

## Denver Snuffer Podcast 196: Family of God, Part 6

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

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DENVER: What Joseph was doing appears to be as Richard Bushman said: It appeared to be related to some kind of familial abundance in the afterlife. It didn't have anything to do with taking plural wives and bearing children in this life. Brigham Young changed that kind of afterlife familial interconnectivity into a practice of taking more wives and having children.

Bushman described what Joseph was up to as “yearning for familial plentitude in Heaven,” the purpose being to expand his family so that when he got into Heaven, he had brothers and sisters and fathers and uncles and aunts and relations—and it was about familial plentitude, which just shows you that Bushman is grappling with something that... He could not get his hands around it.

The diaries of the brethren in the late 1800s—just before they finally cut off adoption practice—in the diaries, they're talking about, “What was it that Joseph was up to?”—'cuz in the *Joseph Smith Papers*, it doesn't even show up until October of 1843. He'll be dead eight months later. And the first mention of this kind of practice is October of 1843. And it's an obscure reference to the necessity for adoption to get into the Kingdom. So, it's not fully explained—but he's doing something—and then he's dead, and he's gone, and they start doing something to imitate it. And by the time you get in the 1880s, their diaries are saying, “We didn't understand what this was all about.”

George Q. Cannon says, “I didn't believe it when Joseph did it, and I don't believe it now.” I mean, they're saying things like, you know, This is—whatever the hell this is—we don't know what it is, and we shouldn't be doing it.” Until finally Wilford Woodruff put some “absolute” into it in a talk he gave to the Utah Genealogical Society in the 1880s, and they edit out THE paragraph that deals directly with it when they publish the talk. And so the talk today is sans the adoption stuff. But they got to the point where you did your genealogy as far as you could do your genealogy, and when you reached the end of the road, then you seal that person to Joseph Smith. And so, we're all connected into the family (the way that Joseph is trying to do it)—which flips everything on it's ear.

COMMENTER: Well, interestingly, all of the temple presidents of the time kept notes as to what was accomplished each day in the temple. And if you go read their diaries, you'll see in Manti and in the different temples around, they talk about, “Today, we baptized this many people for the dead, this many for healing, this many endowments were done, this many sealings, this many adoptions,” and they keep track of all of this, right? So they knew it was a specific ordinance that was necessary. And they were actually doing this (even though they didn't know why). And that persisted for decades. So adoptions (as a specific tool to accomplish the construction of a family) has nothing whatsoever to do with marriage. The problem is that people conflate the two. They think marriage, you know, sealing, adoption...

DENVER: That was deliberate!

COMMENTER: ...it's all the same thing, and now it looks like polygamy.

Prophecies are only meant to be understood after they're fulfilled. God's ways are unsearchable until they are accomplished. We can anticipate, look carefully, observe cautiously—but until God performs His strange act, our best guesses are likely to be wrong. God does this *lest you should say, Behold, I knew them. Yea, you heard not, yea, you knew not; ...from th[e] time that your ear was not opened. For I knew that you would deal very treacherously and were called a transgressor from the womb* (Isaiah 17:1 RE). We want to be learned, wise, and appear to share godly insight to make ourselves seem holy. We are not. We are, in God's words, treacherous transgressors who have a form of godliness, but we deny the power thereof.

Watch carefully. Watch humbly. God will fulfill the prophecy. Keep an open mind about how He will choose to do so. Then, and only then, will you see how great things the Lord has done.

Remember that the original, natural branches which had produced bitter fruit are to be grafted back to the natural roots. Even if all the vineyard is bitter, what the Lord does to reclaim the vineyard is restoring the original branches. Or in other words, lost, scattered Israel is being re-gathered. That gathering brings both bloodlines and covenant together.

The prophecy I want to discuss is this:

*And it shall come to pass that I, the Lord God, will send one mighty and strong, holding the scepter of power in his hand, clothed with light for a covering, whose mouth shall utter words, eternal words, while his bowels shall be a fountain of truth, to set in order the House of God, and to arrange by lot the inheritance of the saints, whose names are found, and the names of their fathers and of their children, enrolled in the Book of the Law of God; while that man who was called of God, and appointed, that puts forth his hand to steady the ark of God, shall fall by the shaft of death, like as a tree that is smitten by the vivid shaft of lightning. (T&C 83:4)*

I'll try not to smile.

OK, the LDS Church thinks this was fulfilled long ago. They correctly have noted that this passage has been used by numerous apostates from the LDS Church to claim they are someone "mighty and strong," deserving to be followed. This is the LDS explanation of the matter:

It is to be observed first of all that the subject of this whole letter [the Prophet's letter to William Phelps], as also...part of it subsequently [being] accepted as a revelation, relates to the affairs of the Church in Missouri, the gathering of the Saints to that land and obtaining their [inheritance] under the law of consecration and stewardship; and the Prophet deals [specifically] with the matter of what is to become of those who fail to receive their inheritances by order or deed from the bishop...

It was while these conditions of rebellion, jealousy, pride, unbelief and hardness of heart prevailed among the brethren in Zion—Jackson county, Missouri—in all of which Bishop Partridge participated, that the words of the revelation taken from the letter to William W. Phelps, of the 27th of November, 1832, were written. The “man who was called and appointed of God” to “divide...the Saints their inheritance”—Edward Partridge—was at that time out of order, neglecting his own duty, and putting “forth his hand to steady the ark”; hence, he was warned of the judgment of God impending, and the prediction was made that another, “one mighty and strong,” would be sent of God to take his place, to have his bishopric—one having the spirit and power of [the] high office resting upon him, by which he would have power to “set in order the house of God, and arrange by lot the inheritance of the Saints”; in other words, one who would do the work that Bishop Edward Partridge had been appointed to do, but had failed to accomplish...

And inasmuch as through his repentance and sacrifices and suffering, Bishop Edward Partridge undoubtedly obtained a mitigation of the threatened judgment against him of falling “by the shaft of death, like...a tree that is smitten by the vivid shaft of lightning,” so the occasion for sending another to fill his station—“one mighty and strong to set in order the house of God, and to arrange by lot the [inheritance] of the Saints”—may also be considered as having passed away and the whole incident of the prophecy closed. (From James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. [1965–75], 4:112, 115, 117)

That seems reasonable enough to me—but the language still gets used by claimants who want a following. Assuming that the LDS explanation is wrong and there will yet be someone who comes forward to set in order the House of God, what should we be looking for?

- Someone to set in order the LDS Church?
- Someone to set in order the temple rites?
- Someone to set in order the family of God through adoption?
- Something else?

That unidentified person will set in order the House of God through “holding the scepter of power in his hand”:

- What exactly is that?
- Will it be a physical object or a metaphorical scepter?
- If metaphor, what’s the correct meaning?

Then, too, this unidentified fellow will be “clothed with light for a covering”:

- How’s that to be understood?
- What will make that happen?
- Can a casual observer detect that light, or is it merely internal to the one who’s mighty and strong?

The same questions can be asked about his “mouth...utter[ing] words, eternal words,” and his “bowels...be[ing] a fountain of truth.” These are ill-defined, lofty words, lacking any specific way to know how they are fulfilled.

Well, you can guess about all these things, but you cannot know for certain. If God intends to do more than was once done in Missouri in the 1830s, then He will accomplish it in His way, His own time, in the manner of His choosing. Only a fool will proclaim that they are the very one described in that passage as “mighty and strong”—and a particular braggart fool who has done nothing more than put his ego on display with self-promotion. I’ve never claimed to be mighty and strong, and I’ll never do so.

Watch and pray always that you’re not deceived. Allow God the privilege of accomplishing His strange work in a way that eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor yet entered into your heart. Be trusting and believing and wait on the Lord. Eagerness and impatience will not prove useful.

Let me use two quotes from Christ to illustrate this. First, after quoting from Isaiah, the Lord commanded this:

*I say unto you that ye had ought to search these things. Yea, a commandment I give unto you that ye search these things diligently, for great are the words of Isaiah. For surely he spake as touching all things concerning my people which are of the house of Israel. Therefore, it must needs be that he must speak also to the gentiles. And all things that he spake hath been and shall be, even according to the words which he spake. (3 Nephi 10:4 RE)*

From this, we know we ought to carefully study Isaiah’s prophecy because he spoke about “all things” involving Israel. And if it covers all things involving Israel, it must include the Gentiles. Although the Gentiles must be grafted back into the roots, they are nevertheless part of the natural branches of the tree (or Israelites who have lost their identity).

On the other hand, the same Lord says: *Watch, therefore, for you know not at what hour your Lord do[th] come* (Matthew 11:13 RE). Even if you study carefully the words of Isaiah and know that he prophesied about “all things” involving Israel, still you will not know about our Lord’s return. Watch! But you won’t know. Why? Because you do not know how the Lord will choose to fulfill the words of Isaiah until the Lord fulfills them. And if you watch, while being familiar with the prophecies, you should be able to see them as they are fulfilled, even if the fulfillment is not something you can predict in advance. The Lord’s conduct will always be **His** “strange act” and not according to our anticipated predictions.

How God chooses to fulfill His promises in our day is as unsearchable and unpredictable as how Christ fulfilled prophecy in front of the learned members of the Sanhedrin while He went unrecognized. He was regarded by them as merely a threat/a pretender who may have had some interesting things to say, but surely (they thought) He could not be the Messiah.

There have been a great number of things accomplished in these last few years. More is presently underway. It may seem like there is little progress, but preparations take time.

Those who will not wait on the preparations put their impatience on display. That in turn allows others to identify them. Haste brings pestilence. In all probability, hasty people will not be suitable for gathering.

Adam and Eve were the original priestly patriarch and matriarch to whom God gave the right of *dominion over every living thing that moves upon the earth* (Genesis 2:8-9). That appointment by God giving them dominion was (and is) part of the Holy Order. They held it jointly, as companions. Joseph Smith explained,

[The Holy Order] was first given to Adam; he obtained the [first presiding position on the Earth], and held the keys of it from generation to generation. He obtained it in the Creation, before the world was formed, as in Genesis 1:26, 27, 28. He had dominion given him over every living creature. He is Michael the Archangel, spoken of in the Scriptures. Then to Noah, who is Gabriel; he stands next in authority to Adam in the [Holy Order]; he was called of God to this office, and was the Father of all living in this day, and to him was given the dominion. These men held keys first on earth, and then in heaven. The [Holy Order] is an everlasting principle, and existed with God from eternity, and will to eternity, without beginning of days or end of years. The keys have to be brought from heaven, whenever the Gospel is sent. When they are revealed from Heaven, it is by Adam's authority. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, hereafter referred to as *TPJS*, p. 157; see also *JSP Documents* Vol. 6, pp. 542-543)

This (from Joseph) ties together parenthood, priesthood, dominion, and Holy Order. All of these elements were necessary for Adam and Eve to be at the head of the Holy Order and are necessary for it to exist today. In "Our Divine Parents" (a talk and paper you can also read on the website), the nature of eternal unity between the man and the woman and the dual nature of God were explained.

The Holy Order is not synonymous with having your calling and election made sure. You can have your calling and election made sure without having the Holy Order.

The Holy Order is not synonymous with being redeemed from the fall and returning to God's presence. That also can happen without having the Holy Order.

Nor is the Holy Order synonymous with having the fullness of revelations from before the creation of the world through the end of this cycle of creation. That, also, can be given to a person while they still lack the Holy Order.

An individual does not need to possess the Holy Order to be able to enter into a covenant. Covenants have been offered mankind by God through the Holy Order. Once offered, covenants are still honored even if the Holy Order is no longer present. The condition for a covenant to remain in effect requires only that the covenant never change. If officiators make changes, the covenant is broken and is no longer in effect.

Further, it is not required for you to be initiated into the Holy Order to become a member of the eternal Family of God. All those who will be exalted will be members. Only a tiny fraction of the Family will experience that in mortality.

Finally, any position in the Holy Order may change after this life. Christ reminded the mother of Jacob (or James) and John that positions in the afterlife will be assigned by His Father. The Holy Order must return before the Second Coming to re-establish God's "house of order." But organizing and ordering for the afterlife will not happen until some time after the Lord's return. Restoring and organizing God's Family is necessary because of the disorder caused by the fall of Adam. That disorder has been compounded by additional repeated apostasies from the periodic restorations of the Holy Order.

Despite what the Holy Order is not, it is important to understand. Most of our scriptures are the writings of members of the Holy Order. The Order must return. This talk is to confirm God is vindicating His promises, whether the world takes any notice or not.

The Holy Order function requires both a father and mother and is the reason Joseph Smith wrote,

...there are many teachers but perhaps not many Fathers. There are times coming when God will signify many things which are expedient for the well being of the saints but the times have not yet come but will come as fast as there can be found place and receptions for them. (*JSP Documents* Vol. 6, February 1838-August 1839, pp. 396-397)

That time did not come during Joseph's life, and therefore, the return of the Holy Order did not happen in his day. Because of the failure in Joseph's day, the Family or House of God still needs to be set in order. As is always the case, there will need to be a temple prepared for the Holy Order to function. It was first given to Adam and Eve in sacred space, and therefore, sacred space like the Garden of Eden is required for its function.

It may seem odd that this Order is so rare that it is withheld from righteous men who have stood in God's presence. Nevertheless, there are good reasons, established before the foundation of the world, setting conditions that strictly confine the Order.

The Holy Order inducts couples into the Family of God. You can only have one father and one mother standing at the head at a time. Abraham could not receive it from anyone other than the singular couple who stood at the head. God's House is a house of order, and there is never more than one parental couple at a time at the head. There is no more reason to aspire or envy that couple than there was for you to jealously want to replace your own father or mother. We should hope for it to return.

It is a hard matter to hear, and a harder one to teach. There is nothing about this subject that should be understood in a worldly sense. It involves a heavenly order of things and not something to be divided from God's purpose to save all mankind and exalt those He can. Not everyone is suited to become part of God's Family. The reality is that very few are.

The Holy Order was and is intended to establish a "house of order." In 1836, the saints were invited to reestablish the Lord's house of order. They hoped to accomplish that by their own initiative: The Lord wanted His 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* (T&C 123:3). They were offered the Holy Order or fullness of the Priesthood, but it was *lost unto [them]* (T&C

141:10) and taken away from that generation. This was not unexpected. The Lord knew they would fail and had previously promised there would come a time when His House would be *set in order* (T&C 83:4). This will happen when the Lord reestablishes the Holy Order. The Lord's "House" is not merely a physical building but includes His Family/House as well.

Egypt's first Pharaoh tried to perpetuate the Holy Order by imitating what had been in the first generation:

*Pharaoh, being a righteous man, established his kingdom and judged his people wisely and justly all his days, seeking earnestly to imitate that order established by the fathers in the first generations, in the days of the first Patriarchal reign, even in the reign of Adam, and also Noah, his father, who blessed him with the blessings of the earth, and with the blessings of wisdom, but cursed him as pertaining to the Priesthood. (Abraham 2:3)*

The name "Pharaoh" in Egyptian means "great house." Pharaoh wanted to recreate the "House" meaning the "Family" of God. That is why he was trying "earnestly to imitate that order established by the fathers in the first generations, in the days of the first Patriarchal reign." He wanted to be the head of God's Family on Earth. However, men cannot establish the Holy Order. It can only be established by God or, as Joseph Smith explained, through Adam (the original father and holder of the right) under the direction of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Order requires both a man and a woman in similitude of Adam and Eve. The couple holds dominion as a father and mother over the Family of God on Earth. That is different than acting as a priest and priestess. God's House is a house of order. To set it right is something far more important than administering a church or performing priestly rites.

We know that Adam is the one with authority over the Holy Order. *Adam holds the keys of the dispensation of the fullness of times; i.e., the dispensation of all...times [that] have been and will be revealed through him, from the beginning to Christ, ...from Christ to the end of...the dispensations that are to be revealed* (T&C 140:3). However, the identity of "Adam" is not just the first man but includes his helpmeet. It is the first couple who are named "Adam," and Eve stands as partner in this order. *In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; in the image of his own body, male and female, created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam in the day [that] they were created and became living souls in the land...* (Genesis 3:14).

The role of the woman is greater than most have imagined. We have enough in modern revelation to know of the mother's importance and power. Consider these words from the Answer to the Prayer for Covenant:

*I say [un]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. (T&C 157:42, emphasis added)*

The covenant-making to secure a throne requires the direct participation of the woman. The Holy Order involves both the husband and wife. Refer back to “Our Divine Parents” regarding the Heavenly Mother and the other mothers involved in the Holy Order. The Heavenly Mother declared, *By me kings reign and princes decree justice. By me princes rule and nobles, even all the judges of the earth* (Proverbs 1:36). That talk went on to explain that it was Eve who identified the successor to Adam. That was her right, just as it is the Heavenly Mother’s right over Her offspring. It was Rebecca’s right to choose Jacob over Esau. We should therefore expect the woman/mother/wife/priestess to be involved directly with the covenant making, who positions her husband in the Holy Order. And we should anticipate that the senior-most mother would also likewise have a say in who succeeds her husband as heir-successor in the Holy Order.

It was the Holy Order that existed as the singular government organization for mankind at the first. There was no “church” or other institution. There was only a family, and it had at the head a father and mother set there by God. They were given dominion over all others. They were to be “husbandmen” to raise up righteous posterity who would walk in the pathway leading back to God.

The question remains open as to whether we will allow the Holy Order to function among us. The Lord will permit it. He’s willing to identify those He will permit to enter into His House (meaning His Family). The question is, who will welcome it? The conditions today are the same as at the time of Adam, Enoch, Melchizedek, and Abraham. Few there will be that will find it.

Predictably, as soon as some learn of the content of this talk, they will claim to be worthy, perhaps even in possession of the Holy Order. All such claimants are liars and deceivers. Whenever there is a couple appointed to the Holy Order, there are always competing voices, pretenders, opponents, and deluded others acting in direct opposition.

Reestablishing the Holy Order involves a new dispensation with those who went before providing the foundation for the work to go forward. Angelic ministers needed to come at the start of Joseph’s dispensation and were needed again.

*...all declaring each one: Their dispensation, their rights, their keys, their honors, their majesty and glory, and the power of their Priesthood.*

*[Giving] line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little...there a little, giving us consolation by holding forth that which is to come and confirming our hope. (T&C 151:15-17)*

This is required to restore the Holy Order any time it’s been lost. The Order is not just a form of priesthood but also involves a family connection to the first fathers. For the holder, it establishes a role within that family. The senior-most living couple in that order stands in the same position as did Adam and Eve. It is essential that the Holy Order be reestablished prior to the Second Coming so that the events of Adam-Oni-Ahman can take place. To link together God’s Family necessarily follows the precedent of Abraham because it includes adoption of the living holder on Earth to the “fathers who are in heaven” (as Joseph Smith

put it). The identity of those “fathers in heaven” and the identity of those who have held the Holy Order are the same. God’s family must be linked together on both sides of the veil.

We have a revelation from Joseph Smith that foretells some of what will be involved with the fulfillment of these ancient prophesied events:

*And the Lord, even the Savior, shall stand in the midst of [the] people and shall reign over all flesh. And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord, and their prophets shall hear his voice and shall no longer stay themselves, ...they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence, and a highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep. Their enemies shall become a prey unto them, and in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land. And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants, and the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence, and there [they shall] fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim, and they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy. Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the heads of the tribes of Israel...and his fellows. And they also of the tribe of Judah, after their pain, shall be sanctified in holiness before the Lord, to dwell in his presence day and night, for ever and ever. (T&C 58:3)*

HOW will the children of Ephraim be able to crown the Lord’s people with “glory” unless they have received from God the knowledge to do so? If blessings are to be administered “upon the heads of the tribes of Israel,” will it not require the Holy Order to accomplish it?

Ignorant people will not re-gather Israel and confer glory upon the “heads of the tribes.” A great deal of missing knowledge is necessary, or the promises of God will not be fulfilled. The Family of God will have an order.

Remember the greatest fulfillment of prophecy in the past happened in relative obscurity, unnoticed by the world, and with very few directly involved. When the prophesied Messiah came to Israel, His birth was known to only a handful of people. When His ministry began, most who heard Him teach rejected Him. Ultimately, He was killed rather than welcomed by His people. Why should anything be different? Why should anything different be expected before His return in glory? Shouldn’t we expect fulfilling the prophecies at the end to also seem uneventful? If His people did not recognize Him, why would they recognize someone commissioned as His servant who is far less than Him?

The purpose of the Holy Order is to serve God. It is not to get noticed or acquire fame or fortune. It serves only God’s purposes. The return is related to the last-days’ work. For Zion to put on her strength, it will require the Holy Order, or as Joseph Smith explained about Zion putting on strength:

*[Isaiah] had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of Priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel. And to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the Priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that Power which she had lost. (T&C 129:4)*

The only “authority of the Priesthood” that would be adequate to “bring again Zion” is that same authority held in the cities of Enoch and Melchizedek. It would be contrary to the Lord’s consistent pattern for there to be a final City of Zion without the Holy Order that established these prior cities of peace.

Remember the words of the covenant our Lord gave to us in 2017:

*All you who have turned from your wicked ways and repented of your evil doings, of lying and deceiving, and of all whoredoms, and of secret abominations, idolatries, murders, [priestcraft], envying, and strife, and from all wickedness and abominations, and have come unto me, and been baptized in my name, and have received a remission of your sins, and received the holy ghost, are now numbered with my people who are of the house of Israel. (T&C 158:10)*

Everyone who entered into the covenant and abides by it has “now been numbered with my people who are of the house of Israel,” meaning that when the Lord returns, He will acknowledge you as His and spare you from condemnation as He did the people in Bountiful. That is a great gift from the Lord to us.

Zion cannot be imposed. There can be no hierarchy, no one greater and no one lesser. Even a teacher assigned by the Lord to teach others cannot be esteemed above another. We have a description in the Book of Mormon that gives us a correct pattern:

*And when their priests left their labor to impart the word of God unto the people, the people also left their labors to hear the word of God. And when the priest had imparted unto them the word of God, they all returned again diligently unto their labors, and the priest, not esteeming himself above his hearers; for the preacher was no better than the hearer, neither was the teacher any better than the learner. And thus they were all equal; and they did all labor, every man according to his strength. And they did impart of their substance, every man according to that which he had, to the poor, and the needy, and the sick, and the afflicted. And they did not wear costly apparel, yet they were neat and comely. And thus they did establish the affairs of the church; and thus they began to have continual peace again... (Alma 1:5)*

You can respect, even honor, the teaching. However, the teacher is no better than the learner, otherwise there is no equality. When there is a hierarchy that maintains a right to control others, it perverts the meaning of “keys” to get gain. Such churches always descend into the direful condition prophesied by Mormon: *The power of God shall be denied, and churches become defiled and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts, yea, even in a day when leaders of churches and teachers, in the pride of their hearts, even to the envying of them who belong to their churches* (Mormon 4:4). It cannot be like that for Zion to come.

There is still a great gulf separating us from the promised New Jerusalem. There is a need for order, and order should be the result of following correct principles. If we are taught correct principles, then we should be able to govern ourselves. None of us is better than any other. Some of us know a great deal more than others about framing, farming, masonry, engine repair, plumbing, electrical wiring, and other skills. Every one of those will be needed in a functioning community. When the Lord provides His people a teacher, then that

teacher is no different or better than a framer. All of us should be willingly contributing, and no one should be prideful.

The Lord Jesus Christ does intend to accomplish a “strange act” that eludes the wisdom of the wise or the understanding of the prudent. But then again, that could be said of almost every significant achievement of the Lord from the beginning.

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The foregoing excerpts were taken from:

- Denver's comments about Joseph Smith, delivered in Manti, Utah on October 17, 2021
- Denver's comments during an impromptu small group discussion following his address at the Hear and Trust the Lord Conference held in Lexington, Kentucky on March 26, 2022
- A lecture by Denver titled "Understanding Prophecy," delivered at a small group meeting in Sandy, Utah on December 17, 2023
- Denver's general conference address titled "The Holy Order, Part 2," delivered at the Albright Auditorium at Hobart & William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY on April 7, 2024