

Podcast Episode 28: Adam-ondi-Ahman

QUESTION: On April 19, 2017, you gave a talk entitled “Things to Keep Us Awake At Night.” In the paper you wrote based on that talk, you state, “Adam, in the presence of Son Ahman, will return the government to our Lord. This event, Adam-ondi-Ahman, or Adam in the presence of Son Ahman, will happen in the new temple and will be done before the Lord returns to judge the world.” What is Adam-ondi-Ahman, why does it require a new temple, and who will be included in this great event?

DENVER: You see: *“Three years previous to the death of Adam he called Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch and Methuselah who were all High Priests, with the residue of his posterity who were righteous, into the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and there bestowed upon them his last blessing. And the Lord appeared unto them. And they rose up and blessed Adam and called him Michael the Prince, the archangel. And the Lord administered comfort unto Adam, and said unto Him, I have set thee to be at the head, a multitude of nations shall come of thee, and thou art a prince forever over them. And Adam stood up in the midst of the congregation and, notwithstanding he was bowed down with age, being full of the Holy Ghost predicted whatsoever should befall his posterity unto the latest generations. These things were all written in the book of Enoch” (D&C 107:53-57).* See, he was one of the seven that were invited. He was one of the seven that participated.

Here you have an interesting setting in which on the earth, previous to the death of Adam, we have a gathering in which there are seven people who are correctly qualified to stand before the Lord. And the Lord comes and appears unto them. And these seven who were present with Adam are now lineal descendants of Adam, members of the same family. Therefore, I would suspect they had all things in common. And the Lord came, even if only for this ceremonial moment, and dwelt among them.

And one of the participants in that moment on that day, in that group, was Enoch. And Enoch is the one who records it. And it will be testified of at the proper time.

But here we have the definition of Zion. And it is diminutive, and it is temporary, and it is tightly confined to a narrow group. And it is not this thundering congregation of 3.7 million temple recommend holders—it’s a very small group. But it is a group to whom it is possible for the Lord to come and dwell among them. And among their number, then, is Enoch. So, we have Zion.

If you want the criteria, and we've got a description—part of what we have in the book of Moses, given to us by Joseph Smith... By the way, I was reading in *Doctrine and Covenants* 107:53-57, in the account of the appearance with Adam-ondi-Ahman. And in Moses 7:16 we find this: “*And from that time forth there were wars and bloodshed among them; but the Lord came and dwelt with his people, and they dwelt in righteousness*”—which is an interesting contrast. Here you have wars and bloodshed, on the one hand, but then you have the Lord and the Lord dwelling among people who are living in righteousness.

“*The fear of the Lord was upon all nations, so great was the glory of the Lord, which was upon his people*” (verse 17). It was “the glory of the Lord upon His people”—it was not the glory of the Lord, it was the people that intimidated. The Lord doesn't show himself to the wicked except unto destruction. But the Lord shows Himself unto those that are prepared, and then it is the glory of the Lord upon them that others find intimidating. And that was the case with the people of Zion.

These initial appearances of Zion in this world are connected, because the first one in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman occurs, and Enoch is present. And the second one occurs with Enoch who was present when the Lord had dwelt with people before. And the third one will occur when Melchizedek, who was acquainted with those on the other side of the flood...he's an adult when they enter the ark. He knew of Enoch and the option. See, Melchizedek who was acquainted with that condition, in my view, who had to be offered the option...I mean going on the ark and staying down there when there's a group that are going to be leaving and going elsewhere... Noah's qualified to leave. All of them were qualified to leave, and they had to be willing to stay.

Now, when you are allowed the option, and when you are going to stay but you know that there are those who are taken up, it seems like a reasonable request for Melchizedek to make, that after he finishes his ministry here, that he also should be allowed to take a people with him. And in the course of events, Melchizedek established a city, a city of peace, city of righteousness. He was the king, and he was the priest, and he presided over his people in righteousness. And Abraham, who was converted to the truth, came to Melchizedek. They had a ceremonial get-together in which, among other things, there's a sacral meal. And Melchizedek, who has been waiting for this moment, hands the football to Abraham and says, “At last me and my people are gone.” And so once again, Zion flees.

Jehovah, speaking directly to Abraham, tells him that from this moment, from the moment God spoke to Abraham before His departure, Abraham would now become the father of all the righteous. Now you ought to ask yourself, why would that be the case? Why is it that Abraham becomes the prototype of who will be saved and the father of whomever is saved from that point going forward?

When you go back to the fathers and you begin with Adam, although there were apostasies—and apostasies began immediately. It was generations before Eve bore Cain and thought she had a son that would at last be faithful. They were grandparents when Cain was born. And then Abel was born. And Cain slew Abel. And Seth came as a replacement to the grandparents, Adam and Eve. And from Seth reckons, then, the seed of the righteous: father to son to grandson to great-grandson.

When you look at the list of those that are gathered together into the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, in the first Zion, where the Lord came and dwelt among them, and He rose up and He called Adam, “Michael”—“El” being the name of God—Jehovah appeared in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and you have seventh from Adam (being Enoch), you have a line of continuity from Adam directly down all the way until you arrive at Shem.

But when you hit Shem, it interrupts. There is a complete falling away. There are no righteous fathers for Abraham. His fathers had turned to idolatry. Abraham is the prototype of the saved man and the father of all who would be righteous thereafter, because Abraham represents coming to the truth in a generation of apostasy. Abraham represents coming back to the light, despite the fact that his fathers taught him idolatry. Abraham represents the challenge that every man (who would be saved from that point forward) must find themselves within and then overcome the idolatry of their fathers. Abraham is the prototype. And so Abraham is acknowledged by that same Jehovah who visited with the fathers in Adam-ondi-Ahman and identified himself again to Abraham who, after apostasy, becomes literally the first—the first to return to the righteousness of the first fathers, the first to return to the religion that belonged in the beginning to mankind, the first to discover a “*a knowledge of the beginning of the creation, and also of the planets, and of the stars, as they were made known unto the fathers*” (Abraham 1:31).

Abraham was the one who desired to be a follower of righteousness—one who possessed great knowledge—to be a greater follower of righteousness and to possess greater knowledge still. It is this which made him a candidate the Lord could speak to. It’s this that made him the prototype in his generation, of what it takes to turn away from idolatry.

Take a look at *Doctrine and Covenants* 107. Because in this we see that first Zion: “*Three years previous to the death of Adam, he called Seth [his son], Enos [his grandson], Cainan [the son of Enos], Mahalaleel [son of Cainan], Jared [son of Mahalaleel], Enoch [son of Jared]] and Methuselah [son of Enoch], who were all high priests, with the residue of his posterity who were righteous, into the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and there bestowed upon them his last blessing.*” This is the original, first patriarchal blessing being given by Adam, he having summoned them there.

And as he's giving his last blessing, three years previous to his death, the Lord appeared unto them. So the Lord comes to dwell with these seven high priests and Adam. *"The Lord appeared unto them, and they rose up and blessed Adam, and called him [Mich-a-el] Michael, the prince, the archangel. And the Lord administered comfort unto Adam."* Ask yourself what comfort is that the Lord administers?

He *"said unto him: I have set thee to be at the head; a multitude of nations shall come of thee, and thou art a prince over them forever. And Adam stood up in the midst of the congregation; and, notwithstanding he was bowed down with age, being full of the Holy Ghost, predicted whatsoever should befall his posterity unto the latest generation. These things were all written in the book of Enoch, and are to be testified of in due time"* (D&C 107:53-57).

This is the original covenant. This is the first father. This is what was set in motion before the death of Adam, under the binding influence and ratification of the Holy Ghost (or the mind of God), in which Adam, under the influence of that Spirit, predicted whatsoever should befall his posterity unto the latest generation. This is the original covenant. This is the original father. Words spoken as a consequence of the influence of the Holy Spirit become the words of God. They will not fall to the ground unfulfilled.

The everlasting covenant in our day is "new" only as a consequence of it having been restored to our attention recently. It is not a new thing. It is a very old thing going back to the days of Adam. It was known to him. You were known to him. What was going to happen in your day was predicted and promised as a consequence of him.

In the first meeting at Adam-ondi-Ahman, Adam was not considered to be among those who were mortal because Adam had begun life in the garden, in the presence of God. Therefore, mortals who were born into the mortal realm, in that meeting, began with Seth. The seven who gathered at Adam-ondi-Ahman were mortal because they were born outside of God's presence. And they were restored again into God's presence at the meeting at Adam-ondi-Ahman. The fact is that that same thing that was in the beginning will be in the end of the world also. That's the covenant; that's the promise; that's the destiny; and God will surely fulfill that.

I also think...we take a lot of comfort, and we spend a lot of money buying all of the stuff around Spring Hill, Missouri, the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, because that was the place where Adam was, and it's the place where God will come to. Once again I want to suggest that the wicked, the knavish, the proud, the boastful, those who seek the honors of men, will never have possession of and be able to control or prevent the unfolding of God's work. The words "Adam-ondi-Ahman" mean "Adam in the presence of the Father." Therefore, any place that the Ancient of Days comes

to, while Christ is there also, is by definition “Adam-ondi-Ahman.” Therefore, it doesn’t matter if a fallen and corrupt society owns a piece of real estate that they claim. God is not bound by the stratagems of man, nor are His purposes controlled by the vanities of men and yet, if they will repent, and if they will hear what the Lord has to say, He can still work with them. But if not, then He’ll work with you, assuming you came, and you’re willing to hear.

...death of Adam will be gathered together in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, where—and it outlines the names of those who participated. This is a series of high priests, one in each generation (because you can only have one in each generation), the total of seven generations from Adam being gathered together there in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman with the residue of the posterity who were righteous, and the Lord came and administered comfort to Adam. And Adam, being filled with the Holy Ghost, gets up, and he predicts all things that are going to happen to his posterity down to the latest generations of time. That’s in the same section of the *Doctrine of Covenants* that describes the first presidency, the quorum of the twelve, and so on. In fact, what Joseph was doing was preparing and using the church as an incubator. The incubator was supposed to produce a product. The end product of that would literally graduate from the church, and it would be a King and a Queen, a Priest and a Priestess—the idea being that those would then go off, and they would establish their own kingdom. They might use “churches” to prepare and incubate their groups, but they would be fully equipped to go off and establish the kingdom of God on earth.

It never happened. They had one dry run. The one dry run occurred in the Council of Fifty in a meeting in which Joseph and Emma were made King and Queen, a Priest and a Priestess. It was not done in a way that systematized or regularized it, and therefore it got lost. And in the post-martyrdom era of the church, what has happened is we’ve adopted the phraseology of “King and Queen, Priest and Priestess,” and we’ve incorporated it into a temple endowment. And we’ve said, “There it is.” And it is owned by the church, and the church administers it. And when you’re done with that you’re supposed to be a good member of the church, and that’s it. You never do graduate.

But Joseph had turned the church over to Hyrum. I mean, he was moving on to be and do something different. And Hyrum was the one who was taking over and running the church. Joseph got up and complained to the members that the members were not paying attention to Hyrum the way that they ought to be paying attention to Hyrum (because Hyrum had essentially taken over and was now running the thing, not him). But all of that has been lost. It never had a fulsome enough development while Joseph was still here for us to be able to reconstruct even what the objective was. We don’t have the capacity to complete that process. And to the extent that there’s any description of that, or any vocabulary that relates to that, everyone assumes that that has been adopted and is incorporated into the church and the ordinances of the church.

So, there's a lot of work left to be done if the restoration is going to be completed. We know that Joseph prophesied there would be another Adam-ondi-Ahman event. Except that one—instead of it being *prospective* with the history of the world yet to occur and with it being reflected by prophecy from Adam filled with the Holy Ghost—in the next one it will be *retrospective*, in which what has happened returns, and keys and accountability for what has happened are the subject matter of the future meeting in which the term “Adam-ondi-Ahman” means “Adam in the presence of Ahman” or “in the presence of God.” It is a description of an event. It is an occurrence.

It's like a BYU-UCLA football game. The BYU-UCLA football game happened yesterday in the Colosseum in LA, but it happened a few years ago in the LaVell Edwards stadium in Provo, and it was still the BYU-UCLA football game. And the fact is that if there was a flood or some other problem, you could play that football game anywhere. You could even play that in a bowl game somewhere in Louisiana—it would still be the same event. “Adam-ondi-Ahman” is a description of an *event*, and it will happen at a location that is not owned by the Corporation of the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints because, quite frankly, they don't belong in that meeting. They won't belong in that meeting. When it occurs, it will occur on different criteria and on a different basis.

How you get from where you are now to the point where it would be suitable and appropriate for an event like that to even be considered is a long, long effort, because we have a restoration to complete. We have prophecies to fulfill. We have things that need to be done, and we have covenants that need to be renewed. And all of that begins again in embryo at the very basic level of faith, repentance, baptism, fellowships, collecting tithing, assisting one another, and acting like we're Christians, and acting like we care about one another.

Priestly authority comes down in a line by men, but it isn't empowered until the man connects with heaven. If you go to the scriptures and you look at what I've written, I point it out. It's in there, over and over again. The ordinations had two features, had two facets: The laying on of hands by someone that is in that tradition, and then secondly connecting to heaven, and God empowering them. But the second part of that—that is, connecting to heaven and having heaven animate that—is not considered necessary by those who don't understand priesthood but is considered vital by those who do, and when God is the one that completes that process.

As I point out, citing Joseph Smith's own history, his ordination to the priesthood did not happen until June of 1831, when the voice of God (as Genesis 14 that he translated in the Joseph Smith version)—that's when they got permission to do the ordination. Peter, James, and John are referred to by Joseph only—not in Section 27; that was added by a committee; that wasn't

Joseph's work. All of that additional language was added by them. He refers to Peter, James, and John in his letter that's in [D&C] 128. And there he says, Peter, James, and John who came and declared "*themselves as possessing the keys of the...dispensation of the fullness of times*" (verse 20). Okay, I'm in possession of keys to my office. Do you now hold the keys to my office? Do you have the keys to my... do you have the keys to my office? I declared myself as being in possession of the keys to my office. Oh, cool. Great for Peter; great for James; great for John.

I will tell you what that means, and I will tell you it only means this: It does not confer upon Joseph or Oliver authority. But it does connect them in a line of patriarchs to the fathers. If you're doing a genealogy chart and you're asking, unto whom then would Joseph have been connected? He would not be connected to Joseph Smith, Sr.; Joseph Smith Sr., if he's going to be connected in, would be connected in as a son of Joseph. That connection was not something that, having been established, was even appreciated during Joseph Smith's lifetime—still isn't appreciated. There is so much more to the restoration that still has to be put on the ground, that the restoration has hardly begun. Joseph laid the groundwork, and in order to take the very next step, you have to return to the point of the beginning at which it ended. You have to gather back together everything that happened before in order to be able to take the next step in that line. It doesn't matter if you're over there if the destiny is up there. Develop all you want out there, but you're never going to find yourself back into that final gathering at Adam-ondi-Ahman in which Adam will be present, and Adam will be present in the presence of Ahman, or Son Ahman, and a meeting will take place.

But there's a lot left to be done. We tend to think as soon as we've got something that that means we've got everything. And when we've got something, what we've got is *something*. But *everything* is a lot further down the road with a lot more diligence and heed and effort and study. I'm constantly amazed at our arrogance. I said it, and I don't think it's in the book, but it's in the recording. I said there is absolutely nothing special about us—*yet*. And the fact is that there can be. There can be, if we are diligent.

Here's the reality, okay? The reality is that in order for the entire earth not to be smitten and utterly wasted at the Lord's return, it will be necessary for there to be a Zion. In fact, it's almost a cause and effect. You have to have the re-establishment of what was in the beginning of the world in the end of the world also. That was a prophecy of Adam. He made it in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman. Enoch was the one that preserves it, so it appears in the Enoch portion of the book of Moses, where Enoch preserves Adam's prophecy, that that same priesthood which was in the beginning of the world shall at the end of the world be, also.

And I have to tell you, that's not—you know, "Yadda yadda yadda..., ummm..."—your, you know, senior chief apostolic high and holy pontificate of the ninth order—it's not that. It's not

that at all. It is re-establishing something about which we know very, very little. And that has to occur only within an environment that has been insulated from the world and accepted by God. It has to be physically accepted by the Lord. That edifice has to be located in a place that is approved by the Lord. We don't know the place. We haven't built the edifice. We don't have the right to proceed, but all of this must occur before the invitation is extended. Because God is not going to come to a planet that He utterly wastes at His coming. An invitation has to precede the return of our Lord. And that invitation needs to be done in His way, at a place of His choosing, in a manner that He ordains, that occurs according to His will, established as a consequence of Him returning what was once here back to the earth again.

But as for wrapping up of the creation and the culmination of the ages, God's direct involvement in that and the impressive nature of how that will roll forward, will not be some people deciding to flee and go farm somewhere. It's going to be a little bit different kind of enterprise, culminating in a city of righteousness and a people of righteousness, and in that sense, righteousness includes a great deal of knowledge. *"The glory of God is intelligence, or in other words light and truth"* (D&C 93:36). Knowledge and redemption—all of that go together.

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, there needs to be a Zion that extends the invitation for the Lord to return.

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 outthink 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 the 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, of the end of whose government, or 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’s a process.

Christ lives. He is the One who redeemed all of us. He has a rightful claim as the Father of us all. In the resurrection we come forth out of the grave as His children, because He purchased with His blood our continued life. We symbolize that when we’re baptized by going under the water and coming up again, to be born again a new creature in Christ, as a preliminary, ceremonial, necessary sign that we accept Him. He’s real. I bear witness of Him. I’ve stood in His presence. I’ve spoken with Him. He speaks in plain humility. He has a very poor student in me. And I don’t say that to be humble; I say that to be truthful. I wish I were better. But in His infinite wisdom, He chooses what He chooses. He does it as He chooses. He does it how He wants.

I am certain we will see Zion because it’s been promised, and it’s been prophesied from the beginning of time. When father Adam prophesied, being overcome by the Spirit in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and foretold what would happen to his posterity down to the latest generations, Zion was pointed to—and therefore, from the days of Adam on, all of the holy prophets have looked forward to that as the essential moment in the history of the world, because Christ will come and will redeem the world. It will be the end of the wicked, and it will be the beginning of something far better. That’s been the hope; that’s been the promise; that’s been what they’ve looked forward to.

The foregoing are excerpts taken from:

- Denver’s talk entitled “The Mission of Elijah Reconsidered,” given in Spanish Fork, UT on October 14, 2011;
- 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 #5 entitled “Priesthood,” given in Orem, UT on November 2, 2013;

- A regional conference Q&A session held in Big Cottonwood Canyon, UT on September 20, 2015;
- His talk entitled “Zion Will Come,” given near Moab, UT on April 10, 2016; and
- A fireside talk entitled “That We Might Become One,” given in Clinton, UT on January 14, 2018.