

Podcast Episode 68: Calling & Election, Part 2

TODAY, Denver answers the question: Regarding Calling & Election, in various blog posts, talks, *Beloved Enos* and so forth, you explain that if we can receive the Second Comforter, then our Calling & Election will take care of itself. In an email this week, you stated:

In the beginning there was one, unified priesthood. It was called “The Holy Order after the Order of the Son of God.” The division of that single unity into other divisions occurred later, and was the result of limitations on those involved. I'd recommend looking at the Holy Order paper, and using some of the information there.

How is that Unified Priesthood related to having your calling & election made sure?

DENVER: Melchizedek (and the order of priesthood he obtained) is described in the book of Genesis—chapter 7 in the current set of scriptures, the Old Covenants: *For God... [swore] unto Enoch and unto his seed, with an oath by Himself, that everyone being ordained after this order and calling, should have power, by faith, to break mountains* (Genesis 7:19 RE). We have no direct account of when the mountains have been broken by those after that order. We have one indirect reference in the book of Genesis referring to Enoch: *And he spoke the word of the Lord, and the earth trembled, and the mountains fled even according to his command, and the rivers of water turned out of their course* (Genesis 4:13 RE).

You need to be careful how you parse that scripture. Enoch spoke the word of the Lord. The word of the Lord is spoken, and in response to the word of the Lord having been spoken, the earth trembled and the mountains fled, even according to His—the Lord—His command. And the rivers of water turned out of their course. Enoch preached, earthquakes followed, mountains moved. In Jacob 3:2 [RE], there's another reference: *We obtain a hope and our faith becometh unshaken, insomuch that we truly can command in the name of Jesus and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea.*

That's Jacob illustrating that the faith they have has this effect. He doesn't describe that effect having occurred, simply that it's there. Nephi explained this is the power that God entrusted him with in Helaman:

For behold, the dust of the earth moveth hither and thither, to the dividing asunder, at the command of our great and everlasting God. Yea, behold, at his voice doth the hills and the mountains tremble and quake, and by the power of his voice are broken up and become smooth, yea, even like unto a valley. (Helaman 4:10 RE)

He was given the sealing power. He was told that the earth will obey you, because He knew that he would not do anything with that power other than what God willed. And shortly

after being entrusted by God to this, Nephi prays to God and asks God to send a famine to stop the people from killing one another. So here's someone who can speak the word of God, and the earth itself will obey him, and he uses that to get on his knees and pray and ask God. He doesn't command anything.

That kind of endowment of priestly authority is done because God expressed His faith in the man. Can God have faith in you? Can God trust you?

So the list goes on:

- The mountains is the first thing.
- *To divide the seas*. We have an example of that with Moses.
- *To dry up waters*. We have an example of that with Joshua when they reached the river Jordan.
- *To turn them out of their course*, which was done again at the time of Enoch.
- *To put at defiance the armies of nations*—Elijah.
- *To divide the earth, to break every band, to stand in the presence of God, to do all things according to his will, according to his command* (Genesis 7:19 RE).

When it comes to breaking every band, keep that in mind because we're gonna return to that in a moment. And then it says *to subdue principalities and powers* (ibid). These are in the spiritual realm. Commanding devils, subduing principalities and powers—these are rebellious spirits cast down from Heaven; these are those that pretend to be and often are false ministering spirits or angels.

And this by the will of the Son of God, who was from before the foundation of the world. And men having this faith, coming up unto this order of God, were translated and taken up into Heaven (ibid). Not always the case. The only reason translation occurred is because a mission was assigned to them, but that's outside of this.

Any one of the foregoing signs is a confirming sign. It's not required for all these signs to be given before faith is confirmed. And because these are gifts from God, it is God who decides when the sign will be given. God determines if, when, what, and how often a sign will be given—not the will of men.

Notice that the Brother of Jared's moving of the Mount Zerim is not recorded in his record or Moroni's abridgment of that record. It is only mentioned in passing as an illustration (see Ether 5:6 RE). Even if we have faith to participate, the signs are God's. We are only witnesses. God sent Moses to deliver signs to Egypt, but the signs were God's. There is only one way in which a mortal can have discretion to invoke God's power, which involves one of the three kinds of sealing power I've previously discussed. That third kind is described in the book of Helaman and involves Nephi, and I've previously talked about that.

The reason Nephi was granted this authority was explained by God when he said, *Thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will* (Helaman 3:19 RE). When Nephi used that

authority shortly afterward, he deferred to God, prayed, and asked God if He would cause a famine to stop the violence of the degenerate people of his generation.

The most righteous man who ever lived was allowed to be killed by the wicked. In fact, it was indispensable that the wicked get to kill the righteous because otherwise, there could not have an Atonement then made. Therefore, Christ was slain at the hands of wicked men.

But we have a problem with Zion—because when the Lord sets about to destroy, the Lord cannot destroy the righteous; and He's going to obliterate life on the earth except for those who are in the Ark—or those in Zion. The wicked can't come against them, and all are going to be destroyed.

So what do you do? Well, we've got a new status for humanity. And the new status is: you take them into heaven. But you don't take people into heaven without an associated calling. There is no reason—ever—to take a person off the earth, even if they're righteous. Abraham died and was buried. Christ died, and He was more righteous than any who ever lived. You don't take them off the earth unless they have a calling to **minister**—so we have a calling to minister. Enoch and his city (who could not be destroyed when the Lord was going to destroy)—and his city were called, and they were given two callings. Their first assignment is as ministering angels, not only here but elsewhere. And their second calling—I don't want to appear irreverent, but they're really—they're the crowd; they're the cheering group backing up the Lord at His Coming. They are the ones (when He comes in the clouds with the angels)—that group is Enoch's people. They are the certifiers; they are the testifiers; they are the chorus; they are the entourage.

Ya know, there is a reason why our tin-horn dictators and our phony idols have an entourage. It's to mimic the real deal, because when the Lord comes again in His glory, He's gonna come with an entourage. So they got the job—Enoch and his folk.

Consider how these ideas affect religion. A calling to priesthood does not accomplish anything if the individual is not “chosen” by God. We can ordain men, but heaven must ratify and elect that man. No one is permitted to function on God's behalf without God's personal imprimatur of approval.

Priesthood is connected to heaven. Without a connection to heaven, there's no priesthood. The “Powers of heaven” are, of course, the angels themselves. Priests must have angelic accompaniment to claim priesthood. And angels cannot be manipulated by the ambition, self-will, or worldly ambition of men.

The called but unchosen use office and position to cover their sins or to gratify their pride and vain ambition. They are like the Jews who persecuted Christ, while sitting in the chief seats. Likewise, there is no priesthood in the possession of any man who exercises control, dominion, or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men in the current sects of Mormonism. Christ's gentle example of kneeling to serve presents a neon-bright example of how priesthood is to be used. He came to **serve**, not to **be** served.

He taught, invited, bid others to repent, and clarified a better understanding of the scriptures for others. He did not demand support. He ministered light and truth for all who would listen. Any other kind of conduct antagonizes the heavens, which then withdraw themselves. The Spirit of the Lord is grieved, and when it's withdrawn, that's the end of the Priesthood.

So, let's turn to a few scriptures and interrupt this for a moment, because we want to repent, after all. We want to change what we are. Let's go to Doctrine and Covenants section 84, and let's look, beginning at verse 33. (Now I'm simply going to allow you to entertain your present views on some things for tonight. But we're gonna have to deconstruct a bunch of junk later, and we'll do that down in Spanish Fork, I think.) Beginning at verse 33 of section 84 of the Doctrine and Covenants:

*For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining of these two priesthoods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies. They **become** the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God. (See also T&C 82:16, emphasis added)*

“Sons.” “Seed.” And it's necessary that you become that in order that you become “the church and kingdom...the elect of God”—because as we saw in the statements made to Joseph Smith, the hearts have to be turned to the Fathers because this is going to be reconstructing a holy family at some point.

And also all they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord (D&C 84:35). Now, many of you read that verse 35 and you think that what that means is; if you fetch this priesthood by ordination, *ipso facto*, you have fetched Jesus. Praise Jesus! (And by the way, Joel Olsteen is coming to the E Center. You're not gonna want to miss that. It's a mega church. It's a mega church in transit. It's going to come to the E Center. SUNDAY, SUNDAY, SUNDAY. I'm sorry. I get worked up when the evangelicals show up on the horizon. He had some nice things to say about Mormons, though, so Joel Olsteen has kind of creped a little more on the positive column for me, of late.)

I want to suggest that verse 35 can also be read exactly as D&C section 93, verse 1—that we were reading a moment ago—is read. And that is to say, if you're gonna receive this priesthood, you're gonna get it from Him. That is, you enter into His presence; you receive Him—if you have it. Then when you have it, as a consequence **of having it**, you receive Him.

Oh! *For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me* (vs. 36); I want to suggest that throughout scripture, almost invariably, the word “servants” is referring to angelic ministrants. And so angels minister (that would be Aaronic), and then Christ ministers (that would be sons of Moses).

And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father (vs. 37), because it is the purpose of the Son to bear record of the Father. It is the purpose of the Son to bring others to the Father so that there might be many sons of God.

And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom (vs. 38), 'cause you can't go where the Father is without entering into and receiving an inheritance. You know, one of the things that we tend to think is that if you get something (this is based upon statements made in 132)— But if you get something here (and you get it by a covenant), that you are automatically entitled to take it into the next world. But what if the covenant that you are to receive, in order to obtain that inheritance in the next world, doesn't reckon merely from something handled by ordinance; but that the ordinance is pointing you to something higher and more holy? What if the thing that secures for you the inheritance in the next life is not the ordinance but what the ordinance testifies to—that is, embracing the Lord through the veil; and then having conversed with Him, entering into His presence; and then having entered into His presence, being ministered to and taught—what if it means all that?

This is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood. Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved. But whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and altogether turneth therefrom, shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come. [Oh,] and wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood which ye have received, which I now confirm upon you who are present this day, by mine own voice out of the heavens; and even I have given the heavenly hosts and mine angels charge concerning you. (Doctrine and Covenants 84: 39-42)

You know, that verse 42 of the oath and covenant of the priesthood—you ought to take a look at Joseph Smith Translation of Genesis chapter 14, verse 29, talking about the priesthood that was given after the Order of the Son of God; it says it was delivered unto men by the calling of His own voice, according to His own will, unto as many as believed on His name.

[Denver coughs.] Excuse me.

And so, we have—in section 76—a testimony given and justification for the translation Joseph rendered of Genesis chapter 14, dealing with the priesthood and qualifying it as coming from the voice of God.

The covenant which we receive will come as a consequence of *them*—what *they* got secured for *us* promises which the Lord intends to honor. Therefore, when we are the beneficiaries of those covenants, we are going, like Abraham, to have restored to us a knowledge of the beginning of creation; the planets; the stars, as they were made known unto the fathers; and—as Section 121 tells us—is going to be the case in the dispensation of the fullness of time.

Go to Joseph Smith Translation of Genesis chapter 14, beginning at verse 25:

*Melchizedek lifted up his voice and blessed Abram. Now Melchizedek was a man of faith, who wrought righteousness; and when a child he feared God, and stopped the mouths of lions, ...quenched the violence of fire. ...thus, having been approved of God, he was ordained [a] high priest after the order of the **covenant** which God made with Enoch, It being after the order of the Son of God. (JST Genesis 14:25-28; see also Genesis 7:17-18 RE, emphasis added)*

There's an order that is after the son of God, but there was a covenant that preceded even the days of Melchizedek. It came down as a consequence of what happened with Enoch.

It was delivered unto men by the calling of his own voice, according to his own will, unto as many as believed on his name. For God having sworn unto Enoch and unto his seed with an oath by himself; that every one being ordained after this order and calling should have power, by faith, to break mountains, to divide the seas, dry up the waters, turn them out of their course; To put at defiance the armies of nations, to divide the earth, break every band, to stand in the presence of God; to do all things according to his command, subdue principalities and powers; and this by the will of the Son of God which was from before the foundation of the world. (JST Genesis 14:29-31; see also Genesis 7:19 RE)

See, it's not your will; even if you're given this ordination, it is by the will of the Son of God. That is to say, nothing gets broken, nothing gets held in defiance, nothing gets done except by the will of the Son.

Men having this faith, coming up unto this order of God, were translated and taken up into heaven. And now, Melchizedek was a priest of this order; therefore he obtained peace in Salem, and was called the Prince of peace. His people [His people] wrought righteousness, and obtained heaven, and sought for the city of Enoch which God had before taken, separating it from the earth, having reserved it unto the latter days, or the end of the world; And hath said, and sworn with an oath, that the heavens and the earth should come together; and the sons of God should be tried so as by fire. (JST Genesis 14:32-35; see also Genesis 7:19-20 RE)

These are they who are coming—whose glory and brightness will burn them up who are on the earth who are unprepared to receive them. **These** are they about whom Moroni was speaking to Joseph Smith.

And this Melchizedek, having thus established righteousness, was called the king of heaven by his people, or, in other words, the King of peace. He lifted up his voice, he blessed Abram, being the high priest, and the keeper of the storehouse of God; Him unto whom God had appointed to receive tithes for the poor. Wherefore, Abram paid unto him tithes of all he had, of all the riches which he possessed, which God had given

him more than that which he had need. And it came to pass, that God blessed Abram, and gave unto him riches, and honor, and lands for an everlasting possession; according to the covenant which he'd made, according to the blessings wherewith Melchizedek had blessed him. (JST Genesis 14:36-40; see also Genesis 7:21 RE)

Joseph Smith restored this information as he restored the rest of what he gave us—in order for us to understand that when God swears by Himself to the Fathers about what it is He intends to accomplish in the last days and we get near enough to that event so that we're over the horizon and inevitably going to fall into that dark day, some few will take it seriously enough to say, like Abraham, "I would like to seek for the blessings of the Fathers. I would like also to have from God a covenant. I would like to inherit what it was that was given in the beginning."

God alone makes the covenant. We accept it by abiding the conditions. The only thing we can do on our own is attempt to make vows—and we can make vows, but Christ discouraged us from doing that in Matthew. Go back to Matthew chapter 5. This is in the Sermon on the Mount. (You can read the same thing in 3 Nephi chapter 12.) But look at Matthew chapter 5, verse 33:

[And] again, ye have heard it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but [thou] shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it's the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. [Well, cosmetically, some of you women can.] But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. (See also Matthew 3:24 RE)

He'll say the same thing in 3 Nephi 12:33-37 (see also 3 Nephi 5:29 RE).

The fact of the matter is that you can make a vow to God, but you can't make a covenant with God. God can make a covenant which you can fulfill by your performance. God can offer you something—it's up to you to accept it; and you accept it by what you do. It's not enough to say, "Yea Lord, I'll go out, and I'll do as I'm bidden." You have to do it, because it's only in the doing that the covenant is kept. It's only in the **doing** that the covenant is able to be empowered sufficient to give you the blessing upon which a law has been established for the blessing to be predicated. You can't get there without God offering and you accepting.

So now we should realize, I hope, that that city which Melchizedek, the King of Peace, was able to teach righteousness sufficiently so that it was taken up from the earth, reserved to the last days of the end of the world—the next time we have such an event on the earth, the next time there is this kind of a gathering and this kind of a population anywhere, it will not be for the purpose of going up. It will be for the purpose of permitting those who have gone up to come back down. It will be for the purpose of having those who can endure the presence of those who come—because those who come will burn up all those who are

unworthy. And therefore, **some few** need to be gathered, so that the earth is not utterly wasted at His coming.

For His atonement and sacrifice to have the greatest effect, we must preach the Doctrine of Christ. The scriptures do not foretell any great numbers will repent. Christ said, *I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion* (Jeremiah 3:14; see also Jeremiah 2:3 RE)—too few, perhaps, to impress the world, but the Lord does not view things as do men. The Lord describes those who respond to His invitation as “His elect.” He explained, *Mine elect hear my voice and harden not their hearts* (D&C 29:7; see also T&C 9:3).

Nephi foresaw how few believers there would be in the last days. He—

beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few, because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw. (1 Nephi 14:12; see also 1 Nephi 3:28 RE)

The Lord requires us to invite the world to repent but not to expect large numbers to do so. Numbers matter to man, but the hearts of men matter to the Lord. It is the quality of conversion, not the quantity. He always spoke of having “few” sheep. Of the likely billions living at the time of Enoch, only some few thousand were saved (see Jude 1:14; see also Judas 1:3 RE) and only eight by Noah (see 1 Peter 3:20; see also 1 Peter 1:14 RE). The end times will be like those days (see Matthew 24:37; see also Matthew 11:11 RE).

The Lord charges us as He did Ezekiel:

*I have made you who have received these tidings to be watchmen unto the scattered house of Israel; therefore **you** shall hear the words of my mouth, and warn **them** from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if **you** do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at **your** hand. Nevertheless, if you warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but **you** have delivered your soul.* (See Ezekiel 33:7-9; see also Ezekiel 16:3 RE, emphasis added)

The Lord said in 1832 and again now, *Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor. Therefore, they are left without excuse, and their sins are upon their own heads.* (D&C 88:81-82; see also T&C 86:15)

We are to warn and invite but not expect many to respond. We have no obligation to dispute, contend, and debate with others to overcome their resistance. The Lord warned us about using “contention” to advance the truth about His Gospel: *And according as I have*

commanded you... And by the way, these words were spoken by the Lord immediately preceding the Doctrine of Christ.

And according as I have commanded you thus shall ye baptize. And there shall be no disputations among you, as there have hitherto been; neither shall there be disputations among you concerning the points of my doctrine, as there have hitherto been. For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another. Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another; but this is my doctrine, that such things should be done away. (3 Nephi 11:28-30; see also 3 Nephi 5:8 RE)

We mustn't argue about our faith but declare it and leave it for the Lord to confirm our testimony.

Similarly, 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're required to labor with your might to finish the Lord's work in his vineyard (verse 72), but He will labor alongside you (see Jacob 5:70-72; see also Jacob 3:26-27 RE). 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; see also Genesis 4:22 RE)

The foregoing are excerpts taken from:

- Denver's talk entitled "The Mission of Elijah Reconsidered," given in Spanish Fork, UT on October 14, 2011;
- His lecture entitled "Signs Follow Faith," given in Centerville, UT on March 3, 2019;
- The presentation of Denver's paper entitled "The Restoration's Shattered Promises and Great Hope," given at the Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City, UT on July 28, 2018;

- Denver's *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #3 entitled "Repentance," given in Logan, UT on September 29, 2013;
- Denver's *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #4 entitled "Covenants," given in Centerville, UT on October 6, 2013;
- His conference talk entitled "The Doctrine of Christ," given in Boise, ID on September 11, 2016; and
- His talk entitled "Opening Remarks," given at the Covenant of Christ Conference in Boise, ID on September 3, 2017.

In addition, Denver has written extensively about this topic. If you are interested in learning more, please review the following blog posts:

[Follow-up Question](#), published January 3, 2012; and
[Last Week's Comments](#), published May 19, 2012.

You may also find value in reviewing the following Glossary Entries:

[Sealed in Their Foreheads](#)
[Called or Calling](#)
[Calling and Election](#)
[Elect](#)
[Sealing Power](#)