

THE POWER OF THE PRIESTHOOD

by

Curtis R. Porritt

www.curtporritt.com



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PREFACE

I would like to make it clear to any who read this that the thoughts expressed here are my own and that I take full responsibility for them. I realize that there are people who will disagree with some of these ideas and that, in some cases, certain issues may be considered controversial or even offensive to some. However, it has never been my desire to offend anyone or to create contention.

It is important for the reader to understand that the purpose I write things is not necessarily to publish or even preach the doctrines, ideas, and concepts included in this or any other work I have written. I also have no interest in making any money from the things I write. I have never charged anyone more than the price it costs me to make them a copy. Often, I don't even charge them that. Chances are that if you have this work it is because you are a close friend, a relative, or because you have asked for it. That said, I would be less than honest if I didn't mention that I hope this work helps you in your personal search for truth. It would definitely please me to know that it helped you learn more about God and the truths he has revealed to us. I have no concerns if copies of this work are made and given to those who may benefit from the things I have written. My permission is hereby granted to the reader to make copies of this work for righteous purposes. My only request is that good judgment and wisdom are used before doing so.

My main motives for writing are, for the most part, purely selfish. I enjoy learning about the things of God. I enjoy trying to organize my thoughts and beliefs in such a way that I can discover how supportable they are or how well they fit in with the other things I believe. I have found that writing about my beliefs helps me to discover such things and gives me a greater understanding about them. There have been many times that I have written something about a given subject or belief, only to find that I could not support it very well or that it didn't match well with other things that I believe to be true. These are what I consider my "failures." Even though I have learned from these experiences, what I learned was that I was wrong. If you are reading this, then what follows is probably what I consider to be one of my "successes."

Another reason I write things is to see if anyone else can find fault or error in what I believe. I am not so naive as to think that if something works in my mind, it must be true. I believe a real "truth seeker" will seek out those who can teach him and correct him. He will want to hear what others have to say about his beliefs. I believe this is a very important part of learning. Often there are times when I revise or correct things in my writings because of something someone else has said to me regarding them. This is great and I welcome it.

I should also mention that I have definitely sought the inspiration of the Lord while studying and writing. This has produced some very interesting experiences for me. I believe in personal inspiration.

As you read the things that follow, I would ask you to open your mind a little bit and to think a little deeper into the subjects discussed and the ideas expressed. Most of what follows came more by asking questions and following them through than by merely taking things at face value and accepting them. I am merely trying to answer some questions I have that have become somewhat important to me. I am seeking truth, and in this there is no fault of which I am aware. If someone can show me where I am wrong, I welcome that person, for it is the truth of the matter that I am after. However, until someone does so or through my own thoughts I come up with something better, I will, at least for the time being, tend to believe the ideas and theories of which I have written. In my own mind these things fit together very well. I hope I will be able to express them as well and as clearly as I see them.

Undoubtedly some people will claim that these writings deal with theories and/or mysteries of the gospel. Before we begin, I feel it is important to note what the Lord has told us about “theories” and the “mysteries” of the gospel. Regarding theories, the Lord has said,

And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom.

Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand; (D&C 88:77-78, underline added. See also D&C 97:14.)

Now, depending upon your testimony, a theory can be defined as something that has not yet been fully revealed. It seems to me that if the Lord has revealed something to us, it can be removed from the realm of “theory.” Thus we see that the Lord has given us “a commandment” to teach one another in such a way that we become more familiar with those doctrines, ideas, and concepts that have not yet been fully revealed. I see nothing wrong with this so long as we appreciate the fact that not everything is “expedient” for us to understand. Sometimes it takes a little more humility than we possess to recognize when something is not expedient, either for ourselves or for someone else.

Regarding the mysteries of the gospel, the Lord has told us,

If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things--that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal. (D&C 42:61, underline added)

The Lord has also said,

But unto him that keepeth my commandments I will give the mysteries of my kingdom, and the same shall be in him a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life. (D&C 63:23, underline added)

Contrary to popular belief, of the many scriptures that talk about the mysteries of the gospel, only a few speak of them in a negative sense.¹ And these are usually talking about missionary work or preaching the gospel, which makes perfect sense.²

¹ See Matthew 13:11; Mark 4:11; Luke 8:10; Romans 11:25; Romans 16:25; 1 Corinthians 2:7; 1 Corinthians 4:1; 1 Corinthians 13:2; 1 Corinthians 14:2; 1 Corinthians 15:51; Ephesians 1:9; Ephesians 3:3; Ephesians 3:4; Ephesians 3:9; Ephesians 5:32; Ephesians 6:19; Colossians 1:26; Colossians 1:27; Colossians 2:2; Colossians 4:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:7; 1 Timothy 3:9; 1 Timothy 3:16; Revelation 1:20; Revelation 10:7; Revelation 17:5; Revelation 17:7; 1 Nephi 1:1; 1 Nephi 2:16; 1 Nephi 10:19; Jacob 4:8; Jacob 4:18; Mosiah 1:3; Mosiah 1:5; Mosiah 2:9; Mosiah 8:19; Alma 10:5; Alma 12:9; Alma 12:10; Alma 12:11; Alma 26:22; Alma 30:28; Alma 37:4; Alma 37:11; Alma 37:21; Alma 40:3; Helaman 16:21; D&C 6:7; D&C 6:11; D&C 8:11; D&C 10:64; D&C 11:7; D&C 19:8; D&C 19:10; D&C 28:7; D&C 35:18; D&C 38:13; D&C 42:61; D&C 42:65; D&C 43:13; D&C 63:23; D&C 64:5; D&C 71:1; D&C 76:7; D&C 76:114; D&C 77:6; D&C 84:19; D&C 90:14; D&C 97:5; D&C 107:19.

Joseph Smith has said,

I advise all to go on to perfection, and search deeper and deeper into the mysteries of Godliness. (TPJS Pg. 364)

Joseph Smith also said,

It should be borne in mind that these wonderful mysteries, as they are suppose to be, are only mysteries because of the ignorance of men; and when men and women are troubled in spirit over those things which come to light through the proper channel of intelligence, they only betray their weakness, ignorance, and folly. (Millennial Star 15:825)

It seems that theories and mysteries of the gospel are not just “okay” to study, but rather, we are actually encouraged to study and learn about them. The key comes in following the inspiration of the Lord, knowing what to share or not share, and in being humble enough to change and admit the errors of our ways.

That said, there are doctrines referred to by many as “mysteries” which can often be found with great repetition among the words of the prophets, both ancient and modern. What many people refer to as a “mystery” is often only a mystery to them, because they have not taken the time to search the scriptures and the words of the prophets to see what they say about the topic. Referring to those who believe that a person should go “thus far and no farther” as far as the study of religion is concerned, Henry Drummond once said,

There is often a great deal of intellectual sin concealed in this old aphorism. When men do not wish to go farther they find it an honorable convenience sometimes to sit down on the outmost edge of the “holy ground” on the pretext of taking off their shoes. Yet, we must be certain that, making a virtue of reverence, we are not merely excusing ignorance; or under a plea of “mystery” evading a truth which has been stated in the New Testament a hundred times, in the most literal form, and with all but monotonous repetition. (Spiritual Law, pp. 89, 90. See also the Seventy’s course in Theology, Pg. v by Elder B.H. Roberts.)

I hope that this work falls into this last category. I am very much an authoritarian as far as these writings are concerned. Great effort has been made to support the doctrines found within these pages. In most cases, whenever a concept is put forth, it will be accompanied with scriptures or quotes from general authorities.

If we are to obtain the Celestial Kingdom, I feel we must always strive to be open and teachable regarding our beliefs. This is important to understand as we ponder some of the thoughts that follow.

Curtis R. Porritt

² See Alma 12:9 and D&C 19:21.
Curtis R. Porritt

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SOME COUNSEL TO THE READER

This manuscript discusses some very difficult issues. It is not intended for non-Mormons. Nor is it intended for those who's faith is weak or who are not well versed in the doctrines, history, and/or practices of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

Before proceeding with this manuscript, I would strongly encourage the reader to read two of my other works, **Detecting the Philosophies of Men** and **The Attitude of Zion**. These two works create a foundation upon which this manuscript builds. I feel it is important that a foundation of faith and knowledge exists before a person attempts a study such as this one. Without such a foundation, the discussion which follows may do more damage than good to a person, as far as building faith and promoting righteousness are concerned.

Joseph Smith once said,

I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions: they cannot stand the fire at all. How many will be able to abide a celestial law, and go through and receive their exaltation, I am unable to say, as many are called, but few are chosen. (TPJS Pg.331)

It has been my experience that even among the most faithful Mormons, we will find those who have great difficulty with some of the doctrines that follow. Please know that it is my intent to learn truth and to promote Zion, not to deceive or destroy. If there are false doctrines found within these pages, which there probably are, I would encourage the reader to judge the doctrines, rather than the author. If there are offensive but true doctrines found, I would encourage the reader to judge themselves, rather than God or his gospel. I feel this is important to keep in mind as we proceed.

INTRODUCTION

This discourse will discuss what I consider to be some of the fundamental principles of the priesthood of God. Although the term "priesthood" is commonly used among latter-day saints, few seem to know much about it, especially in the areas of what it is and how it works. This treatise tries to go beyond some of the standard clichés and cursory discussions about the priesthood. Much of what appears here is seldom discussed in the church. However, I feel it is of great importance to those who profess to hold the holy priesthood of God. It is my sincere hope that all who read this work will benefit from the doctrines, principles, and theories put forth.

The arguments presented in this treatise can be basically outlined in the following manner:

1. All things in the universe find their existence in matter.
2. The only thing in the universe that can act upon matter in an organized way is intelligent matter.

3. Priesthood power comes in that intelligent beings honor one another and hence, serve one another.
4. The ordinances and the gospel message teach us how to gain the honor of intelligent beings in a righteous manner. The way to gain true priesthood power is through keeping righteous covenants and living gospel principles as given to us by God. All such things involve our relationship with other beings.
5. Our lineage and our posterity have a great deal to do with our power in the priesthood.
6. Satan possesses priesthood power in basically the same way God does, namely, by gaining the honor of intelligent beings. The main differences between the priesthood of God and the priesthood of Satan are A) God gains honor with the use of agency while Satan gains honor by eliminating agency and B) God's priesthood works in an unselfish manner while Satan's priesthood is selfish in nature.

I have also added some appendices at the end of this work. These appendices discuss related topics which I feel shed more light on the arguments presented and help us to understand the priesthood to a greater degree.

The first several pages of this work serve to build a basic foundation of understanding. I feel this foundation is necessary to help us better understand the priesthood. Some concepts are a little difficult to follow. I have tried to make this section easier to understand and have even thought about leaving it out completely. However, I have thus far been unsuccessful at the former and don't feel comfortable with the latter. Though it may seem somewhat unrelated at first, I feel the next several pages are important to the discussion that follows.

WHAT IS THE PRIESTHOOD?

In order to adequately discuss the priesthood, we must first understand what the priesthood is. As odd as it sounds, in order to discuss what the priesthood is, we must first try to understand the make up of the universe. The first question we should ask is, "What are the most basic things that exist in the universe and how do they interact with each other?" If I were to use the priesthood to move a mountain or heal a sick person, what force is it that actually acts upon or moves the matter involved with such feats?

As we consider the most basic things that exist in the universe, the scriptures seem to list very few. Basically, we know of the existence of intelligent matter, which has the power to act for itself. We know of the existence of unintelligent matter, which does not have the power to act for itself. And we know of laws and principles that govern the actions of both intelligent and unintelligent matter. That is basically all we know about the make up of the universe. These three fundamental components are the most basic building blocks upon which all other realities in the universe depend for their existence. With a few possible exceptions,³ everything of which we have thus far been made aware, or which has been revealed to us, seems to fall into one of these three categories.

³ It is possible, for example, that light does not fit neatly into one of these three main categories.

It should be mentioned that there are those who believe that all matter possesses intelligence – that there is no such thing as “unintelligent matter.” For the sake of better understanding what is written here, it should be noted that this work was written with the premise that unintelligent matter does exist and is fundamentally different than intelligent matter. A discussion concerning the existence of both intelligent and unintelligent matter has been included at the end of this work in Appendix A. However, whether you believe in the existence of unintelligent matter or not, the arguments that follow should not be hindered, one way or the other. I believe this discussion is worthwhile regardless of whether or not unintelligent matter exists.

Everything is Dependent Upon Matter

It is reasonable to assume that all things are composed of matter. The Lord has tried to explain this principle to us in the Doctrine and Covenants.

There is no such thing as immaterial matter. All spirit is matter, but it is more fine or pure, and can only be discerned by purer eyes;

We cannot see it; but when our bodies are purified we shall see that it is all matter. (D&C 131:7-8)

Intelligences, spirit bodies, as well as mortal bodies are all comprised of matter. Indeed, everything of which we are aware exists in matter. Even such things as ideas or laws and principles must find their existence in matter of some kind. I believe this truth has been made known to us in the revelations of the Lord.

All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence. (D&C 93:30, underline added)

What is truth? The Lord has defined truth as knowledge.

And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come; (D&C 93:24)

Since knowledge, by definition, can only find its existence in things that have the ability to know, and since all such things are made of matter, it follows that all knowledge, and hence all truth, only exists within a material body or entity of some kind. It is all contained within matter. In short,

1. Without matter, there would be no knowledge.
2. Without knowledge, there would be no truth.
3. And without truth, there would be no existence.
4. Hence, all existence (including all of the laws and principles that exist) is dependant upon matter.

Although it is possible that there are truths in existence which may not be known, as far as the Lord’s definition of truth is concerned, things are apparently true only when they are known. Viewing this definition in the opposite way, if something is not known, it is not true. From a certain perspective one might say that if something exists that is unknown to any being in the entire universe, God included, then it

is as though that thing does not exist at all, for no meaningful comment whatsoever can be made about it's existence.

It is important for us to understand that this is the Lord's definition of truth, not the philosopher's or the scientist's definition. If we are to understand the Lord's view of things, we must be willing to use his terminology and definitions.⁴ As Elder B.H. Roberts explained,

“Truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come” (D&C 93:24). If this is spoken with a divine sanction, under inspiration of God, then it ought to be the completest (sic.) definition of truth extant among men. I hold it to be so. It deals with truth under several aspects: relative truth,; absolute truth; and truth in the “becoming” or unfolding; and truth in the sum. (The Truth, The Way, The Life, p.22)

The question can now be asked, “How is it possible for truth to be independent in that sphere in which God has placed it?” What does the Lord mean by the word “sphere?” It follows from our discussion thus far that the “sphere” in which God has placed truth (knowledge) must be some form of organized matter - matter which possesses the ability to receive and store knowledge. The strength of this argument is apparent when we try to consider the opposite view. If God has placed truth (knowledge) in something other than a material sphere, what could that sphere possibly be? If it is not composed of matter, it is nothing. This concept goes against all that Latter-day Saints have come to know about God and his universe. The only answer that makes any sense is that all truth is knowledge, and that all knowledge can act independently when God places it in a material sphere of some kind.

The Eternal Nature of Matter

Another significant fact regarding matter is that it is eternal. It cannot be created from nothing. Nor can it be completely destroyed out of existence.

For man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fullness of joy. (D&C 93:33, underline added)

Now, the word create came from the baurau which does not mean to create out of nothing; it means to organize; the same as a man would organize materials and build a ship. Hence, we infer that God had materials to organize the world out of chaos – chaotic matter, which is element, and in which dwells all the glory. Element had an existence from the time he had. The pure principles of element are principles which can never be destroyed; they may be organized and re-organized, but not destroyed. They had no beginning, and can have no end. (TPJS, Pg.350, underline added)

⁴ “All truth can be circumscribed into one great whole.” If truth is knowledge and knowledge can only be found in matter, then the “great whole” spoken of most likely has reference to the councils of the gods. All truth, or in other words, all knowledge can be encompassed or found within one great council of the gods. The fullness of the priesthood entitles a person to all that the Father hath, or in other words, all that all the gods throughout the universe possess. I believe this has application to D&C 130:10-11.

From this we may assume that when God places truth in a material sphere of some kind, in all likelihood He is simply organizing or reorganizing that matter in some way. He is not creating new matter. He is merely shaping or forming existing matter into an organized pattern.

Intelligent Matter

Like matter, we know that intelligence is also eternal. It was never created or made from nothing.

Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be. (D&C 93:29)

Intelligence is eternal and exists upon a self-existent principle. It is a spirit from age to age, and there is no creation about it. (TPJS, Pg.354)

Difference Between Body and Spirit

In tracing the thing to the foundation, and looking at it philosophically, we shall find a very material difference between the body and the spirit; the body is supposed to be organized matter, and the spirit, by many, is thought to be immaterial, without substance. With this latter statement we should beg leave to differ, and state the spirit is a substance; that it is material, but that it is more pure, elastic and refined matter than the body; that it existed before the body, can exist in the body; and will exist separate from the body, when the body will be moldering in the dust; and will in the resurrection be again united with it. (TPJS Pg.207)

Since “there is no such thing as immaterial matter,” it makes perfect sense that all intelligence must be made of some kind of matter. Both matter and intelligence are co-eternal. There has never been intelligence without matter.⁵

With the idea in mind that truth is knowledge and that matter is the only thing that can possess or store knowledge, we must now ask ourselves what the relationship is between intelligent matter and knowledge or truth.

There seem to be at least two characteristics of intelligent matter as it relates to truth. The first is that intelligent matter must somehow be able to possess or store truth. The second is that intelligent matter must be able to act upon truth - it must be able to use truth to act upon other forms of matter. In other words, it must have agency. This second characteristic seems to be one of the grand keys to the entire plan of salvation.

Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man; because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not the light.

⁵ It should be noted that the opposite line of reasoning does not follow. It is true that all things are made of matter, therefore all intelligence is made of matter. However, this does not mean that all matter is intelligent matter.

And every man whose spirit receiveth not the light is under condemnation. (D&C:93:31-32)

It is also important to note that even though intelligence possesses the capacity for growth in the areas of knowledge and agency, the power to use this capacity has been given to us by God.

The Lord said unto Enoch: Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency; (Moses 7:32)

Notice how this scripture neatly separates our two characteristics. God gave us knowledge at one point in time and then He gave us agency at a different point in time.

Though it is true that man cannot be saved in ignorance, the real test and condemnation of man comes not from his ability to receive and store knowledge, rather, it comes from his ability to properly act upon that knowledge. Brigham Young explained the relationship of knowledge, agency, and salvation very well when he said,

We all occupy diversified stations in the world, and in the kingdom of God. Those who do right, and seek the glory of the Father in heaven, whether their knowledge be little or much, or whether they can do little or much, if they do the very best they know how, they are perfect... 'Be ye as perfect as ye can,' for that is all we can do, tho' it is written, 'Be ye as perfect as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.' To be as perfect as we possibly can according to our knowledge, is to be just as perfect as our Father in heaven is. He cannot be any more perfect than he knows how, any more than we...the sin that will cleave to all the posterity of Adam and Eve is, that they have not done as well as they know how. (Deseret News Weekly, 31 August, 1854, p. 37, underline added)

Notice that the lack of knowledge is not a sin. The sin comes when we improperly use our agency by disobeying the knowledge we possess. It is the agency or how we choose to act upon truth that is the important key to our salvation. As mentioned earlier, agency is “the condemnation of man.”

It seems apparent that the great significance of intelligent matter, the thing that makes it such a topic of interest, is not only its capacity for knowledge but its capacity to act for itself “in that sphere in which God has placed it,” or in other words, its agency. Intelligent matter has the ability to choose how it will respond to the truths placed in it by God. Agency, or the ability to freely act upon truth, is seemingly the most important attribute of intelligent matter. Without agency or “free will,” any matter that possesses knowledge would be little more than a computer – having the ability to store knowledge and react to external inputs, but not really having the ability of true freedom of choice. A computer could, for example, be “independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself,” but only because it was programmed or caused to do so. It cannot choose to act in any manner that is contrary to its programming. Hence, it is not truly free to choose.

The Laws and Principles that Govern Matter

Now that we have discussed matter and intelligence, let's explore the third major area of existence, that of laws and principles. We must remember that laws and principles are dependent upon matter for their existence. If matter ceased to exist, laws and principles would also cease to exist as well.

In the Doctrine and Covenants we are taught that laws exist throughout the universe.

All kingdoms have a law given;

And there are many kingdoms; for there is no space in the which there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space, either a greater or a lesser kingdom.

And unto every kingdom is given a law; and unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions. (D&C 88:36-38)

In our discussion of the priesthood, it is important for us to realize that these laws do not possess life or agency in and of themselves. The laws of the universe only become reality when they are expressed through the interactions of material objects. They are either natural laws, which have existed unchanged throughout eternity, or they are created laws, which can be implemented or abandoned by intelligent beings for specific, temporary purposes.

Here, then, is one of the grand keys to understanding the priesthood and the sum of all that we have discussed so far: As far as the priesthood is concerned, there is no mysterious “force” or power in the universe that makes things happen independent of intelligent matter. Whenever the priesthood is used and a law is implemented to act upon matter in any organized fashion, such as healing the sick or moving a mountain, it can only be that some form of intelligent matter has caused that action to take place. In other words, it is intelligent matter acting upon other elements (whether those elements are intelligent or not) that brings about any organized change in the universe. Hence, whenever a priesthood holder uses his priesthood to invoke some physical change, that physical change must ultimately be caused by an intelligent being (seen or unseen) acting upon matter in some way to make it conform to the priesthood bearer’s wishes.

The Power of the Priesthood

The recognition that intelligence is the only thing in the universe with the agency to act is paramount to our understanding of priesthood power. With this thought in mind, let’s look at what the scriptures teach us concerning the power of the priesthood.

And it came to pass that Adam, being tempted of the devil--for, behold, the devil was before Adam, for he rebelled against me, saying, Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me because of their agency; (D&C 29:36, underline added)

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal. (Abraham 2:11, underline added)

It appears that priesthood power comes when intelligent beings honor each other and act in accordance with that honor. Power in the priesthood is found whenever intelligent beings act for the benefit of each

other.⁶ For example, when we use our priesthood to heal the sick or move a mountain, it is reasonable to assume that it is intelligent beings that actually perform the action for us in some way or other. What else is there in the universe that has the power to honor our command and act upon matter in an intelligent way?

Gaining Further Understanding Through Scriptural Structures

In many cases the Lord has disguised or hidden some of His greatest messages in the form of scriptural structures. The most common types of structures are known as chiasms. A chiasm occurs when the first scripture in a given set matches, either in message or wording, with the last scripture of the same set. Likewise, the second matches with the second to last and so forth until you reach the middle. Often, there are significant messages to be found by thoroughly studying a chiastic structure.

Another type of structure is known as a parallel structure. A parallel structure is developed when the first scripture of a given set matches the first scripture of another set, the second matches the second and so on to the last. As with chiasms, parallel structures can contain messages that will only be found by those who are aware of such things and are searching for them.⁷

One such parallel structure contains significant information concerning the power of God or the priesthood. It is found in the dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland temple as given in the 109th section of the Doctrine and Covenants. Notice how the words and concepts in the left column match those found in the right column.

⁶ It is interesting to note that some of the works from the Nag Hamadi documents refer to beings as “the powers.” At least the following works from the Nag Hamadi library contain references clearly describing people as powers: *The Gospel of Philip*; *The Apocalypse of Adam*; *The Concept of Our Great Power*.

⁷ In case the concept of scriptural structures is new to the reader, I have placed several examples in Appendix B.

7 And as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom, seek learning even by study and also by faith;

8 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;

9 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--

10 And now, Holy Father, we ask thee to assist us, thy people, with thy grace, in calling our solemn assembly, that it may be done to thine honor and to thy divine acceptance;

11 And in a manner that we may be found worthy, in thy sight,

to secure a fulfilment of the promises which thou hast made unto us, thy people, in the revelations given unto us;

12 That thy glory may rest down upon thy people, and upon this thy house, which we now dedicate to thee, that it may be sanctified and consecrated to be holy, and that thy holy presence may be continually in this house;

13 And that all people who shall enter upon the threshold of the Lord's house may feel thy power,

14 And do thou grant, Holy Father, that all those who shall worship in this house may be taught words of wisdom out of the best books, and that they may seek learning even by study, and also by faith, as thou hast said;

15 And that they may grow up in thee, and receive a fullness of the Holy Ghost, and be organized according to thy laws, and be prepared to obtain every needful thing;

16 And that this house may be a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of glory, and of God, even thy house;

17 That all the incomings of thy people, into this house, may be in the name of the Lord;

18 That all their outgoings from this house may be in the name of the Lord;

19 And that all their salutations may be in the name of the Lord, with holy hands, uplifted to the Most High;

20 And that no unclean thing shall be permitted to come into thy house to pollute it;

21 And when thy people transgress, any of them, they may speedily repent and return unto thee, and find favor in thy sight,

and be restored to the blessings which thou hast ordained to be poured out upon those who shall reverence thee in thy house.

22 And we ask thee, Holy Father, that thy servants may go forth from this house armed with thy power, and that thy name may be upon them,

and thy glory be round about them, and thine angels have charge over them;

23 And from this place they may bear exceedingly

and feel constrained to acknowledge that thou hast sanctified it, and that it is thy house, a place of thy holiness.

great and glorious tidings, in truth, unto the ends of the earth, that they may know that this is thy work, and that thou hast put forth thy hand, to fulfill that which thou hast spoken by the mouths of the prophets, concerning the last days.

You will notice in this structure that the Lord starts out with a very obvious, easy to follow parallel. He uses almost exact wording so that we can hardly miss the connection. He then begins to make it a little more difficult, switching from exact wording to more of a conceptual parallel. For example, the concept of doing things to the Lord's "divine acceptance and in a manner that we may be found worthy in [his] sight" (verses 10-11) matches very well with the concept of no unclean thing polluting the Lord's house and His people speedily repenting of their transgressions (verses 20-21). And just in case we didn't catch it, the Lord ends both thoughts with the exact wording "in thy sight."

You will also notice that verses 12 and 13 match with verse 22 but that the order of the matches is switched. This is significant. Generally, whenever there is something out of place or odd about a structure, it is for the purpose of calling our attention to it. It automatically makes us spend more time on that part of the structure. So it is with this structure. In verses 12, 13, and 22, the Lord has switched the parallel in a very obvious fashion. The phrases concerning God's glory and His power are purposely inverted in order to call our attention to them. This indicates a main message or a specific point the Lord would like us to notice.

Notice also the difference in the two statements concerning the Lord's power. When we enter the Lord's house, we "feel" His power. However, when we leave His house, we are "armed with" His power. The message seems to be that something happens between the time we enter the house of the Lord and the time we leave it that gives us priesthood power.

The question should now be asked, "What is it that gives us this power?" What have worthy members of the church learned in connection with this scriptural structure? To help us with these questions, the Lord has provided a third set of verses that parallel the ones above. It is found in section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the section known for its instruction on the priesthood. As we proceed through this structure, it will be necessary to explain some of the parallel messages as we encounter them. I believe this structure teaches us a great deal about priesthood power. It teaches us what it is as well as how we obtain it.

I will outline the structure using three columns. The first two columns contain the same D&C 109 structure as outlined above. The third column contains the third parallel as found in D&C 88:118-141.

7 And as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom, seek learning even by study and also by faith;

8 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;

9 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--

14 And do thou grant, Holy Father, that all those who shall worship in this house may be taught words of wisdom out of the best books, and that they may seek learning even by study, and also by faith, as thou hast said;

15 And that they may grow up in thee, and receive a fullness of the Holy Ghost, and be organized according to thy laws, and be prepared to obtain every needful thing;

16 And that this house may be a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of glory, and of God, even thy house;

17 That all the incomings of thy people, into this house, may be in the name of the Lord;

18 That all their outgoings from this house may be in the name of the Lord;

19 And that all their salutations may be in the name of the Lord, with holy hands, uplifted to the Most High;

118 And as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.

119 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;

120 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.

You will notice that the Lord starts out in the same fashion as before. The exact wording makes it very difficult for us to miss the connection. This seems to serve as a signal to us that something meaningful is happening. In one sense this may be viewed as an introduction of sorts. It is the flag or signal that gets us looking in the right direction.

The parallel continues. However, we now see the same departure from exact wording that we saw before. The parallel changes from one of exact wording to one of a conceptual nature. However, the parallel remains obvious enough that there can be little doubt as to its continuation. The parallel also “explodes” by giving us more detailed information about some of the topics at hand. If we were to underline the parts of the third column that match those from the first and second columns, we would likely underline the entire third column.

10 And now, Holy Father, we ask thee to assist us, thy people, with thy grace, in calling our solemn assembly, that it may be done to thine honor and to thy divine acceptance;

11 And in a manner that we may be found worthy, in thy sight,

20 And that no unclean thing shall be permitted to come into thy house to pollute it;

21 And when thy people transgress, any of them, they may speedily repent and return unto thee, and find favor in thy sight,

121 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.

122 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, and that every man may have an equal privilege.

123 See that ye love one another; cease to be covetous; learn to impart one to another as the gospel requires.

124 Cease to be idle; cease to find fault one with another; cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated.

125 And above all things, clothe yourselves with the bond of charity, as with a mantle, which is the bond of perfectness and peace.

126 Pray always, that ye may not faint, until I come. Behold, and lo, I will come quickly, and receive you unto myself. Amen.

You will immediately notice how much more information we receive from D&C 88 about this topic. If you want to do things properly, in a manner which will be found worthy in the sight of God, then do them in the manner outlined in verses 121 through 126 of D&C 88. These verses offer us much greater detail concerning the things of which we should speedily repent in order to find favor in the sight of God.

The next part of the parallel seems to be the most difficult to recognize.

to secure a fulfilment of the promises which thou hast made unto us, thy people, in the revelations given unto us;

and be restored to the blessings which thou hast ordained to be poured out upon those who shall reverence thee in thy house.

127 And again, the order of the house prepared for the presidency of the school of the prophets, established for their instruction in all things that are expedient for them, even for all the officers of the church, or in other words, those who are called to the ministry in the church, beginning at the high priests, even down to the deacons--

128 And this shall be the order of the house of the presidency of the school: He that is appointed to be president, or teacher, shall be found standing in his place, in the house which shall be prepared for him.

129 Therefore, he shall be first in the house of God, in a place that the congregation in the house may hear his words carefully and distinctly, not with loud speech.

130 And when he cometh into the house of God, for he should be first in the house--behold, this is beautiful, that he may be an example--

131 Let him offer himself in prayer upon his knees before God, in token or remembrance of the everlasting covenant.

If the parallel in D&C 88 is to continue, we should find things related to the fulfillment of the promises, or in other words, the restoration of blessings that the Lord has told us He would give to His people. We find several of these throughout verses 127 through 131 of section 88. We find the organization of the church (verse 127), we have a president or teacher standing in his place preaching (verses 128-129), and we find the everlasting covenant being remembered in prayer (verse 131). All of these things were restored to the earth through the prophet Joseph Smith. These are the promises and blessings given to us by the Lord in the revelations. These blessings have been ordained to be poured out upon those who reverence God in His house. I feel this is especially true as it pertains to the everlasting covenant.⁸

Now we come to the main message of the parallel, that which pertains to the glory of God and priesthood power.

⁸ See Genesis 9:16; Isaiah 55:3; Jeremiah 32:40; D&C 1:15; D&C 1:22; D&C 22:1; and D&C sections 131 and 132

12 That thy glory may rest down upon thy people, and upon this thy house, which we now dedicate to thee, that it may be sanctified and consecrated to be holy, and that thy holy presence may be continually in this house;

13 And that all people who shall enter upon the threshold of the Lord's house may feel thy power,

22 And we ask thee, Holy Father, that thy servants may go forth from this house armed with thy power, and that thy name may be upon them,

and thy glory be round about them, and thine angels have charge over them;

132 And when any shall come in after him, let the teacher arise, and with uplifted hands to heaven, yea, even directly, salute his brother or brethren with these words:

133 Art thou a brother or brethren? I salute you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in token or remembrance of the everlasting covenant, in which covenant I receive you to fellowship, in a determination that is fixed, immovable, and unchangeable, to be your friend and brother through the grace of God in the bonds of love, to walk in all the commandments of God blameless, in thanksgiving, forever and ever. Amen.

134 And he that is found unworthy of this salutation shall not have place among you; for ye shall not suffer that mine house shall be polluted by him.

135 And he that cometh in and is faithful before me, and is a brother, or if they be brethren, they shall salute the president or teacher with uplifted hands to heaven, with this same prayer and covenant, or by saying Amen, in token of the same.

136 Behold, verily, I say unto you, this is an ensample unto you for a salutation to one another in the house of God, in the school of the prophets.

137 And ye are called to do this by prayer and thanksgiving, as the Spirit shall give utterance in all your doings in the house of the Lord, in the school of the prophets, that it may become a sanctuary, a tabernacle of the Holy Spirit to your edification.

Because this is the main message of the parallel and the topic of this discourse, we will forego any explanation of these verses at this point and return to it later.

The final portion of the parallel can be outlined as follows:

and feel constrained to acknowledge that thou hast sanctified it, and that it is thy house, a place of thy holiness.

23 And from this place they may bear exceedingly great and glorious tidings, in truth, unto the ends of the earth, that they may know that this is thy work, and that thou hast put forth thy hand, to fulfill that which thou hast spoken by the mouths of the prophets, concerning the last days.

138 And ye shall not receive any among you into this school save he is clean from the blood of this generation;

139 And he shall be received by the ordinance of the washing of feet, for unto this end was the ordinance of the washing of feet instituted.

140 And again, the ordinance of washing feet is to be administered by the president, or presiding elder of the church.

141 It is to be commenced with prayer; and after partaking of bread and wine, he is to gird himself according to the pattern given in the thirteenth chapter of John's testimony concerning me. Amen.

In order to understand this final portion of the parallel, one must first understand the ordinance of washing of the feet as it relates to being cleansed from the blood and sins of this generation. In order to avoid being sidetracked from our discussion of the priesthood, I will offer only a brief explanation of the ordinance at this point. More specific information is provided in Appendix C.

The ordinance of washing of the feet is for men only. Since its purpose is to make a person "clean from the blood of this generation," it does not apply to women. Women receive this "cleansing" during their initiatory ordinance. The reason for this difference between men and women falls clearly within their respective roles. In order to be cleansed from the blood and sins of one's generation, one must fulfill his or her responsibility to that generation. Women fulfill this responsibility through the bearing and rearing of children. However, a man's role is different than a woman's. The man is expected to go preach the gospel to others. The man's responsibility towards "this generation" is clearly to "bear exceedingly great and glorious tidings, in truth, unto the ends of the earth, that they may know that this is [God's] work." The ordinance of the washing of feet is performed when a man has fulfilled his responsibilities of preaching the gospel to the people of his generation.

Thus we see that the parallel remains true to its structure. When a person is "constrained to acknowledge" the restored truths of the gospel and bears this message to the ends of the earth, he is worthy of the ordinance of the washing of feet. This ordinance indicates that he has fulfilled his responsibility to the people of his generation and is now cleansed from their blood and sins.

Now let's return to that portion of the structure which speaks specifically of priesthood power.

Verses 132 through 137 of section 88 are all discussing a "salutation." This salutation is offered when people face one another, lift up their hands to heaven, and express to each other the "prayer" or "covenant" found in verse 133. This covenant includes receiving a person to fellowship in a determination that is fixed, immovable, and unchangeable. We are to be a friend and brother to this person through the grace of God in the bonds of love forever and ever. It is important to note that this covenant is only offered to those who are worthy of it or in other words, those who can return it with full purpose of heart (verses 134-135).

If our parallel holds true, this salutation should have a great deal to do with glory and priesthood power. With this in mind, we should ask ourselves the following questions:

1. How is this salutation and covenant related to priesthood power?
2. Are all such "salutations" intended to be done while facing one another?
3. If the answer to the previous question is "yes," of what are these salutations symbolic? What do they represent?

In answering the first question we need only return to a scripture quoted earlier regarding what priesthood power is.

And it came to pass that Adam, being tempted of the devil--for, behold, the devil was before Adam, for he rebelled against me, saying, Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me because of their agency; (D&C 29:36, underline added)

Section 88, especially verse 133, is specifically showing us how to righteously honor one another. It is this fixed, immovable, and unchangeable honor towards each other that gives us priesthood power. If we had an unchangeable determination to be a friend and brother to each other through the grace of God in the bonds of love, and if we were walking in the all the commandments of God blameless, in thanksgiving, forever and ever, we would be willing to sacrifice all that we have, even our very lives, if necessary, in the service of one another. We would serve each other to the bitter end. The amount of trust and honor given to each other would be such that we would sacrifice anything for one another. There would be no doubt but what my interests would be yours and your interests would be mine. We could express full confidence and faith in any request made by the other person. In short, we would become one with each other.

The Lord has told us that if we do our part He is anxious to honor us in this same manner.

For thus saith the Lord--I, the Lord, am merciful and gracious unto those who fear me, and delight to honor those who serve me in righteousness and in truth unto the end. (D&C 76:5)

Whether we are speaking of our relationship with God or with others, the idea of honoring one another through the bonds of love and righteousness is the main message of the gospel. It permeates the ordinances given to us by our Father in heaven. The scriptures regarding the importance of love, one towards another, are as clear as any gospel concept.

Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matthew 22:36-40; Mark 12:28-34, underline added)

The Apostle Paul explained this doctrine further in his epistle to the Romans:

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:8-10, underline added)

And again to the Galatians:

For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (Galatians 5:14, underline added)

We need to realize that love is not just one of the commandments, it is the fulfillment of all of the commandments.

Using D&C 82:19, President Kimball offers us a definition of Zion which is very consistent with this idea of honoring each other:

Zion is, "every man seeking the interest of his neighbor, and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God." (Ensign, March 1985, "Becoming Pure in Heart", p. 4)

This doctrine is expressed again by Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians:

Let no man seek his own, but every man another's good. (1 Corinthians 10:24 JST)

This doctrine of sacrificing self for others is what D&C 88:133 is trying to teach us. And it is directly tied to how we gain priesthood power.

Again, it is important to note that this power would only work if both parties were worthy of the salutation. It cannot be a one-sided relationship. If you want to know what the celestial kingdom is like, try to picture

an innumerable council of beings who are always able to express this salutation to each other in all sincerity. Picture a council of gods who are so pure in heart, so righteous and loving, that they would all sacrifice anything and everything for each other. This is the fullness of the priesthood. It is exaltation and eternal life. All of the rest of the doctrines and offices associated with the priesthood are only trying to lead us in the direction of total commitment to each other. The entire plan of salvation, with its ordinances, laws, and doctrines is geared toward helping us to achieve this lofty state of existence. To gain the immovable honor of men, through love for others and obedience to the laws and principles of the universe, is to gain priesthood power for all eternity. Gaining that loving honor from others for ourselves and for our posterity is the very work and glory of our Father in heaven. As will be explained, gaining this honor should also be viewed as the work and glory of every individual who would inherit the celestial kingdom and become a god with our Father in heaven.

The question may now be raised, “What is the proper or righteous manner for us to gain this honor?” In section 121 of the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord teaches us how we should proceed. Listen carefully to the words of the Lord concerning priesthood power and how to gain it.

Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson--

That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness. (D&C 121:34-36)

First notice that aspiring to the honors of men is spoken of negatively. As will be discussed later, this seems to be Satan’s plan - to obtain power for the self in spite of others. The Lord’s plan is to forget self by giving honor and power to others. The natural result of this unselfish or loving attitude is that we receive honor and power from others who have the same attitude towards us as we have towards them.

Next, notice the inseparable connection between the priesthood and the powers of heaven. What are the powers of heaven? As already discussed, they are people or rather, intelligent beings.⁹ They are the things in the universe that act rather than the things that are acted upon.¹⁰

Let’s continue,

That they [the rights of the priesthood] may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins; or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man.
(D&C 121:37, underline added)

⁹ The following works from the Nag Hamadi library contain references which specifically describe people as powers: The Gospel of Philip; The Apocalypse of Adam; and The Concept of our Great Power. See also 3 Nephi 20:22; 3 Nephi 28:7; and Moses 7:27.

¹⁰ 2 Nephi 2:14

Notice that all of the sins in this scripture involve doing things for the self rather than for others or the whole. Why do the heavens withdraw themselves when we do such things? It is because righteous beings can no longer honor us. We will be “found unworthy of [their] salutation” and hence we “shall not have place among [them].” All of the things listed in this scripture would indicate a person that is looking out for his own interests instead of the interests of others. This type of attitude makes others “withdraw themselves” from us. And when the being known as “the Spirit of the Lord” withdraws itself from us, our last bits of priesthood power go with Him or in other words, we are left to ourselves.

Behold, ere he is aware, he is left unto himself, to kick against the pricks, to persecute the saints, and to fight against God.

We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion.

Hence many are called, but few are chosen. (D&C 121:38-40, underline added)

Proceeding on, the Lord then instructs us in the proper way to obtain priesthood power or in other words, the proper way to obtain the honor of men in this world and the world to come. Notice how it all deals with how we treat other beings.

No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile--

Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reprov'd, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy;

That he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death.

Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dew from heaven.

The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever. (D&C 121:41-46, underline added)

Here we see that the natural “flow” of priesthood power comes to us when we deal with others the way we should. Because of our righteous attitude towards others, our relationship with God improves, the doctrine of the priesthood slowly gathers upon us, the Holy Ghost accompanies us continually, the symbol of our

power will become righteousness and truth, and our dominion flows unto us forever and ever.¹¹ It is significant to note that these things come to us “without compulsory means.” In the Celestial Kingdom, we are not compelled to do anything. We simply do it for the love of God, truth, and other people.

All of these things concerning the proper use of priesthood power deal with the relationships between ourselves and other people (intelligences). True priesthood power is only gained by the principles of righteousness. For this is the only way to truly gain the trust or honor of others. Performing priesthood functions for ourselves or simply because the priesthood has been conferred upon us demonstrates the opposite of the true doctrine of priesthood power. If we want to become as the gods and have the power of the priesthood flow unto us and to our children after us, we need to learn these lessons of dealing properly with others. The ordinances found in the temple of God and the scriptures He has given us outline what our purpose and desires should be towards our fellow beings. They outline how to gain power in the priesthood.

OUR PROGRESSION IN THE PRIESTHOOD

Now we will return to the second and third questions we asked earlier.

2. Are all such “salutations” intended to be done while facing one another?
3. If all such things are done while facing each other, of what are these salutations symbolic? Or in other words, what do they represent?

It would seem to follow that if one such salutation should be performed while facing one another, others should also be done in the same manner. In order to better explain the answers to these questions the chart on the following page has been prepared. It outlines the various parts of the priesthood and the things associated with each part. The sensitive nature of the chart should be easily recognized by worthy members of the church. Care will be taken in explaining the chart in an appropriate manner.

The priesthood can be broken up into four major parts, two Aaronic and two Melchizedek. Each of these parts seems to correspond to a particular stage of our progression - pre-mortal existence through the celestial kingdom. Since we currently live in a telestial world, this stage of our existence is the present. Likewise, the pre-mortal existence, which we have already experienced, represents our past and the terrestrial world, such as during the millennium, remains a future state of progression. It will be helpful to refer to the chart during the explanations that follow.

¹¹ I believe it is more than a mere coincidence that the words “forever and ever” are also used in describing the eternal nature of the salutation found in D&C 88:133.

Progression in the Priesthood (Table)

The Kingdoms	The Priesthoods	Progressive Time	Progressive state	The Degrees of Honor	Gifts/Knowledge	The Laws
Outer Darkness (Intelligences)	No Priesthood (D&C 88:114)	No Progression (JD 1:118; JD 2:301)	Native Element, No Real Identity	Alone, in your "Own Place" (D&C 88:114; Jacob 6:3; D&C 121:38)	Little or No Learning/Receiving at All (JD 1:118; JD 2:301; D&C 88:32-39)	Little or No Obedience to Law (D&C 88:32-39)
Pre-Mortal Existence (Spirits)	Aaronic (1 st Part)	Past	Symbolic of the Pre-mortal Personality I used To Be	Recognition of Other Beings	Receiving from Celestial Beings (Abraham 3:21-28)	Law of Sacrifice (3 Ne. 9:19-20; D&C 59:8)
Telestial	Aaronic (2 nd Part)	Present	Symbolic of the Mortal Personality I Am Now	Recognition and Learning/Receiving From Angels (D&C 84:26)	Receiving from Terrestrial Beings (D&C 76:86; D&C 88:123)	Law of the Gospel (D&C 104:18)
Terrestrial	Melchizedek (1 st Part)	Future	Symbolic of the Type of Person I Can become (D&C 35:2; Moses 6:68)	Learning/Receiving and Giving (D&C 84:18-21)	Receiving from Celestial Beings (D&C 76:87)	Law of Chastity
Celestial	Melchizedek (2 nd Part)	Does Not Represent Time	A God, Enjoying Immortality and Eternal Life with the Gods	"At-one-ment" with the whole (John 17:11, 22; D&C 35:2)	Receiving from the Councils of the Gods (D&C 130:10-11; Doctrine on Deity p.198)	Law of Consecration

Outer Darkness

Before the Lord first encountered and organized the intelligences that were to come to this world, we were alone, perhaps with no ability to even recognize the existence of other beings or intelligences.¹² Brigham Young has explained that those who become sons of perdition will lose their knowledge, senses, and hence their ability to recognize others. They will return to a condition similar, if not identical, to that in which God had originally found them.

The opposite principle [to that of righteousness] seizes you, fastens itself upon you, and you decrease, lessen, diminish, decay, and waste away in quality, excellence, and strength, until your organization becomes extinct, oblivion covers you, your name is blotted out from the Book of Life, from the heavens, from the earth, and from under the earth, and you will return, and sink into your natural element, which cannot be destroyed, though many read the Bible as conveying such an idea, but it does not.

The principle opposite to that of eternal increase from the beginning, leads down to hell; the person decreases, loses his knowledge, tact, talent, and ultimately, in a short period of time, is lost; he returns to his mother earth, his name is forgotten. (Journal of Discourses 1:118, underline added)

...let a man or women who has received much of the power of God, visions and revelations, turn away from the holy commandments of the Lord, and it seems that their senses are taken from them, their understanding and judgment in righteousness are taken away, they go into darkness, and become like a blind person who gropes by the wall. Many of you witness this almost daily. Such will continue to go on the retrograde path until they are decomposed; while those who are faithful will continue to increase, and this is the great blessing the Lord has given to, or placed within the reach of, the children of man, even to be capable of receiving eternal lives. (Journal of Discourses 2:301, underline added)

...is there a time when a person will cease to learn? Yes, when he has sinned against God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Ghost – God’s minister; when he has denied the Lord, defied Him and committed the sin that in the Bible is termed the unpardonable sin – the sin against the Holy Ghost. That is the time when a person will cease to learn, and from that time forth will descend in ignorance, forgetting that which they formerly knew, and decreasing until they return to the native element, whether it be one thousand or in one million years, or during as many eternities as you can count. They will cease to increase, but must decrease, until they return to the native element. These are the only characters who will ever cease to learn, both in time and eternity. (Journal of Discourses 3:203, underline added)

It is important to note that Brigham Young teaches a continuance of existence for the sons of perdition. They will not cease to exist. They will simply be “returned” to the condition from whence they came, to

¹² Intelligences are individuals. See Appendix A, “Intelligent and Unintelligent Matter,” under the subtitle “Intelligent Matter as Individual Entities” for a more detailed explanation of intelligences being individuals as opposed to a mass of some sort. This helps us to better understand the idea of individual, eternal, intelligent matter “floating” in space, waiting to be acted upon by higher intelligences.

their “native element,” without knowledge, senses, judgment, talent, etc. Of this “returning,” Elder Heber C. Kimball has said,

...they have dishonoured the spirit and bodies that God gave them; therefore God will make a desolation of those bodies and spirits, and he will throw them back into the earth; that is, that portion that belongs to the earth will go back there. And so it will be with our spirits: they will go back into the elements or space that they once occupied before they came here. (Journal of Discourses 5:271, underline added)

In addition to these quotes by Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, the scriptures teach that the wicked will be cast out into a place known as “their own place.”

And how blessed are they who have labored diligently in his vineyard; and how cursed are they who shall be cast out into their own place! And the world shall be burned with fire. (Jacob 6:3, underline added)

And then cometh the battle of the great God; and the devil and his armies shall be cast away into their own place, that they shall not have power over the saints any more at all. (D&C 88:114, underline added)

The end state of the wicked is likely identical to our own state before the Lord “came down in the beginning in the midst of all [of us]”¹³ and began to implement the plan of salvation. In fact, Brigham Young seems to suggest that the sons of perdition who are placed back into their “native element” will be given another chance at salvation at some point in the future.

Jesus will redeem the last and least of the sons of Adam, except the sons of perdition, who will be held in reserve for another time. They will become angels of the Devil. (Journal of Discourses 8:154, underline added)

The Lord said to Jeremiah the Prophet, “Arise, and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter’s house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hands of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.” The clay that marred in the potter’s hands was thrown back into the unprepared portion, to be prepared over again. So it will be with every wicked man and woman, and every wicked nation, kingdom, and government upon earth, sooner or later; they will be thrown back to the native element from which they originated, to be worked over again, and be prepared to enjoy some sort of a kingdom. (Journal of Discourses 2:124, underline added)

The Doctrine and Covenants also seems to confirm that the final state of the wicked may not be as permanent as we sometimes tend to believe.

Nevertheless, it is not written that there shall be no end to this torment, but it is written endless torment.

¹³ Abraham 3:21

Again, it is written eternal damnation; wherefore it is more express than other scriptures, that it might work upon the hearts of the children of men, altogether for my name's glory.

Wherefore, I will explain unto you this mystery, for it is meet unto you to know even as mine apostles.

I speak unto you that are chosen in this thing, even as one, that you may enter into my rest.

For, behold, the mystery of godliness, how great is it! For, behold, I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment, for Endless is my name. Wherefore--

Eternal punishment is God's punishment.

Endless punishment is God's punishment. (D&C 19:6-12)

Thus we see that sons of perdition end up the same way they started out - the same way that all of us started out. They are alone, in their own place. They are “native element” whose “every possession and object of affection will be taken...and their identity...will eventually cease.”¹⁴ No one honors them and they have no ability to honor anyone else. Because they are alone, in their own place, there is no priesthood power available to them.

The First Part of the Aaronic Priesthood

In its simplest form, the plan of salvation may perhaps be described as a system or method to teach intelligent beings how to love one another and become one with each other. With this in mind, the first step the Lord might take in our learning process is to enable us to recognize or acknowledge other beings. This first step must be taken if we are to begin our progression in the priesthood. The ability to acknowledge others was apparently taught to us in the pre-mortal councils of heaven.

In conjunction with this pre-mortal recognition of other beings, it is interesting to note that the symbol for “hello” seems to be that of raising or waving our hand to another person. Generally the other person responds with the same gesture. Even among the Indians we see the famous raising of the hand as a salutation, which, as every faithful television watcher knows, is always accompanied by the greeting “how.”

This “salutation” may be seen in the performance of many ceremonies or rites of man on earth. When people are baptized, when other basic priesthood duties are performed, or even when people are put under oath in a court of law, we are instructed to raise our right arm to the square. This is common practice among many groups the world over, whether religious or not. It is a practice that can be seen by all who care to view such things. Even Satan and his followers, who did not keep their first estate,¹⁵ recognize and respond to this universal “salutation.” It is likely that such a salutation was learned during our pre-mortal

¹⁴ Journal of Discourses 4:31-32

¹⁵ Abraham 3:28

state by every being who was present at that stage of our progression. It seems to have maintained its significance in this world, both as a greeting or recognition of others, as well as a gesture associated with important rituals or ceremonies.

It is important to note that when such a greeting is offered, all we are generally doing is recognizing or acknowledging something or someone. We are not really receiving or giving any type of communication with the gesture except perhaps to say “hi” or to acknowledge the presence or significance of another person. I believe this is basically what we learned to do in the pre-mortal councils of heaven. Acknowledging the presence or even the existence of other beings was likely our first lesson towards salvation and power in the priesthood.

Another significant step we took at this stage of our progression was to recognize the need of obedience to God. This “law of obedience” does not appear to be a formal law, like many of the other laws we find in the scriptures. We are given no specific definition in the scriptures concerning a “law of obedience.” In fact, there is no formal mention made anywhere in the scriptures concerning a “law of obedience.” It is perhaps explained as well in the following verse as anywhere else in the scriptures:

And, if you keep my commandments and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God. (D&C 14:7)

The law of obedience appears to be more of an all-encompassing, general principle than it does a specifically defined directive. It is similar to the covenant we make at baptism or when we partake of the sacrament. It is a declaration or commitment of universal conformity to the commandments of God, whatever they may be. However, for whatever reason, it should be noted that this law is somewhat different for men than it is for women.¹⁶

If our first lessons were to acknowledge others and obey God, it would seem that a part of this acknowledgement included the recognition that Christ would be provided for us and sacrificed as our Savior. We were given a choice whether or not we wanted to follow this plan of redemption. Those who chose to accept the Savior, also chose to come to earth and suffer the tribulations of this telestial kingdom. We are asked in this life to remember this sacrifice of God’s son by obeying the law of sacrifice. This law suggests to us that we should be willing to sacrifice ourselves, the same as Christ has done. In old testament times, during the law of Moses, the law of sacrifice was remembered by offering up the firstlings of the flock in similitude of the sacrifice of Christ. When Christ came, the law of sacrifice changed. The Savior told the Nephites that a new manner of sacrificing and remembering the Savior should be implemented. We are now asked to offer a sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings.

And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and

¹⁶ See Genesis 3:16; Ephesians 5:22-25; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:1-7; TPJS Pg. 87-88; Articles of Faith Pg. 419; Discourses of Brigham Young Pg. 140 (JD 10:310); Journal of Discourses Pg. 256; Journal of Discourses pp. 257-258; Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball pp. 315-323; Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson pp. 503-519.

with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not.

Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin.

Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive, for of such is the kingdom of God. Behold, for such I have laid down my life, and have taken it up again; therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved. (3 Nephi 9:19-22, see also D&C 59:8)

Lehi explained that he knew a broken heart and contrite spirit were a part of the law of sacrifice long before Christ came to earth.

Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered. (2 Nephi 2:7)

The idea of sacrificing the self is very consistent with having a broken heart and contrite spirit. To be brokenhearted is to feel sorrow or grief, in this case for one's sins. The word contrite means to be apologetic, chastened, penitent, remorseful, and repentant. This is the way we are commanded to feel about ourselves by the Savior "and unto none else can the law be answered." It is very much in line with the idea of sacrificing ourselves, even our very lives, if necessary, for God, truth and others. Basically, it is the idea of giving ourselves up. It is offering up the natural man, which is prone to think of himself, and offering himself as a sacrifice for good.

For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father. (Mosiah 3:19, underline added)

By choosing to come to the earth and accepting the sacrifice of the Savior we learned about the law of sacrifice. Not only about the sacrifice which would be offered for us, but also that we should be willing to sacrifice ourselves as well.

Joseph Smith has told us that the law of sacrifice and the priesthood are very much associated with one another.

The offering of sacrifice has ever been connected and forms a part of the duties of the Priesthood. It began with the Priesthood, and will be continued until after the coming of Christ, from generation to generation. We frequently have mention made of the offering of sacrifice by the servants of the Most High in ancient days, prior to the law of Moses; which ordinances will be continued when the Priesthood is restored with all its authority, power and blessings. (TPJS Pg. 172, underline added)

Learning to sacrifice ourselves is the first step in gaining righteous honor in the priesthood and becoming one with other beings. The points to be noted about the law of sacrifice are two-fold. First, that we must learn to sacrifice ourselves, thus following the example set by the Savior. This is the beginning point or first step in priesthood administration. The second point is that we chose to take this route in our pre-mortal existence. It is my belief that this law must be understood and lived to some extent there before we come to this mortal existence. It is a preparation for this earth life.

The Second Part of the Aaronic Priesthood

The second step in our progression in the priesthood continues to include the concept of recognizing other beings. However, in addition to that recognition, we take one more step in the advancement of our priesthood - that of receiving knowledge and gifts from other beings. Here on earth, a telestial world, we are taught that the Aaronic priesthood holds the key to the ministering of angels.

And the lesser priesthood continued, which priesthood holdeth the key of the ministering of angels and the preparatory gospel; (D&C 84:26)

Those involved with this level of priesthood power should expect to be taught directly by messengers from our Father in heaven. It is the right and privilege of those holding this priesthood to have such communication. It is important to note that in this stage of our progression we are not called upon to give knowledge to others. We merely receive it from them.

The Aaronic priesthood is the priesthood associated with the preparatory gospel of outward ordinances. The preparatory gospel is that of repentance and baptism.

And the lesser priesthood continued, which priesthood holdeth the key of the ministering of angels and the preparatory gospel;

Which gospel is the gospel of repentance and baptism, and the remission of sins, and the law of carnal commandments, which the Lord in his wrath caused to continue with the house of Aaron among the children of Israel until John, whom God raised up, being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. (D&C 84:26-27, underline added)

Why it is called the lesser priesthood is because it is an appendage to the greater, or the Melchizedek Priesthood, and has power in administering outward ordinances. (D&C 107:14, underline added)

Notice the connection the Aaronic priesthood has with preparation. It is meant to prepare us for higher things. Notice also that it is associated with the outward ordinances as well as with carnal commandments. People at this level of priesthood power will receive from others who are more advanced than they. And they will use this knowledge to bless others, but only in a very outward, carnal sense. The “inward” ordinances or “spiritual” commandments are reserved for those who progress beyond this stage of priesthood power.

The law of the gospel has been given to us as an expression of this outward, temporal service.

And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine.

But it must needs be done in mine own way; and behold this is the way that I, the Lord, have decreed to provide for my saints, that the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low.

For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves.

Therefore, if any man shall take of the abundance which I have made, and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the poor and the needy, he shall, with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment. (D&C 104:15-18, underline added. See also D&C 49:19-20; D&C 70:14; D&C 78:5-7; D&C 88:123)

Most members of the church misunderstand the law of the gospel. They often confuse it with the law of consecration. In short, the law of the gospel is that law which provides for the temporal, as opposed to the spiritual, welfare of other people. It includes the giving of our substance to those who are less fortunate. It also includes becoming equal in earthly or “carnal” possessions. It is a preparatory law given to us to ready us for the higher laws. For if we are not equal in earthly things we cannot be equal in obtaining heavenly things. For if we will that the Lord give unto us a place in the celestial world, we must prepare ourselves by doing the things which He has commanded us and required of us.¹⁷ If we do not learn how to share our temporal wealth with others in this life, we simply will not be able to share our spiritual wealth with others in the next life. The law of the gospel is wholly temporal or carnal in nature and is preparatory for the higher things yet to come. It matches perfectly with the offices of the Aaronic priesthood.

The Aaronic priesthood seems to be sort of a testing ground. We are given knowledge and a set of carnal rules or laws to test that knowledge. If we are true and faithful to that knowledge and pass these temporal tests, we will be prepared to receive further light and knowledge. The second part of the Aaronic priesthood or that of our mortal probation, prepares us to better understand and live the higher laws yet to come. The law of the gospel could not be lived during our pre-mortal existence. It must be lived here in mortality where people need the temporal necessities of food, shelter, clothing, etc. When we have mastered the temporal or carnal, we will be introduced to the spiritual.

The First Part of the Melchizedek Priesthood

As already mentioned, if we are faithful to the duties and knowledge given to us while operating in the Aaronic priesthood, we will become prepared to perform the duties of the Melchizedek priesthood. During our Aaronic priesthood stages we learned how to sacrifice as well as how to care for the temporal, outward needs of others. We now move on to the next stage of our progression in the priesthood, that of learning the mysteries of godliness and caring for the spiritual needs of others.

The power and authority of the higher, or Melchizedek Priesthood, is to hold the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church--

To have the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to have the heavens opened unto them, to commune with the general assembly and church of the Firstborn, and to enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant. (D&C 107:18-19, underline added)

¹⁷

D&C 78:6-7

And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God.

Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest.

And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; (D&C 84:19-21, underline added)

Joseph Smith has echoed these statements about the Melchizedek priesthood.

All are bound by the principles of virtue and happiness, but one great privilege of the Priesthood is to obtain revelations of the mind and will of God. It is also the privilege of the Melchizedek Priesthood, to reprove, rebuke, and admonish, as well as to receive revelation. (TPJS, p. 111, underline added)

These statements teach us that while we perform the duties of this greater priesthood, we should look for two key responsibilities. The first responsibility deals with giving or “administering” the gospel to others. This is equivalent to holding the keys of the spiritual blessings of the church. Just as we are expected to receive knowledge from the angels during the time we hold the Aaronic priesthood, worthy holders of the Melchizedek priesthood are expected to share what they have been given with others.

In addition to administering the gospel, the greater priesthood holds the key to receiving more knowledge, even the mysteries of the kingdom. These mysteries deal with the celestial kingdom or kingdom of the Father and thus can only be given to us by celestial beings. They are received as we “commune with the general assembly and church of the Firstborn,” and “enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.” Those involved with this stage of our progression have not “arrived” yet. They are not celestial in nature at this point, but rather, they are terrestrial in nature.

And the terrestrial [receive] through the ministration of the celestial. (D&C 76:87)

But how about the terrestrials, can they come up into the celestial? No, their intelligence and knowledge have not prepared and adapted them to dwell with those who reign in celestial glory, consequently they can not even be angels in that glory. They have not obeyed the law that pertains to that glory, and hence they could not abide it. But will there be blessings administered to them by those who dwell in celestial glory? Yes, angels will be sent forth from the celestial world to minister to those who inherit the glory of the moon, bearing messages of joy and peace and of all that which is calculated to exalt, to redeem and ennoble those who have been resurrected into a terrestrial glory. They can receive the Spirit of the Lord there, and the ministration of angels there. (Orson Pratt, JD 15:322-323, underline added)

We must assume that the messages “of all that which is calculated to exalt” will have just that effect on those living the terrestrial laws. Those at this period of progression will continue to receive from celestial beings in order “to redeem and ennoble those who have been resurrected into a terrestrial glory.” Likewise, it is reasonable to assume that those who obtain that glory while here on earth will be taught the mysteries of the Father’s kingdom in much the same manner.

We are taught in the scriptures that Christ received from his Father and other celestial beings.¹⁸ It is also clear that He spent a great deal of His time giving to others. In much the same way that the Savior, the Son of God, received from his Father and gave to his disciples, we are expected to receive from our Father and give to all those who will listen. We are expected to become like the Savior in this regard, even a son of God.

I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was crucified for the sins of the world, even as many as will believe on my name, that they may become the sons of God, even one in me as I am one in the Father, as the Father is one in me, that we may be one. (D&C 35:2, underline added)

Behold, thou [Adam] art one in me, a son of God; and thus may all become my sons. Amen. (Moses 6:68, underline added)

In short, the Melchizedek priesthood, during its terrestrial stage of progression, is responsible to both give to others as well as receive from others. As mentioned in the scripture above, this is manifest in the ordinances of this greater priesthood.¹⁹

Associated with this stage of our progression is the law of chastity. This law states that we will have no sexual relations with anyone other than our spouse, to whom we are legally and lawfully wed. This law is again preparatory for that which is to come in our next stage of progression. It is a test (and a lesson) to see if we will be able to control the appetites and desires of the flesh and be worthy of the power of procreation in the celestial kingdom.

The law of chastity is the next step in obtaining priesthood power, not only from a standpoint of how we deal with the power of procreation, but also from a standpoint of how we will deal with a spouse and a family in general. Obedience to this law all but forces us to take on the responsibilities of a family. Because the family unit is the natural result of this law, it forces us to both sacrifice ourselves for others as well as share our substance in providing for others. It is a lesson in sacrifice and temporal equality. It puts us in a situation in which others are dependent upon us for many or all of their wants and needs. I feel the lessons learned in such a situation are very complementary with the laws of sacrifice and of the gospel. In this way, the family unit teaches the principles of the priesthood. As will be discussed later, the honor, love, and respect that we learn during the family experience has a great deal to do with obtaining priesthood power. Our lineage and our posterity are very much involved with our priesthood. Indeed, they are our priesthood.

The Second Part of the Melchizedek Priesthood

This is the fullness of the Melchizedek priesthood. It is the priesthood we have when we become a god in the celestial kingdom.

What was the power of Melchizedek? 'Twas not the Priesthood of Aaron which administers in outward ordinances, and the offering of sacrifices. Those holding the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood are kings and priests of the Most High God, holding the keys of power and blessings. In fact, that Priesthood is a perfect law of

¹⁸ Matthew 17:1-5

¹⁹ D&C 84:20

theocracy, and stands as God to give laws to the people, administering endless lives to the sons and daughters of Adam. (TPJS Pg.322)

Because the fullness of the priesthood is celestial in nature, the only place on this telestial earth where it can be obtained is in the temple of God.²⁰ Speaking prior to the building of the first latter-day temple the Lord said,

For there is not a place found on earth that he may come to and restore again that which was lost unto you, or which he hath taken away, even the fullness of the priesthood. (D&C 124:28)

Joseph Smith also taught us how the fullness of the priesthood must be obtained.

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. (TPJS Pg.308, underline added)

It is important to note that literally all the commandments and ordinances of the house of the Lord teach us how to properly live with or give honor to other people.

Joseph Smith goes further by teaching us about the mission of Elijah in connection with this priesthood.

Now for Elijah. The spirit, power, and calling of Elijah is, that ye have power to hold the key of the revelations, ordinances, oracles, powers and endowments of the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of the kingdom of God on the earth; and to receive, obtain, and perform all the ordinances belonging to the kingdom of God, even unto the turning of the hearts of the fathers unto the children, and the hearts of the children unto the fathers, even those who are in heaven. (TPJS Pg.337)

Why is it so important to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers? Why would this be associated with the highest degree of priesthood power? Because in this honoring of our posterity and of our fathers we find our priesthood power. Indeed, this is our priesthood power. Remember the words the Lord spoke to Abraham?

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal. (Abraham 2:11, underline added)

It is important to note that this effort of turning our hearts to our lineage and our posterity is not directed solely to those on earth, but to “those who are in heaven” as well.

²⁰ Brigham Young has said, “The ordinances of the house of God are expressly for the Church of the Firstborn.” (Journal of Discourses 8:154.) The Church of the Firstborn is the church of God the Father. (D&C 88:5)

The end result of this highest priesthood is that of losing the self through sacrificing and by becoming one with the gods - serving, blessing, and caring for others on a continual basis. It is to have at the heart of your desires that of bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man²¹ and seeking for the welfare of those around you. There is no separation of thought or desire. Beings holding this priesthood will “see as they are seen, and know as they are known.”²² There is nothing to hide, no controversy or contention, only pure love and oneness with the councils of the gods. This is the pure in heart and it is where Christ is trying to lead us. It is true “at-one-ment.”

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. (John 17:11, underline added)

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: (John 17:22, underline added)

I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was crucified for the sins of the world, even as many as will believe on my name, that they may become the sons of God, even one in me as I am one in the Father, as the Father is one in me, that we may be one. (D&C 35:2)

In this state of priesthood power we will live the law of consecration. Which is to give everything you are, your time, talents, and all things you possess, in an effort to bless others, bring to pass Zion or the pure in heart,²³ and further the kingdom of our God. They are all one and the same thing. President Ezra Taft Benson has said,

We covenant to live the law of consecration. This law is that we consecrate our time, talents, strength, property, and money for the upbuilding of the kingdom of God on this earth and the establishment of Zion.

Until one abides by the laws of obedience, sacrifice, the gospel, and chastity, he cannot abide the law of consecration, which is the law pertaining to the celestial kingdom. “For if you will that I give you place in the celestial world, you must prepare yourselves by doing the things which I have commanded you and required of you” (D&C 78:7). (“Temple Blessings and Covenants,” Temple Presidents Seminar, Salt Lake City, Utah, 28 September 1982. See also Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, Pg.121)

The other laws are only preparatory “stepping stones” to the law of consecration. They are specific lessons, parts of an entire educational path which leads to full consecration of all that we are and possess.

And all this for the benefit of the church of the living God, that every man may improve upon his talent, that every man may gain other talents, yea, even an hundred fold, to be cast into the Lord’s storehouse, to become the common property of the whole church--

²¹ Moses 1:39

²² D&C 76:94

²³ D&C 97:21

Every man seeking the interest of his neighbor, and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God. (D&C 82:18-19)

This is Zion. It brings with it the fullness of the priesthood. It is the celestial way of life. Notice in these verses that it is not the material substance being thrown into the Lord's storehouse. It is the talents of every man. The desires of every man being not that of himself, but that of his neighbor and of God.

All things are given to those who possess the fullness of the priesthood. The universe becomes an open book, and all things are shared in common by those who righteously enter into this covenant one with another. Knowledge is shared freely among the councils of the gods. The Lord has explained to us how knowledge is obtained in the celestial kingdom.

The place where God resides is a great Urim and Thummim.

This earth, in its sanctified and immortal state, will be made like unto crystal and will be a Urim and Thummim to the inhabitants who dwell thereon, whereby all things pertaining to an inferior kingdom, or all kingdoms of a lower order, will be manifest to those who dwell on it; and this earth will be Christ's.

Then the white stone mentioned in Revelation 2:17, will become a Urim and Thummim to each individual who receives one, whereby things pertaining to a higher order of kingdoms will be made known;

And a white stone is given to each of those who come into the celestial kingdom, whereon is a new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it. The new name is the key word. (D&C 130:8-11)

Notice that the earth will manifest those things pertaining to a lower order of kingdoms while the white stone will manifest those things pertaining to a higher order of kingdoms - higher than the celestial kingdom. Nothing will be withheld from us once we enter into this order of things. On this topic Elder B.H. Roberts has said,

And so in every inhabited world, and in every system of worlds, a God presides. Deity in his own right and person, and by virtue of the essence of him; and also by virtue of His being the sign and symbol of the collectivity of the Divine Intelligences of the universe. Having access to all the councils of the Gods, each individual Deity becomes a partaker of the collective knowledge, wisdom, honor, power, majesty, and glory of the Body Divine,... (Doctrine on Deity, p. 198)

Hyrum Andrus also sums it up well,

Though God knows all things within His vast domain and has access to the truth and power of higher realms within the divine patriarchal order of eternity, He is continually progressing in truth as he advances from one level of celestial glory and power to a higher one. Those within that celestial system are continually moving upward into greater and greater degrees of refinement and power, and to higher and higher realms of celestial life. (Doctrinal Commentary on the Pearl of Great Price, p. 507)

This natural “flow” of knowledge, power, and glory is apparently very different than anything else we experience prior to this time. It can likely be described as a constant stream, flowing through us from the kingdoms high above us, lowering itself to those kingdoms below us.

All of this is possible only because those beings who dwell there live in full, unwavering faith, honor, and love one towards another. There is no doubt but what these beings will use their knowledge and power for good, for the benefit of others. And thus we come to a greater understanding of that important covenant given to us in the Doctrine and Covenants regarding the power gained in the house of the Lord. If, “with holy hands, uplifted to the Most High,”²⁴ we can face each other and with full purity of heart repeat the following words, we will be experiencing the fullness of priesthood power:

Art thou a brother or brethren? I salute you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in token or remembrance of the everlasting covenant, in which covenant I receive you to fellowship, in a determination that is fixed, immovable, and unchangeable, to be your friend and brother through the grace of God in the bonds of love, to walk in all the commandments of God blameless, in thanksgiving, forever and ever. Amen. (D&C 88:133)

This is what the priesthood is all about.²⁵ This is perfect “at-one-ment” with each other. It is perfect power. It is the end design or intent of the priesthood ordinances. It is eternal life and exaltation with our Father, his Son, and all the councils of gods who have ever been.

WOMEN AND THE PRIESTHOOD

This is an area of the priesthood which can be quite confusing and difficult to discuss. There are often strong feelings and emotions involved. This is especially true as the world continues to claim more and more that there should be no differences between men and women at all. However, in spite of these claims, it should be clearly understood that the Lord is the ultimate source of truth in this and all other matters. In my mind, if the Lord has spoken on the topic, the philosophies of men which maintain a different view are of little significance, at least as far as our search for truth is concerned.

That said, I believe there is much we don’t understand regarding women and the priesthood. Many people seem to confuse the functions and duties of the priesthood with the gifts of the spirit. That they are two different things can be easily established. Elder Bruce R. McConkie has said,

Where spiritual things are concerned, as pertaining to all of the gifts of the spirit, with reference to the receipt of revelation, the gaining of testimonies, and the seeing of visions, in all matters that pertain to godliness and holiness and which are brought to pass as a result of personal righteousness - in all these things men and women stand in a position of absolute equality before the Lord. (Ensign, January 1979, p. 61)

This section attempts to demonstrate that although women do not hold the priesthood in the same way that men hold the priesthood, they can and should perform many of the functions generally associated with the

²⁴ D&C 109:9; D&C 109:19; D&C 88:119; D&C 88:132-135

²⁵ See also D&C 50:26-35, especially verse 30.

priesthood. There is much more involved with the question of women and the priesthood than most of us usually appreciate.

Much of our attitude regarding women and the priesthood seems to come from a few prominent authorities in church history. For example, President Joseph Fielding Smith once expressed some very direct words regarding women and the priesthood.

WOMEN AND THE PRIESTHOOD. There is nothing in the teachings of the gospel which declares that men are superior to women. The Lord has given unto men the power of priesthood and sent them forth to labor in his service. A woman's calling is in a different direction. The most noble, exalting calling of all is that which has been given to women as the mothers of men. Women do not hold the priesthood, but if they are faithful and true, they will become priestesses and queens in the kingdom of God, and that implies that they will be given authority. The women do not hold the priesthood with their husbands, but they do reap the benefits coming from that priesthood.

WOMEN NOT TO ANOINT OR SEAL BLESSINGS. The Brethren do not consider it necessary or wise for the women of the Relief Society to wash and anoint women who are sick. The Lord has given us directions in matters of this kind; we are to call in the elders, and they are to anoint with oil on the head and bless by the laying on of hands.

The Church teaches that a woman may lay on hands upon the head of a sick child and ask the Lord to bless it, in the case when those holding the priesthood cannot be present. A man might under such conditions invite his wife to lay on hands with him in blessing their sick child. This would be merely to exercise her faith and not be, cause of any inherent right to lay on hands. A woman would have no authority to anoint or seal a blessing, and where elders can be called in, that would be the proper way to have an administration performed. (Doctrines of Salvation, Vol.3, Pg.178, underline added. See also Pg.176-177 of the same work.)

It is important to note that as clear and straightforward as these words appear to be, the issue at hand may not be quite so black and white as all that. For example, the Prophet Joseph Smith seemed to be very much in favor of women using their faith to administer to and heal the sick.

He [Joseph Smith] said the reason of these remarks being made was, that some little foolish things were circulating in the society, against some sisters not doing right in laying hands on the sick. Said that if the people had common sympathies they would rejoice that the sick could be healed; that the time had not been before that these things could be in their proper order; that the Church is not fully organized, in its proper order, and cannot be, until the Temple is completed, where places will be provided for the administration of the ordinances of the Priesthood.

President Smith continued the subject, by quoting the commission given to the ancient Apostles in Mark, 16th chapter, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th verses, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take

up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

No matter who believeth, these signs, such as healing the sick, casting our devils, etc., should follow all that believe, whether male or female. He asked the Society if they could not see by this sweeping promise, that wherein they are ordained, if it is the privilege of those set apart to administer in that authority, which is conferred on them; and if the sisters should have faith to heal the sick, let all hold their tongues, and let everything roll on...

...Respecting females administering for the healing of the sick he further remarked, there could be no evil in it, if God gave His sanction by healing; that there could be no more sin in any female laying hands on and praying for the sick, than in wetting the face with water; it is no sin for anybody to administer that has faith, or if the sick have faith to be healed by their administration. (TPJS, Pg.224-225, underline added)

Further understanding of these words and the events which prompted them can be gained from the records of the church.

At the end of the two previous meetings of the Relief Society, held 14 and 19 April, ladies who were ill were administered to by the Relief Society presidency. During the meeting of 19 April, for example, “Mrs. Durfee bore testimony to the great blessing she received when administered to after the close of the last meeting, by Emma Smith and Counselors Cleveland and Whitney. She said she never realized more benefit through any administration, [and] that she was healed and thought the sisters had more faith than the brethren” (Relief Society Minutes, 19 April 1842, Church Archives). This caused some members of the society to question the propriety of women anointing with oil and laying on hands, thinking this was only a priesthood function. At the meeting, however, the Prophet explained that this was entirely appropriate. He sympathized with those who did not understand his larger vision of the situation. He said “that the time had not been before, that these things could be in their proper order - that the Church is not now organized in it’s proper order, and cannot be until the temple is completed.” In the temple women would with oil and by the laying on of the hands confer upon their sisters blessings of greater eternal significance than the beautiful but single effect of healing an illness. (The Words of Joseph Smith by Ehat and Cook, pp. 139-140, note 2, underline added. See also page 142, note 21 of the same work.)

Regarding women sharing the priesthood with their husbands as well as their assignments in the temple, Elder James E. Talmage has said,

In the restored Church of Jesus Christ, the Holy Priesthood is conferred, as an individual bestowal, upon men only, and this in accordance with Divine requirement. It is not given to women to exercise the authority of the priesthood independently; nevertheless, in the sacred endowments associated with the ordinances pertaining to the house of the Lord, woman shares with man the blessings of the priesthood. When the frailties and imperfections of mortality are left behind, in the glorified state of the blessed hereafter, husband and wife will administer in their respective stations, seeing and understanding alike, and co-operating to the full in the government of their family kingdom. Then shall

woman be recompensed in rich measure for all the injustice that womanhood has endured in mortality. Then shall woman reign by divine right, a queen in the resplendent realm of her glorified state, even as exalted man shall stand, priest and king unto the Most High God. Mortal eye cannot see nor mind comprehend the beauty, glory, and majesty of a righteous woman made perfect in the celestial kingdom of God. ("The Eternity of Sex," Young Woman's Journal 25 [October 1914]: 602-03)

Along these same lines, Elder Franklin D. Richards once said,

President Smith then gave instruction respecting the propriety of females administering to the sick by the prayer of faith, and laying on of hands, or the anointing with oil; and said it was according to revelation that the sick should be nursed with herbs and mild food, and not by the hand of an enemy. Who are better qualified to administer than our faithful and zealous sisters whose hearts are full of faith, tenderness, sympathy, and compassion. No one. Said he was never placed in similar circumstances before, and never had given the same instruction; and closed his instructions by expressing his heartfelt satisfaction in improving this opportunity.

The Spirit of the Lord was poured out in a very powerful manner, never to be forgotten by those present on this interesting occasion.

I ask any and everybody present who have received their endowments, whether he be a brother Apostle, Bishop, High Priest, Elder, or whatever office he may hold in the Church, "What blessings did you receive, what ordinance, what power, intelligence, sanctification or grace did you receive that your wife did not partake of with you?" I will answer, that there was one thing that our wives were not made special partakers of, and that was the ordination to the various orders of the priesthood which were conferred upon us. Aside from that, our sisters share with us any and all of the ordinances of the holy anointing, endowments, sealings, sanctifications and blessings that we have been made partakers of.

Now, I ask you: Is it possible that we have the holy priesthood and our wives have none of it? Do you not see, by what I have read, that Joseph desired to confer these keys of power upon them in connection with their husbands? I hold that a faithful wife has certain blessings, powers and rights, and is made partaker of certain gifts and blessings and promises with her husband, which she cannot be deprived of, EXCEPT BY TRANSGRESSION of the holy order of God. They shall enjoy what God said they should. And these signs shall follow them if they believe.

Moses said, when some one told him that a certain man was prophesying in the camp, and the people thought he had no right to do so, Moses replied saying: "I would to God that all of the Lord's people were prophets." So I say: I wish all the sisters were so faithful that they were healers of the sick, through the power of God. Then would their children have a foundation to grow up from their youth in the fear and admonition of the Lord and in the power of His might. Sister Eliza R. Snow Smith learned some of these things from the Prophet Joseph Smith; and as he was the organizer of the Church of Christ, so she went through the Territory organizing Relief Societies, and did a wonderful

work. She partook of the power of her distinguished husband. (Collected Discourses, Vol.5, "Women and the Priesthood," July 19, 1888, underline added)

As if women administering to the sick was hardly in question, President Brigham Young has said,

We lay hands on the sick and wish them to be healed, and pray the Lord to heal them, but we cannot always say that He will. We do not always know that He will actually hear our prayers and answer them. Sometimes the Elders will get that faith, and the sisters will often lay hands on their children and have faith and confidence in themselves that God will answer their prayers, and say to fevers and pains, "Be ye rebuked and stand far off from this the afflicted," and it is done. But you have to attain to this power by your faithfulness and confidence in yourselves, that God will answer your prayers. We know that the Lord often heals the sick; and we believe all the time that He is able to do so, but will He because we ask Him to? That is the question, and we are often doubtful about it. (Journal of Discourses 4:284, underline added)

At the risk of being redundant, I will offer one more quote regarding women and their right, if not their duty, to use the gifts of the spirit given to them to bless the lives of those around them. In a discourse regarding the gifts of the spirit, Elder Orson Pratt has said,

To another is given, by the Spirit, the gift of healing. Some may say that the gift of healing was only intended for ancient times, to establish the Gospel; that the people in those days needed some miraculous power and evidence to convince them of the truth of the Gospel; but I find that the gift of healing was given for the benefit of all who had faith to be healed. This was the way that the Lord administered in ancient times, and there is just as much necessity in our day that the sick should be healed, as there was eighteen centuries ago; and the Lord is just as willing, inasmuch as we will exercise faith in him, to bestow the gift of healing now as he was in ancient times. This seems to be a kind of common gift, not limited altogether to a few individuals, as we find recorded in the last chapter of Mark. Jesus said on that occasion, speaking to his Apostles-- "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, he that believes"--that is every creature in all the world who believes--"and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe," that is, every creature in all the world that believes, showing that the believers generally might have the gift of healing, although, perhaps, to some it is given more fully than it is to others. "These signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

It seems that the gifts here named are general gifts, intended more or less for the whole Church; not only for those in the Priesthood, but for those out of the Priesthood, for males and for females. For instance, children are often taken sick, and it is the privilege of their parents, whether they have the Priesthood or not, by virtue of this promise, to lay their hands on their sick children, and ask the Lord, in the name of Jesus, to heal them. Suppose that the father, the head of the family, is absent, has the mother the right to lay her hands upon her sick child? We say that, by virtue of this promise which the Lord has made, she may lay her hands upon her child or children, and ask God to heal it or them. How many scores and scores of cases have there been in this Church, every year since it

was organized, where the parents, both brethren and sisters, have had power over disease, through the Spirit of God being poured out upon them, and their children have been healed through the laying on of their hands? (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 16, Pg. 289-290, underline added)

I believe that though there is sufficient evidence to establish that a woman may not be ordained to an office in the priesthood or hold the priesthood in the same way that a man does, a woman may and should participate in many of the gifts and ordinances usually associated with priesthood authority. To use the words of Elder Bruce R. McConkie already quoted,

Where spiritual things are concerned, as pertaining to all of the gifts of the spirit, with reference to the receipt of revelation, the gaining of testimonies, and the seeing of visions, in all matters that pertain to godliness and holiness and which are brought to pass as a result of personal righteousness - in all these things men and women stand in a position of absolute equality before the Lord. (Ensign, January 1979, p. 61)

Just as Elder McConkie says, this seems to include such things as healing the sick, anointing and blessing with oil, taking part in various ordinances in the temple, and performing many other miracles mentioned in the scriptures. A woman can serve her God and her fellow brothers and sisters by performing many functions generally associated with the priesthood, so long as her performances fall under the umbrella of righteousness and faith.

That there are differences between men and woman with regards to the priesthood seems certain. And that a woman is closely tied to the priesthood of her husband appears equally irrefutable. However, the relationship between a woman and some of the things we generally associate with the priesthood are apparently stronger than we often realize. One of the more important issues at hand seems to involve the differences between priesthood administration and the gifts of the spirit. For whatever reason, the Lord has placed men in the position of holding and administering the various priesthood responsibilities. This, however, should not be confused with the pursuit and use of God-given gifts of the spirit. These gifts, although definitely associated with the priesthood, are apparently not specifically intended for men only. Both sexes are free to obtain and exercise these gifts according to their righteousness, faith, and the goodness of God, through whom all such things are made possible.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LINEAGE

When discussing the priesthood, it is important for us to understand that our relationship with the priesthood may differ depending upon our lineage. The differences between those who are of the house of Israel and those who are Gentiles should not be overlooked. The scriptures teach us with great clarity that there is a significant difference between Gentiles and Israelites. Perhaps the most startling example of this doctrine can be found in the manner in which the Savior dealt with a gentile woman and her daughter.

And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away: for she crieth after us.

But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs.

And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. (Matthew 15:22-28, underline added. See also Mark 7:25-30)

These passages should raise a great deal of questions in our minds. It is strange to us to hear the Lord speak to anyone in this fashion. It seems very unlike the manner in which He dealt with the Jews or the Nephites - those of the house of Israel. This woman, who was not of the house of Israel,²⁶ was first ignored by the Savior and then encouraged to leave by His disciples. Then, when Christ did answer her, he basically seems to tell her that his mission does not include people who are not of the house of Israel, and hence, not her or her daughter. Even when she continued to plead with him, he referred to people of her lineage as “dogs” and told her that it was somehow inappropriate to give “the children’s” bread to her. The woman, acknowledging the truth of what the Lord had said to her, then displays an incredible amount of humility and faith - more than most of us would probably be able to do under the same circumstances. Finally, the Savior gives in and her daughter is made whole.

It is important to note that the only reason we seem to have for Christ’s reluctance in this situation is the fact that the woman belonged to the wrong lineage. She certainly seemed to possess the necessary faith and humility. And there is no indication of any other type of unworthiness. Even if there were, the scriptures are full of examples in which the Savior forgives and heals the sinner. Apparently, the reason Christ was hesitant to make this woman’s daughter whole is the very reason he, himself, offered when he answered and said, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” This woman was not of the house of Israel. Her lineage seems to be the only determining factor in these verses.

Another example of the distinction between Gentiles and Israelites can be found among Christ’s teachings to the Nephites in the Book of Mormon. In Third Nephi the Savior teaches us about some of the differences between His relationship with Israelites and with the Gentiles.

Neither at any time hath the Father given me commandment that I should tell unto them [the Jews] concerning the other tribes of the house of Israel, whom the Father hath led away out of the land.

²⁶ See the heading “Canaan” in the Bible Dictionary of the LDS scriptures (p.629). This same story, as found in the book of Mark, tells us that “the woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation.” (Mark 7:26)

This much did the Father command me, that I should tell unto them:

That other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

And now, because of stiffneckedness and unbelief they understood not my word; therefore I was commanded to say no more of the Father concerning this thing unto them.

But, verily, I say unto you that the Father hath commanded me, and I tell it unto you, that ye were separated from among them because of their iniquity; therefore it is because of their iniquity that they know not of you.

And verily, I say unto you again that the other tribes hath the Father separated from them; and it is because of their iniquity that they know not of them.

And verily I say unto you, that ye [the descendants of Lehi] are they of whom I said: Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

And they understood me not, for they supposed it had been the Gentiles; for they understood not that the Gentiles should be converted through their preaching.

And they understood me not that I said they [the Israelites] shall hear my voice; and they understood me not that the Gentiles should not at any time hear my voice--that I should not manifest myself unto them save it were by the Holy Ghost.

But behold, ye have both heard my voice, and seen me; and ye are my sheep, and ye are numbered among those whom the Father hath given me. (3 Nephi 15:15-24, underline added)

Again, there are a few important things we should notice within these verses. The Lord tells us that he has “sheep” who have been “given” unto him by the Father. He also tells us that these sheep will hear his voice and that they will be made into one fold and shall have one shepherd. It is clear in these verses that the sheep are the house of Israel. It is also clear that the Gentiles are not included as a part of these sheep. The Gentiles shall “not at any time” hear his voice. Nor will Christ manifest himself unto them except via the Holy Ghost. While, at the same time, Christ teaches the Nephites that he will visit the tribes of Israel and they shall both hear his voice and see him. It seems safe to assume that the Gentiles are not “numbered among those whom the Father hath given [Christ].” Here, again, the words of the Savior make it clear that there is some kind of major difference between those who are of the lineage of the house of Israel and those who are not. Apparently, just as He said in Matthew, the Lord is “not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

These scriptures show us that the Lord clearly treats and deals with Israelites differently than he does Gentiles. For some reason, the Gentiles seem to have “fallen out of grace” with the Lord. The prophet Nephi almost makes it sound as if the Gentiles have done something to offend the Lord, perhaps in the pre-mortal existence.

I [Nephi] have charity for my people, and great faith in Christ that I shall meet many souls spotless at his judgment-seat.

I have charity for the Jew--I say Jew, because I mean them from whence I came.

I also have charity for the Gentiles. But behold, for none of these can I hope except they shall be reconciled unto Christ, and enter into the narrow gate, and walk in the strait path which leads to life, and continue in the path until the end of the day of probation. (2 Nephi 33:7-9, underline added)

Nephi clearly sees a distinction between the Gentiles and his people, who are also associated with the Jews. Nephi expresses his loving feelings for the Gentiles. However, for whatever reason, Nephi's hope for the Gentiles seems to be much less than the hope he holds for those of the house of Israel.

It is also of significance to note that the allegory of Zenos refers to the Gentiles as "wild branches" while those of the house of Israel are referred to as "natural branches."²⁷ This allegory teaches us much about the relationship between the house of Israel and the Gentiles. It should be studied carefully by all those who wish to know more about the topic.

I don't know why the Gentiles as a whole are different from the Israelites as a whole. However, it seems clear to me that this is the case. It is important, however, that the house of Israel not use this doctrine as a source of pride. Pride is never right. It is always wrong. Perhaps fearing this pride among his people, the Savior has taught the people of the house of Israel what their attitude should be.

Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. (Luke 3:8, underline added. See also Matthew 3:9)

One thing seems certain. Pride is sin, whether you are of the house of Israel or not.

Obtaining Priesthood Power Through Lineage

This section examines an aspect of the priesthood which is seldom discussed in the church and yet appears in the scriptures with surprising consistency. Most of the time when we discuss the manner in which we obtain priesthood power, we think only in terms of the laying on of hands, by one having the authority. The fifth article of faith seems to outline this quite clearly.

We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof. (5th Article of Faith)

Although this article of faith does not mention priesthood specifically, it does talk about preaching the gospel and administering in the ordinances thereof. Both of these duties are functions of the priesthood.

In the Doctrine and Covenants we find similar instructions.

²⁷

See Jacob 5. See also the Book of Mormon Student Manual for religion 121-122, pp. 135-143.

Again I say unto you, that it shall not be given to any one to go forth to preach my gospel, or to build up my church, except he be ordained by some one who has authority, and it is known to the church that he has authority and has been regularly ordained by the heads of the church. (D&C 42:11)²⁸

So, in order to preach the gospel and administer in its ordinances, one “must” first meet the criteria listed above. One must 1) be called of God, 2) by prophecy, 3) by the laying on of hands, and 4) by one having the authority to do so. This seems to be the standard way of gaining the authority to perform these priesthood functions in the church today.

As true as this may be, it is important to note the significance of lineage as it pertains to priesthood power. There seem to be certain lineages which are somehow naturally entitled to priesthood power and others which are not. Perhaps the clearest example of this comes in the information we have concerning the literal descendants of Aaron and their duties of the Aaronic priesthood.

And if they be literal descendants of Aaron they have a legal right to the bishopric, if they are the firstborn among the sons of Aaron;

For the firstborn holds the right of the presidency over this priesthood, and the keys or authority of the same.

No man has a legal right to this office, to hold the keys of this priesthood, except he be a literal descendant and the firstborn of Aaron.

But, as a high priest of the Melchizedek Priesthood has authority to officiate in all the lesser offices he may officiate in the office of bishop when no literal descendant of Aaron can be found, provided he is called and set apart and ordained unto this power, under the hands of the First Presidency of the Melchizedek Priesthood.

And a literal descendant of Aaron, also, must be designated by this Presidency, and found worthy, and anointed, and ordained under the hands of this Presidency, otherwise they are not legally authorized to officiate in their priesthood.

But, by virtue of the decree concerning their right of the priesthood descending from father to son, they may claim their anointing if at any time they can prove their lineage, or do ascertain it by revelation from the Lord under the hands of the above named Presidency. (D&C 68:16-21, underline added. See also D&C 107:14-16,68-70,76)

In these verses we find that the literal descendants of Aaron have certain “legal rights” to the priesthood simply because they are literal descendants of Aaron. Those belonging to the higher priesthood may

²⁸ The following verse seems to indicate that “the elders, priests and teachers of this church” are the ones who are ordained to teach the principles of the gospel. (D&C 42:12) It should also be noted that D&C 88:81 states, “Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor.” This seems to indicate a missionary responsibility to more people than just those who have been called and ordained to preach the gospel. This is also consistent with President Kimball’s “every member a missionary” approach to preaching the gospel. In a certain sense, it seems to be the responsibility of all of us to preach the gospel, whether ordained to do so or not. If this is not the case, many of us are doing so in error.

officiate in the office of bishop, but only “when no literal descendant of Aaron can be found.” This passage seems to indicate that if a descendant of Aaron can “prove their lineage,” they may claim their anointing to this priesthood at any time, so long as they are worthy to do so. It is true that they must be ordained “under the hands of the First Presidency of the Melchizedek Priesthood.” However, it appears that they may claim this ordination “at any time” so long as they can prove their lineage.

This seems to add new understanding to the fifth article of faith. This scripture seems to indicate that there are people who can “claim their anointing” to the priesthood by virtue of their lineage. It indicates that this right to priesthood authority can be handed down “from father to son.”

Perhaps it is possible that the fifth article of faith as well as D&C 42:11 are not talking about receiving the priesthood in general. Perhaps they are talking only about certain, specific functions within the priesthood. It is certainly possible to possess the priesthood and yet not possess all of the keys or offices within the priesthood.

If the lesser priesthood can be handed down through lineage, it seems reasonable that the higher priesthood would have similar rules associated with it. The scriptures seem to support this conclusion.

The order of this [the higher] priesthood was confirmed to be handed down from father to son, and rightly belongs to the literal descendants of the chosen seed, to whom the promises were made. (D&C 107:40, underline added)

It is important to note that this scripture is no longer talking about the descendants of Aaron. It is talking about a different lineage, one to whom the higher priesthood “rightly belongs,” a “chosen” seed.

In December of 1832, Joseph Smith received a revelation concerning the parable of the wheat and the tares. In part, that revelation reads as follows:

Therefore, thus saith the Lord unto you, with whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of your fathers--

For ye are lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God--

Therefore your life and the priesthood have remained, and must needs remain through you and your lineage until the restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began. (D&C 86:8-10)

What a remarkable statement! To whom is the Lord speaking in these verses? In all likelihood, it is Joseph Smith and perhaps other contemporaries of his day. This scripture tells us in no uncertain terms that these people, whoever they were, lawfully inherited the priesthood through the lineage of their fathers. They were heirs “according to the flesh.” In addition, it tells us that the priesthood has continued through the lineage of their fathers. It is also significant that these people “have been hid from the world” until the restoration of all things. No one has known of their existence, yet they have been there all along.

Concerning the continuation of priesthood power through lineage, Joseph Smith has said,

The Priesthood has descended in a regular line from father to son, through their succeeding generations. (TPJS, Pg.173)

The word “regular” seems to suggest constant, unbroken, not interrupted. And it has apparently continued through the proper lineage or in other words, the literal descendants of the chosen seed. According to William Clayton,

He [Joseph Smith] stated that Hyrum held the office of prophet to the church by birth-right and that he was going to have a reformation and the saints must regard Hyrum for he has the authority. (Words of Joseph Smith, Pg. 232-233)

We also know that others have received the priesthood through their lineage.

Which Abraham received the priesthood from Melchizedek, who received it through the lineage of his fathers, even till Noah; (D&C 84:14, underline added)

In light of this scripture, it is interesting to note the words of Elder George Q. Cannon regarding how Abraham received the priesthood.

You remember very well how it was with Terah, the father of Abraham. He was of the chosen seed, but he was an idolater. Yet he was heir to the promises, and because of that Abraham, through that heirship, and through descent, or the blessing that came through that descent, was able to go unto God and to plead for and receive the blessings that God had promised through the fathers unto him and unto all who belonged to that chosen seed. (JD, Vol.25, Pg.367, underline added)

We are also told in the scriptures that “Zion” has a right to authority in the priesthood because of her lineage.

Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion--and what people had Isaiah reference to?

He 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. (D&C 113:7-8, underline added)

As we have read, we know that the higher priesthood “rightly belongs to the literal descendants of the chosen seed, to whom the promises were made.”²⁹ But who are these chosen seed to whom the promises were made? The scriptures tell us that they are the seed of Abraham.

Abraham received promises concerning his seed, and for the fruit of his loins--from whose loins ye are, namely, my servant Joseph--which were to continue so long as they were in the world; and as touching Abraham and his seed, out of the world they should continue; both in the world and out of the world should they continue as innumerable as the stars;

²⁹ D&C 107:40

or, if ye were to count the sand upon the seashore ye could not number them. (D&C 132:30)

Not only does this scripture tell us that it is Abraham's seed who received the "promises," it also tells us that Joseph Smith is numbered among that seed. That explains why he would have a right to the priesthood through the lineage of his fathers. This verse informs us that these promises would "continue so long as they [the seed of Abraham] were in the world." In fact, it indicates that the promises would always continue with the seed of Abraham when they are out of the world as well.

But what were the specific promises made to Abraham? The Lord has outlined them for us as follows:

And I will make of thee [Abraham] a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations:

And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father;

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal.
(Abraham 2:9-11)

The promise given to Abraham was that the right of the priesthood would continue in him and in his seed, even the literal seed of his body. It is their mission to use this priesthood to bless all the families of the earth with the blessings of the gospel and eternal life. It is important to note that this is the mission of the Melchizedek priesthood, not the Aaronic.

Thus we find perfect harmony in the idea that Joseph Smith was a rightful heir to the priesthood because of his lineage. This priesthood continued on earth "in a regular line from father to son," through the lineage of his fathers, which is the chosen seed of Abraham.

Elder Orson Hyde has made some very direct remarks about the importance of lineage in the latter days.

Now there was actually a marriage [in Cana of Galilee]; and if Jesus was not the bridegroom on that occasion, please tell who was. If any man can show this, and prove that it was not the Savior of the world, then I will acknowledge I am in error. We say it was Jesus Christ who was married, to be brought into the relation whereby he could see his seed, before he was crucified. "Has he indeed passed by the nature of angels, and taken upon himself the seed of Abraham, to die without leaving a seed to bear his name on the earth?" No. But when the secret is fully out, the seed of the blessed shall be gathered in, in the last days; and he who has not the blood of Abraham flowing in his veins, who has not one particle of the Savior's in him, I am afraid is a stereotyped Gentile, who will be left out and not be gathered in the last days; for I tell you it is the

chosen of God, the seed of the blessed, that shall be gathered. I do not despise to be called a son of Abraham, if he had a dozen wives; or to be called a brother, a son, a child of the Savior, if he had Mary, and Martha, and several others, as wives; and though he did cast seven devils out of one of them, it is all the same to me.

Well, then, he shall see his seed, and who shall declare his generation, for he was cut off from the earth? I shall say here, that before the Savior died, he looked upon his own natural children, as we look upon ours; he saw his seed, and immediately afterwards he was cut off from the earth; but who shall declare his generation? They had no father to hold them in honorable remembrance; they passed into the shades of obscurity, never to be exposed to mortal eye as the seed of the blessed one. For no doubt had they been exposed to the eye of the world, those infants might have shared the same fate as the children in Jerusalem in the days of Herod, when all the children were ordered to be slain under such, an age, with the hopes of slaying the infant Savior. They might have suffered by the hand of the assassin, as the sons of many kings have done who were heirs apparent to the thrones of their fathers.

History is replete with circumstances of neck-or-nothing politicians dyeing their hands in the blood of those who stood in their way to the throne or to power.

That seed has had its influence upon the chosen of God in the last days. The same spirit inspires them that inspires their father, who bled and died upon the cross after the manner of the flesh. (Journal of Discourses 2:82-83, underline added)³⁰

What did the old Prophet mean when he said (speaking of Christ), “He shall see His seed, prolong his days, &c.”³¹ Did Jesus consider it necessary to fulfil every righteous command or requirement of his Father? He most certainly did. This he witnessed by submitting to baptism under the hands of John. “Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness,” said he. Was it God’s commandment to man, in the beginning, to multiply and replenish the saith? None can deny this, neither that it was a righteous command; for upon an obedience to this, depended the perpetuity of our race. Did Christ come to destroy the law or the Prophets, or to fulfil them? He came to fulfil. Did he multiply, and did he see his seed? Did he honour his Father’s law by complying with it, or did he not? Others may do as they like, but I will not charge our Saviour with neglect or transgression in this or any other duty.

At this doctrine the long-faced hypocrite and the sanctimonious bigot will probably cry, blasphemy! Horrid perversion of God’s word! Wicked wretch! He is not fit to live! &c., &c. But the wise and reflecting will consider, read, and pray. If God be not our Father, grandfather, or great grandfather, or some kind of a father in reality, in deed and in truth, why are we taught to say, “Our Father who art in heaven?” How much soever of holy

³⁰ It is interesting to note that in this same speech Elder Hyde made this comment, “...I feel that the spirit is on me now, I am warmed with it, and it presses me to speak on this subject, and to speak it out.” (JD 2:86)

³¹ See Isaiah 53:10; Mosiah 14:10; Mosiah 15:10.

horror this doctrine may excite in persons not impregnated with the blood of Christ, and whose minds are consequently dark and benighted, it may excite still more when they are told that if none of the natural blood of Christ flows in their veins, they are not the chosen or elect of God. Object not, therefore, too strongly against the marriage of Christ, but remember that in the last days, secret and hidden things must come to light, and that your life also (which is the blood) is hid with Christ in God.

Abraham was chosen of God for the purpose of raising up a chosen seed, and a peculiar people unto His name. Jesus Christ was sent into the world for a similar purpose, but upon a more extended scale. Christ was the seed of Abraham, so reckoned. To these, great promises were made; one of which was, that in Abraham and in his seed, which was Christ, all the families of the earth should be blessed. When? When the ungodly or those not of their seed should be cut off from the earth, and no family remaining on earth except their own seed. Then in Abraham and in Christ, all the families and kindreds of the earth will be blessed — Satan bound, and the millennium fully come. Then the meek will inherit the earth, and God's elect reign undisturbed, at least, for one thousand years. (Journal of Discourses 4:260, underline added)³²

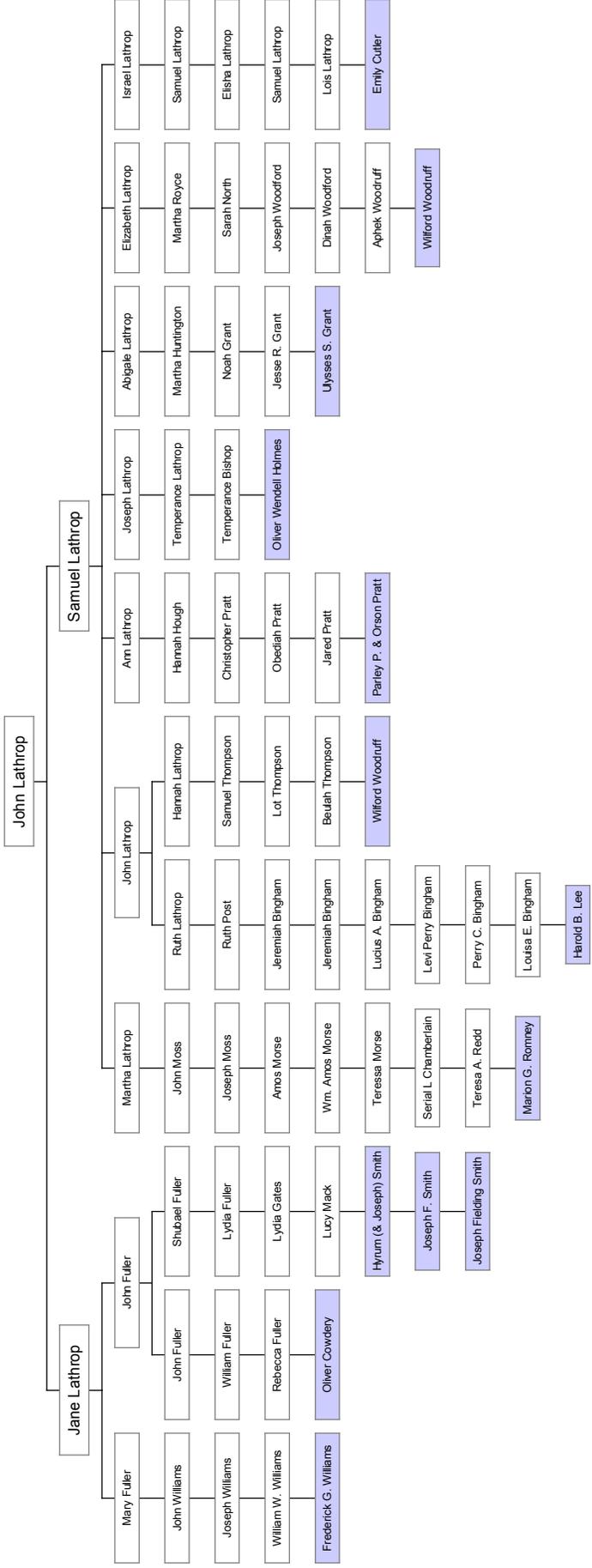
It would be difficult for a person to be any more explicit and frank concerning the importance of lineage as Elder Hyde was in these passages.

An investigation into the lineage of Joseph Smith reveals some interesting heritage. The chart on the following page shows the posterity of one of Joseph Smith's ancestors. Notice the list of righteous priesthood holders who have come from this one man and his two offspring.

³²

See also Journal of Discourses 1:262; 2:80; 18:127; 22:233.

Posterity of John Lathrop



These are only some of the significant descendants of John Lathrop. It is interesting that Wilford Woodruff can actually trace both lines of his ancestry back to this one man. In fact, Wilford Woodruff's parents are related to each other in at least five different ways.³³ It is also interesting to note that Emily Cutler (far right) ended up being one of the wives of Elder Heber C. Kimball.

You can tell from the names of many of these people that most of them (if not all) maintained their religious heritage. The gospel was important to these people. In fact, John Lathrop himself was a minister in England who married the daughter of another minister. After a while, he resigned his pastorate because he could not subscribe to all of the teachings of his church (The Church of England). After becoming the pastor of a Puritan congregation, he was persecuted because of his religious beliefs, which have been described as being far in advance of his time. Among other things, John Lathrop was trying to trace his lineage directly to Christ. For some reason, he thought he might be a literal descendant of the Savior himself. Where did he get such an "unorthodox" idea? He and his entire congregation were eventually thrown into jail. He was only released on the condition that he and his family would get out of England. He came to America and continued his preaching on this continent. The evidence indicates that John Lathrop and his descendants have truly cared about the Lord and the truths of the gospel. One might truthfully say that it is "in their blood."

In addition to the descendants of John Lathrop, there are many other interesting relationships among the first members of this church. For example, Joseph Smith is also related to Vilate Murray, Heber C. Kimball's first wife. Joseph Smith and Brigham Young are sixth cousins. John Taylor and Brigham Young are 12th cousins three generations removed as well as 16th cousins one generation removed. Heber J. Grant and Brigham Young are eighth cousins eight generations removed. Joseph Smith and George Albert Smith are first cousins two generations removed. And the list goes on and on.

All of this is probably just a coincidence, right? In lieu of the scriptures dealing with priesthood lineage, I hardly think coincidence is the answer. All of these great leaders of the church are related to Joseph Smith and thus are likely to be literal descendants of Abraham, rightful heirs to the priesthood, the true blood of Ephraim. This idea seems to be supported by Brigham Young.

The Elders who have arisen in this Church and Kingdom are actually of Israel. (Journal of Discourses 2:268)

Joseph Smith also tells us of the importance of the promised seed in doing the work of the Lord in the latter-days.

The election of the promised seed still continues, and in the last day, they shall have the Priesthood restored unto them, and they shall be the "saviors on Mount Zion," the ministers of our God; if it were not for the remnant which was left, then might men now be as Sodom and Gomorrah. (TPJS, Pg.189)

Elder Parley P. Pratt adds his testimony concerning the importance of lineage in the leadership of this church.

Knowing of the covenants and promises made to the fathers, as I now know them, and the rights of heirship to the Priesthood, as manifested in the election of God, I would never

³³ They are husband and wife, third cousins, 4th cousins one generation removed, sixth cousins, and fifth cousins one generation removed.

receive any man as an Apostle or a Priest, holding the keys of restoration, to bless the nations, while he claimed to be of any other lineage than Israel.

The word of the Lord, through our Prophet and founder, to the chosen instruments of the modern Priesthood, was this — “Ye are lawful heirs according to the flesh, and your lives have been hid with Christ in God.” That is to say, they have been held in reserve during the reign of Mystic Babel, to be born in due time, as successors to the Apostles and Prophets of old, being their children, of the same royal line. They have come forth, at length as heirs to the keys of power, knowledge, glory, and blessing, to minister to all the nations of the Gentiles, and afterwards to restore the tribes of Israel. They are of the royal blood of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and have a right to claim the ordination and endowments of the Priesthood, inasmuch as they repent, and obey the Lord God of their fathers. (Journal of Discourses 1:262, underline added)

This doctrine of the prophets and apostles being the true blood of the House of Israel has been on earth since the beginning. Hugh Nibley helps us to understand this concept in light of Alma’s priesthood authority. The following dialogue took place in a lecture given by brother Nibley to a Book of Mormon honors class:

Question: What was Alma’s authority in the priesthood?

Answer: Well, he was a direct descendant of Nephi, so he had the authority; whereas King Noah was a descendant of Zeniff who was a descendant of Zarahemla. So they were Mulekites, but Nephi was really of a priestly line of Lehi.

Question: So even when Alma was living with the king and his court he had the priesthood?

Answer: Yes, as we learn from the first chapter in Luke, priests were ordinary people like Zacharias and his family. Zacharias had to serve as a priest in the temple behind the veil, where only the high priest could go. He had to serve there a week every year; that was his [responsibility]. But he was just an ordinary citizen. The same thing with Lehi, but he was a man of high position, as you know, and had considerable influence in the town. He had the priesthood alright. Notice these people call themselves the sons of Zadok. Of course, that’s Melek Zadok - that’s Melchizedek, as composed of the priesthood of Aaron. In the Dead Sea Scrolls, it says these things shall be in effect until the High Priest comes who will have the priesthood of Aaron. He shall come who is a priest of Israel and Aaron. But they only had the lower priesthood; they admitted that here. And these will only be done this way until the High Priest comes. So they were looking forward to the coming of the Savior this way, and Alma was doing the same thing here. (Teachings of the Book of Mormon, Semester 2, 1989-1990, underline added)

Brother Nibley’s remarks clearly point to Alma’s lineage in regard to his priesthood authority. Alma was a descendant of Nephi, who was a descendant of Lehi, who, evidently was a descendant of Melchizedek. Because of this lineage, Alma already had the priesthood when he began to baptize and when he started the church of God. The same seems to be true for Joseph Smith. Apparently he and his family already had the priesthood they needed when they began to restore the gospel, baptize, and organize the church of God in these latter days. They received the priesthood in the same manner as Alma - from their lineage. Joseph

Smith and his family were pure Ephraimites, “with whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of [their] fathers--For [they were] lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and [they] have been hid from the world with Christ in God--Therefore [their lives] and the priesthood have remained, and must needs remain through [them] and [their] lineage until the restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began.”³⁴ Just as the prophet has told us, the priesthood of the Smith’s “descended in a regular line from father to son, through their succeeding generations.”³⁵ In lieu of the scriptures and the words of the latter-day prophets on this subject, all of this seems to make perfect sense.

The Mixing of the True Blood

Since the seed of Abraham has spread throughout the world, it has naturally mixed with the seed of all nations. This mixing of blood has created a rather confusing situation as far as the true blood of Israel is concerned. Among the many families and nations of the world we will find those who are literal descendants as well as those who are not. President Brigham Young helps us to better understand what has happened.

Israel is dispersed among all the nations of the earth; the blood of Ephraim is mixed with the blood of all the earth. Abraham’s seed is mingled with the rebellious seed through the whole world of mankind. (Journal of Discourses 16:75)

Brigham Young has also told us that because the seed of Abraham has mixed with the rest of the world, we will find the pure blood of Israel spattered among the peoples of the latter days, even within the same family.

Take a family of ten children, for instance, and you may find nine of them purely of the Gentile stock, and one son or one daughter in that family who is purely of the blood of Ephraim. It was in the veins of the father or mother, and was reproduced in the son or daughter, while all the rest of the family are Gentiles. You may think that is singular, but it is true. It is the house of Israel we are after, and we care not whether they come from the east, the west, the north, or the south; from China, Russia, England, California, North or South America, or some other locality; and it is the very lad on whom father Jacob laid his hands, that will save the house of Israel. The Book of Mormon came to Ephraim, for Joseph Smith was a pure Ephraimite, and the Book of Mormon was revealed to him, and while he lived he made it his business to search for those who believed the Gospel. (Journal of Discourses 2:268-269)

We are taught by Brigham Young that those who are not born with the true blood of Israel in them can still become a part of Israel.

Israel--Who are Israel? They are those who are of the seed of Abraham, who received the promise through their forefathers; and all the rest of the children of men, who receive the truth, are also Israel. My heart is always drawn out for them, whenever I go to the throne of grace. (Journal of Discourses 1:107, underline added)

³⁴ D&C 86:8-10

³⁵ TPJS, Pg.173

Thus, we have two definitions of “Israel.” They are 1) those who are of the natural lineage of Abraham, the chosen seed, and 2) those who are not the natural seed of Abraham but who have accepted the truths of the gospel. In the case of those who are not of the literal seed, President Young informs us that they can be “adopted” into the family of Abraham.

By and by the Jews will be gathered to the land of their fathers, and the ten tribes, who wandered into the north, will be gathered home, and the blood of Ephraim, the second son of Joseph, who was sold into Egypt, which is to be found in every kingdom and nation under heaven, will be gathered from among the Gentiles, and the Gentiles who will receive and adhere to the principles of the Gospel will be adopted and initiated into the family of Father Abraham, and Jesus will reign over his own and Satan will reign over his own. (Journal of Discourses 12:38, underline added)

Elders Orson Hyde and Parley P. Pratt (quoted in that order) seem to agree with this doctrine.

Is there no way provided for those to come into this covenant relation who may not possess, in their veins, any of the blood of Abraham or of Christ? Yes! By doing the works of Abraham and of Christ in the faith of Abraham and of Christ; not in unbelief and unrighteousness, like the wicked world who have damned themselves in their own corruption and unbelief. If thou wilt believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and repent of thy sins, and put them all away, and forsake them for ever, and turn unto the Lord our God, and serve Him with all thy might, mind, and strength, the Holy Ghost will change thy vile body, quicken and renew thy spirit and natural system, so that thou shalt lay off or overcome that fallen nature which is in the body with its sins, and be created anew in Christ Jesus, with a new heart and a new spirit, even the Holy Ghost; this will cause your spirits to cry, Abba, Father. Your lips may even now cry, “Abba, Father;” but your spirit cannot until it is renovated; and lip service, you know, is mockery before God. We are to worship God in spirit and in truth, and with the understanding also. But if you wish to destroy us for doing the works of Abraham and of Christ, know ye that God will curse you; and neither He nor His people will allow you to have any part in the covenant of promise; and neither in Abraham, nor yet in Christ can ye be blessed. There is something more implied in this change often alluded to by all professing Christians than is usually considered. It is, nevertheless, scripturally and philosophically true. (Journal of Discourses 4:260-261)

Those who are not of this lineage, whether they are Gentiles, Edomites or Ishmaelites, or of whatever nation, have a right to remission of sins and the Gift of the Holy Spirit, through their ministry, on conditions of faith, repentance, and baptism, in the name of Jesus Christ. Through this Gospel they are adopted into the same family, and are counted for the seed of Abraham; they can then receive a portion of this ministry under those (literal descendants) who hold the presiding keys of the same. (Journal of Discourses 1:262)

Apparently, those who are not of the literal seed of Abraham may still obtain a claim on the promise of priesthood power. However, in order to do so they must not only undergo a spiritual change, by accepting the truths of the gospel, they must actually undergo a physical change as well. They must have the old blood purged out of them and become literally the seed of Abraham. Joseph Smith helps us to understand this process.

There are two Comforters spoken of. One is the Holy Ghost, the same as given on the day of Pentecost, and that all Saints receive after faith, repentance, and baptism. This first Comforter or Holy Ghost has no other effect than pure intelligence. It is more powerful in expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding, and sorting the intellect with present knowledge, of a man who is of the literal seed of Abraham, than one that is a Gentile, though it may not have half as much visible effect upon the body; for as the Holy Ghost falls upon one of the literal seed of Abraham, it is calm and serene; and his whole soul and body are only exercised by the pure spirit of intelligence; while the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to purge out the old blood, and make him actually of the seed of Abraham. That man that has none of the blood of Abraham (naturally) must have a new creation by the Holy Ghost. In such a case, there may be more of a powerful effect upon the body, and visible to the eye, than upon an Israelite, while the Israelite at first might be far before the Gentile in pure intelligence. (TPJS Pg.149, underline added)

Thus we see just how important our lineage is. To those who are naturally of the lineage of Abraham, literal descendants of the promised seed, to these belong the rights of the priesthood. It is important that those who are not of this chosen lineage, the natural gentiles, begin seeking diligently to become adopted into the family of Abraham, that they may be numbered among the house of Israel in the latter-days. This is done by accepting the truths of the gospel and by experiencing a change in the physical make up of the body through the Holy Ghost. The scriptures clearly teach about the ability and necessity of the gentiles becoming a part of the house of Israel.

And it shall come to pass, that if the Gentiles shall hearken unto the Lamb of God in that day that he shall manifest himself unto them in word, and also in power, in very deed, unto the taking away of their stumbling blocks--

And harden not their hearts against the Lamb of God, they shall be numbered among the seed of thy father [Lehi]; yea, they shall be numbered among the house of Israel; and they shall be a blessed people upon the promised land forever; they shall be no more brought down into captivity; and the house of Israel shall no more be confounded. (1 Nephi 14:1-2, underline added)

Turn, all ye Gentiles, from your wicked ways; and repent of your evil doings, of your lyings and deceivings, and of your whoredoms, and of your secret abominations, and your idolatries, and of your murders, and your priestcrafts, and your envyings, and your strifes, and from all your wickedness and abominations, and come unto me, and be baptized in my name, that ye may receive a remission of your sins, and be filled with the Holy Ghost, that ye may be numbered with my people who are of the house of Israel. (3 Nephi 30:2, underline added)

From what we have read, it appears that in order for a gentile to become numbered among the house of Israel, he must become the literal seed of Abraham. To do this he must “receive a remission of his sins, and be filled with the Holy Ghost” that he (the Holy Ghost) may “purge out the old blood, and make [the gentile] actually of the seed of Abraham.”

But if they [the gentiles] will not turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, I will suffer them, yea, I will suffer my people, O house of Israel, that they shall go through among

them, and shall tread them down, and they shall be as salt that hath lost its savor, which is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of my people, O house of Israel. (3 Nephi 16:15. See also D&C 101:39-40 and 3 Nephi 21:12-24)

The Lineage of Cain

Since there is a lineage which has a natural right to the priesthood, we should not be too surprised that there is also a lineage which has no right to the priesthood.

Now, Pharaoh being of that lineage by which he could not have the right of Priesthood, notwithstanding the Pharaohs would fain claim it from Noah, through Ham, therefore my father was led away by their idolatry; (Abraham 1:27)

Even though those from this lineage may claim to have the priesthood, they apparently do not have a right to it.

The literal seed of Caan was preserved on this earth through Egyptus, the wife of Ham. Through this lineage, the blood of the Canaanites has continued on earth.

Now this king of Egypt [Pharaoh] was a descendant from the loins of Ham, and was a partaker of the blood of the Canaanites by birth.

From this descent sprang all the Egyptians, and thus the blood of the Canaanites was preserved in the land.

The land of Egypt being first discovered by a woman, who was the daughter of Ham, and the daughter of Egyptus, which in the Chaldean signifies Egypt, which signifies that which is forbidden; (Abraham 1:21-23, underline added)

It seems safe to assume that this lineage is still upon the earth today.

It is important to note that this Pharaoh, son of Ham and Egyptus, was a righteous man. It was not his wickedness that prevented him from obtaining the priesthood. It was his lineage.

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 of 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 1:26, underline added)

Notice that all Pharaoh could hope for was to “imitate” the order of the priesthood. Pharaoh knew that he was “of that lineage by which he could not have the right of Priesthood.” Thus, being a righteous man, he tried his best to copy or emulate that pattern as set forth by the true patriarchal priesthood of his fathers. Pharaoh’s successors “would fain claim” to hold this priesthood. The word “fain” means willingly or gladly. Thus, in spite of their righteousness and the willingness of some of Cain’s lineage to obtain the

right of the priesthood, this right was not given unto them. It was not their unrighteousness or their unwillingness that was the problem. It was their lineage.

THE PRIESTHOODS OF SATAN

We often think that in the pre-mortal councils of heaven, Satan rejected the entire plan of salvation. This is not true. There were really only two parts of the plan which he tried to change. He wanted to take away man's agency and he wanted to have the glory given to himself instead of his Father. These are the only two areas of disagreement between Satan and God of which we are aware. We have no evidence that he rejected any other areas of the plan of salvation than these. In all likelihood, Satan accepted the rest of the plan as put forth by our Heavenly Father. Because of this, when we look for the doctrine, church, and priesthood of Satan, we should look for something which closely imitates the true doctrine, church, and priesthood of God. It will be the same, yet opposite. Whenever we see an organized force which looks or acts similar to that of the Lord's, we should examine it carefully to see if it 1) tries to take away agency and 2) tries to bring honor and glory to the self, instead of to the other. These are the signs of Satan's organization. It is no small matter that Satan's organization is similar enough to the Lord's that many people have been deceived into confusing one with the other.

That there is such a thing as wicked or evil priesthood power is not difficult to confirm. Joseph Smith has said,

It would seem also, that wicked spirits have their bounds, limits, and laws by which they are governed or controlled, and know their future destiny; hence, those that were in the maniac said to our Savior, "Art thou come to torment us before the time," and when Satan presented himself before the Lord, among the sons of God, he said that he came "from going to and fro in the earth, and from wandering up and down in it;" and he is emphatically called the prince of the power of the air; and, it is very evident that they possess a power that none but those who have the Priesthood can control, as we have before adverted to, in the case of the sons of Sceva. (TPJS, p. 208, underline added)

Regarding the power of Satan, it is important for us to realize that Satan does have priesthood power and that he uses it in order to accomplish his purposes. The Lord uses agency, covenants, love, and works of light to bring about priesthood power. Satan, on the other hand, achieves priesthood power through force, secret combinations, selfishness, and works of darkness. These tools of Satan's priesthood bind men to him and to each other and put them in situations which force them to obey. Instead of sacred covenants, Satan uses secret combinations. Instead of teaching men to willingly sacrifice their own lives for others, Satan threatens to sacrifice others if they do not obey. It is still the honor of men that Satan is after, for that is the definition of priesthood power. However, Satan uses fear instead of love in order to obtain the honor and respect of men. The Doctrine and Covenants teaches us not only to beware of Satan, but to beware of his servants as well.

Pray always, that you may come off conqueror; yea, that you may conquer Satan, and that you may escape the hands of the servants of Satan that do uphold his work. (D&C 10:5, underline added)

Perhaps the first example we have of Satan's priesthood in action during mortality can be found in the secret combination or covenant made between Satan and Caan.

And Satan said unto Cain: Swear unto me by thy throat, and if thou tell it thou shalt die; and swear thy brethren by their heads, and by the living God, that they tell it not; for if they tell it, they shall surely die; and this that thy father may not know it; and this day I will deliver thy brother Abel into thine hands.

And Satan sware unto Cain that he would do according to his commands. And all these things were done in secret.

And Cain said: Truly I am Mahan, the master of this great secret, that I may murder and get gain. Wherefore Cain was called Master Mahan, and he gloried in his wickedness. (Moses 5:29-31)

Notice the parallel found between this method of obtaining priesthood power and that of the law of sacrifice. Both are sacrificing all we are, even our very lives, if necessary. However, the true law of sacrifice is that we sacrifice ourselves for truth and others. Satan's counterfeit is that we sacrifice others for the self. If Cain or his brethren tell the secret, they will be killed. It is that simple. The power of this combination or oath can be shown a few verses later as the offspring of Cain continue in this wicked priesthood.

And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah: Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech; for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.

If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech shall be seventy and seven fold;

For Lamech having entered into a covenant with Satan, after the manner of Cain, wherein he became Master Mahan, master of that great secret which was administered unto Cain by Satan; and Irad, the son of Enoch, having known their secret, began to reveal it unto the sons of Adam;

Wherefore Lamech, being angry, slew him, not like unto Cain, his brother Abel, for the sake of getting gain, but he slew him for the oath's sake.

For, from the days of Cain, there was a secret combination, and their works were in the dark, and they knew every man his brother.

Wherefore the Lord cursed Lamech, and his house, and all them that had covenanted with Satan; for they kept not the commandments of God, and it displeased God, and he ministered not unto them, and their works were abominations, and began to spread among all the sons of men. And it was among the sons of men. (Moses 5:47-52)

Notice here that Lamech murdered his great grandfather, Irad, "for the oath's sake." It was not allowed for anyone to talk about these things to those who were not "brothers" in this secret group of Satanists. If you do not properly honor your brethren according to the oath you made, they will kill you. Basically, Satan's priesthood comes in that men make covenants with Satan and with each other to honor one another or

suffer the penalty of death. The Lord's priesthood comes in that men make covenants with God and with each other to honor one another by being willing to sacrifice themselves for each other. Notice the two basic differences between Satan's priesthood and that of God. It is a question of unselfishness verses and selfishness and of agency verses no agency. These are the exact same issues found in the pre-mortal confrontation between Satan and God. Satan's plan was clearly to force them to do it and give himself the glory.³⁶ This is how his priesthood works and he is still using his priesthood power to further his work and his kingdom today.

The reason these secret combinations are so popular is because they work. These wicked covenants with Satan and others bring actual power with them in much the same way that righteous covenants with the Lord and others bring power. Found within both is a means of binding and uniting men together in such a way that they will honor and serve one other.

Book of Mormon examples of Satan's priesthood on earth are plentiful. Notice the similarities and differences between Satan's priesthood, as outlined in the following verses, and the true priesthood of God.

But behold, Satan did stir up the hearts of the more part of the Nephites, insomuch that they did unite with those bands of robbers, and did enter into their covenants and their oaths, that they would protect and preserve one another in whatsoever difficult circumstances they should be placed, that they should not suffer for their murders, and their plunderings, and their stealings.

And it came to pass that they did have their signs, yea, their secret signs, and their secret words; and this that they might distinguish a brother who had entered into the covenant, that whatsoever wickedness his brother should do he should not be injured by his brother, nor by those who did belong to his band, who had taken this covenant.

And thus they might murder, and plunder, and steal, and commit whoredoms and all manner of wickedness, contrary to the laws of their country and also the laws of their God.

And whosoever of those who belonged to their band should reveal unto the world of their wickedness and their abominations, should be tried, not according to the laws of their country, but according to the laws of their wickedness, which had been given by Gadianton and Kishkumen. (Helaman 6:21-24, underline added)

In these verses we see such things as laws, covenants, key words, and signs given one to another in order to indicate a brother. We also see that the whole purpose was to get gain and to be protected in wickedness. It was all selfish in nature. "What's in it for me?" is the question at hand. Notice also that once you are admitted into this organization, it is very difficult to get out of it. It is obedience by force, not agency. If you break the covenant, you will be killed according to the laws of the covenant.

The differences between this wicked priesthood of Satan and the righteous priesthood of God are further outlined for us in the Book of Mormon. Notice what the motivation for power is in the following verses. Also notice how well this priesthood works in accomplishing those desires.

³⁶ Moses 4:1-4

But behold, Kishkumen, who had murdered Pahoran, did lay wait to destroy Helaman also; and he was upheld by his band, who had entered into a covenant that no one should know his wickedness.

For there was one Gadianton, who was exceedingly expert in many words, and also in his craft, to carry on the secret work of murder and of robbery; therefore he became the leader of the band of Kishkumen.

Therefore he did flatter them, and also Kishkumen, that if they would place him in the judgment-seat he would grant unto those who belonged to his band that they should be placed in power and authority among the people; therefore Kishkumen sought to destroy Helaman.

And it came to pass as he went forth towards the judgment-seat to destroy Helaman, behold one of the servants of Helaman, having been out by night, and having obtained, through disguise, a knowledge of those plans which had been laid by this band to destroy Helaman--

And it came to pass that he met Kishkumen, and he gave unto him a sign; therefore Kishkumen made known unto him the object of his desire, desiring that he would conduct him to the judgment-seat that he might murder Helaman.

And when the servant of Helaman had known all the heart of Kishkumen, and how that it was his object to murder, and also that it was the object of all those who belonged to his band to murder, and to rob, and to gain power, (and this was their secret plan, and their combination) the servant of Helaman said unto Kishkumen: Let us go forth unto the judgment-seat. (Helaman 2:3-8, underline added)

The goal and objective of this priesthood is to get gain, to obtain honor or glory for the self, to bring power and protection to one's self by means of covenants, laws, signs, key words, etc. Because the priesthood of Satan is so similar to the priesthood of God, it is vital that we fully understand the two main differences found between them. One seeks the interest of the self while the other seeks the interest of others and one destroys agency while the other uses agency. The following chart helps to outline some of the similarities and differences between the priesthood of Satan and the priesthood of God.

TRUE CHRISTIANITY

Agency (freedom)
Ordinances
Sacred Covenants
Promotes Sacrificing Self for Others
Teaches Unselfish Love for Others
Brings Feeling of Peace
Teaches Christ
Has Great Power
Has Inspiration
Has Signs, Key Words, etc.
Has Laws of Obedience, Sacrifice, etc.
Includes Spiritual Gifts

VS.

SATANISM

No Agency (force)
Rituals
Secret Combinations
Promotes Sacrificing Others for Self
Teaches Love of Self Over Love for Others
Brings Feeling of Terror
Teaches Satan
Has Great Power
Has Inspiration
Has Signs, Key Words, etc.
Has Laws of Obedience, Sacrifice, etc.
Includes Spiritual Gifts

Is Sacred
You Can “Get Out” at Any Time
Teaches Repentance (atonement)

Is Secret
Very Difficult to “Get Out”
Teaches Despair (no hope)

It is vital that we understand that true priesthood power comes from seeking the interest of others and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God,³⁷ that all may be edified,³⁸ unified, strengthened, and built up. The moment we begin to do it for ourselves, as Satan and his followers do, we have lost the true priesthood of God.

...when we undertake to cover our sins; or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man.

Behold, ere he is aware, he is left unto himself, to kick against the pricks, to persecute the saints, and to fight against God.

We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion. (D&C 121:37-39)

Doing something for yourself and doing something with the true priesthood of God are opposites. This again is the great irony and paradox of the situation. If you seek the honor of men for yourself, you are serving Satan. If, however, you seek the glory of God and others in truth and light and strive to lose yourself in the service of God and others, the honor of righteous beings will come to you naturally and eternally.

The Priesthood of Satan in the Latter-days

Bishop Glenn L. Pace, formerly of the Presiding Bishopric of the church,³⁹ has written a timely memorandum concerning the evils of Satanism in our day. I have included his remarks in Appendix D of this work.

President Ezra Taft Benson has also clearly outlined the situation in our day.

Never before on the face of the earth have the forces of evil and the forces of good been so well organized. Now is the great day of the devil's power. But now is also the great day of the Lord's power, with the greatest number of priesthood holders on the earth. Each day the forces of evil and the forces of good enlist new recruits. Each day we personally make many decisions showing the cause we support. The final outcome is certain - the forces of righteousness will finally win. But what remains to be seen is where each of us personally,

³⁷ See D&C 4:5; D&C 82:19

³⁸ See D&C 84:110; D&C 88:122

³⁹ Elder Glenn L. Pace is now a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

now and in the future, will stand in this battle - and how tall we will stand. Will we be true to our last days and fulfill our foreordained missions? (In His Steps, August, 1987)

The forces of evil are organized today. They have a great deal of power. Our prophet has told us that the wickedness of our day is as great as in the days of Noah. He claims that the wickedness on the earth today is worse than ever before.

In striving to prepare a people who are ready to meet the Lord for His impending second coming, we are faced with wickedness which has never been as well organized, extensive, and subtle. Our day is becoming comparable to the days of Noah, when the Lord had to cleanse the earth by flood--only in our day it will be cleansed by fire. (Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, Pg.108, underline added)

It is his [Satan's] day--a day that is to become as the days of Noah before the Second Coming, for the prophets have so predicted. The signs are clear. The signs are here in this blessed land. (Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, Pg.326)

Surely we must assume that the priesthood of Satan is at least as active on the earth today as is the priesthood of God. To assume anything else would be to deny the scriptures and the words of the prophets. I believe the following verse applies as much to us in our day as it did to the Nephites in their day.

And there are also secret combinations, even as in times of old, according to the combinations of the devil, for he is the founder of all these things; yea, the founder of murder, and works of darkness; yea, and he leadeth them by the neck with a flaxen cord, until he bindeth them with his strong cords forever. (2 Nephi 26:22)

Mormon tells us quite clearly that Satan's priesthood will be actively engaged in our day.

And it [the record of the Nephites] shall come in a day when the blood of saints shall cry unto the Lord, because of secret combinations and the works of darkness. (Mormon 8:27, underline added)

It is important that we understand the fate of our society if this wicked priesthood continues, grows, and flourishes. Moroni, writing directly to us in the latter-days, has said,

And whatsoever nation shall uphold such secret combinations, to get power and gain, until they shall spread over the nation, behold, they shall be destroyed; for the Lord will not suffer that the blood of his saints, which shall be shed by them, shall always cry unto him from the ground for vengeance upon them and yet he avenge them not.

Wherefore, O ye Gentiles, it is wisdom in God that these things should be shown unto you, that thereby ye may repent of your sins, and suffer not that these murderous combinations shall get above you, which are built up to get power and gain--and the work, yea, even the work of destruction come upon you, yea, even the sword of the justice of the Eternal God shall fall upon you, to your overthrow and destruction if ye shall suffer these things to be.

Wherefore, the Lord commandeth you, when ye shall see these things come among you that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation, because of this secret combination which shall be among you; or wo be unto it, because of the blood of them who have been slain; for they cry from the dust for vengeance upon it, and also upon those who built it up.

For it cometh to pass that whoso buildeth it up seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries; and it bringeth to pass the destruction of all people, for it is built up by the devil, who is the father of all lies; even that same liar who beguiled our first parents, yea, even that same liar who hath caused man to commit murder from the beginning; who hath hardened the hearts of men that they have murdered the prophets, and stoned them, and cast them out from the beginning. (Ether 8:22-25)

Notice that verse 24 says “when” not “if” we shall see these things come among us. It also speaks of a secret combination which “shall” be among us. It does not seem to be a case of “if” or “maybe.” It appears clear that it will definitely happen. Of these verses in the Book of Mormon President Ezra Taft Benson has said,

One of the most urgent, heart-stirring appeals made by Moroni as he closed the Book of Mormon was addressed to the gentile nations of the last days. He foresaw the rise of a great world-wide secret combination among the gentiles which “seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries.” (Ether 8:25.) (Conference Report, Oct. 1961)

Wickedness is rapidly expanding in every segment of our society. (See D&C 1:14-16; 84:49-53.) It is more highly organized, more cleverly disguised, and more powerfully promoted than ever before. Secret combinations lusting for power, gain, and glory are flourishing. A secret combination that seeks to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries is increasing its evil influence and control over America and the entire world. (See Ether 8:18-25.) (Conference Report, Nov. 1988)⁴⁰

An organization of Satan truly exists. The priesthood of Satan is a real power. It is strong and it is deceiving many in the world today. It is kept in secret, but is rapidly becoming an open and acceptable exercise in wickedness for the whole world to see. “What do I need to do in order that I might get gain and power in this world?” That is the question on everybody’s mind today. It saturates our society, especially in the areas of education and employment.

We must be aware of the doctrines of the priesthood, what they are and how they work. We must learn how to recognize the differences between Satan’s power and that of the Lord. And we must fully understand what is at stake when we make the choices we are forced to make in these latter-days.

CONCLUSION

⁴⁰ See also *Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* pp. 107, 401, 404, 623, and 696.

The best way to withstand and fight the power of Satan is to obtain the power of God. To the same degree that we obtain the power of God, Satan's power over us will be decreased. Again we read the directions of the Lord concerning how we obtain the power of the true priesthood of God.

No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile--

Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy;

That he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death.

Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.

The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever. (D&C 121:41-46)

Why do intelligent beings serve, trust, and honor God? It is because they know He is purely self-sacrificing and loving in His nature, caring only for the welfare of others. What will make God delight to honor us? The very same thing. When we have proven that we will unselfishly serve and love God, truth, and others, we will gain His honor and hence, the full blessings of His priesthood power. We will become a part of the whole, a part of the great at-one-ment with the gods of the universe. When a whole group of such beings exist together, honoring and sustaining each other in the bonds of love, walking in all the commandments of God blameless, it may rightly be said that these people are sharing in the fullness of the priesthood. Under such circumstances, Zion or a celestial kingdom will not be far off. It must be this way if we are to survive the difficulties of the last days and regain the presence of our Father in the life hereafter. We must strive for this attitude of love and sacrifice no matter what the cost.

Oh that we would all turn to each other and be able to do as the Lord has instructed us in the Doctrine and Covenants, and with all sincerity repeat the prayer given to us by the Lord in these latter days.

Art thou a brother or brethren? I salute you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in token or remembrance of the everlasting covenant, in which covenant I receive you to fellowship, in a determination that is fixed, immovable, and unchangeable, to be your friend and brother through the grace of God in the bonds of love, to walk in all the commandments of God blameless, in thanksgiving, forever and ever. Amen. (D&C 88:133)

This is priesthood power. This is godhood. It is immortality, Eternal life, and exaltation. It is what brings us to God and to become gods ourselves. It is what the temple, the scriptures, and all the holy prophets are trying to teach us. It is glorious, beautiful, and eternal.

For thus saith the Lord--I, the Lord, am merciful and gracious unto those who fear me, and delight to honor those who serve me in righteousness and in truth unto the end. (D&C 76:5, underline added)

May we serve God and our fellow man in righteousness and truth all the days of our lives, that they, in turn, will delight to honor us as we delight to honor them. May we obtain priesthood power for ourselves and for our families, forever and ever. This is my prayer and admonition in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

APPENDIX A: INTELLIGENT AND UNINTELLIGENT MATTER

There is some debate concerning whether or not all matter contains intelligence. In this debate, we are faced with many complex questions and possibilities. It should be noted as we investigate these possibilities that the outcome of our investigation will not greatly affect the arguments presented in this work on the priesthood. Intelligence, in whatever form, honoring other intelligence brings priesthood power. Whether that intelligence is in the form of a man, plant, or mineral makes little difference as far as our discussion of the priesthood is concerned. The sole purpose for the following inquiry is to help us to understand the subject to a greater degree. When all is said and done, the answer as to whether all matter contains intelligence may not be revealed to us at this time. However, by raising and discussing the question, we will undoubtedly be better prepared for the answer when the Lord sees fit to reveal it to us.

By implying that the Lord has not yet revealed to us the full story of the relationship between intelligence and matter, I do not wish to suggest that He has not given us information on the subject. To the contrary, I feel we have ample information to help us ask intelligent questions about the topic.

The basic premise of this section is that there is both intelligent matter as well as unintelligent matter in the universe. I maintain that not all matter possesses intelligence and that intelligences are individual, separate beings as opposed to a mass or accumulation of substance that can be separated and put back together again.

All Matter Possesses Life

Brigham Young has taught us much about how intelligence, life, and matter interact with each other. In an interesting sermon delivered on March 23, 1856, President Young outlined his belief that all matter possesses life. Notice, as you read, the difference in the way Brigham Young uses the terms “spirit” and “life.”

I will bring to your minds what I have formerly stated with regard to the spirit's entering the body. Our bodies are composed of visible, tangible matter, as you all understand, you also know that they are born into this world. They then begin to partake of the elements adapted to their organization and growth, increase to manhood, become old, decay, and pass again into the dust. Now in the first place, though I have explained this many times, what we call death is the operation of life, inherent in the matter of which this body is composed, and which causes the decomposition after the spirit has left the body. Were that not the fact, the body, from which has fled the spirit, would remain to all eternity just as it was when the spirit left it, and would not decay.

What is commonly called death does not destroy the body, it only causes a separation of spirit and body, but the principle of life, inherent in the native elements, of which the body is composed, still continues with the particles of that body and causes it to decay, to dissolve itself into the elements of which it was composed, and all of which continue to have life. When the spirit given to man leaves the body, the tabernacle begins to decompose, is that death? No, death only separates the spirit and body, and a principle of life still operates in the untenanted tabernacle, but in a different way, and producing different effects from those observed while it was tenanted by the spirit. There is not a

particle of element which is not filled with life, and all space is filled with element; there is no such thing as empty space, though some philosophers contend that there is.

Life in various proportions, combinations, conditions, &c., fills all matter. Is there life in a tree when it ceases to put forth leaves? You see it standing upright, and when it ceases to bear leaves and fruit you say it is dead, but that is a mistake. It still has life, but that life operates upon the tree in another way, and continues to operate until it resolves it to the native elements. It is life in another condition that begins to operate upon man, upon animal, upon vegetation, and upon minerals when we see the change termed dissolution. There is life in the material of the fleshly tabernacle, independent of the spirit given of God to undergo this probation. There is life in all matter, throughout the vast extent of all the eternities; it is in the rock, the sand, the dust, in water, air, the gases, and, in short in every description and organization of matter, whether it be solid liquid, or gaseous, particle operating with particle.

I have heard some philosophers argue that because no body could move without displacing other matter, therefore there must be empty space. That reasoning is nonsense to me, because eternity is, was, and will continue to be full of matter and life. We put a ship in motion on the water, and have we created an empty space? No, we have only changed the position of matter. Men and animals move upon the earth, birds and fishes cleave the elements they are organized to operate in, but do they leave a track of empty space? No, for all eternity is full of matter and life. True, element is capable of contraction and expansion but that does not by any means imply empty space. You see life in human beings and in the growing vegetation, and when that spirit of life departs, another condition of life at once begins to operate upon the organization which remains. By way of illustration I will quote one passage from the book of Job, who in his afflictions was visited by several friends, and after he had concluded that they were all miserable comforters, he exclaimed, "Though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." To make this passage clearer to your comprehension, I will paraphrase it, though my spirit leave my body, and though worms destroy its present organization, yet in the morning of the resurrection I shall behold the face of my Saviour, in this same tabernacle; that is my understanding of the idea so briefly expressed by Job. If you wish to know how the quoted passage reads, see Job, 19 chapter, 26 verse, King James' translation.

I have formerly spoken about the spirits overcoming the flesh; the body or flesh, is what the devil has power over. God gave Lucifer power, influence, mastery, and rule, to a certain extent, to control the life pertaining to the elements composing the body, and the spirit which God places in the body becomes intimately connected with it, and is of course more or less affected by it.

Now let some of our philosophers tell us how much empty space there is, and where it is, in all the eternities that exist, or in other words, where life is not. The term death is often used to accommodate the understandings of the people, but they are in darkness upon this subject.

The spirit leaves a body, and then that body begins to pass away by another system of life. I might enlarge upon the death pertaining to this time, and the death that will be

hereafter, but it is all upon the same principle, it is plain, simple, natural philosophy, and our religion is based upon it. (Journal of Discourses 3:276-278, underline added)

It is important to recognize that the words “spirit” and “life” are not synonymous in these statements by Brigham Young. Notice that President Young speaks of the spirit in a much different manner than he does of the life. The relationship of each to matter is different. He speaks of the spirit as possessing the ability to leave or separate from the matter of our mortal body. However, he states that “life” remains with the matter and cannot be separated from it. He even goes as far as to say that all matter has life. There is obviously a difference between what Brigham Young calls the spirit and what he refers to as life. It seems reasonable to assume that our spirits are comprised of some form of “life” as well as of matter. Of the latter the Lord has been very specific in telling us that all spirit is matter.

There is no such thing as immaterial matter. All spirit is matter, but it is more fine or pure, and can only be discerned by purer eyes;

We cannot see it; but when our bodies are purified we shall see that it is all matter. (D&C 131:7-8)

But what is the difference between the life we usually associate with our spirits and the life contained in all matter, such as our mortal bodies, as outlined by Brigham Young? I feel it is reasonable to assume that the difference is found in the intelligence. The spirit of man is always associated with intelligence while “life” is not always associated with intelligence.

That there is a difference between intelligent matter and unintelligent matter seems to be evident both in Brigham Young’s discourses as well as many scriptures. For instance, in the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord has taught us the following about man, spirit (intelligence), and the elements (matter):

For man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit (man) and element, inseparably connected, receive a fullness of joy.

And when separated, man (spirit) cannot receive a fullness of joy. (D&C 93:33-34)

In these verses the Lord first equates man with spirit. It is reasonable to assume that by “spirit” the Lord is referring to intelligent matter. Basically, this is what man is. Notice that spirit and element are treated as two separate things in these verses. There is apparently a difference between the matter the Lord refers to as “spirit” and the matter the Lord refers to as “element.” The latter comprises man’s tabernacle or “physical” body. If spirit is intelligent matter and element is unintelligent matter, this statement by the Lord makes perfect sense. If, however, all matter is intelligent, this statement seems to lose any meaning. It would be the equivalent of saying, “Intelligent matter and intelligent matter inseparably connected receive a fullness of joy.” If this were the case, what would the difference be between spirit and element? In addition, it is difficult for us to answer the question, “Which of these two material substances possess the agency, spirit or element?” The answer can only be that the spirit possesses agency and the element does not.

Returning to the statement by Brigham Young, we notice that he seemed to associate the spirit with maintaining the organization of the mortal body. On the other hand, he associated the “life” with the decomposition of matter. Once the spirit leaves the body, explained Brigham, the material make up of the body begins to decompose. With this in mind, we may perhaps define “life” as that force or forces which

cause change, any change. Spirit, or intelligence, on the other hand, is that force which causes or maintains organized change. Under this definition, intelligence becomes a subset of life. As Brigham Young puts it, when the spirit leaves a body, that body begins to pass away by “another system of life.” In other words, while all matter possesses life, not all matter possesses intelligent life. While life may “act upon” matter to break it down or alter its organization, it seems that only intelligent life can build up and maintain matter, reorganizing it towards a higher existence. When spirit or intelligence is removed from matter, the remaining laws of life take over and that matter is immediately returned to the process of becoming disorganized. In other words, without intelligence to continue the process of organization, the natural laws of life, as found throughout the universe, begin the operations of decay, corrosion, and decomposition. It is all life or change, but it is not all the same kind of life/change. Some changes lead towards a higher organization of matter while others lead towards a lower organization of matter.

Joseph Smith taught that,

The first principles of man are self-existent with God. God himself, finding he was in the midst of spirits and glory, because he was more intelligent, saw proper to institute laws whereby the rest could have a privilege to advance like himself. The relationship we have with God places us in a situation to advance in knowledge. He has power to institute laws to instruct the weaker intelligences, that they may be exalted with himself, so that they might have one glory upon another, and all that knowledge, power, glory, and intelligence, which is requisite in order to save them in the world of spirits. (TPJS Pg.354, underline added)

It is important to understand that in our original state of existence we did not have the power within us to progress upward. The capacity for increase was within us, but for some reason we could not use it to bring ourselves into a higher organization of things. Without God, our intelligent matter would never have been acted upon toward a higher state of organization. Even now, in our telestial state, we are decaying and decomposing according to the laws of life, as apposed to the laws of the spirit. It seems that our intelligent spirits have some power over this decaying process, but without direct intervention from God, we will all continue to travel the road of disorganization, decomposition, and decay. One of the main goals of the plan of salvation is to give men the power to take up their own lives, so to speak, and maintain our organized bodies without the aid of any external force. The scriptures teach us that those who are redeemed from the fall of Adam will become “free forever” and be able to act for themselves rather than being acted upon. It seems reasonable that part of this freedom includes the ability to maintain the organization of our flesh without the aid of other intelligent beings. Perhaps, in part, this is what Lehi was trying to explain to his son, Jacob.

Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.

And the Messiah cometh in the fullness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because that they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon, save it be by the punishment of the law at the great and last day, according to the commandments which God hath given.

Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great

Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself.

And now, my sons, I would that ye should look to the great Mediator, and hearken unto his great commandments; and be faithful unto his words, and choose eternal life, according to the will of his Holy Spirit;

And not choose eternal death, according to the will of the flesh and the evil which is therein, which giveth the spirit of the devil power to captivate, to bring you down to hell, that he may reign over you in his own kingdom. (2 Nephi 2:25-29, underline added)

First notice the connection between Lehi's words and D&C 93 as quoted above. Lehi states that men (intelligent spirits) are that they might have joy. D&C 93 told us how we gain that joy; it is by inseparably combining spirit and element. Lehi is apparently talking about two things in these verses - the resurrection and the judgment we will receive in the resurrection.

Verse 26 indicates that once we are redeemed from the fall, the only way we will be acted upon is "by the punishment of the law at the great and last day." The freedom spoken of in this verse seems to have reference to the resurrection or our ability to overcome the decaying process of our bodies. It is important to note that these verses are not saying we will have the freedom of choosing our exaltation or eternal reward. All it states is that we can become "free according to the flesh," or in other words, not dependent upon any other being for the maintenance of our organized bodies. The judgment and our inheritance of one of the kingdoms of glory will still be determined by others. However, we will all receive the gift of immortality, which, by definition, occurs when the spirit and body (element) become inseparably connected.

It is also possible that the "will of the flesh" refers to the "life" mentioned earlier by Brigham Young. We must ask, "What is meant by the 'will of the flesh' in this verse?" Perhaps it is the natural tendency to change in a downward direction - to disorganize, decompose, and decay. As Lehi states, to opt for this direction is to choose the path of "eternal death." On the other hand, if we choose "according to the will of the Holy Spirit," eternal life awaits us.

In addition to the statements already offered, Brigham Young has taught on other occasions that intelligence is a subset of matter.

There is an eternity of matter. Astronomers estimate that there is between us and the nearest fixed star matter enough from which to organize millions of earths like this. There is an eternity of matter, and it is all acted upon and filled with a portion of divinity. Matter is to exist; it cannot be annihilated. Eternity is without bounds, and is filled with matter; and there is no such place as empty space. And matter is capacitated to receive intelligence. (DBY, Pg.48, underline added)

Notice here that Brigham Young claims that matter is "capacitated to receive intelligence." This clearly suggests that not all matter has intelligence to begin with. At least some matter has to "receive" it. Since all things are made of matter, this statement by President Young may be considered a restatement of D&C 93:33. He may just as well have said, "And unintelligent matter is capacitated to receive intelligent matter."

The Difference Between Intelligent and Unintelligent Matter

It seems that one of the basic differences between intelligent matter and unintelligent matter is the capacity of intelligent matter to choose for itself - to possess agency.

The Lord has created or organized all things. Among his creations there seem to be two main categories, those things which are free to act for themselves and those things which are to be acted upon.

And now, my sons, I speak unto you these things for your profit and learning; for there is a God, and he hath created all things, both the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are, both things to act and things to be acted upon. (2 Nephi 2:14, underline added)

It may be said that those things which are acted upon fill a role of “reacting” rather than “acting.” Acting involves agency. Reacting does not involve agency. The main difference between intelligent matter and unintelligent matter is agency. Intelligent matter can choose how to act while unintelligent matter can only react to its environment.

Intelligent Matter as Individual Entities

In our discussion of intelligent matter, it is important that we understand the nature of such matter, especially in relation to its individuality. The evidence seems to indicate that we have always been separate, individual beings throughout all past eternity. This is in opposition to the belief of some that intelligence was simply a mass of some sort, from which the Lord separated “chunks” or “pieces” as He created each individual being. This idea of a mass of intelligence, as opposed to individual intelligences, seems to be contradictory to reason as well as the word of God.⁴¹

In supporting the idea of intelligences having always been separate, distinct individuals we may look at our first encounter with God. It seems obvious that there was a specific time in which God, our Father in heaven, began to be involved with us in working out our progression. Let’s see how this first meeting is described. Joseph Smith said,

The first principles of man are self-existent with God. God himself, finding He was in the midst of spirits and glory, because He was more intelligent, saw proper to institute laws whereby the rest could have the privilege to advance like himself. (TPJS p. 354, underline added)

The Lord told Abraham,

I came down in the beginning in the midst of all the intelligences thou hast seen. (Abraham 3:21)

Though definitions may vary as to the meaning of “the beginning,” it appears that these statements by the prophet and then by the Lord are very likely speaking of God the Father’s first encounter with us. It is

⁴¹ In my another work entitled, “The End From the Beginning, Some Thoughts on Progression,” I have outlined more thoughts on the differences between the mass theory and the individual theory of intelligence.

interesting to note that in both statements the plurals are used in describing us. No mention or hint of any kind is given concerning a mass of intelligence.

Concerning our eternal nature, the prophet Joseph Smith taught that,

...intelligence is eternal and exists upon a self-existent principle. It is a spirit from age to age, and there is no creation about it. (TPJS p. 354)

Commenting on this statement by Joseph Smith, Elder B. H. Roberts made the following observation:

“a spirit from age to age” not “spirit from age to age” but “a spirit,” that is, an entity, a person, an individual. This paragraph in the prophet’s remarks may well be taken as an interpretation of Doctrine and Covenants, section 93:29. (TPJS p. 354, footnotes)

Doctrine and Covenants 93:29 reads,

Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be. (D&C 93:29)

In the book of Abraham we find an interesting and meaningful conversation between Abraham and the Lord. The Lord informs Abraham of the following:

If two things exist, and there be one above the other, there shall be greater things above them;.... (Abraham 3:16)

Then Abraham, obviously pondering this idea, makes the statement,

...if there be two spirits, and one shall be more intelligent than the other, yet these two spirits, notwithstanding one is more intelligent than the other, have no beginning; they existed before, they have no end, they shall exist after, for they are gnolaum, or eternal. (Abraham 3:18)

The Lord then replies,

These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they;.... (Abraham 3:19)

It appears that the Lord in these passages is trying to explain to Abraham that spirits (intelligences) have always been separate and different. “These two facts” just plain “do exist.” They weren’t created or made but are “eternal.” “They have no beginning” and “they shall have no end,” as Abraham puts it. He is trying to show Abraham that we have always been separate, individual beings. Joseph Smith, in commenting on these passages of scripture, said,

Intelligences exist one above another, so that there is no end to them. (TPJS p. 373)

Notice again that he uses the plural “intelligences” rather than “intelligence.”

With the idea in mind that at least one characteristic of intelligent matter is that it is eternally individual in nature, we must ask the questions, “If intelligence can be found within a rock or tree, then what happens to the intelligence of a rock when it is broken in half, or a tree when it is split? Are we splitting an intelligence in half, thus creating two intelligences?” In light of the comments we just read, this conclusion seems to make little sense. Likewise, can the intelligence within you or me be split into more than one individual being? If we hold to the idea that intelligences are eternal, separate, individual beings, the answers to such questions can only lead us to believe that intelligence cannot be split apart or separated. When we break a rock into pieces, we are merely separating unintelligent matter. We are doing little more than advancing the decomposition of that matter by acting upon it in a destructive fashion. If you believe that all matter contains intelligence, you must also admit a belief that intelligences are not eternally individual or separate. This latter belief seems to contradict the statements made in the scriptures as well as some latter-day servants of God. The only possible conclusion seems to be that not all matter possesses intelligence.

Unintelligent Matter “Acting” For Itself

It is important to note that unintelligent matter can react to the natural laws of the universe, and hence “act for itself” in a certain respect. We see this type of reaction in such things as machines which are set in motion and then left to operate “by themselves.” However, unintelligent matter cannot act for itself in an organized manner without the aid of intelligent matter acting upon it. If left to itself, unintelligent matter, even if organized, will begin to decay and decompose. Its organized state will last for a time, but without further intervention by intelligent beings, it will eventually falter and decompose. This is in accordance to the natural laws of decomposition and decay mentioned earlier.

Although unintelligent matter does not possess agency, it appears that it does possess the ability to accommodate truth or knowledge. This is important. For example, a computer can store information (truth) and yet apparently only has the ability to react (as opposed to act) to its information. It does not seem reasonable to assume that a computer can act or freely choose what it will do with its stored “knowledge.” As stated earlier, I believe this inability to exercise agency is the main difference between intelligent matter and unintelligent matter. As already mentioned, all matter has life. In addition, all matter seems to be able to store and react to truth. However, not all matter has agency when acting upon its stored truth. The Lord has said,

All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence. (D&C 93:30)

In this verse of the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord separates the term “truth” (knowledge) from the term “intelligence.” The Lord says “as all intelligence also.” The word “also” suggests “in addition to.” So, in addition to truth being placed in material spheres, we have intelligence being placed in material spheres. This would seem to indicate that truth or knowledge can exist without intelligence. It indicates that knowledge and intelligence are two separate things and that they can exist apart from each other. It follows from this that some matter exists which possesses knowledge but which does not necessarily possess intelligence. This, once again, associates intelligence with the power to choose more than with the power to know. It tells us that the truth necessary to “act for itself” may be contained within any given set of matter, but that this same set of matter may not possess the intelligence to choose for itself. It may not possess agency. It is, in reality, acting upon the knowledge, pattern, or blueprint given to it by God. However, it does not possess the agency to choose anything other than that which it “knows” how to do. Intelligent matter, on the other hand, has the agency to choose. It may use this agency to act in a manner contrary to

the knowledge it possesses. Hence we have intelligent matter acting for itself and unintelligent matter acting for itself.

Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man; because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not the light.

And every man whose spirit receiveth not the light is under condemnation. (D&C 93:31-32)

There always seems to be a question as to whether or not man will fill the measure of his creation. This question does not appear to apply when we speak of other things.

And again, verily I say unto you, the earth abideth the law of a celestial kingdom, for it filleth the measure of its creation, and transgresseth not the law-- (D&C 88:25, see also D&C 88:17-20)

In my mind, this question seems to revolve around the issue of agency. Intelligent matter may choose to “receive not the light.” Unintelligent matter has no such option. It merely reacts to its environment and the truth given to it. It is predictable in every sense and in every case.

With this in mind, plants also seem to fall into the category of unintelligent matter. They do not act for themselves in the sense of having agency to choose. Rather, much like the computer, they act for themselves in the sense of being placed in a “sphere” which will cause them to react to their surroundings in an organized manner. They are filled with truth or a “pattern” from which they cannot stray. They cannot choose to do anything other than what their sphere, knowledge, or pattern dictates to them. Just as a moon circles a planet, and a planet circles a sun, or just as a computer performs certain pre-programmed functions, a plant appears only to act for itself in the sense of reacting to its intelligently pre-arranged environment. The plant, the computer, the moon, and the planet all possess life and even truth or knowledge. However, they seem to be completely void of any type of intelligent matter. They seem to be void of any type of agency. The old saying, “You can lead a horse to water but you can’t make him drink,” is true only for intelligent beings. However, it is simply not true for plants. If the proper conditions exist, a plant will do exactly as it has been programmed or commanded to do. There is no evidence of which I am aware that agency, and hence intelligence, is found in a plant to any degree whatsoever.

The Significance of Unintelligent Matter

The significance of what has been said is this: when a person uses the priesthood to do such things as move a mountain, heal the sick, or call down a famine from heaven, it is not the intelligence in the mountain, the mortal body, or the crops which acts of its own free will. Rather, it is intelligent beings responding to or honoring your command by acting upon the unintelligent matter, thus making it “obey” your command. The mountain has no intelligence or agency of its own. If it is to be moved, intelligent beings will have to move it.

This is why the gospel must be a gospel of love, unselfishness, and service. This is why all of those qualities listed in Doctrine and Covenants 121 are so important to gaining power in the priesthood. The righteous honor of intelligent beings brings to us the power of the universe, even the power of God.

Gaining the selfish, forceful honor of the wicked will also bring power. But this power does not last and only brings you down into bondage and misery.

Other Statements Regarding Intelligent and Unintelligent Matter

The remaining portion of this appendix is comprised of statements that seem to support the existence of both intelligent and unintelligent matter. Since we have already covered many of the main points, I will only make brief comments about each passage.

The Lord has made it clear that there is a hierarchy in place upon this earth. All things deserve respect and reverence to some degree, but the higher forms of organized matter seem to take precedence over the lower forms. The scriptures continually warn us against placing a higher regard for those things which are of a lower state of organization, things which have no power in and of themselves.

Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not? (Mormon 8:39, underline added)

In this verse we must assume that Moroni uses the word “life” to indicate intelligence, agency, or the power to honor other beings. It would be inconsistent to use Brigham Young’s definition of life in this case. We should glean from this verse that the hungry, needy, naked, in short, the people, have “life.” The other things, with which we “adorn” ourselves, have no life. There is a manifest difference between the people and the other things to which Moroni refers.

Notice in the following verses that the Lord again separates the “living” intelligences from the elements. The word “also” indicates “in addition to.”

And every corruptible thing, both of man, or of the beasts of the field, or of the fowls of the heavens, or of the fish of the sea, that dwells upon all the face of the earth, shall be consumed;

And also that of element shall melt with fervent heat; and all things shall become new, that my knowledge and glory may dwell upon all the earth. (D&C 101:24-25, underline added)

What is the difference between man, the beasts, the fowls, the fish and that of mere element? Why is element grouped separately from the other categories? Why will it “melt” while the others are “consumed?” The answer that seems to make the most sense is that one is individually intelligent, the other is not.

President Spencer W. Kimball has also given us information that appears to be consistent with the existence of both intelligent and unintelligent matter.

Soul is body animated by spirit. Man is a dual being. There is the body and the spirit. Together they compose the soul of man. Each is dependent on the other for completeness. The spirit is the life, the body the tabernacle. The spirit may live independent of the body, but without the spirit, the body becomes as the clod, subject to early dissolution. This mystery is most striking as one goes through the harrowing experience of death. One

moment there is life, movement, vocal expression, reasoning, memory. In an instant, there lies the same flesh and bones, but without feeling, movement, thought, or power. It is wholly inanimate as a rock, as soil. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (James 2:26.)

Man is a soul, the combination of that mortal matter called the body, and that immortal matter called spirit. The former is created of the elements of a mortal earth and when inhabited by the organized eternal spirit matter, is the soul of man.

In accordance with the plan of God the Creator, our earthly parents in partnership with him have provided the earthly tabernacle, and at the proper moment, the Lord has provided and sent to that tabernacle the spirit body to give it life, understanding, power. (Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, Pg.35)

The following statements by Brigham Young help to further explain the relationships between matter, knowledge, and intelligence.

Man and Matter Eternal--Mankind are organized of element designed to endure to all eternity; it never had a beginning and never can have an end. There never was a time when this matter, of which you and I are composed, was not in existence, and there never can be a time when it will pass out of existence; it cannot be annihilated.

It is brought together, organized, and capacitated to receive knowledge and intelligence, to be enthroned in glory, to be made angels, Gods--beings who will hold control over the elements, and have power by their word to command the creation and redemption of worlds, or to extinguish suns by their breath, and disorganize worlds, hurling them back into their chaotic state. This is what you and I are created for. (Journal of Discourses 3:356, underline added)

The elements with which we are surrounded are as eternal as we are, and are loaded with supplies of every kind for the comfort and happiness of the human race. (Journal of Discourses 10:3)

This earth is brought together and organized from native elements as we now behold it, our tabernacles included. The matter of which all animate and inanimate existence is formed is from all eternity, and it must remain to all eternity, without beginning and without end. There are certain portions of this native element that will be refined and prepared to enter into the celestial kingdom--into the celestial family of the celestial world. If the spirit honors the body and the body honors the spirit while they are here united, the particles of matter that compose the mortal tabernacle will be resurrected and brought forth to immortality and eternal life; but it cannot be brought forth and made immortal, except it undergoes a change, for "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." What for? To prepare the body to be made immortal and fitted to dwell in the presence of the Gods. (Journal of Discourses 8:27, underline added)

If we could so understand true philosophy as to understand our own creation, and what it is for--what design and intent the Supreme Ruler had in organizing matter and bringing it forth in the capacity that I behold you here today, we could comprehend that matter

cannot be destroyed--that it is subject to organization and disorganization; and could understand that matter can be organized and brought forth into intelligence, and to possess more intelligence and to continue to increase in that intelligence; and could learn those principles that organized matter into animals, vegetables, and into intelligent beings; and could discern the Divinity acting, operating, and diffusing principles into matter to produce intelligent beings and to exalt them--to what? Happiness. Will nothing short of that fully satisfy the spirits implanted within us? No. (Journal of Discourses 7:2-3, underline added)

APPENDIX B: EXAMPLES OF STRUCTURES IN THE SCRIPTURES

The following examples of scriptural structures are not offered with the intent to shed further light on gospel topics. Nor are they presented in order to teach the reader how to find or use such things. Rather they are given only to provide the reader with clear evidence that such things truly exist in the revelations given to us by God. They are real and can often be helpful in our study of gospel principles.

MOSIAH 5:10-12 CHIASM

- A 10 And now it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall not take upon him the name of Christ must be called by some other name; therefore,
- B he findeth himself on the left hand of God.
- C 11 And I would that ye should remember also,
- D that this is the name that I said I should give unto you that never should be blotted out,
- E except it be through transgression;
- E therefore, take heed that ye do not transgress,
- D that the name be not blotted out of your hearts.
- C 12 I say unto you, I would that ye should remember to retain the name written always in your hearts,
- B that ye are not found on the left hand of God,
- A but that ye hear and know the voice by which ye shall be called, and also, the name by which he shall call you.

D&C 93:1-20 CHIASM

- A1** 1 Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments,
- A2** shall see my face and know that I am;
- B** 2 And [know] that I am the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world;
- C** 3 And that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and the Father and I are one--
- D** 4 The Father because he gave me of his fulness,
- E** and the Son because I was in the world and made flesh my tabernacle, and dwelt among the sons of men. 5 I was in the world and received of my Father, and the works of him were plainly manifest.
- F** 6 And John saw and bore record of the fulness of my glory, and the fulness of John's record is hereafter to be revealed.
- G** 7 And he bore record, saying: I saw his glory, that he was in the beginning, before the world was; 8 Therefore, in the beginning the Word was, for he was the Word, even the messenger of salvation--
- H** 9 The light and the Redeemer of the world; the Spirit of truth, who came into the world,
- I** because the world was made by him, and in him was the life of men and the light of men.
- I** 10 The worlds were made by him; men were made by him; all things were made by him, and through him, and of him.
- G** 11 And I, John, bear record that I beheld his glory, as the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,
- H** even the Spirit of truth, which came and dwelt in the flesh, and dwelt among us.
- F** 12 And I, John, saw that he received not of the fulness at first, but received grace for grace. 13 And he received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness;
- E** 14 And thus he was called the Son of God, because he received not of the fulness at the first. 15 And I, John, bear record, and lo, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove, and sat upon him, and there came a voice out of heaven saying: This is my beloved Son.
- D** 16 And I, John, bear record that he received a fulness of the glory of the Father.
- C** 17 And he received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him. 18 And it shall come to pass, that if you are faithful you shall receive the fulness of the record of John.
- B** 19 I give unto you these sayings that you may understand and know how to worship, and know what you worship, that you may come unto the Father in my name, and in due time receive of his fulness.
- A1** 20 For if you keep my commandments
- A2** you shall receive of his fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace.

2 NEPHI 3:9-24 PARALLEL STRUCTURE

9 And he shall be great like unto Moses, whom I have said I would raise up unto you, to deliver my people, O house of Israel.

10 And Moses will I raise up, to deliver thy people out of the land of Egypt.

11 But a seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins--and not to the bringing forth my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them.

12 Wherefore, the fruit of thy loins shall write; and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; and that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins, and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the

loins of Judah, shall grow together, unto the confounding of false doctrines and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins, and bringing them to the knowledge of their fathers in the latter days, and also to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord.

13 And out of weakness he shall be made strong, in that day when my work shall commence among all my people, unto the restoring thee, O house of Israel, saith the Lord.

14 And thus prophesied Joseph, saying: Behold, that seer will the Lord bless; and they that seek to destroy him shall be confounded; for this promise, which I have obtained of the Lord, of the fruit of my loins, shall be fulfilled. Behold, I am sure of the fulfilling of this promise;

15 And his name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father. And he shall be like unto me; for the thing, which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand,

by the power of the Lord shall bring my people unto salvation.

16 Yea, thus prophesied Joseph: I am sure of this thing, even as I am sure of the promise of Moses; for the Lord hath said unto me, I will preserve thy seed forever.

17 And the Lord hath said: I will raise up a Moses; and I will give power unto him in a rod; and I will give judgment unto him in writing. Yet I will not loose his tongue, that he shall speak much, for I will not make him mighty in speaking. But I will write unto him my law, by the finger of mine own hand; and I will make a spokesman for him.

18 And the Lord said unto me also: I will raise up unto the fruit of thy loins; and I will make for him a spokesman. And I, behold, I will give unto him that he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins, unto the fruit of thy loins; and the spokesman of thy loins shall declare it.

19 And the words which he shall write shall be the words which are expedient in my wisdom should go forth unto the fruit of thy loins. And it shall be as if the fruit of thy loins had cried unto them from the dust; for I know their faith.

20 And they shall cry from the dust; yea, even repentance unto their brethren, even after many generations have gone by them. And it shall come to pass that their cry shall go, even according to the simpleness of their words.

21 Because of their faith their words shall proceed forth out of my mouth unto their brethren who are the fruit of thy loins; and the weakness of their words will I make strong in their faith, unto the remembering of my covenant which I made unto thy fathers.

22 And now, behold, my son Joseph, after this manner did my father of old prophesy.

23 Wherefore, because of this covenant thou art blessed; for thy seed shall not be destroyed, for they shall hearken unto the words of the book.

24 And there shall rise up one mighty among them, who shall do much good, both in word and in deed,

being an instrument in the hands of God, with exceeding faith, to work mighty wonders, and do that thing which is great in the sight of God, unto the bringing to pass much restoration unto the house of Israel, and unto the seed of thy brethren.

2 NEPHI 3 CHIASM

- 3 A And now, Joseph, my last-born, whom I have brought out of the wilderness of mine afflictions, may the Lord bless thee forever, for thy seed shall not utterly be destroyed. 4 For behold, thou art the fruit of my loins; and I am a descendant of Joseph who was carried captive into Egypt. And great were the covenants of the Lord which he made unto Joseph.
- 5 B Wherefore, Joseph truly saw our day. And he obtained a promise of the Lord, that out of the fruit of his loins the Lord God would raise up a righteous branch unto the house of Israel; not the Messiah, but a branch which was to be broken off, nevertheless,
- C to be remembered in the covenants of the Lord that the Messiah should be made manifest unto them in the latter days, in the spirit of power,
- D unto the bringing of them out of darkness unto light--yea, out of hidden darkness and out of captivity unto freedom.
- 6 E1 For Joseph truly testified, saying:
- E2 A seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins.
- 7 E1 Yea, Joseph truly said:
- E2 Thus saith the Lord unto me: A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins. And unto him will I give commandment that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren, which shall be of great worth unto them,
- F even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers.
- 8 G And I will give unto him a commandment that he shall do none other work, save the work which I shall command him. And I will make him great in mine eyes; for he shall do my work.
- 9 OMISSION And he shall be great like unto Moses, whom I have said I would raise up unto you, to deliver my people, O house of Israel. 10 And Moses will I raise up, to deliver thy people out of the land of Egypt.
- 11 H But a seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins;
- I and unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins--and not to the bringing forth my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them.
- 12 J Wherefore, the fruit of thy loins shall write; and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; and that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins, and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together,
- K unto the confounding of false doctrines and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins, and bringing them to the knowledge of their fathers in the latter days, and also to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord.
- 13 L And out of weakness he shall be made strong, in that day when my work shall commence among all my people, unto the restoring thee, O house of Israel, saith the Lord.
- 14 M And thus prophesied Joseph, saying: Behold, that seer will the Lord bless;
- N and they that seek to destroy him shall be confounded;
- O for this promise, which I have obtained of the Lord, of the fruit of my loins, shall be fulfilled.
- 15 P Behold, I am sure of the fulfilling of this promise;
- Q And his name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father. And he shall be like unto me; for the thing, which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand, by the power of the Lord shall bring my people unto salvation.
- 16 P Yea, thus prophesied Joseph: I am sure of this thing,
- O even as I am sure of the promise of Moses; for the Lord hath said unto me,
- N I will preserve thy seed forever.
- 17 M And the Lord hath said: I will raise up a Moses; and I will give power unto him in a rod; and I will give judgment unto him in writing.
- L Yet I will not loose his tongue, that he shall speak much, for I will not make him mighty in speaking. But I will write unto him my law, by the finger of mine own hand; and I will make a spokesman for him.
- 18 H And the Lord said unto me also: I will raise up unto the fruit of thy loins; and I will make for him a spokesman. And I, behold, I will give unto him that
- J he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins, unto the fruit of thy loins;
- I and the spokesman of thy loins shall declare it.
- 19 (H and K are switched for emphasis) K And the words which he shall write shall be the words which are expedient in my wisdom should go forth unto the fruit of thy loins. And it shall be as if the fruit of thy loins had cried unto them from the dust; for I know their faith. 20 And they shall cry from the dust; yea, even repentance unto their brethren, even after many generations have gone by them. And it shall come to pass that their cry shall go, even according to the simpleness of their words.
- 21 G Because of their faith their words shall proceed forth out of my mouth unto their brethren who are the fruit of thy loins; and the weakness of their words will I make strong in their faith,
- F unto the remembering of my covenant which I made unto thy fathers.
- 22 E1 And now, behold, my son Joseph, after this manner did my father of old prophesy.
- 23 E2 Wherefore, because of this covenant thou art blessed;
- D for thy seed shall not be destroyed,
- C for they shall hearken unto the words of the book.
- 24 B And there shall rise up one mighty among them, who shall do much good, both in word and in deed, being an instrument in the hands of God, with exceeding faith, to work mighty wonders, and do that thing which is great in the sight of God, unto the bringing to pass much restoration unto the house of Israel, and unto the seed of thy brethren.
- 25 A And now, blessed art thou, Joseph. Behold, thou art little; wherefore hearken unto the words of thy brother, Nephi, and it shall be done unto thee even according to the words which I have spoken. Remember the words of thy dying father. Amen.

2 NEPHI 3:17-18 "SUB-CHIASM"

17 A1 And the Lord hath said:

A2 I will raise up a Moses;

B and I will give power unto him in a rod;

C and I will give judgment unto him in writing.

D Yet I will not loose his tongue, that he shall speak much,

D for I will not make him mighty in speaking.

C But I will write unto him my law, by the finger of mine own hand; and

B I will make a spokesman for him.

18 A1 And the Lord said unto me also:

A2 I will raise up unto the fruit of thy loins

B and I will make for him a spokesman.

C And I, behold, I will give unto him that he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins, unto the fruit of thy loins;

B and the spokesman of thy loins shall declare it.

19 C And the words which he shall write shall be the words which are expedient in my wisdom should go forth unto the fruit of thy loins.

2 NEPHI 3:9-14 "SUB-CHIASM"

9 A And he shall be great like unto Moses, whom I have said I would raise up unto you, to deliver my people, O house of Israel.

10 B And Moses will I raise up, to deliver thy people out of the land of Egypt.

11 C But a seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins;

D1 and unto him will I give power

D2 to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins--

E and not to the bringing forth my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them.

12 F1 Wherefore, the fruit of thy loins shall write;

F2 and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write;

F1 and that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins,

F2 and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together,

E unto the confounding of false doctrines and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins, and bringing them to the knowledge of their fathers in the latter days, and also to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord.

13 D1 And out of weakness he shall be made strong.

D2 in that day when my work shall commence among all my people, unto the restoring thee, O house of Israel, saith the Lord.

14 C And thus prophesied Joseph, saying: Behold, that seer will the Lord bless;

B and they that seek to destroy him shall be confounded; for this promise, which I have obtained of the Lord, of the fruit of my loins, shall be fulfilled.

A Behold, I am sure of the fulfilling of this promise;

2 NEPHI 3:5-11 "SUB-CHIASM"

- 5 Wherefore, Joseph truly saw our day. And he obtained a promise of the Lord, that out of the fruit of his loins the Lord God would raise up a righteous branch unto the house of Israel; not the Messiah, but a branch which was to be broken off, nevertheless,
- A to be remembered in the covenants of the Lord that the Messiah should be made manifest unto them in the latter days,
- B in the spirit of power, unto the bringing of them out of darkness unto light--yea, out of hidden darkness and out of captivity unto freedom.
- 6 C For Joseph truly testified, saying: A seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins.
- 7 D Yea, Joseph truly said: Thus saith the Lord unto me: A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins.
- E And unto him will I give commandment that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren, which shall be of great worth unto them,
- F even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers.
- 8 E And I will give unto him a commandment that he shall do none other work, save the work which I shall command him. And I will make him great in mine eyes; for he shall do my work.
- 9 D And he shall be great like unto Moses, whom I have said I would raise up unto you, to deliver my people, O house of Israel. 10 And Moses will I raise up, to deliver thy people out of the land of Egypt.
- 11 C But a seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins;
- B and unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins--and not to the bringing forth my word only, saith the Lord,
- A but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them.

2 NEPHI 6:6-15 PARALLEL

6 And now these are the words: Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.

7 And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their faces towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

8 And now I, Jacob, would speak somewhat concerning these words. For behold, the Lord has shown me that those who were at Jerusalem, from whence we came, have been slain and carried away captive.

9 Nevertheless, the Lord has shown unto me that they should return again. And he also has shown unto me that the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, should manifest himself unto them in the flesh; and after he should manifest himself they should scourge him and crucify him, according to the words of the angel who spake it unto me.

[See verse 8 above.]

10 And after they have hardened their hearts and stiffened their necks against the Holy One of Israel, behold the judgments of the Holy One of Israel shall come upon them. And the day cometh that they shall be smitten and afflicted.

11 Wherefore, after they are driven to and fro, for thus saith the angel, many shall be afflicted in the flesh, and shall not be suffered to perish, because of the prayers of the faithful; they shall be scattered, and smitten, and hated; nevertheless, the Lord will be merciful unto them, that when they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer, they shall be gathered together again to the lands of their inheritance.

12 And blessed are the Gentiles, they of whom the prophet has written; for behold, if it so be that they shall repent and fight not against Zion, and do not unite themselves to that great and abominable church, they shall be saved; for the Lord God will fulfil his covenants which he has made unto his children; and for this cause the prophet has written these things.

13 Wherefore, they that fight against Zion and the covenant people of the Lord shall lick up the dust of their feet; and the people of the Lord shall not be ashamed. For the people of the Lord are they who wait for him; for they still wait for the coming of the Messiah.

[See the second half of verse 14 below.]

14 And behold, according to the words of the prophet, the Messiah will set himself again the second time to recover them;

wherefore, he will manifest himself unto them in power and great glory,

unto the destruction of their enemies, when that day cometh when they shall believe in him; and none will he destroy that believe in him.

15 And they that believe not in him shall be destroyed, both by fire, and by tempest, and by earthquakes, and by bloodsheds, and by pestilence, and by famine.

And they shall know that the Lord is God, the Holy One of Israel.

APPENDIX C: THE ORDINANCE OF WASHING OF THE FEET

Washing of the feet is an ordinance of the temple of which most latter-day saints are largely unaware. Yet, it has been discussed openly by many latter-day prophets as well as within the scriptures of the Lord. The following information regarding this ordinance is little more than a collection of quotes with a few comments of explanation and emphasis offered as deemed appropriate.

And ye shall not receive any among you into this school save he is clean from the blood of this generation;

And he shall be received by the ordinance of the washing of feet, for unto this end was the ordinance of the washing of feet instituted.

And again, the ordinance of washing feet is to be administered by the president, or presiding elder of the church.

It is to be commenced with prayer; and after partaking of bread and wine, he is to gird himself according to the pattern given in the thirteenth chapter of John's testimony concerning me. Amen. (D&C 88:138-141)

In the thirteenth chapter of John we read the following concerning the ordinance of washing of feet:

He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe [them] with the towel wherewith he was girded.

Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. (John 13:4-20)

That this same ordinance is necessary and has been restored in our day is evident in the following words by the prophet Joseph Smith:

Special Ordinances

You want to know many things that are before you, that you may know how to prepare yourselves for the great things that God is about to bring to pass. But there is one great deficiency or obstruction in the way, that deprives us of the greater blessings; and in order to make the foundation of this Church complete and permanent, we must remove this obstruction, which is, to attend to certain duties that we have not as yet attended to. I suppose I had established this Church on a permanent foundation when I went to Missouri, and indeed I did so, for if I had been taken away, it would have been enough, but I yet live, and therefore God

requires more at my hands. The item to which I wish the more particularly to call your attention tonight, is the ordinance of washing of feet. This we have not done as yet, but it is necessary now, as much as it was in the days of the Savior; and we must have a place prepared, that we may attend to this ordinance aside from the world. (TPJS, Pg.90, underline added)

Elder Orson Pratt recalls this ordinance as it was performed by the prophet Joseph Smith. Notice the similarities between Elder Pratt's rendition and the scriptures above.

When the Temple was built, the Lord did not see proper to reveal all the ordinances of the Endowments, such as we now understand. He revealed little by little. No rooms were prepared for washings; no special place prepared for the anointings, such as you understand, and such as you comprehend at the period of the history of the Church! Neither did we know the necessity of the washings, such as we now receive. It is true, our hands were washed, our faces and our feet. The Prophet Joseph was commanded to gird himself with a towel, doing this in the Temple. What for? That the first Elder might witness to our Father and God, that we were clean from the blood of that wicked generation, that then lived. We had gone forth according to our best ability, to publish glad tidings of great joy, for thousands of miles, upon this continent. After this we were called in, and this washing of hands and feet was to testify to God that we were clean from the blood of this generation. (JD 19:16, underline added)

Notice the direct connection between this ordinance and preaching the gospel. It is only after a man has done his duty of preaching the gospel to the world that he can be found worthy of this cleansing. It is important to understand that preaching the gospel is a responsibility that falls under the umbrella of the Melchizedek priesthood. This is the purpose of the ordinance - to cleanse us from the blood and sins of this generation, or in other words, to make us "clean every whit." The scriptures clearly show the connection between preaching the gospel and being cleansed from the blood and sins of this generation.

And I give unto you, who are the first laborers in this last kingdom, a commandment that you assemble yourselves together, and organize yourselves, and prepare yourselves, and sanctify yourselves; yea, purify your hearts, and cleanse your hands and your feet before me, that I may make you clean;

That I may testify unto your Father, and your God, and my God, that you are clean from the blood of this wicked generation; that I may fulfill this promise, this great and last promise, which I have made unto you, when I will. (D&C 88:74-75, underline added)

That their souls may escape the wrath of God, the desolation of abomination which awaits the wicked, both in this world and in the world to come. Verily, I say unto you, let those who are not the first elders continue in the vineyard until the

mouth of the Lord shall call them, for their time is not yet come; their garments are not clean from the blood of this generation. (D&C 88:85, underline added; See also D&C 112:33)

Commenting on the scripture just referred to in D&C 88, Elder Orson Hyde has added,

In another revelation to the first Elders of this Church, who had been forth preaching in their weakness, (being called in at Kirtland, Ohio,) the Lord told them to wash their feet in testimony that they were clean from the blood of this generation, and goes on to say, “Let those who are not of the first Elders of my Church remain in the vineyard, for their garments are not yet clean.” Those first Elders had laboured but a short time in the vineyard – perhaps one or two years, when it was said, “Your garments are clean.”

There are Elders who have laboured from sea to sea, from island to island, from country to country, and have spent the vigour and strength of their days in the work of proclaiming the Gospel. May we not say, upon the same principle, that their garments are clean from the blood of this generation? If so, what does it imply? That we shall not be held under condemnation if we never preach to them again. And there is another thing implied in this: If this generation shall rise against you to slay you for your religion, and because you are righteous, your garments being clear of their blood, and you slay them, their blood is upon their own heads. This is what I understand by being clear from the blood of this generation. It is an important saying. In my opinion, it means more than a casual observer would attach to it. It is a deep saying. If you have warned them – have called upon them to repent – offered them the blessing of eternal life through the Gospel, and they thrust it from them, let what will happen to them, your garments are clean from their blood. (JD 6:55)

George A. Smith also adds his testimony regarding the connection between this ordinance and preaching the gospel.

We were instructed to wash each other’s feet, as an evidence that we had borne testimony of the truth of the Gospel to the world. We were taught to anoint each other’s head with oil in the name of the Lord, as an ordinance of anointing. All these things were to be done in their time, place, and season. All this was plain and simple, yet some apostatized because there was not more of it, and others because there was too much. (JD 2:215, underline added)

Joseph Smith has said,

Now the Lord wants the tares and wheat to grow together: for Zion must be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness. Every Elder that

can, after providing for his family (if he has any) and paying his debts, must go forth and clear his skirts from the blood of this generation. While they are in that region instead of trying members for transgressions, or offenses, let every one labor to prepare himself for the vineyard, sparing a little time to comfort the mourners; to bind up the broken-hearted; to reclaim the backslider; to bring back the wanderer; to re-invite into the kingdom such as have been cut off, by encouraging them to lay to while the day lasts, and to work righteousness, and, with one heart and one mind, prepare to help redeem Zion, that goodly land of promise, where the willing and the obedient shall be blessed. Souls are as precious in the sight of God as they ever were; and the Elders were never called to drive any down to hell, but to persuade and invite all men every where to repent, that they may become the heirs of salvation. It is the acceptable year of the Lord: liberate the captives that they may sing hosanna. (TPJS, Pg.76, underline added)

Brigham Young has taught,

This, then, is our position towards the Government of the United States and towards the world, to put down iniquity, and exalt virtue; to declare the word of God which he revealed unto us, and build up his Kingdom upon the earth. And, know all men, Governments, Nations, Kindreds, Tongues, and People, that this is our calling, intention, and design. We aim to live our religion, and have communion with our God. We aim to clear our skirts of the blood of this generation, by our faithfulness in preaching the truth of heaven in all plainness and simplicity; and I have often said, and repeat it now, that all other considerations of whatever name or nature, sink into insignificance in comparison with this. To serve God and keep his commandments, are first and foremost with me. (JD 2:176, underline added)

Orson Pratt teaches us more on the subject.

Thousands and tens of thousands of large congregations have been preached to in the United States and in Great Britain. Thousands and thousands of the servants of God have lifted up their voices, day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year, and warned the nations; and the Lord told us, more than twenty years ago, that he had sent forth his servants to warn the people, and it became those who had been warned to warn their neighbours. The Lord, more than twenty years ago, said to his servants, "Your garments are clean from the blood of this generation." (JD 6:200)

President Wilford Woodruff has said,

We have warned our own and other nations; and so far our garments are clear of the blood of this generation. There never were men in the flesh who labored

harder and tried more to fulfil the commandments of God than the elders of this Church have done. Some of our elders have traveled over 100,000 miles in thirty years to preach the Gospel and build up the kingdom of God; and the Lord Almighty has labored with us. (JD 11:248)

Wilford Woodruff has again stated,

We have been called to preach the gospel; the Lord Almighty has required it at our hands; we would have been under condemnation as Elders if we had not done it. We have done it, and our garments, in a great measure, are clear of the blood of this generation. (JD 12:11-12)

President John Taylor has also spoken of this ordinance and the importance of becoming worthy of it by preaching the gospel to the world.

How many of you can say, my garments are clean from the blood of this generation? I speak in behalf of the nations and the people thereof, and the honest in heart who are ignorant of God and his laws. He has called upon us to enlighten them, and then spread forth the truth, and send forth the principles of the Gospel, and point out the way of life. And it is for us to attend to these things, that we may secure the smiles and approbation of God. (JD 20:23)

John Taylor adds more,

Then when you come back, having accomplished a good mission, you can say, "My garments are clean from the blood of this generation." Many of you cannot say that now, therefore I wish to remind you of these things, that you may reflect upon them, and prepare yourselves for the work that is before you. (JD 20:47)

These quotes are sufficient to indicate the nature, necessity, and importance of the ordinance of washing of feet. In addition to the information offered to us in these quotes, it is important that we understand the implications of this ordinance in defining the different roles of men and women.

The Roles of Men and Women

It is important to understand that the ordinance of washing of feet is for men only. It is only the men who have the responsibility to preach the gospel unto the world. The responsibility of women is just as great but is clearly different than that of the men. The woman's role in regard to serving others and preaching the gospel is not to go out to the world but to take care of those close at hand, especially their own family. This is why there is a difference in the way in which men and women are cleansed from the blood and sins of this generation or pronounced "clean every whit." Women, because of their missions as mothers and wives, receive this blessing much

earlier than men. Worthy women are pronounced clean during the introductory ordinances given to them in the house of the Lord. This is not so for men. They receive no such blessing at that time and hence must wait until they have been found worthy of such a cleansing through preaching the gospel to those outside their family circle.

It is important to note that just as there are men who are unwilling to recognize and properly fulfill their responsibilities to the world, there are women who are likewise unwilling to recognize and properly fulfill their responsibilities to their homes and families. It is perhaps appropriate to suggest that one is just as unacceptable to the Lord as the other. Our various roles have been clearly outlined for us and we should perhaps be reminded that the Lord is in charge and that He knows what He is doing. Our role should be one of obeying and trying to understand, not one of questioning the wisdom of the Lord. We may not completely understand why our roles have been assigned to us in such a manner, however, the fact that the Lord has made such a division of responsibility seems to be without doubt in His revelations and the words of His prophets.

In addition to what we learn from the ordinances and the scriptures about the differences in the roles of men and women, we may look to the latter-day prophets to show the clear dissimilarities in the roles of men and women. Joseph Smith has said,

[Women] Let your labors be mostly confined to those around you, in the circle of your own acquaintance, as far as knowledge is concerned, it may extend to all the world; but your administering should be confined to the circle of your immediate acquaintance, and more especially to the members of the Relief Society. Those ordained to preside over and lead you, are authorized to appoint the different officers, as the circumstances shall require. (TPJS Pg.228)

We see from this that the woman's role is not so concerned about "the world." However, we also see that it extends beyond the immediate family to those close around them and the people with whom they are acquainted, especially within the Relief Society.⁴² In other words, they are not called upon to take the gospel to strangers, as are the holders of the Melchizedek priesthood. Their calling in the priesthood should be directed "mostly" to those around them. It is important that the women allow the men to perform their duties in the priesthood by making sure they perform their own respective duties with diligence. Considering the importance of leaving the family in order to preach the gospel, that thereby the men may have the blood and sins of this generation taken away from them, such diligence on the part of women can only be considered a great blessing to the man. I fear that far too many men are bound to their homes due to the unwillingness of their wives to "let them go." At the same time, far too many women are hindered in fulfilling their equally important roles due to the lack of vision and diligence of their

⁴² I feel it is important to emphasize the word "relief" more than the word "society." I fear that, like many other things originally organized by the Lord through Joseph Smith, perhaps many of the original functions and purposes of this society have been incorrectly interpreted over the years.

husbands. If we will all fulfill our respective missions in life by doing what the Lord has asked of us, all will be well. Regarding the roles of men and women president Brigham Young has said,

It is the right of the mother who labors in the kitchen, with her little prattling children around, to enjoy the Spirit of Christ, and to know her duty with regard to those children; but it is not her duty and privilege to dictate to her husband in his duties and business. If that mother or wife enjoys the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, she will never intrude upon the rights of her husband. It is the right and privilege of the husband to know his duty with regard to his wives and children, his flocks and his herds, his fields and his possessions; though I have seen women who, I thought, actually knew more about the business of life than their husbands themselves did, and were really more capable of directing a farm, the building of a house, and the management of flocks and herds, etc., than the men were; but if men were to live up to their privileges this would not be the case; for it is their right to claim the light of truth and that intelligence and knowledge necessary to enable them to carry on every branch of their business successfully. (JD 11:135)

Again, if we will only express our faith in the Lord by doing the things he asks of us, whatever that may be, all will be well and will fall into its proper place. Husbands and wives should serve as the Lord has instructed them, while at the same time, allowing their spouses to do the same.

That these doctrines are not just the outdated rules of a prejudiced society can be easily confirmed by our current prophets. In more recent times President Spencer W. Kimball has said,

In some places in the world, there are men who do not recognize their wives with full righteousness. The man and the wife are equals; one has to be in authority, and that is the man. That does not mean that he is superior.

Men and women are complementary. I have mentioned only a few of the special blessings God gives his daughters in helping them to become like him. His sons have their own special opportunities. And in his wisdom and mercy, our Father made men and women dependent on each other for the full flowering of their potential. Because their natures are somewhat different, they can complement each other; because they are in many ways alike, they can understand each other. Let neither envy the other for their differences; let both discern what is superficial and what is beautifully basic in those differences, and act accordingly. And may the brotherhood of the priesthood and the sisterhood of the Relief Society be a blessing in the lives of all the members of this great Church, as we help each other along the path to perfection. (Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, Pg.315, underline added)

President Kimball instructs us that it is not an issue of equality, as most people today believe. It is an issue involving the basic differences between men and women, and of the missions to which each has been appointed by the Lord.

We had full equality as his spirit children. We have equality as recipients of God's perfected love for each of us. ... Within those great assurances, however, our roles and assignments differ. These are eternal differences--with women being given many tremendous responsibilities of motherhood and sisterhood and men being given the tremendous responsibilities of fatherhood and the priesthood-- but the man is not without the woman nor the woman without the man in the Lord (see 1 Corinthians 11:11). Both a righteous man and a righteous woman are a blessing to all those their lives touch.

Remember, in the world before we came here, faithful women were given certain assignments while faithful men were foreordained to certain priesthood tasks. While we do not now remember the particulars, this does not alter the glorious reality of what we once agreed to. (Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, Pg.315, underline added)

President Ezra Taft Benson echoes the words of President Kimball, thus providing us with a second witness of these great truths in our day.

Our beloved prophet, Spencer W. Kimball, had much to say about the role of mothers in the home and their callings and responsibilities. I am impressed to share with you some of his inspired pronouncements. I fear that much of his counsel has gone unheeded, and families have suffered because of it. But I stand as a second witness to the truthfulness of what President Spencer W. Kimball said. He spoke as a true prophet of God.

President Kimball declared: "Women are to take care of the family--the Lord has so stated--to be an assistant to the husband, to work with him, but not to earn the living, except in unusual circumstances. Men ought to be men indeed and earn the living under normal circumstances."

Remember the counsel of President Kimball to John and Mary: "Mary, you are to become a career woman in the greatest career on earth--that of homemaker, wife, and mother. It was never intended by the Lord that married women should compete with men in employment. They have a far greater and more important service to render."

Again President Kimball speaks: "The husband is expected to support his family and only in an emergency should a wife secure outside employment. Her place is in the home, to build the home into a haven of delight.

"Numerous divorces can be traced directly to the day when the wife left the home and went out into the world into employment. Two incomes raise the standard of living beyond its norm. Two spouses working prevents the complete and proper home life, breaks into the family prayers, creates an independence which is not

cooperative, causes distortion, limits the family, and frustrates the children already born.”

Finally, President Kimball counsels: “I beg of you, you who could and should be bearing and rearing a family: Wives, come home from the typewriter, the laundry, the nursing, come home from the factory, the cafe. No career approaches in importance that of wife, homemaker, mother--cooking meals, washing dishes, making beds for one’s precious husband and children. Come home, wives, to your husbands. Make home a heaven for them. Come home, wives, to your children, born and unborn. Wrap the motherly cloak about you and, unembarrassed, help in a major role to create the bodies for the immortal souls who anxiously await.

“When you have fully complemented your husband in home life and borne the children, growing up full of faith, integrity, responsibility, and goodness, then you have achieved your accomplishment supreme, without peer, and you will be the envy [of all] through time and eternity.” President Kimball spoke the truth. His words are prophetic. (Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, Pg.514)

I add my own testimony to those just given. The man’s place is in the world and the woman’s place is in the home. “The Lord has so stated” through his scriptures, his ordinances, and his prophets in the latter-days, and it is verily true. Though the proud and the unrighteous would have us think otherwise, the words of the Lord through his prophets are clear on the subject, both in times of old as well as present times. It is not discriminating or prejudice in the least. It is simply true that “our roles and assignments differ.” “These are eternal differences” that will continue to some degree after this life. If you don’t like your role or mission as assigned to you by the Lord, whether male or female, you must realize that this is no different than rejecting any other principle or truth given to us by the Lord. The choice is ours to make. As with all principles, doctrines, and duties, we all have our moral agency to choose the direction the Lord has given us or to flounder in our own wisdom. That we will prayerfully make the right choices in these matters is my hope and humble prayer for all.

APPENDIX D: A MEMORANDUM CONCERNING SATANISM BY BISHOP GLENN L. PACE

Date: July 19, 1990
To: Strengthening Church Members Committee
From: Bishop Glenn L. Pace
Subject: Ritualistic Child Abuse

Pursuant to the Committee's request, I am writing this memorandum to pass along what I have learned about ritualistic child abuse. Hopefully, it will be of some value to you as you continue to monitor the problem. You have already received the LDS Social Services report on Satanism dated May 24, 1989, a report from Brent Ward, and a memorandum from myself dated October 20, 1989 in response to Brother Ward's report. Therefore, I will limit this writing to information not contained in those papers.

I have met with sixty victims. That number could be twice or three times as many if I did not discipline myself to only one meeting per week. I have not wanted my involvement with this issue to become a handicap in fulfilling my assigned responsibilities. On the other hand, I felt someone needed to pay the price to obtain an intellectual and spiritual conviction as to the seriousness of this problem with the Church.

Of the sixty victims with whom I have met, fifty-three are female and seven are male. Eight are children. The abuse occurred in the following places: Utah (37), Idaho (3), California (4), Mexico (2), and other places (14). Fifty-three victims are currently living in the State of Utah. All sixty individuals are members of the Church. Forty-five victims allege witnessing and/or participating in human sacrifice. The majority were abused by relatives, often their parents. All have developed psychological problems and most have been diagnosed as having multiple personality disorder or some other form of dissociative disorder.

Ritualistic child abuse is the most hideous of all child abuse. The basic objective is premeditated-to systematically and methodically torture and terrorize children until they are forced to dissociate. The torture is not a consequence of the loss of temper, but the execution of well-planned, well-thought out rituals often performed by close relatives. The only escape for the children is to dissociate. They will develop a new personality to enable them to endure various forms of abuse. When the episode is over, the core personality is again in control and the individual is not conscious of what happened. Dissociation also serves the purposes of the occult because the children have no day-to-day memory of the atrocities. They go through adolescence and early adulthood with no active memory of what is taking place. Oftentimes they continue in rituals through their teens and early twenties, unaware of their involvement. Many individuals with whom I have spoken have served missions and it has not been until later that they begin to

remember. One individual has memories of participating in rituals while serving as a full-time missionary.

The victims lead relatively normal lives, but the memories are locked up in a compartment in their minds and surface in various ways. They don't know how to cope with the emotions because they can't find the source. As they become adults and move into another environment, something triggers the memories and, consequently, flashbacks and/or nightmares occur. One day they will have been living a normal life and the next they will be in a mental hospital in a fetal position. The memories of their early childhood are recalled in so much detail that they once again feel the pain that caused the dissociation in the first place.

There are two reasons why adults can remember with such detail events that happened in their past: First, the terror they experienced was so stark that it was indelibly placed in their mind. Second, the memory was compartmentalized in a certain portion of the mind and was not subjected to the dilution of experiences of ensuing years. When it is tapped, it is as fresh as if it happened yesterday.

The memories seem to come in layers. For example, the first memory might be of incest; then they remember robes and candles; next they realize that their father or mother or both were present when they were being abused. Another layer will be the memory of seeing other people hurt and even killed. They then remember having seen babies killed. Another layer is realizing that they participated in the sacrifices. One of the most painful memories may be that they even sacrificed their own baby. With each layer of memory comes another set of problems with which they must deal.

Some have said that the witnesses to this type of treatment cannot be trusted because of the victim's unstable condition and because practically all of them have some kind of dissociative disorder; in fact, the stories are so bizarre as to raise serious credibility questions. The irony is that one of the objectives of the occult is to create multiple personalities within the children in order to keep the "secrets." They live in society without society having any idea that something is wrong since the children and teenagers don't even realize there is another life occurring in darkness and in secret. However, when sixty witnesses testify to the same type of torture and murder, it becomes impossible for me, personally, not to believe them.

I mention multiple personalities because the spiritual healing which must take place in the lives of these victims cannot happen without their priesthood leaders understanding something about it.

The spiritual indoctrination which takes place during the physical abuse is one of the most difficult to overcome. In addition to experiencing stark terror and pain, the children are also instructed in satanic doctrine. Everything is completely reversed: white is black, black is white, good is bad, bad is good, Satan is going to rule during the Millennium.

Children are put in a situation where they believe they are going to die--such as being buried alive or being placed in a plastic bag and immersed in water. Prior to doing so, the abuser tells the child to pray to Jesus to see if He will save her. Imagine a seven-year old girl, having been told she is going to die, praying to Jesus to save her and nothing happens--then at the last moment she is rescued, but the person saving her is a representative of Satan. He uses this experience to convince her that the only person who really cares about her is Satan, she is Satan's child and she might as well become loyal to him.

Just before or shortly after their baptism into the Church, children are baptized by blood into the satanic order which is meant to cancel out their baptism into the Church. They will be asked if they understand or have ever felt the Holy Ghost. When they reply that they have, they will be reminded of the horrible things they have participated in and will be told that they have become a son (or daughter) of perdition and, therefore, have no chance of being saved or loved by our Father in Heaven or Jesus.

All of this indoctrination takes place with whichever personality has immersed to endure the physical, mental, and spiritual pain. Consequently, there develops within each of these individuals the makings of what I call a civil war. As the memories begin to surface, there are personalities who feel they have given themselves to Satan, and there is no hope for forgiveness. The core person is an active member of the Church, often with a temple recommend. As integration takes place, the civil war begins. Sometimes, in an interview, personalities of the dark side have come out. They are petrified or perhaps full of hate for me and what I represent. Eventually those personalities need to be dealt with spiritually and psychologically.

Most victims are suicidal. They have been brainwashed with drugs, hypnosis, and other means to become suicidal as soon as they start to tell the secrets. They have been threatened all of their lives that if they don't do what they are told their brother or sister will die, their parents will die, their house will be burned, or they themselves will be killed. They have every reason to believe it since they have seen people killed. They believe they might as well kill themselves instead of wait for the occult to do it. Some personalities feel it is the right thing to do.

The purpose of this detail is to stress the complexity of psychological and spiritual therapy for these individuals. Our priesthood leaders, when faced with such cases, are understandably at a loss of how to respond. Orthodox counsel is completely ineffective. For example, some victims have been told that this all happened in their past and that they should put it behind them and get on with their lives. This is just not possible. Part of the spiritual therapy necessary is for priesthood leaders to assist with the conversion process of the personalities who have been indoctrinated into Satanism. Victims must integrate their personalities so that they can function as whole persons and be able to deal with their problems and then get on with their lives. Often, some of the parts will begin to act out--perhaps promiscuously--and a good intentioned priesthood leader, following the General Handbook of Instructions, will disfellowship or excommunicate an individual. All this does is reinforce the satanic indoctrination of the victims that they are no good.

I'm sorry to say that many of the victims have had their first flashbacks while attending the temple for the first time. The occult along the Wasatch Front uses the doctrine of the Church to their advantage. For example, the verbiage and gestures are used in a ritualistic ceremony in a very debased and often bloody manner. When the victim goes to the temple and hears the exact words, horrible memories are triggered. We have recently been disturbed with members of the Church who have talked about the temple ceremony. Compared to what is happening in the occult along the Wasatch Front, these are very minor infractions. The perpetrators are also living a dual life. Many are temple recommend holders. This leads to another reason why the Church needs to consider the seriousness of these problems. In affect, the Church is being used.

I go out of my way to not let the victims give me the names of the perpetrators. I have told them that my responsibility is to help them with spiritual healing and that the names of perpetrators should be given to therapists and law enforcement officers. However, they have told me the positions in the Church of members who are perpetrators. Among others, there are Young Women leaders, Young Men leaders, bishops, a patriarch, a stake president, temple workers, and members of the Tabernacle Choir. The accusations are not coming from individuals who think they recognized someone, but from those who have been abused by people they know, in many cases their own family members.

Whatever the form of abuse our main concern is for the victims, but there are legal ramifications. We are disturbed to receive reports that a scoutmaster has abused the boys in his troop. It is not difficult to imagine what would happen if we learn that a bishop or stake president has participated in the abominations of ritualistic child abuse. Not only do some of the perpetrators represent a cross section of the Mormon culture, but sometimes the abuse has taken place in our own meetinghouses.

I don't pretend to know how prevalent the problem is. All I know is that I have met with 60 victims. Assuming each one comes from a covenant of 13, we are talking about the involvement of 800 or so right here on the Wasatch Front. Obviously, I have only seen those coming forth to get help. They are in their twenties and thirties for the most part. I can only assume that it is expanding geometrically and am horrified the numbers represented by the generation who are now children and teenagers.

Another reason for concern is that there are several doctrinal issues that need to be resolved. The Church and society in general are very skeptical as to whether the occult and its activities do exist. There is no First Presidency statement relative to some of the doctrinal issues: What does a priesthood leader tell individuals who come forward and say that they have participated in these rituals--which may include human sacrifice? Should they have a temple recommend? Will they ever be forgiven? There are questions regarding free agency and accountability. Is a person who has been raised in an occult from infancy accountable for things that take place in a dissociated state, even though those acts were committed after the age of eight? I have formed my own opinions to these questions and have done the best I can. However, I don't have the mantle to make these decisions. I have relied on the mantle of a bishop regarding discernment and being a common judge.

The few priesthood leaders who have had to face these issues are crying out for help because they don't want to give their own opinions and yet there is no place to go for an answer. A bishop will go to his stake president who says he doesn't believe it is happening and that the member is just crazy. The stake president might go to an Area Presidency who will react in a similar way. Most people are afraid to surface it to the First Presidency for fear of getting the same reaction and don't want to appear crazy themselves for asking the question.

I hope you will excuse me if I am being presumptuous, but I am concluding this paper with scriptures I feel support my belief that these activities are real and cannot be ignored.

The things I have been writing about go back to Cain and Abel:

And Satan said unto Cain: Swear unto me by thy throat, and if thou tell it thou shalt die; and swear thy brethren by their heads, and by the living God, that they tell it not; for if they tell it, they shall surely die; and this that thy father may not know it; and this day I will deliver thy brother Abel into thine hands.

And Satan swore unto Cain that he would do according to his commands. And all these things were done in secret.

And Cain said: Truly I am Mahan, the master of this great secret, that I may murder and get gain. Wherefore Cain was called Master Mahan, and he gloried in his wickedness. (Moses 5:29-31.)

All of the experiences I have heard about have to do with secrecy, swearing not to tell, murdering to get gain and power:

Wherefore Lamech, being angry, slew him, not like unto Cain, his brother Abel, for the sake of getting gain, but he slew him for the oath's sake.

For, from the days of Cain, there was a secret combination, and their works were in the dark, and they knew every man his brother. (Moses 5:50-51.)

And then in Moses 6:15 we learn that as people began to fill the earth, so did these secret works:

And the children of men were numerous upon all the face of the land. And in those days Satan had great dominion among men, and raged in their hearts; and from thenceforth came wars and bloodshed; and a man's hand was against his own brother, in administering death, because of secret works, seeking for power.

The Book of Mormon is replete with descriptions of these secret murderous combinations as well as prophecies that they will always be with us:

And our spirits must have become like unto him, and we become devils, angels to a devil, to be shut out from the presence of our God, and to remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself; yea, to that being who beguiled our first parents, who transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light, and stirreth up the children of men unto secret combinations of murder and all manner of secret works of darkness. (2 Nephi 9:9.)

Wherefore, for this cause, that my covenants may be fulfilled which I have made unto the children of men, that I will do unto them while they are in the flesh, I must needs destroy the secret works of darkness, and of murders, and of abominations. (2 Nephi 10:15.)

And there are also secret combinations, even as in times of old, according to the combinations of the devil, for he is the founder of all these things; yea, and he leadeth them by the neck with a flaxen cord, until he bindeth them with his strong cords forever. (2 Nephi 26:22.)

In Alma, we find that the Lord commanded some of the prophets not to write any of the secret works, especially of the secret oaths, so that they would not become known by generations to follow, but that they might be warned that they do exist:

And now, I will speak unto you concerning those twenty-four plates, that ye keep them, that the mysteries and the works of darkness, and their secret works or the secret works of those people who have been destroyed, may be made manifest unto this people; yea, all their murders, and robbings, and their plunderings, and all their wickedness and abominations, may be made manifest unto this people; yea, and that ye preserve these interpreters. . . .

I will bring forth out of darkness unto light all their secret works and their abominations; and except they repent I will destroy them from off the face of the earth; and I will bring to light all their secrets and abominations, unto every nation that shall hereafter possess the land.

And now, my son, we see that they did not repent; therefore they have been destroyed, and thus far the word of God has been fulfilled; yea, their secret abominations have been brought out of darkness and made known unto us.

And now, my son, I command you that ye retain all their oaths, and their covenants, and their agreements in their secret abominations; yea, and all their signs and their wonders ye shall keep from this people, that they know them not, lest peradventure they should fall into darkness also and be destroyed.

For behold, there is a curse upon all this land, that destruction shall come upon all those workers of darkness, according to the power of God, when they are fully ripe; therefore I desire that this people might be destroyed. (Alma 37:21, 25-28.)

In Helaman, the name of Gadianton is introduced and becomes descriptive throughout the Book of Mormon relative to the secret combinations.

But behold, Kishkumen, who had murdered Pahoran, did lay wait to destroy Helaman also; and he was upheld by his band, who had entered into a covenant that no one should know his wickedness.

For there was one Gadianton, who was exceedingly expert in many words, and also in his craft, to carry on the secret work of murder and of robbery; therefore he became the leader of the band of Kishkumen. . . .

And when the servant of Helaman had known all the heart of Kishkumen, and how it was his object to murder, and also that it was the object of all those who belonged to his band to murder, and to rob, and to gain power, (and this was their secret plan, and their combination) the servant of Helaman said unto Kishkumen: let us go forth unto the judgment-seat. (Helaman 2:3-4, 8.)

It was true then as it is now that these things were not known by the general populace or by the government:

And it came to pass in the forty and ninth year of the reign of the judges, there was continual peace established in the land, all save it were the secret combinations which Gadianton the robber had established in the more settled parts of the land, which at that time were not known unto those who were at the head of government; therefore they were not destroyed out of the land. (Helaman 3:23.)

In chapter 6, we learn that in spite of the Lord's command to the prophets not to write these things, Satan is capable, and always has been, of revealing his secrets to his followers just as the Lord has revealed his will to the prophets.

And now behold, those murderers and plunderers were a band who had been formed by Kishkumen and Gadianton. And now it had come to pass that there were many, even among the Nephites, of Gadianton's band. But behold, they were more numerous among the more wicked part of the Lamanites. And they were called Gadianton's robbers and murderers. . . .

But behold, Satan did stir up the hearts of the more part of the Nephites, insomuch that they did unite with those bands of robbers, and did enter into their covenants and their oaths, that they would protect and preserve one another in

whatsoever difficult circumstances they should be placed, that they should not suffer for their murders, and their plunderings, and their stealings.

And it came to pass that they did have their signs, yea, their secret signs, and their secret words; and this that they might distinguish a brother who had entered into the covenant, that whatsoever wickedness his brother should do he should not be injured by his brother, nor by those who did belong to his band, who had taken this covenant.

And thus they might murder and plunder, and steal, and commit whoredoms and all manner of wickedness, contrary to the laws of their country and also the laws of their God.

And whosoever of those who belonged to their band should reveal unto the world of their wickedness and their abominations, should be tried, not according to the laws of their country, but according to the laws of their wickedness, which had been given by Gadianton and Kishkumen.

Now behold, it is these secret oaths and covenants which Alma commanded his son should not go forth unto the world, lest they should be a means of bringing down the people unto destruction.

Now behold, those secret oaths and covenants did not come forth unto Gadianton from the records which were delivered unto Helaman; but behold, they were put into the heart of Gadianton by that same being who did entice our first parents to partake of the forbidden fruit. . . .

Yea, it is that same being who put it into the heart of Gadianton to still carry on the work of darkness, and of secret murder; and he has brought it forth from the beginning of man even down to this time.

And behold, it is he who is the author of all sin. And behold, he doth carry on his works of darkness and secret murder, and doth hand down their plots, and their oaths, and their covenants, and their plans of awful wickedness, from generation to generation according as he can get hold upon the hearts of the children of men. (Helaman 6:18, 21-26, 29-30.)

In light of this scripture, it is naive for us to think these things would not exist in our own generation. We know this is the last dispensation, the dispensation of the fullness of times. Surely Satan would not “pass” on this most important dispensation.

In Helaman 8:1 we learn that people in high places were members of the Gadianton band and secret combinations:

And now it came to pass that when Nephi had said these words, behold, there were men who were judges, who also belonged to the secret band of Gadianton, and they were angry, and they cried out against him, saying unto the people: Why do ye not seize upon this man and bring him forth, that he may be condemned according to the crime which he has done?

We have allegations to indicate that this is true of people in high places today in both the Church and the government who are leading this dual life. The secret combinations were mentioned all through the Book of Mormon. In Mormon 1:18-19 we read that these Gadianton robbers were still alive and well and functioning:

And these Gadianton robbers, who were among the Lamanites, did infest the land, insomuch that the inhabitants thereof began to hide up their treasures in the earth; and they became slippery, because the Lord had cursed the land, that they could not hold them, nor retain them again.

And it came to pass that there were sorceries, and witchcrafts, and magics; and the power of the evil one was wrought upon all the face of the land, even unto the fulfilling of all the words of Abinadi, and also Samuel the Lamanite.

In Mormon 8:27 there is a prophecy that secret combinations will be among us in our time:

And it shall come in a day when the blood of saints shall cry unto the Lord, because of secret combinations and the works of darkness.

The extent of the evil that mankind will perpetrate on another is told in Moroni 9:10:

And after they had done this thing, they did murder them in a most cruel manner, torturing their bodies even unto death; and after they have done this, they devour their flesh like unto wild beasts, because of the hardness of their hearts; and they do it for a token of bravery.

Many of us have read this all of our lives and click our tongues at how awful it would be to live in such a time. Those victims with whom I have spoken testify to these things going on all around us today. In Ether we are told that they will exist amongst us, the gentiles, and we are also warned that we should do something about it:

*And now I, Moroni, do not write the manner of their oaths and combinations, for it hath been made known unto me that they are had among all people, and they are had among the Lamanites.
And they have caused the destruction of this people of whom I am now speaking, and also the destruction of the people of Nephi.*

And whatsoever nation shall uphold such secret combinations, to get power and gain, until they shall spread over the nation, behold, they shall be destroyed; for the Lord will not suffer that the blood of his saints, which shall be shed by them, shall always cry unto him from the ground for vengeance upon them and yet he avenge them not.

Wherefore, O ye Gentiles, it is wisdom in God that these things should be shown unto you, that thereby ye may repent of your sins, and suffer not that these murderous combinations shall get above you, which are built up to get power and gain--and the work, yea, even the work of destruction come upon you, yea, even the work of destruction come upon you, yea, even the sword of the justice of the Eternal God shall fall upon you, to your overthrow and destruction if ye shall suffer these things to be.

Wherefore, the Lord commandeth you, when ye shall see these things come among you that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation, because of this secret combination which shall be among you; or wo be unto it, because of the blood of them who have been slain; for they cry from the dust for vengeance upon it, and also upon those who built it up. (Ether 8:20-24.)

In summary, we live in the last dispensation of the fullness of times and Satan is here with his secret combinations in all of the ugliness that existed in previous dispensations. The scriptures prophesy to that reality. I also believe that the scriptures cited and many others that could be quoted argue against our being passive about the problem. I don't want to be known as an alarmist or a fanatic on the issue. Now that I have put what I have learned in writing to you, I feel the issue is in the right court. I hope to take a low profile on the subject and get on with the duties which I have been formally assigned. This is not to say I would not be willing to be of service. Over the last eighteen months I have acquired a compassionate love and respect for the victims who are fighting for the safety of their physical lives and, more importantly, their souls.