

Podcast Episode 84: Zion's Return, Part 1

This is part 1 of a special series on the much anticipated, and much prophesied return of Zion.

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

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

The first spirit was the spirit of Messiah. Adam dwelt in the presence of God. Adam represents that original fullness. Adam was the first man. Adam received instructions and spoke to God face to face. He dwelt in a temple, from which he was cast out, but he dwelt in a temple. Therefore, Adam represents the Spirit of Messiah.

The Spirit of Elijah is represented by Enoch who, when the Earth was threatened with violence and men were to be destroyed because of the wickedness upon the face of the Earth, was able to gather a people into a city of peace, and to have the Lord come to their city of peace and remove them from the coming violence and destruction. He is a type of the Spirit of Elijah because Elijah would likewise later ascend in the fiery chariot into heaven. He is a type of the Spirit of Elijah, because it is the Spirit of Elijah in that ascent into heaven that must prefigure the return of the Spirit of Messiah in the last days in order to gather a people to a place that God will acknowledge, will visit and will shield from the coming violence that will involve the destruction of the world. And so Enoch becomes the

great type of the Spirit of Elijah, although the name “Elijah” is associated with a man who lived later still but who duplicated, among a hardened people in a fallen world, the same achievement as Enoch had accomplished, albeit Enoch did so with a city, and Elijah did it as a solitary ascending figure, yet it will be Elijah and his spirit which, in the last days, will likewise prepare a city for salvation and preservation.

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

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

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

We are promised that one will come who will be part of Jesse and part of Ephraim who will set in order, whose identity will be established by the work accomplished and not by the foolishness and prideful claims made by someone who has done nothing. If the work is

done, once it's completed, you might be able to guess. But any fool can run around claiming themselves to be whatever their peculiar schizophrenia allows them to claim.

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

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

Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 2: 2-3, "*And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.*" In this context, "all nations" is not about Russia, and China, and Ethiopia, and Pakistan. "All nations," in this context, is all the 12 tribes of Israel. The "nations" are the 12 tribes of Israel. That's it, period. That's who is going to flow unto it. So you won't need an international airport. Nor will you need to host the Olympics. "*The mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.*"

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths."

The paths of God lie in the heavens. Therefore if you are going to learn to walk in his paths you are going to have to learn to walk in the heavens.

"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The ensign that is prophesied to be established (Isa. 5: 6), in the context of that day, had reference to a zodiacal, a constellation, or a depiction of the heavens themselves. So when God promises an ensign is going to be reared, it will be to tell you about how to walk in the paths of God,

through the heavens back to God's presence. This is talking about something very, very different than what most of us today would envision.

Zion is going to be a connection between heaven and earth, and at that place you will learn of the God of Jacob's ways. You will walk in His paths. Heaven and earth will be connected. The stairway connecting the two will be opened. The heavens and the earth will be reunited again. This is going to happen in the top of the mountains.

In March of 1831, there was a revelation given now found in D&C 49: 24-25, *"But before the great day of the Lord shall come, Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose. Zion shall flourish upon the hills and rejoice upon the mountains, and shall be assembled together unto the place which I have appointed."*

There it is again: "the mountains." These were the prophecies at the beginning, when the restoration was starting to roll forth.

Joseph Smith said this, *"Our Western tribe of Indians are descendents from that Joseph that was sold to Egypt, and that the land of America is a promised land unto them, and unto it, all the tribes of Israel will come with as many of the Gentiles as shall comply with the requirements of the new covenant."* That is in a letter Joseph Smith wrote to N.C. Saxton found in *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, compiled by Dean C. Jesse, on page 273. He's talking about the Western tribes of Indians. This will make more sense as we get into this material. But it really did mean out West.

"Having been approved of God." It is God, and God's approval alone that matters. It is what God regards of you. It is what is in your heart, because God can detect what is in your heart. God knows why you do what you do. God knows why you say what you say. God knows what is in your thoughts. Therefore, to be approved of God, is to be weighed against His perfect standard of righteousness, and not the whims of fashion. Fashion will come and go, and ideas will be popular or unpopular. Righteousness will endure forever. This is the kind of man upon whom the words get spoken, "My Son." The fathers about whom I spoke in Centerville, had this association with God. They had this fellowship with God. They had this sonship with God. And they had this priesthood from God. And the hearts of the children need to turn to the fathers, and that too, because Elijah is coming to plant in the hearts of the children, the promises that were made.

Now, I want to take another detour into parsing things in a way that you might not have considered before and for this I want to go to Doctrine and Covenants section 128 and look at verse 21. This is Joseph's letter to the church that got canonized. He talks about all the

stuff that has gone on in the process of getting the restoration fully established on the earth. He mentions in this letter that he writes, these things: "And again, the voice of God in the chamber of old Father Whitmer, in Fayette, Seneca county, and at sundry times, and in divers places through all the travels and tribulations of this Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints!" [So the voice of God has been there throughout all of this. As Joseph presided and as the Church rolled forth.] "And the voice of *Michael*, the archangel; the voice of *Gabriel*," ["El" being the name of God] "and of *Raphael*, and of divers angels, from *Michael* or *Adam* down to the present time, all declaring their dispensation, their rights, their keys, their honors, their majesty and glory, and the power of their priesthood; giving line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little; giving us consolation by holding forth that which is to come, confirming our hope!"

So, I want to suggest to you that *Michael*, *Gabriel*, and *Raphael* are known to us as those who have come, though they were part of the El, or in the plural form, the Elohim, they came into mortality and they served here among us. They came and they ministered here. *Michael* descended, and he came to the earth and he was known as *Adam* in mortality. *Gabriel* came to the earth and he was known in mortality as *Noah*. There is a big debate over the identical to the *Raphael*. I will tell you what I think and you can take it or leave it. *Raphael* is the name that was given to the man who in mortality we know as *Enoch*.

Now there are four angels who preside over the four corners of the earth. Joseph surely knew that. And Joseph mentions the names of three of the four. But he leaves the fourth one out. And I find the absence of the fourth one rather extraordinary. The fourth one's name is *Uriel*, also one of the Elohim.

Although there are those who will absolutely cry heresy, and throw dirt on their hair, and tear their clothes because they are scholars, and they are *bona fide*, and they know I'm talking out of my hat—but I'd remind you Joseph talked out of his hat too. That fourth and missing, unmentioned angel is *Uriel*, who in mortality was known to us as *John*.

Adam is the one in the East, the angel who is considered the one who presides over and has control of the air. Which is apt because onto *Adam* was given the breath of life in the beginning. *Raphael* is in the South, and he is associated with the power of fire, which is apt because of his fiery ascent with his people into heaven. *Gabriel* is the angel in the West who has the power over water, which is apt because in mortality, he managed through the Flood. And *Uriel*, though not mentioned, is the one who in the North has the power over the earth, which is apt because he remains upon the earth and he is the guardian at one gate with *Elijah* at the other end. But you can take and leave all that as you will. I find the mention here in this letter by Joseph, of these individuals and these powers, and these four,

three of whom are named, the fourth of whom, potentially is unnamed, to be interesting. Though he does mention “divers angels for Michael or Adam down to the present time.”

There is so much more that has to go on and be understood, if you are going to save yourself and any soul in this generation, in that kingdom which we claim we would like to inherit. We claim we'd like to inherit it without any idea of the consequences of what it would take in order to ascend there. Or without any regard to the fact that, you don't take one of the El and bring them down into mortality, pain-free. You say that the Son of God condescended to come and be here. And I say so did *Michael*, and so did *Raphael*, and so the *Gabriel*. Because coming down and condescending to be here on a rescue mission, by those who dwell in glory, is an act of service and sacrifice, that we simply take for granted out of the abundance of our ignorance. You hardly comprehend the things of God. You simply do not know how great things God has done for us. You remain content to allow conceit and foolishness to lead you from error to error without any fear you are losing your souls.

Yet if you go to and you look at Doctrine and Covenants section 76 beginning at verse 50, you can read through the list of things that describe those who are going to inherit celestial glory. Beginning at verse 50, we don't have time to go through all the things that are there. But in verse 51, it says these are people “who receive the testimony of Jesus,” that is, Christ testifying to them that they are saved, “believed on his name and were baptized after the manner of his burial, being buried in the water in his name, and this according to the commandment which he has given— That by keeping the commandments they might be washed and cleansed from all their sins, and receive the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the hands of him who is ordained and sealed unto this power;” [that sounds a little different than what we do, doesn't it?] “And who overcome by faith, and are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true. They are they who are the Church of the Firstborn. They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things—They are they who are priests and kings, who have received of his fulness, and of his glory;” [I hope you read those words now with a little different meaning than you did when you came here] “And are priests of the Most High, after the order of Melchizedek, which was after the order of Enoch, which was after the order of the Only Begotten Son. Wherefore, as it is written, they are gods, even the sons of God— Wherefore, all things are theirs, whether life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are theirs and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's. And they shall overcome all things.” [That is in the future.] “Wherefore, let no man glory in man, but rather let him glory in God, who shall subdue all enemies under his feet. These shall dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever. These are they whom he shall bring with him, when he shall come in the clouds of heaven to reign on the earth over his people. These are they who shall have part in the first resurrection.

These are they who shall come forth in the resurrection of the just. These are they who are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly place, the holiest of all. These are they who have come to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of Enoch, and of the Firstborn. These are they whose names are written in heaven, where God and Christ are the judge of all. These are they who are just men made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, who wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood. These are they whose bodies are celestial, whose glory is that of the sun..." [Those who inherit everlasting burnings. These are those who are referred to as the "Elohim." These are those that were referred to when Moroni said, Elijah will come to plant in the hearts of the children, the promises made to the fathers. When Joseph spoke in August 27 of 1843, that Elijah *will* come; and he will come again after August 1843. I've written a paper on this and I'm not going to repeat that again here.]

Therefore, when I consider these things, I reach a different conclusion than the Elijah narrative that we generally talk about. The conclusion that I reach is that when it comes to Elijah's role and Elijah's mission the purpose was, in the last days on the cusp of the Lord's return, in order to open the channel through which the Zion that has been taken above can return, there will be a ministry, just as Joseph put it, still future in 1844 – March, April, May, June, three months before the death of the Prophet, yet future – the purpose of which is to make possible the reuniting of those that dwell above with those that dwell below, formed by a people who are capable of bearing the presence of the Lord, coming back into His presence and not withering at the sight. Coming back into His presence and being able to dwell at peace.

I would suggest that the peace of Zion has much less to do with whether or not the outward hostilities of those who will be burned at His coming are fighting with one another and those inside the city are not taking up arms, but it is rather the peace that comes as a consequence of having shed your sins and being able to endure the presence of the Lord. These are those people who have "let virtue garnish their thoughts unceasingly because their bowels have been full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith." Imagine that. Can you imagine that it's necessary that you have charity for those who are within your own household of faith? Can you imagine that I need to tolerate and even love those inside my own community of belief who think me an emissary of the devil? Who think me an apostate? Toward them I must show charity?

And "let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly." Because you see, if you are not so constituted within your own heart – where there can't be any lies – if within your heart you

are not at peace in charity toward those who would in the name of your own religion despitefully use you, then your "confidence [cannot] wax strong in the presence of God." And all of this is connected to "the doctrine of the priesthood."

Can it be said concerning your own marriage, that it is not good for the man to be alone? Are the two of you together, better than what each of you are alone? Is your marriage a source of joy, of happiness, of contentment, of companionship? The Lord told them to multiply and replenish the earth. Do you find within your family relationship there is joy, rejoicing and happiness as a consequence of the environment you and your wife have put together in your home?

As a woman, is your relationship in the image of God? Is there godliness about the way in which you and your husband interact? If you had to reckon whether or not someone, looking at the two of you, would see in you the image of God, would they? These are not just happy notions for the afterlife, these ought to be descriptions of what your marriage could and should look like. Can you sense the glory of God in your marriage? Remember, we looked at this in D&C 93:36. *"The glory of God is intelligence, or another words Light and Truth."* The glory of God being light, the glory of God being truth. Is that something present in the marriage that you now have? Is your marriage filled with life? With light? With truth? With understanding?

Turn back to D&C 121, there a couple versus there that I want to call to your attention, particularly if you view the man and the woman together as one. Read these verses as if they describe "the one," which is you and your wife. This is beginning at verse 40. *"Many are called, but few are chosen. No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned; By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile."*

Within your family, within your marriage, are you and your wife learning to use persuasion? Within your marriage, are you and your husband learning to use gentleness in dealing with one another? Are the two of you together, facing one another, in all the difficulties that come as a result of being married, are you facing that together in meekness? Do you find that, in all the relationship troubles, turmoil, and challenges, together you face it all with mutual kindness? Is there a search for understanding that results in pure knowledge, when it comes to any dilemma you two confront?

Look at verse 37: *"That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or*

compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man." [It has been my observation that as soon as the Spirit of the Lord withdraws, that quickly will another spirit step in to assure you that you right, that you should be vindicated, that you ought to proceed on in the arrogance of your heart to feel yourself justified and vindicated. There are false spirits that go about, but there is no better an audience to receive the whisperings of those false spirits, than the abusers of their authority. Those who, having grieved the Spirit and caused it to withdraw, then accept counsel from another spirit saying: "You are right, press on! Well done! You are good and you are doing good using this great authority from God! You will be vindicated. This is all God's work, and you're a great man because you are engaged in God's work! Do not back down, do not relent. Forget about persuasion, you should never be long-suffering, you should make those under your rule suffer if they resist your power. They should yield to your rule. There is no place for meekness. We believe in a God of strength, a God of power, a God whose work can be done despite the frailties of man! God's work cannot fail, and you are doing God's work! There is no need for men to be meek. And it's kind in the end, to punish, and to force, and coerce, because we have a good objective in mind." This false spirit influences much of what happens today among the Latter-day Saints. It grieves God, and leaves the Saints in a state of confusion.]

All the lies and all the deceit that led to Catholicism falling into the abyss it fell into are presently in play with the Latter-day Saints. Those same deceiving spirits who worked this deception out long ago, are now taking the Restoration of the Gospel as another opportunity for them. And so they once again whisper to the priests and the priests listen. As soon as the Spirit of God is withdrawn, another spirit convinces men they have God's power, and therefore cannot go astray.

So, does your marriage help you avoid covering your sins? You are never going to solve this problem in a community of Zion, until you first begin to solve it the walls within your own home. You are never going to have Zion somewhere in a community, until first that community has been composed of those who have a marriage that is in the image of God.

Does your marriage help you to avoid "gratifying your pride?" Does it help hold down your "vain ambition?" Is your ambition to exalt the two of you, rather than the one of you? Does it bring you time and time again, to not exercise control, but to respect the freedom to choose?

Well, Enoch launches his ministry, and at some point in his ministry he does do what the Lord said he would do some hundreds of years earlier. In Moses Chapter 7 now, we are a

whole chapter later and this is verse 13: “And so great was the faith of Enoch that he led the people of God, and their enemies came to battle against them; and he spake the word of the Lord, and the earth trembled, and the mountains fled, even according to his command; and the rivers of water were turned out of their course; and the roar of the lions was heard out of the wilderness; and all nations feared greatly, so powerful was the word of Enoch, and so great was the power of the language which God had given him.” That is one of the unique attributes about the existence of Zion. When you have Zion in place then it is the Lord who fights the battles against it. You do not need to have a weapon’s budget in the Zion camp. It doesn’t happen. The battle to be fought is fought by the Lord. In the descriptions given through the Prophet Joseph Smith about the last days the people decide that they will not take on Zion, because Zion is too terrible because of the Lord. It is not their munitions. In fact, the description includes a statement that those who will not take up arms against their neighbor are the only ones that flee to Zion and the only ones that aren’t out killing.

Which then raises the conundrum: Why does the remnant which will build Zion “tear in pieces and trample under foot” the gentiles? Why do they do that? Oh, stop thinking with a damn howitzer in your hand, and start thinking about the image of Babylon that is going to be torn in pieces and be trodden under foot. You do not need anything other than the truth to tear in pieces the Gentile’s kingdom. And it will be trodden under foot by the truth.

Zion’s final development says: “The fear of the Lord was upon all nations, so great was the glory of the Lord, which was upon his people. And the Lord blessed the land, and they were blessed upon the mountains, and upon the high places, and did flourish.” (Moses 7:17.) That’s where you’ll find Zion. Not on a plain and not in a valley. You will find it in the high places on the mount, not merely symbolically. No one will have a height from which to peek down into the goings-on in Zion. They will be beneath, and Zion will be above. Zion’s presence will be terrible. I’m not going up there. You going up there? I’ve got a flak vest and I’m not going up there. It’s the same problem Israel had before the mountain when Moses was up on the mountain communing with the Lord.

Mountaintops are acceptable substitutes for temples. I doubt the people of Zion are going to have a budget with which to build what needs to be built. Well, the Lord has a way of making do. “The Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart, and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.”(Moses 7:18.) There were no poor among them physically; there were no poor among them spiritually. They did not compete, they cooperated. They did not envy, they shared. They did not look to pass a zoning law. I will tell you how to ruin Zion, how to keep it from coming – pass a zoning law. Let’s police the neighborhood. Let’s get some restrictive covenants. The instant you start to

regulate Zion it's gone. It's slipped right between your fingers. No man need say to another: 'know ye the Lord; for they're all going to know him who dwell in Zion.'

I've thought about writing a fictional account of this curious city in which people who have children live in big houses, and people who have no children live in small houses. No one has a job or a schedule but everyone works. One day the lead character gets up, walks outside, and notices that the lawn could use mowing. So he goes and finds a lawn mower and he starts mowing. He mows from one place in his house across the city to the other side. Everywhere he goes that he finds grass, he mows. When he finishes after a couple of weeks he returns to his house and says, "Hey, the grass has grown." So he starts mowing again. He does this because he feels like mowing the grass for the time being.

Then after a season he notices that there is only one person working in the bakery. Well, he's never worked in a bakery, but he decides he'll go see what it's like to work in a bakery—and he rather likes that. So he spends a year in the bakery doing that. And he wonders whatever happened to the lawns. They've have been cut, but he doesn't know who has been cutting them. On his way to try and find someone who is cutting the yards, because he liked doing that, he has something in common with them. He would like to know how they liked it and what their pattern was. "How did you do that?" But on his way, he gets distracted by the orchard that needs harvesting, so he spends the fall harvesting that.

So the story just ends, with complete chaos. A total ungoverned society, in which everyone is at peace, and no one has a job, and everyone works, and the only thing that motivates is what needs doing. "Hey, let's go do it." And let's do it for as long as we feel like doing it, and then let's do something else.

The foregoing are excerpts taken from:

- Denver's conference talk entitled "Things to Keep Us Awake at Night" given in St. George, UT on March 19th, 2017
- Denver's *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #6 entitled "Zion" given in Grand Junction, CO on April 12th, 2014
- Denver's *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #5 entitled "Priesthood" given in Orem, UT on November 2nd, 2013
- His talk entitled "The Mission of Elijah Reconsidered", given in Spanish Fork, UT on October 14th, 2011

- Denver's *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #9 entitled "Marriage and Family" given in St. George, UT on July 26th, 2014