth to flood the earth.

“...to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle [in this context, the tabernacle to be built is His house] and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem. And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other.” This is the second return of Enoch, as well. First His house, then Enoch.

“And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest. And it came to pass that Enoch saw the day of the coming of the Son of Man, in the last days, to dwell on the earth in righteousness for the space of a thousand years” (Moses 7:60-65).

Zion exists before these things can happen. If Zion does not exist, these things will be delayed. They will not be prevented because the Lord has, by a covenant, ensured that they will happen. But the fact that the Lord has, by a covenant, ensured that it will happen is no guarantee that we will see it. Because we will only see it if we undertake to abide the conditions by which He can accomplish His work.

This is the Joseph Smith translation of Genesis chapter 9: *“And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant, which I made unto thy father Enoch; that, when men should keep all my commandments, Zion should again come on the earth, the city of Enoch which I have caught up unto myself. And this is mine everlasting covenant, that when thy posterity shall embrace the truth and look upward, then shall Zion look downward, and all the heavens shall shake with gladness and the earth shall tremble with joy. And the general assembly of the church of the first-born shall come down out of heaven, and possess the earth, and shall have place until the end come. And this is mine everlasting covenant,*

which I made with thy father Enoch” (JST Genesis 9:21-23)-- the covenant that God made again with Noah, the covenant that He made originally with Adam, the covenant which some generation will rise up to receive. Whether that’s you, or whether you go to the grave without realizing it or not, is entirely up to you.

If you look at D&C 133, beginning at verse 26: “And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence. And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep. Their enemies shall become a prey unto them, And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land. And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants. And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence. And there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim. And they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy. Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel, and the richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim and his fellows” (D&C 133:26-34).

Heaven will protect the last days’ Zion. It will belong to Him, and therefore, God will not allow it to be overtaken or overcome. D&C 45 has another prophecy about the last days Zion beginning at verse 66: *“And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God; And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion. And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety. And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another. And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand” (D&C 45:66-70).*

Heaven protected Zion in its first iteration, and heaven is going to protect the last days’ Zion. As a consequence of that, the time is going to come when it will not be the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt that people cite as evidence of the power of God. You see, Egypt had to be subdued. Moses was sent to subdue them because Egypt was at the time the greatest kingdom, the greatest nation on the earth. And Moses was sent to them to establish the government of God. When you confront the government of God against the most powerful nation on the earth, it’s the most powerful nation that must yield the field and not the Lord.

Well, in the last days Jeremiah prophesied the time is going to come when the talk about the power of God is no longer making reference to what the Lord did anciently with Egypt-- it's going to be what the Lord intends to do with the last days' Zion.

This is Jeremiah chapter 16, beginning at verse 14: *“Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers”* (verse 14-15). That will be the reference point to which people will point as evidence of God's intention to establish His rule, His reign upon the earth, His authority over the nations of the earth.

Well, it is going to come to pass. Rest assured that God intends to establish in the last days, a Zion in which we will see the return of exactly what was here at the beginning. There will be a return. I mean, the reason why they're coming to the children of Ephraim in the everlasting mountains is because there will be a New Jerusalem. They will bring rich treasures when they come because they have records that they, themselves, are going to need to have translated. And they are going to be crowned because the family of God consists of people who are, in fact, kings and priests.

All of that infrastructure has to be put in place by the Lord before His return. And therefore, He intends to accomplish this work. And when He accomplishes this work, you're not going to find at the top of it a king, like the gentiles expect. You're going to find something or someone or some group who are meek and lowly, who are rather more like our Savior than the kings who ruled during our Savior's day. You won't find a Caesar, and you won't find a local potentate; you'll find a servant.

Well, there's a parable. It's just one verse-- it's a very short parable. It moves along, but it's a response that Christ gave to the question that was put to him by his disciples, asking him, “Tell us what the signs of your return is going to be.” And He goes through a list of things, but He ends with a little parable at the end. And our translation makes it seem kind of morbid, so I'm going to substitute “body” for “carcase,” because it sounds like what you're dealing with in the current King James version is morbid, not a living body. But He says one of the signs that is going to be at His return is “where the body is, that's where the eagles will gather” (Matthew 24:28). The “body” is the New Jerusalem. The “eagles” are going to be angelic ministrants who are going to come. There has to be an opening that occurs in order to prepare the way. The opening at this end is going to be handled by someone who has remained behind, and the opening at the far end is going to be the one to whom the assignment was given to open the way for His return-- Elijah, the one who was promised.

Now, I want to be really clear. I don't expect either of those individuals to have any public ministry again. They have a role in Zion, and those who dwell in Zion are going to have some contact with them. John will have a role, but the work of Zion is the work of flesh and blood.

Men have to extend the invitation for God to return, so that men who extend that invitation are worthy of His return, and the Lord can safely come without utterly destroying all who are upon the earth. Therefore, you need Zion, among other reasons, in order for there to be a place and a people to whom the Lord can safely return without utterly destroying the earth at His coming. However small, however diminutive it may be, there needs to be a Zion that extends the invitation for the Lord to return.

Now the good news is that Zion will be preserved. And the even better news is that all of those good people of the earth who live in ignorance but who would've accepted the truth if it were brought to them, they will be preserved, also. There will be a mission field into the millennium.

But the really, really bad news is, in the laundry list of those whom the Lord intends to destroy at His coming, that is the description of those who are telestial and therefore, cannot endure His presence when He shall come-- all of the liars, all of the whoremongers, all of the people who have taken our Lord's name in vain having not authority, all those who have preached for hire and practiced priestcraft-- one of the reasons it needs to be eradicated before you get to Zion is so you're not ignited like a torch head to the amusement of everyone else that is in Zion. There has to be an end of all that nonsense.

The concern I always have is that, in the days of Joseph, we made some foolishly laughable mistakes. Because when we had a man like Joseph walking among us, it was so easy to take our eyes off of the Lord and put them upon the man, that when Joseph got up to talk to the Relief Society in 1842, he said, "Your minds are darkened because you're neglecting the duty that's devolving upon yourselves. You are depending too much upon the prophet." If we don't learn anything from that past example of failure, then we can expect the exact same outcome. We may get Kirtland; we may get Nauvoo; we may get Salt Lake City; but we will not get the New Jerusalem. We have to learn from the past errors. We have to determine not to repeat at least those. We may make new and inventive mistakes of our own, but at least they will belong to us and not be caused by our arrogance and stupidity in simply repeating what we have seen gone on before.

I don't care how cleverly you parse the scriptures. God, and God alone, is responsible for causing them to be written in the first place. And He has a meaning in mind behind them. And He has a work that He intends to do that they will vindicate when the work is done.

If you think that you can out-think the Lord, and you can arrive at the right place at the right time, then go ahead and buy some farmland in or around Independence, Missouri and wait for the burning, because you're not going to be at the right place. If Independence, Missouri was where the Lord intended Zion to be, He wouldn't have told them in January of 1841 that He was going to make Nauvoo the corner of Zion. It is *portable* until it is *fixed* by Him.

And Adam-ondi-Ahman is not simply a location that you can find on a map in Missouri. It is a description of an event. The event is Adam in the presence of Son Ahman, Christ. Wherever that happens, that is, and will be, Adam-ondi-Ahman. So buy all the land you want, build all the bleachers you expect to build. But the fact of the matter is, that when Adam (the Ancient of Days) returns, there is going to be an orderly process in which a king, a mortal king (it necessarily begins there) surrenders the jurisdiction of the earth back to those who once presided over it-- in turn, ultimately back to the Ancient of Days. That's why he's going to be here. And he, in turn, will surrender it to the Father, the Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the increase of whose government there shall be no end.

Christ, when He returns, will have the lawful, the legal right, to possess this earth, to rule it, and to govern it. And He will come to govern it. But before that day, groundwork has to be laid. There is a process.

The religion of Adam was the objective of Mormonism. Joseph Smith was unable to fully restore that first religion of man. Joseph predicted the religion would include a future gathering in the everlasting hills (in all probability the Rocky Mountains), where returning tribes would be crowned with glory in a New Jerusalem, be God's last Zion. The returning tribes did not gather in Kirtland, Jackson County, Far West, or Nauvoo. And Joseph was dead before the trip westward to Salt Lake. Even the most ardent defender of the LDS version of Mormonism must concede that things were expected, even promised and prophesied to happen, that were left unrealized when Joseph died.

Because of prophecies made to the patriarchal fathers, the right to found this future city of peace descends from a specific ancient line. There will be an heir descended from both Jesse and Joseph who will accomplish it. Occupants of the community will likewise have lineal qualification. The last days' Zion is an accomplishment promised earlier to the patriarchal fathers, and it is through their descendants God intends to vindicate the promises. The result of this alignment will be a priestly city of Zion that will "return to that power which she has lost."

If we'll: "*Repent and harken to my words 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], this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for an inheritance.*" It's

talking about the gentiles, but it's talking about establishing His word, which is a prerequisite to establishing His people.

“Numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance; And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem. And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem. And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in their midst” (3 Nephi 21:22-25).

So, let me read the list again of what we're not to be. 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.

One of the interesting things about the gathering into Zion is that apparently although there may be yet more revelations and commandments that roll out. Apparently it will be in Zion where the rich treasures of the records of other scattered tribes are to be brought in order for that information or body of material to be reclaimed. If the revelations and the prophecies are correct, the records of the Jews and the records of the Nephites-- they get gathered. And they are the first. But eventually there will be many others that get gathered in. The description that's given of bringing the rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim in the everlasting mountains is a description of bringing them into the place that will be built by a covenant people who have the legal right to the land.

And first of all, I believe we could choose, as a people, a place to build a temple, and we would get exactly the same response that we see in the Doctrine and Covenants that was given to Joseph when the Nauvoo Temple began. “The sight that you have selected is acceptable to me.” And we'd probably reach exactly the same conclusion. I will not, therefore, choose a site. If God doesn't choose a site, it will remain unchosen. If God chooses the site, it's His. And then He has the responsibility to defend it.

If you read about the sites selected in Nauvoo, in the Nauvoo site the Lord said, “Yea, that's acceptable to me, and if..., and if..., and if..., then...” But if God chooses the site, it's His. There's no “if.” Well, there might be one “if.” And that one “if” is, “Now if you want to live and not be slain by me on the land that I've chosen, then you better be careful.” But it's His land. It's His to defend; it's His choice; it's His house; it's His Zion; it will be His New Jerusalem. And

therefore, no man is going to say (and if they do say, I'm going to have nothing to do with them), "Is this acceptable to you, Lord?" It's got to be His. And if it is His, it carries the weight of God having chosen it. He's known where it is for millenia now. And He's had prophets describe it. It's in the everlasting mountains; it's not on the plains of Missouri. And the people that are going to go there are going to say, "Let us go up to the mountain where the Lord has an ensign erected." And that will be His house. And He will come, and He will accept it, or we won't have Zion.

Zion cannot be established by isolated and solitary figures proclaiming a "testimony of Jesus" from their home keyboard. The challenge of building a community must be part of a process. Zion is a community, and therefore, God is a God of community, and His people must learn to live together with one heart, one mind, with no poor among us. Isolated keyboardists proclaiming their resentment of community can hardly speak temperately of others. How could they ever live peacefully in a community of equals?

We must become precious to each other.

Although the laborers in this final effort are "few," you will be the means used by the Lord to complete His work in His vineyard (verse 70). You are required to labor with your might to finish the Lord's work in His vineyard (verse 72). But He will labor alongside you (Jacob 5).

He, not a man or a committee, will call you to do work. When He calls, do not fear-- but do not run faster than you have strength. We must find His people in the highways and byways and invite them to join in. Zion will include people from every part of the world. This conference is broadcast worldwide as part of the prophecy to Enoch that God would send "*...righteousness and truth will [he] cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem*" (Moses 7:62). We must proclaim this to the world.

Do not despair when further pruning takes place. It must be done. Only through pruning can the Lord keep His tree of life equal, without those who are lofty overcoming the body (verse 73). The lofty branches have always destroyed equality to prevent Zion.

The final result of the Lord's labor in His vineyard is declared by the ancient prophet in unmistakable clarity: "*The trees have become again the natural fruit, and they became like unto one body and the fruits were equal and the Lord of the vineyard had preserved unto himself the natural fruit which was most precious unto him from the beginning.*" Mark those words. That's verse 74 (Jacob 5).

When the Lord explained this to me I realized how foolish it was to expect “natural fruit” worthy of preservation in an instant. The Lord works patiently, methodically and does not require any to run faster than they have strength.

We cannot allow ourselves to be drawn in to inequality when the result of this labor is to make us one body, equal with one another. We cannot imitate the failures of the past by establishing a hierarchy, elevating one above another, and forgetting that we must be of one heart, one mind, and no poor among us.

The restoration was never intended to just restore an ancient Christian church. That is only a halfway point. It must go back further. In the words of the ancient prophet, God intends to do, “According to [His] will, and [to] preserve the natural fruit, that it is good, even like as it was in the beginning” (verse 75). This means the beginning, as in the days of Adam, with the return of the original religion and original authority. Everything must be returned as it was in the beginning. Civilization began with a temple as the center of learning, law, and culture. The temple was the original “university” because it taught of man's place with God in the universe.

God will return the right of dominion, once held by Adam, to man on earth to make us humble servant-gardeners, laboring to return the world to a peaceful paradise. The covenant received today restores part of that right. There is a land inheritance given to us as part of the covenant, and therefore, if we keep the covenant, we have the right to remain when others will be swept away.

Ultimately, all rights given to us must be turned back to the fathers who went before, who will likewise return them to Adam, who will surrender them to Christ. When Christ returns, He will come with the right to exercise complete dominion over the earth and exercise judgment over the ungodly.

Things set into motion today are part of preparing the way for the Lord’s return in glory. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

The foregoing are excerpts taken from:

- Denver’s *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #4 entitled “Covenants,” given in Centerville, UT on October 6, 2013;

- Denver's *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #6 entitled "Zion," given in Grand Junction, CO on April 12, 2014;
- His talk entitled "Zion Will Come," given near Moab, UT on April 10, 2016;
- The presentation of Denver's paper entitled "Was There an Original," given at the Sunstone Symposium on July 29, 2016;
- Denver's conference talk entitled "Things to Keep Us Awake at Night" and Q&A given in St. George, UT on March 19, 2017; and
- His talk entitled "Opening Remarks," given at the Covenant of Christ Conference in Boise, ID on September 3, 2017.