

Denver Snuffer Podcast 173: Cry Peace, Part 2

In this series, Denver addresses the importance of becoming peacemakers, learning to live together peacefully, and crying peace in these last days.

DENVER: Listen, if you're faithful to the Lord, you have no reason to pick a fight with anyone else. Our Lord was a peacemaker. We ought to be peacemakers as well.

The more we contend and dispute with one another the better we become at contention. We polish the rhetorical skills to oppose others. That spirit of contention can take possession of us and when it does, we are hard-pressed to be a peacemaker with others. Christ said: *"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."* (Matt. 5:7-9).

But peace should not be made at the cost of truth. Truth must be the only goal. Truth, however, belongs to God. Our desires, appetites and passions are prone to make us stray well beyond the bounds set by God.

- Therefore, when our pride is gratified, we should question if what we are advancing is truth.
- When our ambition is served, we should question if we are in the Lord's employ or our own.
- When we insist upon control, we should question if we are like our Lord or instead like His adversary.
- When we use any means for compelling others, we should wonder if we are mocking the God who makes the sun to shine and rain to fall on all His fallen children without compulsion.
- When we display unrighteous dominion, we should question whether we are worthy of any dominion at all.

Our tools must be limited to persuasion, gentleness, meekness, love unfeigned, pure knowledge, all of them mustered "without compulsory means" to persuade others to accept the truth. And if we fail to make the persuasive case then the problem is not others, the problem is that we've yet to figure out how to be sufficiently knowledgeable so as to bring them aboard.

There is so much left to be done. I know that we can't jump hastily from point to point along the way and that we have to carefully proceed with every step. But it's astonishing to me the steps that people decide to get hung up on and to spend a great deal of time, when time could better be spent moving further along on the path. I don't know what it will take to get people to enthusiastically welcome and to move along with alacrity on the pathway that the prophecies foretell someone is going to achieve in the last days. Because it seems like all that murmuring that we read about in the Book of Exodus going on in the camp of Israel,

when we scratch our heads and say, why are they complaining about missing the fleshpots of Egypt when God is leading them with a pillar of smoke by day and a pillar of fire by night? One would think that you'd be happy eating manna in the wilderness if you knew God was with you.

I also think that in our current state of technological development it's possible for the discontent to magnify the voice electronically over the Internet and to make any level of discontent seem to be much greater than it really is. But if one person is discontent and 500 people are arguing with the one who is discontent it appears that the argument includes at least half a thousand, maybe more. As between one another, that is every one of us, because every one of us is involved in a relationship with one another; you choose. Mind you, Christ could have disputed, he could have corrected, he could have challenged every one of the ongoing religious and social conventions of his day. *You are doing that wrong. Oh, you should stop doing that. Would you quit it! And by the way, you're so dark in your mind that I don't know where it begins, except for him, he's worse, and then her. Oh!* [cross talk and audience laughter]

How much of the gospel of Christ would not have been possible for Him to preach if He'd gone about contending? He chose not to. In that respect, perhaps His most godly example was the patience with which He dealt with those around him; kindly, patiently, correcting them when they largely came to Him with questions trying to trap Him, but affirmatively stating in the Sermon on the Mount how you could take any group of people and turn them into Zion itself, if we would live the Sermon on the Mount.

I figure that I'm not that good a teacher because it appears to me that there are a lot of mistakes being made that are perfectly avoidable. I don't take King Benjamin's statement that the number of errors that people can make, the number of sins that people can commit are endless, there is no way to possibly number them, as I don't take that as consoling words. I take that as a challenge to say, *Okay, but your people did find peace among one another.* And even Enoch's people found peace among one another. Melchizedek was called the Prince of Peace because he preached but what he preached was repentance. The office of the ministering of angels is to spread the message of repentance. So then all of us have an obligation there, to join in the same thing, repenting, turning to face God. The more we face Him, the more light we take in, the more differently we behave, individually and in connection with each other.

I am certain we will see Zion because it's been promised and it's been prophesied from the beginning of time. When father Adam prophesied, being overcome by the Spirit in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and foretold what would happen to his posterity down to the latest generations, Zion was pointed to. Therefore, from the days of Adam on, all the holy prophets have looked forward to that as the essential moment in the history of the world, because Christ will come and will redeem the world. It will be the end of the wicked; it will be the beginning of something far better. That's been the hope, that's been the promise, that's been what they've looked forward to. I wonder how many of us share that same longing, that same hope, that same desire that originated in the beginning, because if we don't subdue our desires, appetites, and passions enough to try and deal peaceably one

with another, choosing deliberately to not contend, even when we know people are wrong. When Christ was confronted and he corrected the error he corrected only that error, he didn't go on with a list of other weaknesses, failings and challenges, He only addressed the one that was put to him.

We have an opportunity. We have a bona fide, actual offer from God to allow us to be that generation in which the promises get fulfilled. But we have the freedom of choice that allows us to elect to be stubborn, to be contentious, to be agents of disruption, and to discourage and break the hearts of those who would willingly accept the challenge to repent and follow God.

Now it's also possible, in fact it's probable, that at some point what the Lord will do is gather out a remnant of the remnant, gather out a few, and how many are essential in order for the promises to be fulfilled? I'm certain there is a minimum and I'm fairly confident that the minimum can be counted on your two hands, but there is no maximum. We're not going to just have eight people on the ark; there can be more, there can be many more. The upper number is practically limitless. There is a minimum but heavens, why would anyone want that?

Jacob (called James in the King James Bible) mentioned *wisdom* in his letter. In contemplating Her, Jacob suggested we should be *easy to be entreated*.

*Who is a wise man, and endowed with knowledge among you? Let him show out of good conduct his works with meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descends not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish; for where envying and strife are, there [is] confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is **first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, of them that make peace.*** (Epistle of Jacob 1:14 RE, emphasis added)

Wisdom from above can endow us with the kindly demeanor of brothers and sisters who seek what is good for one another. How often are the words of our mouths froward and perverse? The Divine Mother refuses to speak wickedness and abominations, and Her influence brings others to depart from such failures.

Continuing:

They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge. Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. (Proverbs 8:9-11; see also Proverbs 1:35 RE)

Proclaiming *wisdom is better than rubies*, She asks us to receive Her instruction rather than seek silver and gold. Nothing else is to be compared with Her wisdom. She instructs in virtues that would make any person better. But Her instruction will also make living in peace with others possible. Nothing in this world is more desirable than acquiring wisdom—understanding and putting knowledge to wise use. Zion will require the wisdom to use pure knowledge in meekness, humility, and charity. Zion will require Her influence.

The idea that a Heavenly Mother exists is implicit in the scriptures. But because it is not explicit, a person can have faith that God exists without understanding the duality of the Heavenly Parents. Likewise, the character, perfections, and attributes do not require anybody to understand what is explained in this talk.

Their character, perfections, and attributes are: mercy, righteousness, love, compassion, and truthfulness. They are without partiality, no respecter of persons, regarding all alike. They make the sun to shine and the rain to fall on both the righteous and the wicked. They regard wickedness as an abomination. They prize truth, meekness, and peacemakers. They abhor the froward, prideful, evil, and arrogant. They are full of grace and truth and are more intelligent than us all. They are the Creators and will be the final judges of this cycle of existence, and no one will be permitted to progress further without Their permission. There is nothing vile or perverse about Them. They are repelled by contention and seek for us all to associate with one another equally, as brothers and sisters. They are *perfect* in the sense of having completed the journey to the end of the path and entered into eternal lives and exaltation. They now seek to guide Their children along the same path.

The light of Christ is withdrawing from the world, and darkness continues to spread. If you have the Spirit, you can see clearly the steady decline of light in the world. It's obvious. The increasing darkness will eventually result in the wicked slaying the wicked as has happened in two previous civilizations on this land.

The Book of Mormon describes how this happens: *The spirit of the Lord had ceased striving with them and Satan had full power over the hearts of the people, for they were given up unto the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds, that they might be destroyed* (Ether 6:17 RE). *God will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous* (1 Nephi 7:4 RE). He has declared, *The wicked shall destroy the wicked, and I will hold the peacemakers in the palm of my hand and none can take them from me* (T&C 157:65).

But being among the peacemakers and being among those who are **not** covered in darkness requires practicing charity towards those who are in need. It enlarges your heart. It increases the light within you. It makes you **feel** better when you minister to and help those who are in need. All of that is godliness.

When Joseph Smith restored Enoch's record (now found in Genesis), Joseph learned about the last days' Zion. It revealed, *And 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* (Genesis 4:14 RE).

I do not believe this was their ancient goal, but it was a byproduct. Such a society cannot be organized but can be gathered. Individuals rarely are able to persuade one another through arguing to expose the other man's error.

Even among people who keep their eyes on the Lord and pay no heed to their neighbor's failure still must grow to become:

- People who refuse to judge and belittle others;
- Those who are humbled by the opportunity to build a house of God;
- Those who refuse to become an accuser.

Even among humble people the Lord can use to restore His house, there will be many things on which to disagree. Therefore, we should ask ourselves:

- What if I don't need to always be right?
- What if you don't need to be wrong?
- What if we don't need to debate?
- Can people with different backgrounds be of one heart?
- Can we have different ideas, value one another, and be of one mind?
- Is it possible to disagree with one another about meanings of Scriptures and still dwell in righteousness?
- Can we explore, consider, and respectfully discuss incomplete or inaccurate ideas?
- What if *no poor among us* includes sharing the wealth of diverse and interesting ideas?

This path of sober, thoughtful, open welcoming of differences is the only way first steps can be taken. We cannot jump into Zion. We must crawl there on bended knee, asking the Lord to bring us there. He's given us a blueprint in the Answer and Covenant. His word to us is:

You think Satan will be bound a thousand years, and it will be so, but you do not understand your own duty to bind that spirit within you so that you give no heed to accuse others. It is not enough to say you love God; you must also love your fellow man. Nor is it enough to say you love your fellow man while you, as Satan, divide, contend, and dispute against any person who labors on an errand seeking to do my will. How you proceed must be as noble as the cause you seek. You have become your own adversaries, and you cannot be Satan and also be mine. Repent, therefore, like Peter and end your unkind and untrue accusations against one another, and make peace. How shall there ever come a thousand years of peace if the people who are mine do not love one another?...

*I speak of you who have hindered my work, that claim to see plainly the beams in others' eyes. You have claimed to see plainly the error of those who have abused my words, and neglect the poor, and who have cast you out — to discern **their** errors, and you say you seek a better way. Yet among you are those who continue to scheme, backbite, contend, accuse, and forsake my words to do them, even while you seek to recover them. Can you not see that your works fall short of the beliefs you profess?...*

Be of one heart, and regard one another with charity. Measure your words before giving voice to them, and consider the hearts of others. Although a man may err in understanding concerning many things, yet he can view his brother with charity and come unto me, and through me he can with patience overcome the world. I can bring him to understanding and knowledge. Therefore, if you regard one another with charity, then your brother's error in understanding will not divide you. (T&C 157:10,18,53, emphasis added)

We need to be wiser than the society in which we presently live. We can build a new society that will eventually have people who are at peace with one another, living in righteousness, and having all things in common, but that is still years ahead.

As mentioned earlier, the Lord has taught this principle: *Nevertheless, in your temporal things you shall be equal in all things, and this not grudgingly; otherwise, the abundance of the manifestations of the spirit shall be withheld* (T&C 61:4). This begins with preparing a place for gathering. And there will be required:

- a water supply;
- a wastewater system;
- roads;
- some form of energy;
- a temple for meetings, instruction, and conferences.

These things are necessary to come first and will make water commonly and equally available, hygiene commonly and equally available, movement through open roads and trails commonly and equally available, and access to heat and light commonly and equally available.

We take much of these things for granted, but these things currently tie us to Babylon. There are great calamities soon to befall the world. God's people are to escape *the tribulation which shall descend upon you, that you may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the Celestial world* (T&C 70:4) by the work they have accomplished beforehand. God will instruct, but we must do the work.

There will be many skills needed. Blacksmiths, carpenters, farmers, ranchers, electricians, plumbers, roofers, and every practical skill will be needed. Many skills are lost to urban dwellers. We need to recover those lost skills.

The route to equality is forged through united effort to accomplish the instructions we are given. Unity will lead to equality.

Anyone uninterested in helping prepare a community of equals will naturally and inevitably not have prepared a place for them to gather. As Amulek put it, *Ye cannot say when ye are brought to that awful crisis that I will repent, [and] that I will return to my God* (Alma 16:37 RE) because it'll then be too late. So, we have work to do, and it will need to be done in an orderly way.

I know of no people who are trying to bring Zion today. There have been and are utopians who band together to share resources. Utopian societies are usually missing a religious foundation. Their groups, more often than not, result in aberrant sexual sin, drug use, and disobedient conduct offensive to God. However hopeful a beginning these communities may have, wickedness cannot be peaceful for long.

We are asked to prepare so we can begin to found Zion. But preparing or even beginning is not the same thing as accomplishing. Whether anything can or will be accomplished must be **proven**. It cannot just be claimed. Braggarts do not impress heaven and have no claim to any title or status they have not first lived.

The Lord is offering an opportunity. He's promised to labor alongside to help us reach the prophesied Zion. With His help, Zion is possible. But we can fail—and Zion be left for another people in another time.

The greatest false spirit of all is the one that inspires you to accuse your brethren, condemn your sisters, and judge others unfairly. This is Satan. We cannot be Satan and also be the Lord's.

I believe we will see Zion established. Sadly, I do not think all can be gathered. Those who find fault now will surely find fault when people start to sacrifice and hard work is expected. It makes little sense to assemble the discontent, angry, and bitter souls into a community seeking to find peace. Zion *shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another* (T&C 31:15). That promise of the Lord's cannot be fulfilled by people fighting a *war of words and [a] tumult of opinions* (Joseph Smith History 2:3 RE). It was such fighting about religious differences that inspired Joseph Smith to ask God for answers. His inquiry led to the Restoration. But Joseph's Restoration has now lapsed into infighting and dividing into separate sects. Our modest return to restoring is not yet free from a tumult of conflicting opinions.

Preparing people to welcome God remains the Restoration's great objective. That will require all of us to humble ourselves before God and eagerly respond to the opportunity He offers us. Prayerfully choose a needed skill and learn it. Spinning thread, weaving fabric, producing paper, making cheese, drying fruit and vegetables, beekeeping, and egg production are all useful for an isolated community, particularly if the larger, more complex society falls into disarray and is unable to provide goods and services.

We have a daunting challenge before us. It will require minds, hearts, hands, and backs to accomplish it. Preparation needs to begin now. It will be followed by an orderly gathering, not in haste but with guidance from above.

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.

And 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—because *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.

I want to look at what was said to Joseph that we find in the Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis chapter 50, beginning at verse 24. Joseph of Egypt says: *The Lord [hath] visited me and I have obtained [a] promise of the Lord.* This is what Lehi will refer (to in his prophecy to his son Joseph) as a covenant. Because when the Lord delivers a promise to someone, He delivers it by way of covenant. God is bound by His word. Therefore, when He delivers a promise, it is a covenant.

*I have obtained a promise of the Lord, that out of the fruit of my loins [this is the covenant with Joseph of Egypt—out of **his** loins], the Lord God will raise up a righteous **branch** out of **my** loins [so that is talking about Joseph of Egypt, one of the sons of Israel, one of the twelve tribes]; And [now we're changing topics—and] unto **thee**, whom my father Jacob hath named Israel [so this is not just the descendants of Joseph, this is **all** of the twelve tribes, raised up unto **all** of the twelve tribes] a prophet; (not the Messiah who is called Shilo;) and **this** prophet shall deliver my people out of Egypt in the days of thy bondage [that's a covenant about deliverance to be had for all the tribes of Israel, not merely the descendants of Joseph].*

*And it shall come to pass that they [that is, all of Israel] shall be scattered again; and a branch shall be broken off, and shall be carried into a far country; nevertheless they shall be remembered in the covenants of the Lord, when the Messiah cometh; for he shall be made manifest unto them in the latter days [now, when is **that**? Is it when he was resurrected, and he appears in Third Nephi? Or is the "latter-days" some other time?], in the Spirit of power; and shall bring them out of darkness into light; out of hidden darkness, and out of captivity unto freedom.*

*A **seer** shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of **my** [that is, Joseph's] loins [different topic, different person, different time frame].*

*Thus saith the Lord God of **my fathers** [this is Joseph speaking—his fathers would include, at a minimum, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; his "fathers," in the plural] unto me [so the Lord God of Joseph's fathers said unto him], A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy [that is, Joseph's] loins...he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy [that is, Joseph's] loins; and unto him will I give [a] commandment that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy [that is, Joseph's] loins, **[and] his brethren** [that is, other members of Israel].*

*And he shall bring them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made **with thy fathers**.... (JST Genesis 50:24-28, emphasis added; see also Genesis 12:36-38 RE)*

Now we're beginning to have laid out in the restoration through Joseph Smith, part of what it is that we need to know in order to avoid being utterly wasted.

*He [the seer] shall do whatsoever work I shall command him. And I will make him great in mine eyes, for he shall do my work; and he [that is, Joseph of Egypt's descendant—"seer"] he shall be great like unto **him** whom I have said I would raise up unto you, to deliver my people, O house of Israel ["him" that he's going to raise up is Moses, okay?] ...for a seer will I raise up to deliver my people out of the land of Egypt [this is Moses]; he shall be called Moses. And by this name he shall [be known] that he is of thy house [that is, "O, house of Israel"— that's the house, not Joseph's—the House of Israel]; for he shall be nursed by the king's daughter, and shall be called her son.*

And again [so we're changing topics again] a seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy [that is, Joseph's] loins, and unto him [that is, this seer] will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins [that's Joseph's seer—and he's to give us God's word]... (ibid, vs. 28-30; see also Genesis 12:38-39 RE)

And then he goes on to say in verse 31 (39 RE):

*The fruit of thy loins [that is, Joseph's loins] shall write, ...the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; ...that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins, ...also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together unto the confounding of false [doctrine], ...laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins [a yet future event], and bringing them to a knowledge of their **fathers** in the latter days; and also to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord.*

Joseph's seer is to do this. This is what Moroni is telling Joseph in verse 39 of the Joseph Smith History.

*Out of weakness shall he be made strong, in that day when my work shall go forth among **all** my people ["all my people" include all of the various branches of Israel], which shall restore **them**, who are of the house of Israel, in the last days. (JST Genesis 50:32, emphasis added; see also Genesis 12:39 RE)*

That's the objective. To fix and reconnect the house of Israel, restoring them in the last days.

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.

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.”

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**. 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 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 is 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...]. 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 chapter 12, verses 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 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.

The foregoing excerpts were taken from:

- Denver's fireside talk on "The Temple", given in Ogden, UT on October 28th, 2012
- A fireside talk titled "That We Might Become One", given in Clinton, UT on January 14th, 2018
- Denver's conference talk titled "Our Divine Parents" given in Gilbert, AZ on March 25th, 2018
- Denver's conference talk titled "The Heavens are Open", given in Hurricane, UT on March 22, 2020
- His 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