

Podcast 142: Shem, Part 1

This is the first part of a series about Shem, who came to be known as Melchizedek, one of the Patriarchal Fathers, who established a city of peace that ultimately achieved the status of "Zion" and was taken up into heaven.

DENVER: (Moses 7:20-21, 23): "And it came to pass that Enoch talked with the Lord; and he said unto the Lord: Surely Zion shall dwell in safety forever. But the Lord said unto Enoch: Zion have I blessed, but the residue of the people have I cursed. And it came to pass that the Lord showed unto Enoch" and he saw everything. And "...Zion was taken up into heaven, Enoch beheld, and lo, all the nations of the earth were before him;" and so on. So Enoch and his city depart.

Now we have not only the example from Section 107 of the appearance of the Lord, Enoch and his city were taken up. Noah remained behind. Again, here I am offering you my view. I am not offering you something which has been endorsed by anyone, although there are those folk on the fringe who have suggested the same thing that I think. But it is my view that Melchizedek is the new name given to Shem, and that Shem is the son of Noah. When it's talking about the priesthood through the fathers unto Noah as the basis for a doctrinal interpretation, that that means that there were generations separating Noah from Melchizedek; that's not how I read the verse. I read it to say, "Through the fathers, that is, from Adam down to Noah," and the connection between Noah and Melchizedek is immediate, father and son, and Shem is the son, which is why then the next appearance of Zion happens as a connection. 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. The second one occurs with Enoch, who was present when the Lord had dwelt with people before. 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. At that moment in history, here's the dilemma: God is going to destroy the world but a group inside the world had attained the status of Zion. Since they are in the state of being Zion the world cannot destroy them. It is fair game for the wicked to destroy the righteous. The wicked are allowed to destroy the righteous all the time. If you don't believe that then go ask Amulek, whose suggestion to Alma was rejected because Alma was saying, "Oh, no, this is a good deal. Let them burn. The Lord is getting mad right now. Something's going to happen." These people are received up in glory. These people being killed by the wicked, the wicked get to kill them! And they get to kill them because then God will judge the wicked by the taking of the lives. That's the system. The most righteous man who ever lived was allowed to be killed by the wicked. In fact, 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

were 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. 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 could not be destroyed when the Lord was going to destroy. [He] and his city were called and they were given two callings: Their first assignment is as ministering angels, not only here but elsewhere. Their second calling – I don't want to appear irreverent but 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.

There is a reason why our tinhorn 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 going to come with an entourage. So they got the job, Enoch and his folk.

Melchizedek, who was acquainted with that condition, in my view had to be offered the option. Going on the Ark and staying down here when there is a group that are going to be leaving and going elsewhere, Noah was qualified to leave. All of them were qualified to leave and they had to be willing to stay. 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.

In the course of events Melchizedek established a city, a City of Peace, a city of righteousness. He was the king and he was the priest, and he presided over his people in righteousness. Abraham, who was converted to the truth, came to Melchizedek. They had a ceremonial get-together in which, among other things, there is a sacral meal. 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.

When Zion flees again, now we have the people of Melchizedek. Notice, if you will, that the Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God has been renamed the Priesthood of Enoch, and then renamed again the Melchizedek priesthood. That name has become rather more enduring because in each case they came and they established Zion, and when they established Zion they were taken with their people up into heaven.

Now we have...I was going to read this stuff about Melchizedek. You'll find that in the Joseph Smith Translation of Genesis Chapter 14. It's a long enough section that it's back in the back of your bible, beginning with verse 25:

“And 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, and quenched the violence of fire. And thus, having been approved of God, he was ordained an high priest after the order of the covenant which God made with Enoch,” (Vs. 25-27.) He’s got the same covenant as had been previously made with Enoch. That tells you something if you’re paying attention. “It being after the order of the Son of God; which order came, not by man, nor the will of man; neither by father nor mother; neither by beginning of days nor end of years; but of God; And it was delivered unto men by the calling of his own voice, according to his own will, unto as many as (received) his name.” (Vs. 28-29.)

Joseph Smith tells us when he got the Melchizedek Priesthood, in my view. And in my view it was not an incident that occurred in which Peter, James and John were present. But it was “the voice of God in the chamber of old Father Whitmer, in Fayette, Seneca county” (D&C 128:21) when Joseph received the Melchizedek priesthood. Peter, James and John, like other angelic ministrants, came to deliver keys but not Melchizedek Priesthood because the priesthood of Melchizedek comes but of God. “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. We can ordain people all day long, but the manner the ordination assumes power is by ‘the calling of God’s own voice’” That’s the description given by the Prophet Joseph Smith in the translation of Genesis 14. He tells us that event took place from the voice of God in the chamber of old Father Whitmer, as referred to in D&C 128:21.

D&C 128 is a letter Joseph Smith wrote in Nauvoo. It’s late in his ministry. It’s a letter that Joseph wrote while he is in hiding in Nauvoo and he’s trying to stay in contact with the saints. I make no reference to this in *Passing the Heavenly Gift* but it is another example, just as it is a glaring omission from the testimony of Oliver Cowdery, that he makes no mention of Elijah’s appearance in what we have in D&C Section 110. So also, in the listing of the angelic ministrants who came to Joseph Smith, in a letter that he composed in Nauvoo in 1842, six years after the appearance of Elijah. To our current way of informing one another he does not include Elijah in the letter or the list. And throughout the time period that he’s speaking in Nauvoo – you can look at the Nauvoo talks, and we will look at some of them – Joseph speaks of the return of Elijah as a still future event. If the return of Elijah is a still future event in 1842, 1843, and 1844, then the appearance of Elijah in the Kirtland Temple cannot answer to the mission of Elijah.

But now we’re ahead of the story. Let’s go back to Melchizedek for a moment. In the case of Melchizedek, once again we see a repetition of the pattern in which there is a prophet-ministrant and a people who respond to the message of repentance, and people coming up to the state in which the Lord can come and dwell with them and then they are taken up into heaven. And then the narrative of the appearance of Zion evaporates from the scriptural record. Now, we do have the Nephite experience where the Lord came and He dwelt among them. They were not taken up into heaven. For a moment I want to stay on the idea of Zion’s ascent up the heavenly corridor. Just like the first Zion with Adam, all of those, including Adam, died, except Enoch and his city, and they did not die, they were taken up into heaven. Then we have Melchizedek, and his city was taken up into heaven. The

subsequent experiences where the Lord visited with people, whether it is in Jerusalem or whether it is in the new world, did not result in Zion going up and ascending into heaven. It didn't happen.

See, everything proceeds according to law. And the government of God is not necessarily limited to an organizational structure, but it hails back to things that were committed, by God—in promises made to the fathers—which have to be fulfilled. And it doesn't matter if we try to capture that. God's purposes are ordained according to a law that was ordained before the world was.

I am the Lord thy God; and I give unto you [a] commandment—that no man shall come unto my Father but by me or by my word, which is my law, saith the Lord. (ibid, vs. 12)

In other words, if you are going to come—whoever you are—unto the Father, the only way you are going to get there will be through the Son.

And everything that is in the world, whether it be ordained of men, by thrones, or principalities, or powers, or things of name, whatsoever they may be, that are not by me or by my word, saith the Lord, shall be thrown down, and shall not remain after men are dead, neither in nor after the resurrection, saith the Lord your God. For whatsoever things remain are by me; ...whatsoever things are not by me shall be shaken and destroyed. (ibid, vs. 13-14)

This is another way in which we can know that *the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there* (2 Nephi 9:41, emphasis added; 2 Nephi 6:11 RE). Because when it comes to this kind of material, involving this kind of salvation—for any of the children of men—God is hands-on. And our Redeemer is the one who not only keeps the gate, protects the way, but greets those along the way whom He is going to introduce to the Father.

And it has to be *by me, or by my word, saith the Lord...* If it is not, *then it shall be thrown down [and it] shall not remain* (D&C 132:13). Only God can, or does, ordain covenants. We do not make covenants. Covenants come as a consequence of God's will, and **only** as a consequence of God's will. We can accept them, or we can reject them—but we cannot create them. He does. Our participation is limited to acceptance of—or rejection of—what He offers.

The way in which we accept the covenants is set out in Doctrine and Covenants section 130: *There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated* (D&C 130:20-21). Therefore, what is important for you to understand and to know is whatever it is that law consists of. Because the way in which you accept the covenant that has been offered to you is by learning the principle or the law upon which the blessing you seek is predicated. And then, having learned what law that is upon which it is predicated, obeying it.

We learn all of this through the revelations given to us through Joseph Smith.

Before Joseph of Egypt, one of the fathers that we need to look at is Abraham. And therefore, I want to turn to Abraham chapter 1, beginning at verse 2:

And, finding there was greater happiness and peace and rest for me, I sought for the blessings of the fathers...

Once again, now we have Abraham, and we've gone all the way back to him generations before Joseph of Egypt, and we encounter the same thing—that is, searching for the blessings which belong to the fathers—Abraham looking for the blessings of the fathers, hoping to find, thereby, happiness; hoping to find peace and rest for himself.

...and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge...

You know, when I spoke in Logan, I talked about repentance being related to knowledge and that it's our ignorance that damns us, most of all. Abraham perceived the same thing. And Abraham believed that redemption and possessing great knowledge went hand-in-hand. And if he could obtain that great knowledge, then he wanted to be:

a greater follower of righteousness, and [as a consequence of that] to possess a greater knowledge...

Because this is one of those laws upon which blessings are predicated. Knowledge, light, truth, the glory of God—all of those things are obtained by obedience to law. And Abraham sought for and desired to possess more light and truth. And as a result of that, he wanted inevitably to become:

*...a father of many nations, a prince of peace, and [he desired most of all] ...to receive instructions, and to keep...commandments of God. [As a result of all that desire, he] became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers. It was conferred upon me **from the fathers**; it came down **from the fathers**, from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth, down to the present time, even the right of the firstborn, or the first man, who is Adam, or [the] first father, through the fathers unto me.*

All of this ties back, necessarily, to Adam.

I sought for mine appointment unto the Priesthood according to the appointment of God unto the fathers concerning the seed. (Abraham 1:2-4; see also Abraham 1:1 RE)

Everything about the original form of priesthood, everything about what it is that Abraham was seeking, all of this ties together because there is only one gospel.

In the Lectures on Faith, the Second Lecture paragraphs 37 to 53, there is a chronology given. I'm not gonna go through the chronology, and you needn't have brought it with you tonight. But that chronology is listed in the Lectures on Faith in order to save you the trouble of going through and tracking it yourself. But it was important enough to Joseph Smith to put it into the Lectures on Faith so that you know how to reconstruct the fathers—who they were.

Noah was 502 years old when Shem was born. 98 years later the Flood came. Noah was 600 years old when the Flood came; Shem was 98. (You can see that in paragraph 45 of the Second Lecture.) Shem lived to be 600. Shem was 448 years old when Noah died. Shem was acquainted with both Noah and Abraham. Abraham lived to be 175 years old, and Shem was alive and a contemporary with ~~Shem~~ [Abraham] for 150 of the 175 years of the life of Abraham. Shem knew Noah. And Shem knew those on the other side of the Flood, having lived with them for 98 years before the Flood.

Abraham had the records of the fathers. Look at Abraham chapter 1, verse 31:

But the records of the fathers, even the patriarchs, concerning the right of Priesthood, the Lord my God preserved in mine own hands; therefore 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, have I kept even unto this day, and I shall endeavor to write some of these things upon this record, for the benefit of my posterity that shall come after me (see also Abraham 2:4 RE).

Since Abraham was acquainted with the priesthood that belonged to the fathers—and since Abraham had a knowledge that was reckoned from priesthood, that goes back to the time of the patriarchs—he, as a consequence of possessing that, knew about the beginning of creation, knew about the planets, knew about the stars as they were made known unto the fathers.

Go back to Doctrine and Covenants section 121; it's talking about our dispensation. I want to look at—beginning at about verse 28:

A time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld, whether there be one God or many gods, they shall be manifest [because that's included within the knowledge that the first fathers had—that's included with what was here at one time]. All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ. And also, if there be bounds set to the heavens or to the seas, [and] to the dry land, ...to the sun, moon, or stars—All the times of their revolutions, all the appointed days, months, and years, and all the days of their days, months, and years, and all [the] glories, laws, ...set times, shall be revealed in the days of the dispensation of the fulness of times—According to that which was ordained in the midst of the Council of the Eternal God of all other gods before this world was, that should be reserved unto the finishing and the end thereof, when every man shall enter into his eternal presence and into his immortal rest. (D&C 121:28-32; see also T&C 138:21)

Abraham is not merely talking about something—both in this verse, Abraham 1:31, as well as what we encounter later on in the Book of Abraham about the various stars that were shown to him and the relationship between them and his Facsimile #2, as I recollect—that is, an effort to lay out a relationship in the heavens between certain positions of glory and authority. But Abraham is testifying that it was part of the original gospel that was entrusted to the fathers and that those records were handed down to him. In Doctrine and Covenants section 121, we find out that that’s part of what is supposed to have been included within, and is ultimately scheduled for revelation to, those that will receive the restoration of the Gospel, when it is fully upon the earth in the dispensation of the fullness of times.

Abraham received his priesthood ordination through Melchizedek. You can see that in Doctrine and Covenants section 84, verse 14: *Which Abraham received the priesthood from Melchizedek, who received it through the lineage of his fathers, even till Noah* (see also T&C 82:10). Now, Bruce R. McConkie reads that verse, and he disagrees with what the church had previously taught; that is, that Melchizedek was Shem. He takes the position that this 14 means that *Melchizedek, who received it through the lineage of his fathers, even till Noah*, means that there were fathers between Melchizedek, on the one hand, and Noah, on the other—and therefore, Melchizedek could not be Shem. I take the view, instead, that it was received *through the lineage of his fathers even [until] Noah*, meaning from Adam down to the time of Noah, the priesthood was preserved, and that Melchizedek—that is, Shem—received it from Noah. In any event, it’s clear in verse 14 that Abraham received it from Melchizedek. But if you go to Abraham chapter 2, in the Book of Abraham, beginning at verse 6:

But I, Abraham, and Lot, my brother's son, prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord appeared unto me, and said unto me: Arise, and take Lot with thee; for I have purposed to take thee away out of Haran, and to make of thee a minister to bear my name in a strange land which [will I] give unto thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession, when they hearken to my voice. For I am the Lord thy God; I dwell in heaven; the earth is my footstool; I stretch my hand over the sea, and it obeys my voice; I cause the wind and the fire to be my chariot; I say to the mountains—Depart hence— ...behold, they are taken away by a whirlwind, in an instant, suddenly. My name is Jehovah, and I know the end from the beginning; therefore my hand shall be over thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, ...I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations; ...I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father (see also Abraham 3:1 RE).

“Ordination” and “confirmation by the voice of God” are two separate events. We’ll speak more about this in the next talk, which will be on Priesthood. But it’s enough to simply take note of that here.

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 Able was born. And Cain slew Able. 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 knowledge of the beginning of the creation, [as] also of the planets, and of the stars, as they were made known unto the fathers* (Abraham 1:31; see also Abraham 2:4 RE).

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 (Abraham 1:2; see also Abraham 1:1 RE). 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, to turn away from the kind of corrupt and degrading religions that were then in play on the earth—the fertility cults and the human sacrifices and the vileness that surrounded him. And then, having done so, to be asked by God to slay his son, as if there was some legitimacy to the rites that were practiced all around him.

Now in the version that we have in the King James Bible, Isaac is not slain. There is an older tradition—that you can find in the book of Hebrews, and you can find it in the Book of

Mormon—where Isaac is slain, and he's brought back to life, rather like Lazarus is brought back to life. But it's clear that the Old Testament version that we have in King James: he raises his hand with a knife to commit the act, and then the ram is found in the thicket to deliver him. Sometimes, as it turns out, rams are not found in thickets, and the sacrifice will be required.

The Lord says:

*I will bless them that bless thee, ...curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) [because fundamentally, what distinguishes Abraham and what distinguishes the covenant is the knowledge that he has—Abraham is in possession of something because Abraham **knows** some things that are true that relate back to the very beginning; and as a consequence of that, those who are given the same **knowledge** necessarily have to belong to the same priesthood] ...in thy seed (that is, [in] thy Priesthood) [because you **become** a son of Abraham if you take upon yourself the requirements for the covenant; you inherit that, just as Abraham inherited it—it comes down from the beginning from the fathers], for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or...seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal. Now, after the Lord had withdrawn from speaking [un]to me, and withdrawn his face from me, I said in my heart: Thy servant has sought thee earnestly; now I have found thee. (Abraham 2:11-12; see also Abraham 3:1 RE)*

And there again, Abraham stands as the prototype of the saved man, the father of the righteous, the example of all those who, coming out of apostasy, find themselves redeemed—because all the servants that will be acknowledged by Him must seek Him earnestly and will, as the Lectures on Faith promise, assuredly find Him. Everyone who receives the gospel, this gospel (verse 10 of that Abraham chapter 2): *As many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name.* You ought to ask yourself: What is *this Gospel*? And are you yet in possession of it? Because it would appear that the promises made to the fathers includes rather more than what we know about, as yet.

But it is, nevertheless, the case that it is through Joseph and Jacob, Isaac and Abraham that the promises remain. You can see that in Doctrine and Covenants section 27. We only need to look at verse 10 of section 27: *[As] also with Joseph and Jacob, and Isaac, and Abraham, your fathers, by whom the promises remain;* that is, promises are still in play, right now, as a consequence of what God did in covenant with Joseph and covenant with Jacob and covenant with Isaac and covenant with Abraham. Those promises are still in play. This is what Moroni was talking to Joseph Smith about. *And [verse 11] also with Michael, or Adam, the father of all, the prince of all, the ancient of days.* Promises that are in play today go all the way back to them.

The covenant which we receive will come as 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 Fulness 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 an 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)

There is 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. (ibid, vs. 29-31, emphasis added; see also Genesis 7:18-19 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. ...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. (ibid, vs. 32-35, emphasis added; 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 had made, ...according to the blessing[s] wherewith Melchizedek had blessed him. (ibid, vs. 36-40; see also Genesis 7:20-21 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.”

The foregoing excerpts are taken from:

- Denver's talk titled “The Mission of Elijah Reconsidered”, given in Spanish Fork, UT on October 14th, 2011; and
- Denver’s *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #4 titled “Covenants” given in Centerville, UT on October 6th, 2013.