

Denver Snuffer Podcast 155: Completing God's Image, Part 2

This is part two of a series where Denver addresses listener-submitted questions relating to the roles of Women in scripture and in the restoration movement. Today, Denver discusses the women as partners and wives, and as mothers.

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DENVER: The Keeper of the Gate is the Holy One of Israel indeed! These words should mean something to you if you've listened to or read the text that we reviewed in Orem on priesthood. You should understand what God is saying here. You should understand that when it comes to some things that you hope to have continue into eternity, it is not enough to have even one of the "noble and great," even one of those who we regard as an Archangel; it doesn't matter. God and God alone holds the keys of death and hell. Christ paid that price. Christ has to be the One because He is the only one qualified to do this. He has to be the One. This is a non-delegable responsibility by He who—by virtue of bringing you back and promising you—becomes your Father in heaven. If Christ is going to become your Father in heaven, He's got that same responsibility to you that He imposed upon you as a parent in Zion (that we looked at before the break). He doesn't spare Himself.

For whatsoever things remain are by me; and whatsoever things are not by me shall be shaken and destroyed [that's Christ's word—that's what He says is going to happen]. Therefore, if a man marry him a wife in the world, and he marry her not by me nor by my word, and he covenant with her so long as he is in the world and she with him, their covenant and marriage are not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world; therefore, they are not bound by any law when they are out of the world. (D&C 132:14-15)

Although God is talking about the eternity of the marriage covenant, He extends this into everything. Everything—even your associations—all of them are obtained by a covenant from Him. Because His word, and His word alone, will endure.

Therefore, when they are out of the world they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory. (Ibid, vs. 16)

Partners in such marriages become angels that are ministering servants. Angels look to receive the things that God has offered to men, but unless they come down and participate here, they cannot obtain them, for they're only to be had here. Verse 19:

And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise [skipping down]...

they shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths [skipping down]...

they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as has been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever. (Emphasis added)

You cannot receive these things unless you enter in by the Gate, the Keeper of whom is the Holy One of Israel who employs no servant. If you do that however,

Then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them. (Ibid, vs. 20)

These are people who have qualified for the kind of trust from God that makes sure that eternity will not be infected by the kinds of abuse, by the kinds of neglect, by the kinds of unworthiness that typifies those things which God wants to throw down, those things that God wants to have come to an end—not because He's mean, but for the protection of yourself, for the protection of eternity, for the protection of the potential offspring that may arise as a result of the continuation of the seed. This is so that, in the beginning, when life comes into existence as an organized spirit, that spirit is introduced into an environment which is perfect, pure, holy, and like God.

Therefore, when we come—finally—to this topic, we are talking about something which, even if it exists only with you and your spouse, it is Zion. It is eternal. It bears the hallmarks of God's hand and covenant. It is what this topic is all about. These people have no end; they are everlasting; they have all power. And all of this is a discussion about a marriage between a man and a woman. Plural wives do not get mentioned until verse 34 for the first time.

Lay aside all the issues that are thundering into your minds right now and ask yourself this: If you're a man, do you have a wife/If you're a woman, do you have a husband with whom you are one? Ask yourself, do you and your spouse reflect the image of God? Ask yourself that soberly.

In the Answer to the Prayer for Covenant, it is explained that establishing any throne is done through a covenant requiring a mother-companion and female counterpart to elevate a father to a throne. It is also clear that once elevated, these two sit together upon a throne. Every throne and every kingdom in eternity requires these two separate parties, the man and the woman, to be one.

And again, I say to you, Abraham and Sarah sit upon a Throne, for he could not be there if not for Sarah's covenant with him. Isaac and Rebecca sit upon a Throne, and Isaac likewise could not be there if not for Rebecca's covenant with him. And Jacob and Rachel sit upon a Throne, and Jacob could not be there if not for Rachel's covenant with him. And all these have ascended above Dominions and Principalities and Powers, to abide in my Kingdom. Therefore the marriage covenant is needed for all those who would likewise seek to obtain from me the right to continue their seed into eternity, for only through marriage can Thrones and Kingdoms be established.

Given this, any mention of the Heavenly Father is also mention of both Divine Parents, for there is neither man nor woman alone in the Divine state. When first created, man and woman were joined together by God. This union happened before death entered the world. Therefore their companionship was eternal when first established, and when rescued from death would return. As Christ put it,

Have you not read that he who made man at the beginning made him male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.

This union of Adam and Eve, and this plan of God for all who would thereafter be married, was to make the man and wife “one flesh.” What God has joined together and made into “one” no one should “put asunder” by rejecting the eternal nature of marriage. It was always intended to last through the resurrection.

God doesn’t judge righteousness the way we do. If you’ve read the Tenth Parable, what was it that attracted the attention of the angels? They looked at the marriage, and they said, “This! This looks like what we come from! This! This relationship, this marriage, the man and the woman—this is what heaven itself consists of. And look, look! It’s on the earth!” And the angels go, and they bring the Lord, and they say, “Behold the man and the woman!” And the Lord sets in motion everything that was needed.

What more do you need to see from the theme of the Book of Mormon than this passage in order to realize that when it comes to the relationship of marriage, this is the image of God. This is what God would like to preserve into eternity. It is so much easier to take people who have this kind of a marriage and to preserve them into eternity than it is to take someone who may know all mysteries but whose marriage is a tattered ruin and attempt to preserve them.

Look at the example of your first parents. Moses 3, the last two verses, 23 and 24 (excuse me, the next—there’s one other verse after that): And Adam said: This I know now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh (see also Genesis 2:14 RE).

You may have a spouse who is Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, or Mormon. You may have a spouse who is “Community of Christ” Mormon. You may have a spouse who believes in dancing naked at Wiccan ceremonies while high on peyote. You and your spouse need to love one another. You and your spouse have something far, far greater (potentially) between you and your children than all of the distractions of this world. You and your spouse face the challenge of becoming one. And if you are one...

The Lamanites were condemned consistently in the Book of Mormon; it came to blows. But they were praised because of their marriages, because of the love of the spouses.

Now, if you claim that you have enough love for two or more women, then I'd ask you: Can you not love your one wife enough to give her your full attention?

Every day, my wife and I get up; we have a four-mile hike that we do every morning before we come back and get ready for work and the day. We spend about an hour doing that that is filled with conversation—every day—about what's going on in my life, what's going on in her life, what's going on in this big problem, what's going on with our children—every day.

I come home for lunch very frequently, and we spend the noon-hour talking. We probably call each other—I don't know—four or five times during the day. I drive down to Utah County a couple of times. Driving down, I'm on the phone talking to my wife; driving back, I'm on the phone talking with my wife. We have a lot to talk about.

I do think that marriage can be something that is godlike. And two people can, in fact, become one.

When it comes to the subject of marriage (as if all I have said and all that is in scripture isn't clear enough), Revelation chapter 19 has a description of the culmination of all the Lord's great work in this cycle of creation. And this is talking about when it all wraps up. In the prophecy, God can't think of anything better to put into the mouth of John His Beloved (who wrote this stuff) than the analogy that gets used here. John—excuse me—Revelation chapter 19, beginning at verse 6:

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude [that multitude being male and female], and as the voice of [mighty] waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. (Revelation 19:6-9; see also Revelation 7:9-10 RE)

Not only does He liken the final triumph of the Lord's atonement to a wedding feast, but it is, in fact, a wedding feast. For all those who come through the tribulation—male and female, in the image of God—He's going to put on for them a wedding banquet because they are like Him. And they will see as they are seen because they are like Him. "Male and female created he them, in the image of God created he them" (see Genesis 1:27; see also Genesis 2:8 RE)

When our Lord's ministry began, John's Gospel has (in chapter 1) Christ's baptism. John's Gospel has (in chapter 2) the wedding at Canaan. When Christ prepared for His death and burial, it was with a woman. And when Christ was resurrected, the first and (at the moment) only witness was a woman. And when Christ finally got around to seeing His disciples, He upbraided them for not believing the testimony of the woman.

For us the Mother's greatest accomplishment has been to take the seed of God the Father and magnify it. She controls and weaves His seed into Their organized spirit offspring. From Their glory, or intelligence,¹³⁰ She produces organized intelligences, or spirits.¹³¹ One of the titles for the Heavenly Mother is "The Great Weaver" because She formed unorganized intelligence into organized spirits becoming the Mother of All Living. All of us are intimately connected to Her, for we came from Her.

Mortal women have inherited a similar power from Her. This inheritance empowers them to become mothers here. The capacity to fashion matter into another human being belongs only to Her daughters. All human life begins inside the womb of the woman where the work of The Great Weaver is replicated for each one of us who has ever lived in this world.

There is a natural and inevitable affection children hold for their mothers...

There is something primal, unavoidable and universal in the connection between children and mothers. Life begins in her arms and at her breast. Approaching death always brings the beginning of life, and therefore motherhood, back into focus. This primal connection is one reason why acknowledging the Heavenly Mother has proven overwhelming, even a burden for some societies. As soon as they are aware of Her, they focus veneration and worship on Her alone.

The presence of the female counterpart to God the Father does not include a scriptural command or permission to single Her out and worship Her apart from the Father. Indeed, the psalm of Mary in the book of Luke and the words of the Mother in Proverbs direct our attention to the Father. She may be part of a Divine Couple, but it is clear She wants honor and worship to be on Her Husband and Her Son.

Mary's psalm focused on God the Father and His Son. Look carefully at Her adoration of God:

My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. ... holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. (Luke 1:46-55.)

She pointed us to the Father. Remember also that the brightest star in Her constellation is in her hand – the "seed of the woman." The stars testify of Her, but point to Her "seed" as the greatest light for us here and now.

The moon reflects the light of her sun. Just as Mary did in Her psalm, this physical example testifies to the glory of the Father and the faithful reflection of the Mother. It is the sun that provides the light, heat and gravity governing the planets of this creation under its influence. It is the moon that stabilizes and makes life possible.

So, these are the events that took place in that first generation of Adam and Eve among their descendants. If you want to have peace and harmony for a community, it has to begin inside strong marriages. Zion necessarily requires holy matrimony. Adam and Eve had sons and daughters at the time this took place.

Chapter 5 of Moses, verse 2: Adam knew his wife, and she bare unto him sons and daughters, and they began to multiply and to replenish the earth. This is an event that occurs because they were married, and they were commanded to, at that point, offer sacrifice, multiply and replenish the earth. So they offered sacrifice, and they multiplied, and they began to have children. And their children began to multiply (in verse 3): From that time forth, the sons and daughters of Adam began to divide two and two in the land, and to till the land, and to tend flocks, and they also begat sons and daughters (emphasis added; see also Genesis 3:1 RE).

Notice that the image that is created of the man and the woman—that is, Adam and Eve—is now replicated in the children of Adam and Eve to imitate the same pattern: two and two. They're necessarily male and female if they are going to produce offspring. If they're going to beget sons and daughters, they have to be male and female. And it's not one on three; it's two by two. It is the man and the woman. That is the image of God, and no other image is offered to us in scripture; there simply isn't. There's no such thing as same-sex marriage in the scriptural model. There is no such thing as same-sex marriage; else how do they produce offspring? How can you obey the first commandment to multiply and replenish the earth? Because if the commandment to multiply and replenish the earth arises within the context of marriage, necessarily it requires that there be the man and the woman.

Adam and Eve had sons and daughters; their children likewise were married, and they had sons and daughters. They were visited, and they were instructed by the angel (we looked at that). They were baptized, then they received the Holy Ghost. And look what is contained in the Holy Ghost, in verse 66 that we read a few moments ago of chapter 6. They are baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost. This is the record of the Father and the Son from henceforth ...forever. It's also referred to and defined more in verse 61:

It is given to abide in you; the record of heaven; the Comforter; the peaceable things of immortal glory; the truth of all things; that which quickeneth all things, which maketh alive all things; that which knoweth all things, and hath all power according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice, and judgment. (See also Genesis 4:9 RE)

So, that is what is within them. Look what happens once they are so endowed, and they're equipped? This is Moses chapter 5, verses 10 and 11. I am so glad that these verses were restored to us because contained in this is a much, much greater lesson if you have the eyes to see it:

And in that day Adam blessed God and was filled, and began to prophesy concerning all the families of the earth, saying: Blessed be the name of God, for because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God.

That's Adam prophesying what is going to befall the future generations. That's what Adam is doing. Now, look at what Eve does:

And Eve, his wife, heard all these things [the prophecy comes through Adam; Eve hears them—Eve hears all these things] and was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient. (See also Genesis 3:4 RE)

There is a profound difference between the response of the power of the Spirit unfolding upon these two, with respect to its effect upon Adam, on the one hand, and its effect upon Eve, on the other. These are remarkably different reactions. To the man it is that he prophesies; that is, he declares the truth—the 'truth' being a knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come. That definition is given to us in the Doctrine and Covenants. This is the role of the man, and this is the role that he fulfills.

But to Eve, on the other hand, she obtains wisdom. The role of the man is knowledge; the role of the woman is wisdom. And you see that on display right here in these verses. It is the role of the woman to have the understanding, to take the prophecy that has been delivered now by Adam, to process it, and to say: "Here is what it means." This is the role of the woman. This is the gift of the woman. This is eternally the role of the woman.

This is why there is a male and why there is a female. Because in many respects, the gift of wisdom eludes the male, and in many respects, the gift of knowledge eludes the female. And together the two of them... And I'm not talking about 'knowledge' in the sense that a woman can't have a Ph.D. Two of the brightest people I know are daughters of mine. It's not that that I'm talking about. I'm talking about knowledge in the godly sense—knowledge in "the gift of God" sense—and I'm talking about wisdom in "the gift of God" sense and in the scriptural sense. This is an example.

Now, together (look at verse 12): And Adam and Eve blessed the name of God. And how did they do that? They did that by a ritual. They did that by offering sacrifice. They did that by observing what they understood, but they did it together. And they [it is "they"—they] made all things known unto their sons and daughters (Moses 5:12, emphasis added; see also Genesis 3:4). This isn't Adam preaching repentance; this isn't Eve preaching repentance. This is they; this is the two of them. They are equally yoked. This is the two of them joined together to make the declaration—they together. The two of them, however (beginning in verse 12), begin to make all things known unto their sons and daughters, after they had been adequately prepared to understand and to make the declaration.

My God, people! What are you thinking!? What on earth are you thinking? Do you read these scriptures? Do you recognize that the salvation and eternal life of your children hangs in the balance by the ignorance that you visit upon them? Do you understand that their salvation may be lost entirely because the responsibility devolving upon you to teach, preach, exhort, and expound (both the man and the woman, both mother and father) has been imposed upon you by God?

You have to take time on Sunday (if that's the way you're going to spend your Sabbath) educating your children about the foolishness that they just heard and about the vanity and the pride that has just been visited upon them. You need to inoculate them against the errors of our day, and you need to ensure that they understand the truth. Because if you simply turn them loose to hear what they hear there—I don't care if you go to a Lutheran Church or a Catholic Church or a Baptist Church—you're not gonna get anything more redemptive out of what now is taught in the Primary programs of the Church than what you can get in these others. And, in fact, some of them may even do a better job because they preach and focus upon Jesus; they don't have a hierarchy to point to to say, "Look at that man, and he'll get you somewhere! He's got a key, and all you have to be is some keyhole" [laughter].

Children need to be taught. Children need to be challenged. Children are the most inquisitive creatures on the planet. Children are eager to learn. They not only don't know a lot, they know they don't know a lot. They're sponges. They want to learn. Boring a child about the gospel of Jesus Christ is an offense to the child and an offense to God! Preach the gospel to them. Tell them the truth. Take the material and challenge them to see that this gospel is infinite in scope, that Joseph Smith did not (indeed, could not) have written the Book of Mormon, that there are at least two voices that appear in the dialogue that we looked at yesterday in the book of Ether, that one of them never uses the word "prayer," and the other one never uses the word "cry."

Show them from the scriptures what it means to be saved. You will be astonished at how much children are capable of understanding! But I have to warn you, when you begin to teach your children, if you decide to discharge your obligation to them, you're gonna make them strangers and foreigners and sojourners—and you're gonna have to find other people who are like-minded and willing to teach their children and discharge their responsibility, so that your kids know that there's more than just your family that's interested in comprehending the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Look, go to D&C section 88. I wanna read this and take a slightly different view of it. Beginning at verse 119 of Doctrine and Covenants section 88:

Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God; That your incomings may be in the name of the Lord; that your outgoings may be in the name of the Lord; that all your salutations may be in the name of the Lord, with uplifted hands unto the Most High. Therefore, cease from all your light speeches, from all laughter, from all your lustful desires, from all your pride and light-mindedness, and from all your wicked doings. Appoint among yourselves a teacher, and let not all be spokesmen at once; but let one speak at a time and let all listen unto his sayings, that when all have spoken that all may be edified of all, that every man may have an equal privilege. See that ye love one another; cease to be covetous; learn to impart one to another as the gospel requires. Cease to be idle; cease to be unclean; cease to find fault one with another; cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to your bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated. And above

all things, clothe yourselves with a bond of charity, as with a mantle, which is the bond of perfectness and peace. Pray always, that ye may not faint, until I come. Behold, and lo, I will come quickly, and receive you unto myself. Amen. (D&C 88:119-126; see also T&C 86:29-30)

Think of this as a description of you (as husband), you (as wife), and your children. And make your house this house. Make this your family: a family of prayer, a family of fasting, a family of faith, a family of learning; therefore, a family of glory—which will bring about a family of order; and therefore, a house of God.

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The foregoing excerpts were taken from:

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