

Denver Snuffer Podcast 192: Family of God, Part 2

This is part two of a series about the Family of God, what it consists of, and how it is and will be organized.

DENVER: So, well. Joseph Smith said on page 308 of *The Teachings of the Prophet [Joseph Smith]*, “If a man gets a fullness of the priesthood of God, he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments, and by obeying all the ordinances of [~~the house of God~~] the house of the Lord.”

I wanna suggest that if you define the house of God as a temple—a building with walls and a spire and an angel on top—if that’s your definition, okay, then there are an infinite number of things that can interfere with your ability to accomplish this, one of them being that the temple has been defiled. Another one of them being that the ordinances have been changed; and therefore, the covenant has been broken. Another of them being that the officiator who shows up has left his adulterous paramour to come in and perform the sealing. And so, there’s any number of ways in which you—at the altar, kneeling in good-faith—have no way of knowing whether or not you can do this, and therefore... Oh, oh, oh, you can let your doubts lay hold upon you.

Let me read it to you again though and offer another definition. “If a man gets a fullness of the priesthood of God, he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments, and obeying all the ordinances of the house of the Lord.” I wanna redefine that “house”—not in terms of physical structure, but in terms of familial relationship, in which God alone establishes His house, and that too, by acknowledging who His sons and daughters are. **That house** can never be overtaken, touched, trampled, broken, forsaken, compromised, or adulterated, because man is powerless. And so, when the house of God is to be set in order in the last days, don’t think of that as a movement that you’re awaiting for someone else to accomplish. How do you not know that the One Mighty and Strong, to be sent to set in order the house of God, is not Jesus Christ himself, waiting to minister to all those who will come to Him? Because receiving our Lord is, in itself, an ordinance.

Now, keeping in mind everything I’ve said, now we’re really gonna parse the scriptures in a way that may not yet have occurred to you, but I find perfectly delightful. Doctrine and Covenants section 132; I wanna begin at verse 8. And I want you to remember what I’ve said the house of God is.

*Behold, mine house is a house of order, saith the Lord God, and not a house of confusion. Will I accept...an offering, saith the Lord, that is not made in my name? Or will I receive at your hands that which **I** have not appointed? And will I appoint unto you, saith the Lord, except it be by law, even as I and my Father ordained unto you, **before the world was**? I am the Lord thy God; and I give unto you this commandment—that no man shall come unto the Father but by me or by my word, which is my law, saith the Lord. And **everything** that is in the world, whether it be*

ordained of men, [or] by thrones, or [by] 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 [or] after the resurrection, saith the Lord your God. For whatsoever things remain are by me; and whatsoever things are not by me shall be shaken and destroyed (D&C 132:8-14, emphasis added).

The Powers of Heaven. And this is the reason why that third form of priesthood is so rare a commodity—because even the angels desire to inquire into it, but the angels don't possess it. And it doesn't matter if, in that hierarchy of those that exist on the other side of the veil, you manage to wrestle something from those who are powers there and possess thrones or principalities. God is saying in this revelation—if you understand the words—that even His **angels** (and those who have ascended far up) must, in every case, only establish that which comes by the will and covenant of the Son and the Father: the Son, because He possesses the keys to do so; the Father, because He is the one from whom the original covenant began in the pre-existence. So, don't think, because you've had an angel promise you something... In Doctrine and Covenants section 132, you have to connect up with the Father.

In the first meeting at Adam-ondi-Ahman, Adam was not considered to be among those who were mortal because Adam had begun life in the Garden in the presence of God. Therefore, mortals who were born into the mortal realm in that meeting began with Seth. The seven who gathered at Adam-ondi-Ahman were mortal because they were born outside of God's presence. And they were restored again into God's presence at the meeting at Adam-ondi-Ahman.

The fact is that that same thing that was in the beginning will be in the end of the world, also. That's the covenant; that's the promise; that's the destiny—and God will surely fulfill that.

The last days' Zion is connected with the rights of the Fathers. And I talked about covenants. And I talked about the preliminaries. And in Centerville there was some material that is relevant to this topic. From Adam to Noah and then to Melchizedek there was an unbroken chain of both priesthood, on the one hand, and father-to-son descent, on the other hand. There was literally “a family of God” that began with Adam as the son of God, and it descended then, generation after generation, until Melchizedek in an unbroken chain. But then there was an apostasy from that Order. As a result of the apostasy from that Order, the chain got broken. And because the chain got broken (like we looked at in Centerville), it was the hope of Abraham to reconnect that chain.

I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same [that is, the rights of the fathers]; having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge and [possess a greater knowledge, be a greater follower] and to be a [and this doesn't make much sense unless you comprehend what it was that he was looking at, and you are convinced that what he was looking at is exactly that Order that began with Adam; he was desiring to be a] father of many nations, a prince of peace, and desiring

to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God, I 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, 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. (Abraham 1:2-3; see also Abraham 1:1 RE)

This is what Abraham sought. And the reason Abraham sought that was because he understood that once that connection had been broken that he needed to turn his heart to the fathers so that he, Abraham, would not be smitten with the curse of apostasy. Therefore, he sought for the “blessings of the fathers.”

Now, in this late moment in time—in this late period of the generations of humanity—I don't think we can much aspire to being one of the Fathers because, well, they were established long ago. But we ought to be turning our hearts to the Fathers. And we ought to be seeking also for what it was Abraham was seeking for... Not to become, ourselves, but to become connected—not as a Father but as a descendant, as a son or daughter.

When Abraham reconnected into the Fathers, Abraham was again able to perpetuate an unbroken chain from himself to Isaac, and Isaac in turn to Jacob, and Jacob in turn to Joseph, and Joseph in turn to Ephraim, to whom passed the right of the Fathers or the right of the firstborn—even though Isaac wasn't firstborn; Jacob wasn't firstborn; Joseph wasn't firstborn; and Ephraim wasn't firstborn. And yet they were all the firstborn because they received the inheritance by right, and it was conferred upon them by right. Therefore, they were the firstborn. Five generations in which the ancient pattern, through the faith of Father Abraham, returned and “took”—it actually endured for five more generations.

Well, Jacob gave a blessing to Joseph that we find in the book of Genesis chapter 49, verse 26: *The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren* (see also Genesis 12:29 RE). As a consequence of that, the latter-day Zion must be brought through Joseph. He's the one upon whom the blessing devolved, and interestingly enough, he passed that on to Ephraim, not to Manasseh. And interestingly enough, though Manasseh was the lineage through which Lehi's family descended, the prophecy I read you about the blessings being conferred in the last days are to come through the hand of Ephraim. (There's something afoot.) And it's going to come through Joseph at “the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.”

I don't know how many of you've spent much time in Missouri, but the hills there aren't “everlasting.” They're almost so diminutive as to be undetectable. And if you happen to be in a cornfield or around some trees, they're altogether gone. Because that terrain was never the terrain prophesied as being the location when the blessing was given by Father Jacob to Father Joseph.

Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah chapter 2, verses 2 and 3:

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it...

In this context, in this prophecy, “all nations” is not Russia and China and Ethiopia and Uzbekistan and Turk-crap-istan and I’m-a-nut-istan [laughter]. “All nations,” in this context, means all the 12 tribes of Israel. The “nations” are the 12 tribes of Israel, period. That’s it. That’s who’s gonna flow unto it. So, you won’t need an international airport. Nor will you need to host the Olympics.

The mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, ...let us go up to the...house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths...

The paths of God lie in the heavens. So, if you’re going to learn to walk in His paths, you’re going to have to learn how to walk in the heavens.

For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. (Isaiah 2:2-3; see also Isaiah 1:5 RE)

The “ensign” that is prophesied to be established—in the context, in the meaning of that day—had reference to a zodiacal, a constellation, a depiction of the heavens themselves. So, when an ensign is going to be reared and it’s going to tell you about how to walk in the paths of God, this is talking about something very, very different than what most of us today would envision. Zion is going to be a connection between heaven and earth. And at that place, you will learn of the God of Jacob's ways, and you will walk in His paths—because Heaven and earth will be connected, and the stairway connecting the two will be open. And the heavens and the earth will be reunited again. And this is going to happen in the top of the mountains.

Doctrine and Covenants section 77:2 includes the statement: *...that which is spiritual being in the likeness of that which is temporal; ...that which is temporal in the likeness of that which is spiritual* (see also T&C 74:2).

D&C 88, verses 15 to 16: *...the spirit and the body are the soul of man. And the resurrection from the dead is the redemption of the soul* (see also T&C 86:2). This definition was given by revelation to Joseph Smith in 1832. Three years later in 1835, Chandler came through and sold the mummies to Joseph Smith. He did not bother translating the end part of the book of Abraham, as we have it, until the 1840s in Kirtland (or excuse me, in Nauvoo). But when he translated it in Nauvoo, he knew the definition of what a “soul” was, that is, *[a] spirit and [a] body*. When he translated the book of Abraham... In Abraham chapter 3, verse 23, speaking of those in the pre-existence, he says: *God saw these **souls** that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These [will I] make my rulers; for he stood among those **that were spirits*** (see also Abraham 6:1 RE). They were **souls**—possessing,

therefore, a spirit and a body. And they were **spirits** because they had not come down yet in the beginning to be in **this** condition. And it's speaking about *the noble and great* (ibid).

By the way, I talked before about the definition of “rulers” in the Gentile world, and that’s someone who exercises authority over them. In the vernacular of both the Book of Mormon and in the vernacular found here, “rulers” in the house of God have nothing to do with dominion over someone else. A “ruler” is someone who teaches. A ruler is someone who is able to give an accurate gauge by which to measure things. A ruler is someone who teaches the truth. If you would want to be a ruler in the house of God, then you have to be someone who declares and teaches the truth.

Take a look at Alma chapter 13—because this is where it becomes very important for **us**. Alma chapter 13, beginning at verse 17:

*Now this Melchizedek was a king over the land of Salem; and his people had waxed strong in iniquity and abomination; yea, they had **all** gone astray; they were **full** of all manner of wickedness [**this is his audience**]. But Melchizedek having exercised mighty faith, ...received the office of the high priesthood according to the holy order of God, did preach repentance unto his people. And behold, they **did** repent; and Melchizedek did establish peace in the land in his days; therefore he was called the prince of peace, for he was the king of Salem; and he did reign under his father.* (emphasis added; see also Alma 10:2 RE)

First, he received this priesthood. Second, he preached repentance. But nothing would have happened except for, third, the people who heard him **did** repent. And because of that, people who are described as having *waxed strong in iniquity*, people who are described as being captivated by *abomination[s]*, people who have **all gone astray** turned out to be the very people among whom this City of Peace got established. But **they** did it. They did it by **repentance**. This isn't something Melchizedek pulled off, this is something that the **people** accomplished, and they accomplished it because of **their repentance**.

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.

This is seven things. Seven is a symbolic number that gets used to signify the completion or the perfection of something. **Finish** your house. It has yet to be built if you haven't built upon that foundation. Let this description not be of some multi-million-dollar building that's built somewhere using the finances you donate to the organization. Make this **you**. Make this **your** people. **You** should be the temple of God.

That building involves a ritual designed to depict the coming back into the presence of God. Make that ritual a reality in the lives of you and your children. "Where two or three are gathered in my name;" make it possible for Him to come and be with you. Make it possible for Him and the angels themselves to take note and to say, "Look! It's beginning again! There is faith again on the earth, and the children are being taught. We must act! Let us go down and gather them." Make yourselves worthy of preservation. Get your own houses in order.

Every dispensation of the Gospel has left only a remnant behind. Christ's work is designed to preserve a remnant and, at the end, gather **all** remnants together again. The Restoration that was given through the Prophet Joseph Smith has likewise put itself in a position where, now, it can only produce a remnant—but one that will be preserved and not abandoned.

In Third Nephi chapter 21, the Lord talked about some things that become exceptionally relevant in light of what we've covered today.

And verily I say unto you, I give unto you a sign, that [you] may know the time when these things shall be about to take place—that I shall gather in, from their long dispersion, my people, O house of Israel, and...establish again among them my Zion [this is addressing all of those various remnants, wherever that they may be found, so long as they are some residue of the house of Israel]. And behold, this is the [sign] which I will give unto you for a sign—for verily I say unto you that when these things which I declare unto you, and which I shall declare unto you hereafter of myself, and by the power of the Holy Ghost which shall be given unto you of the Father, shall be made known unto the Gentiles [see, the Gentiles had to first receive some things] that they [the Gentiles] may know concerning this people who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, and concerning this my people who shall be scattered by them [the Gentiles]. Verily, verily, I say unto you, when these things shall be made known unto them [some

constituent group of Gentiles] *of the Father, and shall come forth of the Father, from them unto you...* (3 Nephi 21:1-3)

It can't come from any source other than from the Father—the Father and Christ being one—the authority to minister and to deliver it coming from Them, the power to baptize being brought forth from some remnant of the Gentiles who care to bear it.

For it is wisdom in the Father that they [the Gentiles] should be established in this land, and be set up as a free people by the power of the Father, that these things might come forth from them unto a remnant of your seed, that the covenant of the Father may be fulfilled which he hath covenanted [~~with this people~~] with his people, O house of Israel. (Ibid, vs. 4)

"O house of Israel" is much more. "O house of Israel" is that same inclusive of all bits and remnants, wherever they may be found. I talked about covenants when we were in Centerville and about the fulfillment of the covenants. **All** of the covenants which apply to people scattered everywhere, all of those included within the previous remnants—they need to be gathered into one constituent group.

*Therefore, when these works and the works which shall be wrought among you hereafter shall come forth **from** the Gentiles...* (Ibid, vs. 5, emphasis added)—

Not their "book"; their **works**. Not their "book"; the works: bringing to pass the Doctrine of Christ, establishing repentance, declaring and baptizing by the authority of Christ, having people visited by fire and the Holy Ghost—these are the works. These are the works.

*...shall come forth from the Gentiles, unto your seed which shall dwindle in unbelief because of iniquity; For thus it behooveth the Father that it **should** come forth from the Gentiles, that he may show forth his power unto the Gentiles. (Ibid, vs. 5-6, emphasis added)*

That's what He needs now to do. That's what He intends **to** do—if you will receive it.

*For this cause that the Gentiles, if they will not harden their hearts, that **they** may repent and come unto me and be baptized in my name and know of the true points of my doctrine, that **they** may be numbered among my people, O house of Israel. (Ibid, vs. 6, emphasis added)*

You can't get there except through the power of the doctrine and the power of the ordinance that God has given, in the way that is has been given, performed with the exactness, fidelity, and language that has been given to us by Christ Himself.

When these things come to pass that thy seed shall begin to know these things—it shall be a sign unto them, that they may know that the work of the Father hath already commenced unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he...made unto the people who are of the house of Israel. (Ibid, vs. 7)

All of them. It's a witness that His work has commenced.

And when that day shall come, it shall come to pass that kings shall shut their mouths; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider. For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and...marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them. But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil. Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause him to bring forth unto the Gentiles, and shall give unto him power that he shall bring [it] forth unto the Gentiles, (it shall be done even as Moses said) they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant. ...[whoever] will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ. (Ibid, vs. 8-11; see also 3 Nephi 9:11-12 RE)

These are Christ's words. We touched on these words all the way back in Boise. It was quoted by the angel Moroni, referring to Joseph Smith. Acts 3, verses 22 to 23:

For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

That prophet is Christ. It doesn't say Christ is going to come and deliver His words; it says, His "words." Those who *will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, ...they shall be cut off* (3 Nephi 21:11). And the angel Moroni said to Joseph, in verse 40 of the Joseph Smith History, *The day had not yet come when 'they who would not hear his voice should be cut off from among the people,' but soon would come* (see also Joseph Smith History 3:4 RE).

That prophet is Christ. His words are what I've spoken to you today.

And my people who are a remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, yea, in the midst of them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Their hand shall be lifted up upon their adversaries, and all their enemies shall be cut off. Yea, wo be unto the Gentiles except they repent; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots; And I will cut off the cities of thy [lands], and throw down all thy strongholds; And I will cut off witchcrafts out of [the] land, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers; Thy graven images will I also cut off... (3 Nephi 21:12-17)—

Graven images are people you worship. Graven images include men to whom you submit as objects or idols of authority in whom you trust, thinking that they can deliver you by some magic, using some key that they purport to hold, whether Catholic or Mormon or Fundamentalist. Graven images—they're going to be cut off.

*...thou shalt no more worship the works of thy hands; And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee; so will I destroy thy cities. And it shall come to pass that all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, shall be done away. For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel [that's all remnants gathered together]; And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard. But if they [speaking of the Gentiles—if **they**] will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance. (3 Nephi 21:17-22, emphasis added)—*

...because every time there's a covenant, there is always a land. And this is the land that God covenants He will give. And the people to whom He will give it are those that come back and receive the covenant, including the Gentiles **in whose ears** this first shall sound...if they will come. And coming unto the covenant—that is not yet possible. It requires more than has at present been given. It is possible to come in and become part of His church. It is possible, if you follow as you've been instructed today, to become part of the church He recognizes and will preserve. But coming fully into the covenant... That will require more than has at present be given. It will require a covenant. It will require adoption. It will require sealing. It was what Joseph looked forward to have happen at some point in the future during the days of his prophecy.

And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem. And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem. And then shall the power of heaven [in this case, it is the singular—it's not the "powers"—because when you have Him present with you, you have all the authority—then shall the power of heaven] come down among them; and I also will be in the midst. And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day... (Ibid, vs. 23-26)

Christ will come. Once the covenant has been renewed, the city of Zion will follow. The Lord's presence will come, and then the final stage begins.

...even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among...the dispersed of my people, yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem. Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may [be]come [in] unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name. Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance. And they shall go out from all nations; ...they shall not go out in haste, nor...by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward. (3 Nephi 21:26-29; see also 3 Nephi 9:12-10:1 RE)

It's not gonna happen in haste. And the work of the Father that will commence in those nations, to commence the possibility for the gathering, will involve destroying a great deal of political, social, and military obstructions that prevent the gathering, prevent even the preaching to those that would gather if they could hear. But the work of the Father (and it's always masculine when it comes to destruction)... The work of the Father is going to bring this to an end. All the scattered remnants will be brought back again. The original, unified family of God will be restored again. The Fathers will have our hearts turned to them because in that day, once it's permitted to get that far, we will be part of that family again.

If you're going to try and understand what **that** was about, you're going to have to throw away everything you think you understand about plural marriage and allow some things from the scriptures to penetrate.

Joseph Smith was doing something which did not just put together a man and a wife. He was doing something that put together families. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a mock-up of a family. It's a mock-up of the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with the First Presidency and the 12 sons of Jacob in the Quorum of the Twelve and the 70 descendants that went into Egypt when they migrated into Egypt when Joseph was counselor to Pharaoh that you can read in Exodus 1:5 (see also Exodus 1:1 RE). That's the church. It is a mock-up; it is an imitation; it is a facsimile of the family of Abraham. It is not the family of Abraham, but it is a powerful evidence that the family of Abraham is, in fact, something Joseph Smith was interested in restoring. Eventually, that which is a mockery is going to give way to that which is the family. First you have a schoolmaster, and then you have the reality. Joseph was headed to the reality, but he didn't get there in his day.

In the immediate aftermath of Joseph's death and the completion of the Nauvoo Temple, there was [were] a lot of questions that could not then be answered because they simply no longer had the keys with which to get the answers to the questions that were pressing upon them. If they didn't have the ability to ask and get an answer, then they couldn't get direction—and they **couldn't**. Therefore, what Joseph was doing was left without a culmination.

You can go out and.... There is physical proof in the restored Nauvoo Temple. You can see this on the website¹ (where the photograph was taken and put up—"Bare Record") where there's a place where the brick size changes in the construction of the Nauvoo Temple. They were making small bricks, and you can see how far up the small bricks run on the outside of the temple. When Joseph was killed, in order to complete the temple in greater haste, the size of the bricks increase; and so, there's a point in which the size of the bricks go from small to larger when they are hastening the work in which they're trying to get the building done. The level at which the temple had been completed at the time of the martyrdom essentially was a repetition of what had been built in the Kirtland Temple. It is the Solemn Assembly Room, 'kay?

Joseph never lived to tell anyone how to build the top of the Nauvoo Temple. So, when they got to the point that they were finishing the Nauvoo Temple, they didn't have any plans for

¹www.barerecord.blogspot.com

what happened in the attic area other than the rooms around the perimeter in which the priesthood was supposed to meet. And so, to create the ceremonial setting in which the Nauvoo Temple endowment companies were taken through, they took canvas that Joseph had ordered for a bowery (so they could get it out of the weather), and they took the canvas, and they made partitions in the attic area to divide the rooms up in which to present the endowment in the attic of the Nauvoo Temple. Had Joseph lived, he would have been able to finish out that space. He didn't live, and so, they did it with canvas. They did it as a temporary thing, and they administered the endowments in that setting.

In the process of administering those things, there was something that went on that they were **trying to imitate** what Joseph had been talking about. And Brigham Young makes an explanation shortly after they abandoned. I mean, the same month that they abandoned Nauvoo and they're heading west, he gives a talk in Winter Quarters in February of 1847. This is the 16th of February. They walked out of town on the 9th. This is a week later. He's talking about a subject that really defines what the entirety of this topic is really involved with:

The Lord introduced the law of adoption for the benefit of the children of men as a schoolmaster to bring them back to the covenant of the priesthood, not as some have supposed to add anything to his glory. This principle I answer is not clearly understood by many of the Elders in [of] this church at the present time as it will hereafter be, and I confess that I have had only a smattering of these things; but when it is necessary I will attain to more knowledge on the subject and consequently will be enabled to teach and practice more and will in the meantime glorify God, the bountiful giver.

The rest of that talk's interesting, and I would comment on it, but we don't have time. So, this is on the 16th of February. On the 23rd, another week later, Brigham Young gives another talk, and this talk is pointed to for one purpose. I wanna read you a more fulsome account and suggest to you the more important purpose, 'kay? This is that **great** occasion on which Brigham Young went to sleep and had a dream in which Joseph Smith appeared to him. And Joseph Smith... Well, let me read you the account. And I'm into the part where he's already introduced that he's dreaming, that he's seen Joseph, and that Joseph is now talking to him:

I then discovered there was a hand rail between us, Joseph stood by a window, and southwest of him it was very light. I was in the twilight and to the north of me it was very dark;

Joseph's in the light; Brigham's in the dark.

I said, "Brother Joseph, the brethren you know well, better than I do; you raised them up, and brought the Priesthood to us. The brethren have a great anxiety to understand the law of adoption or sealing principles; and if you have a word of counsel for me, I should be glad to receive it."

So now, of all the things about which Brigham Young could be talking to the Prophet Joseph Smith, on this occasion, the thing that comes thundering to the foreground that he would

like to know about is the law of adoption. He wants to know that, standing as he is in the dark:

Joseph stepped toward me, and looking very earnestly, yet pleasantly said, "Tell the people to be humble and faithful, be sure to keep the spirit of the Lord [and] it will lead them right. Be careful and not turn away the small voice; it will teach you what to do and where to go; it will yield the fruits of the kingdom. Tell the brethren to keep their hearts open to conviction, so that when the Holy Ghost comes to them, their hearts will be ready to receive it. They can tell the Spirit of the Lord from all other spirits; it will whisper peace and joy to their souls; it will take malice, hatred, strife and all evil from their hearts; and their whole desire will be to do good, bring forth righteousness and build up the kingdom of God. Tell the brethren if they will follow the spirit of the Lord they will go right. Be sure to tell the people to keep the Spirit of the Lord; and if they will, they will find themselves just as they were organized by our Father in Heaven before they came into the world. Our Father in Heaven organized the human family, but they are all disorganized and in great confusion.

And so, Joseph's answer to the pressing question of how do we go about getting these sealings right, is to say, "Oh, go get the Holy Ghost, and let the Holy Ghost guide you. God will get you organized." In other words, Joseph punted on the answer. It would do no good for the answer to be given if the authority with which to administer the answer was something that wasn't there.

After the days of Shem, who was renamed "Melchizedek," people fell into iniquity. They fell into iniquity, and they lost the birthright. There was no continuation of this. It was broken by an apostasy, and it had to be restored again, which ought to give all of us great hope because Abraham sought for this. He sought for a restoration of the kingdom of God. He sought for a restoration of this, which only one man on the earth can hold at a time. Abraham chapter 1, vs. 2 (LE; see also Abraham 1:1 RE):

And, finding there was greater happiness and peace and rest for me, I sought for the blessings of the fathers, 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, and to be a greater follower of righteousness, and [to] possess a greater knowledge, and to be a father of many nations, a prince of peace, [and] desiring to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God, I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers.

When you are in possession of that, you have no problem asking God and getting an answer. It is the right belonging to the Fathers. After a period of apostasy and the break of this line, Abraham received it by adoption. Therefore, this power has the ability to cure the break. This covenant-making through God has the ability to restore the family of God, even when wicked men kill in order to destroy it, even when a substitute needs to be made, even when the fathers turn from their righteousness, yet God is able to cause it to persist. And Joseph Smith was doing something which no one else either understood or had the right to perpetuate.

This continued through ten generations from Adam to Melchizedek, but through Abraham it continued five generations. And it appeared again once on the earth in a single generation that included Joseph and his brother Hyrum.

It was abundantly clear, according to Joseph, that the only way in which this kind of a welding link could be accomplished required a temple to be built—and not the temple that was built in Kirkland that was accepted by the Lord, but **something different**.

There are at least three stages in the process of restoring knowledge. The first stage is to receive it, but that's just receiving it. Receiving it is not the same thing as the second stage, which is to comprehend it. It is possible that a man receives something without understanding what it was that he had received. Time and careful and solemn and ponderous thoughts are required to untangle what has been received in order to comprehend what it is that you have been given. But it is altogether something of a different order of magnitude completely separate from that to teach it. You can receive it, you can comprehend it, but you may not be able to teach it.

When it finally does get taught, undoubtedly it will be taught in the manner that Joseph Smith was beginning to work on in Nauvoo that he never finished at the time that he was taken—that is, by ceremony, by covenant; and this, too, by something given by God, and it to be established in a house that is acceptable to Him.

If you want to know what Joseph Smith was doing in his efforts, apart from the Church in a whole new effort, talking about something involving potentially the plurality of wives, you have to understand the birthright; you have to understand the sealing power; you have to understand he was trying to organize again on the earth the kingdom of God. He was trying to bring back the actual family, but he was taken from us at the incipient stage because all that he was sent here to do was to lay a groundwork, to lay the beginning, to come as an Elias, to come and to call to the world and to give to them, if they will pay attention to it, a basis upon which they can study and learn and potentially qualify for the Lord to **resume** the restoration and bring it to a completion.

All of the work that gets done for the dead, where you seal yourself to your ancestors, like they are going to get you anywhere, is the inverse of the model that Joseph was establishing. Joseph had people sealed to **him** because he had formed a link to heaven. Sealing your kindred dead to be your superior puts you in the spirit world living among the dead—unredeemed, unresurrected, unreturned to the flesh—where you, like your kindred righteous dead, can preach to the people that are in prison, but it'll never get you up Jacob's ladder back to the presence of God; it won't even get you out of the grave. If you're going to be part of the Family of God, there has to be a link, and the link has to form in an unbroken chain.

Joseph was doing something **very** different than what became essentially a **vast** wasteland of adulterous relationships **unapproved** by God, **unsanctioned** by Him, **unmeriting** preservation, and essentially hedging up the kingdom of God. I know that there were men who received blessings under the hands of Joseph and that Joseph held the priesthood and that those people had blessings bestowed upon them by the authority that Joseph held.

They had blessings **of** the priesthood even if they didn't **hold** it. He **blessed** them. And I know that Wilford Woodruff received a revelation that insisted on the continuation of celestial marriage; and so, too, the 1886 revelation that John Taylor talks about—he will never revoke the commandment to practice celestial marriage.

But what is celestial marriage? It's the first 33 verses of section 132. That's where "**a** man" and "**a** woman" are sealed together for eternity. The practice of polygamy was never authorized, and the way in which it was taught was not proper. And Joseph Smith restored a covenant **by which** a family could be restored that belonged to God. He did not do it for the reasons that Brigham Young practiced it. What was done was an error, and the perpetuation of it was an error; and those who are in polygamy who are now being baptized and coming out of it need to end the practice with them.

I do not think it is pleasing to God to tear a family apart; therefore, no one should be abandoning the responsibility as parents of children or as members of the household. But the children in those families need to be taught that this is not pleasing to God, that it must end in this generation—because the time to end the error has come. If we don't end the error, how can we **possibly** expect that God will be pleased enough with us to **restore** the covenant to **allow** the connection that needs to be made back to the Fathers?

A lot more can be said, but I hope that what has been said is enough to point you in a new direction—because what God is about to do **can** include a return of that work that Joseph and Hyrum got to. But it will not happen if we go **charging out, attempting to hasten** what is **so deadly** a proposition that an aspiring man at the beginning of the world murdered in order to interfere with it. There is no reason to charge into that path and be destroyed by the beast that waits there. The best we can and should do is wait patiently and prayerfully on God and allow **Him** to determine when **we** are prepared to receive what He has said so many times: He would gather us as chicks under the wings of Him if we would but respond. Part of responding to Him is to allow Him to do His work in His way, in His time, by His means.

The foregoing excerpts were taken from:

- Denver's *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #5 titled "Priesthood" given in Orem, UT on November 2nd, 2013
- Denver's *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #6 titled "Zion" given in Grand Junction, CO on April 12th, 2014
- Denver's *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #8 titled "A Broken Heart" given in Las Vegas, NV on July 25th, 2014;
- Denver's *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #9 titled "Marriage and Family" given in St. George, UT on July 26th, 2014
- Denver's *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #10 titled "Preserving the Restoration" given in Mesa, AZ on September 9th, 2014; and

- A fireside talk on “Plural Marriage”, given in Sandy, UT on March 22, 2015