

This is based on a transcript of the talk given in St. George titled *Things to Keep Us Awake at Night*. It has been expanded and updated to include additional information that the scriptures project has brought to my attention since the St. George conference. Given the importance of the scriptures project and how it continues to advance, I thought it would be useful to add some of the post-conference information to this document.

We face the same test as all others have ever faced from the days of Adam down to the present. Things never change. From the time of Adam, the roles have been filled by different people in different ages, but the conflict is perpetual. And the same battle continues from age to age. You can even lift the arguments that are made from one epoch and put them into the next and they fit into the ongoing struggle. It doesn't change.

Adam taught his posterity the gospel, and Satan, imitating an angel of light, declared himself to be a son of God and taught this doctrine, "believe it not" (Moses 5:13). And most of Adam's posterity did not believe.

Enoch received a message from God, and the record that Enoch left behind says, "*and all men were offended because of him.*" (Moses 6:37)

Noah taught the same gospel as was taught "in the beginning" to Adam but his audience claimed "*we are the sons of God*" and they would not hearken to the message that came through Noah. (Moses 8:21)

Abraham obtained the same rights that were "belonging to the fathers" (Abr. 1:2) or to Adam in the beginning, including holding the right of the first born that came down from the first father, Adam. (Abr. 1:3) [And those who claim the gospel of Abraham is less than the gospel given to Adam are false messengers bearing a false message. Mark it well: If they don't repent for preaching that message in opposition to what the Lord declares both in scripture and by my voice they will regret it. They can believe any error they choose, but will be held to account by God if they preach in opposition to the truth.] Unfortunately, Abraham's own family; his fathers and his uncles, utterly refused to hearken to his voice. (Abr. 1:5)

Moses saw God face to face and he talked with him. (Moses 1:2) God gave Moses a work to do (Moses 1:6). Satan tempted Moses to worship him instead. (Moses 1:12) Even declaring to Moses, "I am the only begotten, worship me." (Moses 1:19) When Moses rejected this demand, his message from God was opposed by sorcerers and magicians who "did in like manner with their enchantments," duplicating the signs shown through Moses over and over again in the record in Exodus. (Exo. 7:11; 8:7; 8:18) Even after delivering Israel from Egypt, the Israelites wished they had perished in Egypt rather than being delivered and freed. (Exo. 16:3) And of course, what might have happened - given the qualification of Moses to bring it about - did not happen because the people he led were unwilling to rise up as they were invited. (D&C 84:19-25)

Satan was opposed Christ and demanded that He worship him. (Matt. 4:3-10) Christ was also opposed by the religious leaders of the people He came to save. They conspired to kill him, and ultimately succeeded. (John 7:25; 8:37, 40)

Joseph Smith was, and is, opposed by those who claimed or claim to follow him, or to belong to a church that was founded by him. If you don't understand the extent to which the opposition to Joseph Smith arose out of those claiming to be Mormons, take a look at the book *A Man Without Doubt* and you'll see that Joseph's greatest opposition came from those who claim to follow him.

Opposition in scripture seems clear, but when we struggle in our time, it becomes much more difficult to make decisions about what is right, what is wrong, what is good, what is bad, what is of God, what is deception, what is truth, and what is false. That is not the correct way to understand the test of mortality. Even if the scriptures reveal the conflict in sharp contrast, deciding between opposing sides was never any clearer to those living at the time the scriptures were written than the opposition encountered every day of this life.

The scriptures were written by or about prophets who took clearly opposing positions from those who were deceived. The clarity you read in scripture is because the views and opinions of prophets were used to retell the events. But as the events happened, those living at the time had to have faith to distinguish between truth and error, and to believe or to ignore a message from the Lord. Does the message invite or entice you to believe in Christ and to do His works? (Moroni 7:13-16) Does it get presented in a way that displays patience and long-suffering? Does it use gentleness and persuasion, meekness and love? Is the message consistent with the revelations and commandments found previously in scripture? Does it appeal to your vanity, your arrogance? (D&C 121:41-42) Does it make you proud of yourself, or does it make you wish you were a better person?

Humility is absolutely required to progress. The more we think we understand, the less willing we are to receive more. Joseph said, "*It is the constitutional disposition of mankind to set up stakes and bound to the works and ways of the Almighty.*" (TPJS p. 320) He also said, "*I never heard of a man being damned for believing too much but they are damned for unbelief.*" (TPJS p. 374) James 4:6 says, "*God resisteth the proud but giveth grace unto the humble.*" Damnation is limiting progress or stopping progress. Setting up boundaries to hinder what the Lord can do is voluntary damnation. No matter how much you believe you know, humility allows you to learn more. We must voluntarily continue to progress; if we don't, we accept voluntary damnation.

Earlier dispensations have had scripture projects. Adam with Seth composed a book of remembrance written by "the spirit of inspiration." (Moses 6:4-5)

Enoch kept a record of the priesthood in the first generations of patriarchs. In Enoch's record Adam's prophecy about everything that would befall man till the latest generation of mankind was written. (D&C 107:56-57)

Abraham received the records of the fathers or the first patriarchs (Abr 1:31) which is how he knew about, inquired into, sought for and ultimately obtained, in a fullness, the right of the first born belonging to the first father or to Adam. And thus Abraham continued what began in the beginning.

Moses was handicapped by centuries of slavery separating him from Abraham. And so Moses re-wrote an account of the creation, Adam, and the first generations. (1 Ne. 5:11) He established a new body of commandments adapted to the capacity of Israel at that time, and then the people voted in order to accept those as their governing principles. (Exo. 24:3)

Nephi was told recovering the scriptures for his people was essential, otherwise they would dwindle and perish in unbelief. (1 Ne. 4:13) When the record that Nephi was able to obtain on the brass plates was studied, it included an account of the creation of Adam and Eve, God's dealing with mankind down to the time of Lehi, including their genealogy, and prophecies of Joseph of Egypt. (1 Ne. 5:11-16)

When Christ visited with the Nephites, He asked them to bring to Him their scriptural records so that He could review them. (3 Ne. 23:7) He reviewed the things that they brought and He commanded them to fix omissions in their records. (3 Ne. 23:8-13) Christ then dictated two chapters of additional scripture to be added to the Nephite record. (3 Ne. 24 & 25) Only then did He expound all things to them using the scriptures. (3 Ne. 26:1-3)

With these predecessor events to inform Joseph Smith, in more recent history, he like Moses who restored the account beginning with Adam and the first generations, restored the Book of Mormon as his first assignment. But he was required also to revise the Bible. Joseph referred to the revision of the Bible as the "the fullness of the scriptures." The Book of Mormon he only called "the Book of Mormon." Joseph's reference to "the fullness of the scriptures" was exclusively to the Bible.

In the minutes of an October 1831 conference Joseph made this statement, "*God had often sealed up the heavens because of covetousness in the church. Said the Lord would cut his work short in righteousness and except the church receive the fullness of the scriptures they would yet fall.*" (JSP, Documents Vol 2: July 1831-January 1833, p. 85)

The fullness of the scriptures, or Joseph Smith's inspired revision of the Bible, has never been available, in full, in print. Even the version that has been published by the RLDS Church misses several of the revisions Joseph made. All of them, and a handful of additional revisions made orally by Joseph Smith in talks given during the Nauvoo era, are published for the first time in the proposed new set of scriptures. They can be found in the Old Testament, and in half the volume called the New Testament and the Book of Mormon. The fullness of the scriptures, without which the church would fall, is being made available for the first time.

The people who acknowledged Joseph teachings, like God's people before them, accepted the new, and then expanded the scriptures. This is the process by which scripture expansion took place:

On 17 August 1835, the Doctrine and Covenants including the *Lectures on Faith* were sustained. This is a quote from that event: "*It was deemed necessary to call the general assembly of the church to see if the book be approved or not by the authorities of the church that it may if approved become a law of the church and a rule of faith and practice of the same.*" (JSP Revelations and Translations Vol 2, p. 307)

In an article in the *Ensign* magazine, the church published an account explaining how the sustaining of the original *Doctrine and Covenants* occurred. It contains some important information. It

was written by a fellow years before the *Joseph Smith Papers* Project began, but he later worked on the *Joseph Smith Papers* Project. [He has uncovered numerous dilemmas in the historical records of the LDS church, including the perplexity regarding the account of how the sealing power was restored. If you think that the ambiguities about the claims to have the sealing power in the LDS church are glaring, you're not alone.] The *Ensign* article states the following, "Since the book was to be presented at the conference of 17 August 1835, several priesthood leaders were apparently given unbound copies to read ahead of time. They were then able to testify at the conference, to the truthfulness of the revelations. After hearing the testimonies, the whole conference voted, first as quorums, then as a congregation to accept the book as arranged. Our present section 134 was also unanimously voted into the publication, as was the section on marriage penned by Oliver Cowdery. This section was deleted from the book in 1876 and replaced by Section 132 on the Eternal Marriage covenant. Members who could not attend the conference were informed by the publication of the high counsel minutes of the 17 Aug 1834 in the *Doctrine and Covenants* itself and in the *Latter Day Saints Messenger and Advocate*, the Kirtland newspaper." (*The Story of the Doctrine and Covenants*, *Ensign*, December 1984, Robert Woodford)

There is a real problem with the concept that some man or men can vouch for something and say, "*Trust Me, it's gonna be GOOD for you to go ahead and take the pill we're asking you to swallow.*" The view that I believe in, and hope to have you adopt, is that no one of us is greater than another. No one has the right to dictate. No one has the right to say, "*Trust me.*" Instead, everything is being made available in advance for everyone to view. No group will be required to tell the body about something the body has not had the opportunity to review for themselves. There will be first-hand, not second-hand, familiarity with the scriptures. Unlike August 17, 1834, we are not going to have you adopt something you have not had an opportunity to read.

None of us should expect to be treated unequally. We are all equal, and we are all accountable. We should all be allowed the opportunity to review critically and to comment beforehand. As equals, we should be shown the courtesy to make suggestions, to provide meaningful criticism, and to deliberate. When the work is complete, and people raise their hand to accept it as the basis for governing the body of believers, a body of equal believers, a body of believers who respect one another, it can be done as equals. It can be done with the full light of understanding with no need to trust some group to say, "*Trust us—we are not gonna let you read it, but we are telling you—it's good stuff.*" Everyone will be able to read, to pray, to examine, to criticize, and to determine that for him or herself.

In 1876, Orson Pratt published a new edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* making numerous changes. He added 22 new sections, among which was section 110. He altered the text from the third-person to the first-person for section 110. No sustaining vote was taken to approve the changes to that addition. It was simply done and published.

In the October 1880 general conference, President George Q. Cannon held up copies of the *Doctrine and Covenants* and *Pearl of Great Price* and said, "As there have been additions made... by the publishing of revelations which were not contained in the original edition, it has been deemed wise to submit these books with their contents to the Conference, to see whether the Conference will vote to accept the books, and their contents from God and binding upon us as a people and as a

church.’ President Joseph F. Smith so moved, it was seconded, and the congregation voted affirmatively.” (*Deseret Evening News*, 11 October 1880, p. 2, col. 4)

In the 1921 edition, which is referred to as the Apostles’ Edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*—a title that was given because by 1921 it was abundantly clear to everyone that the apostles had completed their overthrow of the church and that it belonged exclusively to them—the *Lectures on Faith* were removed without a vote by a general assembly. They were removed, “not because they were called in question, for they are excellent lectures of great value on the principles of faith, but because they were not revelations.” (Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl, *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1957, p. xvii) That was the story that was told, and therefore, what had at one time been adopted as the rule of faith was eliminated simply by fiat.

In April 1976 during a Saturday afternoon session of conference, N. Eldon Tanner, as part of sustaining church leaders, obtained approval for Sections 137 and 138. The form of Section 137 approved and published in the LDS scriptures is only an excerpt from a larger revelation given to Joseph. The larger version of the revelation is provided in its entirety, rather than as an excerpt, in the proposed new scriptures.

In October 1978, during the Saturday afternoon session of conference, N. Eldon Tanner obtained sustaining approval for Official Declaration No. 2.

As it stands today, there is not a single church, body, congregation, or assembly anywhere that has published and is claiming as their body of governing scriptural material, a set of scriptures which includes: 1. the *Lectures on Faith*, 2. fully contain the fullness of the scriptures for every revision Joseph made of the Bible, 3. faithfully reproduce the original revelations and their original wording, and 4. adapt punctuation for the Book of Mormon text that avoids imposing doctrinal errors. Nor is there a form of scriptures adapted so as to function to govern the existing fellowships among us. Now there is a draft to include all these things, and it is available for at least a half a year for all to review before we consider adopting it as our volumes of scripture.

Today’s project began more than a year before I was directly involved with it. Chris Hamill said that there were two groups that functioned independent of one another. But there was also one individual who was working on his own project before he discovered that there was a group working on the same thing. Then he joined their group. Significantly, the members of both groups felt themselves called to do this. The concept, if not the very words, “*If ye have a desire to serve God ye are called to the work*” was included over and over again in sections of the current LDS scriptures. (See D&C 4:3; 6:3; 11:3-4; 12:3-4; 63:57)

These two independent groups, called only by the spirit to do the work, began and completed their work about one week apart without knowing of each other. One of the two groups brought the finished product to me, telling me they wanted me to publish it and they wanted to remain anonymous. They don’t want their names to be included. That group had asked me for permission to include some of the material that I have written and I told them, “Do what you want with it.”

I began to review what they had done, and realized it was markedly different than the current set of LDS scriptures. I had it for about a week, and had not made a lot of progress in

reviewing it before the second group put their preliminary project on-line, and Adrian Larsen made note of it on his blog. So, I contacted Adrian and asked if he knew who was involved with the newly announced scriptures. I was in possession of an electronic version of the entire project completed by one team and then found out there were actually two teams who had completed essentially the same work.

Adrian gave me the contact information for Chris Hamill, the individual who made the announcement at the St. George conference about the scriptures project. He will be the public face of the committee, and therefore the one receiving the criticism for all members of both committees, and I suppose he is welcome to it.

I contacted Chris and inquired if he was involved enough to speak on behalf of the group. He was and could, and I suggested there ought not be two groups, but there ought to be some cooperation between them. I suggested both of them get together. I think it was during the year-end holidays, at my office, when and where everyone who was local came to my office and met face-to-face, while everyone in far-flung parts of the world, including overseas, who participated in this work joined in a meeting.

As each group did their work, they faced essentially the same questions in recovering the original texts for the scriptures. The groups reached slightly different conclusions for good and sufficient reasons to them. Once they were put in touch with each other, they reasoned together regarding their questions. One example is that both had concluded that *Lectures on Faith* needed to be put back into the *Doctrine and Covenants*. One group however, had concluded that the catechisms (the questions and answers) should be eliminated because they were simply pedagogical tools (teaching tools) used in the School of the Prophets to try and facilitate content retention. So they decided that it wasn't necessary to republish, and they eliminated the questions and answers. The other group had included everything, including questions and answers because at least one person thought there was some slight ambiguity between the text of the *Lectures on Faith* and the question-and-answer discussion. That ambiguity allows for a more fulsome interpretation of the meaning of the lecture itself in light of the question and the answer. He found value in the catechism. As a consequence of that discussion, everything from the original *Lectures on Faith*, including the catechism, is now included in the proposed set of scriptures just as it was in 1835.

In addition, one group was aware that Joseph Smith had announced the intention of publishing both the New Testament and the Book of Mormon in a single volume and the other group was unaware of that. They reached an agreement that it ought to be done as Joseph planned.

Questions about sourcing, questions about what was and what was not to be included, how to authenticate materials, what steps were taken by one group, what steps were taken by another group, what solutions were reached were all discussed. The two groups compared notes and reasoned together. Then there were the difficulties of spelling—how words were spelled in the 1830s was compared with modern spelling. It is annoying to readers for the text to spell “vail/veil” two different ways, particularly when veil has a well-known accepted spelling today. There was also the spelling of the name “Noah” which is sometimes N-O-E and other times N-O-A-H. The joint decision was made to standardize all spellings, and to adopt modern convention so that it looks familiar to the modern eye.

After they had adopted the same protocols, both agreed that they would work together to review the entire project again. And so more than a year's worth of work was redone and re-reviewed by both groups from beginning to end. What is now available is the chance to see the entire project after it has been checked carefully twice by two teams. And, of course, each team inspected it repeatedly while they were working on their separate projects.

When it comes to the history of scripture, corruption happens every time there is an apostasy. Each new dispensation is responsible for fixing the canon in order to reclaim truths, to correct errors and to adopt guiding principles applicable to their day. Remember the statement Joseph Smith made at the 1831 conference: *“God had often sealed up the heavens because of covetousness in the church, said the Lord would cut his work short in righteousness and except the church receive the fullness of the scriptures that they would yet fall.”*

Approving and adopting the scriptures is to take place in September after the chance has passed for review of the material. This has always been a necessary and ignored step for the gentiles. With it, they can claim they have accepted a covenant and a law. “For behold I say unto you that as many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord and as many of the Jews as will not repent shall be cast off for the Lord covenanteth with none such save it be with them that repent and believe in His Son who is the Holy One of Israel. . . . *For the time speedily cometh that the Lord will cause a great division among the people and the wicked will be destroy. And He will spare his people, yea even if it so be that He must destroy the wicked by fire* —“ (2 Nephi 30:2, 10, emphasis added). The time for sweeping away will come, and the only gentiles who have the promise they will be preserved are those who become numbered with the remnant.

Zion will include people who are willing to receive revelations from God and obey commandments. God does this to bless His people. *“Blessed are they whose feet stand upon the land of Zion, who have obeyed my Gospel; for they shall receive for their reward the good things of the Earth and it shall bring forth in its strength. And they shall also be crowned with blessings from above, yea, and with commandments not a few and with revelations in their time —they that are faithful and diligent before me.”* (D&C 59:3-4) In other words, if we are privileged to stand upon the land of Zion, God will speak to us. He speaks two things to benefit us. First, “commandments,” and those will be “not a few” because we need a great deal of direction if we are going to be His people. Second, “revelations in their time” because we are ignorant of many mysteries He expects us to one day comprehend. Therefore, one of the characteristics of these people will be their willingness, even alacrity, to receive commandments and revelations.

Former gentiles to whom Joseph was sent were not interested enough in God’s commandments and revelations to preserve them. Mormon scriptures are in disarray. We are only 180 years post-Joseph and the record has not only been “treated lightly,” but important things are incomplete, have been lost, or come to us in an altered form.

Zion necessarily means wanting and receiving commandments and revelations. It means setting aside our pride and covetousness to receive the fullness of the scriptures, in order for us to have any chance to succeed. Take a look around at all those who claim they belong to a church founded by the prophet Joseph Smith; every one of them is in a state of disrepair. The present state

of all branches of splintered Mormonism is represented in Joseph's last dream of his farm. The night before his death he had the following dream or vision:

I was back in Kirtland, Ohio, and thought I would take a walk out by myself, and view my old farm, which I found grown up with weeds and brambles, and altogether bearing evidence of neglect and want of culture. I went into the barn, which I found without floor or doors, with the weather-boarding off, and was altogether in keeping with the farm. While I viewed the desolation around me, and was contemplating how it might be recovered from the curse upon it, there came rushing into the barn a company of furious men, who commenced to pick a quarrel with me. The leader of the party ordered me to leave the barn and farm, stating it was none of mine, and that I must give up all hope of ever possessing it. I told him the farm was given me by the Church, and although I had not had any use of it for some time back, still I had not sold it, and according to righteous principles it belonged to me or the Church. He then grew furious and began to rail upon me, and threaten me, and said it never did belong to me nor to the Church. I then told him that I did not think it worth contending about, that I had no desire to live upon it in its present state, and if he thought he had a better right I would not quarrel with him about it but leave; but my assurance that I would not trouble him at present did not seem to satisfy him, as he seemed determined to quarrel with me, and threatened me with the destruction of my body. While he was thus engaged, pouring out his bitter words upon me, a rabble rushed in and nearly filled the barn, drew out their knives, and began to quarrel among themselves for the premises, and for a moment forgot me, at which time I took the opportunity to walk out of the barn about up to my ankles in mud. When I was a little distance from the barn, I heard them screeching and screaming in a very distressed manner, as it appeared they had engaged in a general fight with their knives. While they were thus engaged, the dream or vision ended. (TPJS, p. 393-394)

That vision of Joseph's, while not included in any set of current scriptures used by any body of believers, will be in the new scriptures.

Christ said that it behooveth the Father that it should come forth from the Gentiles. (3 Ne. 21:6) He says, "...the Gentiles, if they will not harden their hearts, that they may repent and be baptized in my name and know the true points of my doctrine, that the Gentiles may be numbered among my people." This objective is in the Book of Mormon repeatedly:

Nephi prophesied, "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; yea, they shall be numbered among the house of Israel; and they shall be a blessed people upon the promised land forever..."

Christ was commanded to address this topic by the Father, "And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you at that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fullness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fullness of my gospel from among them: and then will I remember my covenant which I

have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them; and I will shew unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you, but I will remember my covenant unto you, O house of Israel, and ye shall come unto the knowledge of the fullness of my gospel. But if the Gentiles will repent, and return unto me, saith the Father, behold, they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel...”

More than a thousand years before the migration of Lehi’s family, the Lord revealed to the Jaredites the conditions set on this land of promise. Moroni, who translated the record, added his own caution to the gentiles about this land: “And the Lord would not suffer that they should stop beyond the sea in the wilderness, but he would that they should come forth even unto the land of promise, which was choice above all other lands which the Lord God had preserved for a righteous people; and he had sworn in his wrath unto the brother of Jared, that whoso should possess this land of promise, from that time henceforth and forever, should serve him, the true and only God, or they should be swept off when the fullness of his wrath should come upon them. And now we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise, and whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fullness of his wrath shall come upon them. And the fullness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ripened in iniquity; for behold, this is a land which is choice above all other lands; wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God, or shall be swept off; for it is the everlasting decree of God. And it is not until the fullness of iniquity among the children of the land, that they are swept off. And this cometh unto you, O ye Gentiles, that ye may know the decrees of God, that ye may repent, and not continue in your iniquities until the fullness come, that ye may not bring down the fullness of the wrath of God upon you, as the inhabitants of the land hath hitherto done. Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, who hath been manifested by the things which we have written.”

The records, along with increased understanding given to the gentiles will be a “sign” for all to witness. The sign testifies that the work of the Father has already commenced. Moroni added these words to describe the meaning of the sign, “Behold, when ye shall rend that veil of unbelief which doth cause you to remain in your awful state of wickedness and hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, then shall the great and marvelous things which have been hid up from the foundation of the world from you; yea, when ye shall call upon the Father in my name, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, then shall ye know that the Father hath remembered the covenant which he made unto your fathers, O house of Israel; and then shall my revelations which I have caused to be written by my servant John, be unfolded in the eyes of all the people. Remember, when ye see these things, ye shall know that the time is at hand that they shall be made manifest in very deed; therefore, when ye shall receive this record, ye may know that the work of the Father has commenced upon all the face of the land. Therefore, repent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, and believe in my gospel, and be baptized in my name; for he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned; and signs shall follow them that believe in my name.” The work of the Father has already commenced. But the greater part of the gentiles has little interest in it. They are not and will not be numbered among the remnant because they refuse to receive the covenant.

In the dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland temple, Joseph Smith identified the Latter-day Saints as “*we who are identified with the Gentiles.*” (D&C 109:60) If the gentiles enter into a covenant with the Lord, and we come to know the true points of Christ’s doctrine, then those few gentiles who do covenant with the Lord may be numbered among His people, or numbered with the remnant.

Continuing with 3 Ne. 21: “*And when these things come to pass it shall be a sign unto them that the work of the father hath already commenced. ...In that day for my sake shall the Father work a work which shall be a great and marvelous work among them. And there shall be among them those that will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them. ... It shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause him to bring forth unto the Gentiles, they shall be cut off from among the people who are of the covenant.*” (3 Ne. 21:7, 9, 11) God does not send a messenger to be ignored. Whenever the Lord speaks, He expects His sheep to hear His voice and respond.

Joseph Smith was a messenger sent by God who brought forth words that have never been preserved or accepted. It is high time that some people, however few, finally do so. It is high time that you and I do so. The Lord condemned the gentiles in 1832 because we treated lightly the things He gave to us. The scripture project has taught me just how lightly we have treated the revelations.

When the Book of Mormon was transcribed, various scribes wrote the original text. It was a copy of that text, made by Oliver Cowdery that was taken to E. B. Grandin’s print shop to be published. On average, Oliver Cowdery made two transcription errors per page in transcribing from the original text. E. B. Grandin’s shop made other errors in setting the type. An employee of Grandin’s, John Gilbert, provided essentially ALL the punctuation to the first edition. He punctuated it in ways that caused changes in the meaning and therefore changes to the doctrine. I have discussed that previously and suggested needed punctuation corrections to fix the doctrinal problem. The new edition incorporates all the punctuation changes I have discussed.

In 1837, and again in 1840, Joseph Smith made corrections to the text. He was trying to get a more correct version into print, fixing Oliver Cowdery’s transcription errors and Grandin’s errors. The 1840 edition was reprinted in Nauvoo in 1841 and 1842 without any changes. Therefore, the 1840, 1841 and 1842 editions printed in Cincinnati and Nauvoo are identical.

Another edition was published in England in 1841. The English printing was done under the supervision of the twelve, and was based on the 1837 edition Joseph worked on, but did not include any of Joseph’s fixes in his 1840 edition. The English print version had numerous printer errors and some word changes to reflect British language conventions.

After Joseph Smith’s death, the RLDS (CofC) denomination has based their printed copies of the Book of Mormon on Joseph’s 1840 edition. The LDS denomination has based their printed copies on the 1841 English edition.

The version used in the proposed new scriptures is the 1840 edition Joseph corrected. However, by revelation to me from the Lord, some changes have been made during the work that will be incorporated into the scriptures. [Those changes were made after the St. George Conference and therefore were not mentioned during the conference.]

Original text is shown below in black print, and revised replacement text in red print and cross-out showing deletions revealed by the Lord:

Alma 13:

...that same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have power to possess your body in that eternal world.

...the same spirit you hearken to obey while living in the flesh shall, upon your death, have the same power to influence you to hearken unto that spirit in the next life.

3 Nephi 3:

...the Gentiles should not at any time hear my voice,
...the Gentiles should not at that time hear my voice,

3 Nephi 4:

So great faith have I never seen among all the Jews, ...
So great faith as yours have I never seen among all the Jews, ...

Ether 1:

And never has man come before me with such exceeding faith...
And none of those now living have come before me with such exceeding faith...

Ether 1:

And never have I shewed myself unto man whom I have created for never has man...
And to none of those now living whom I created have I appeared, for none have ...

D&C 31:

And again, strong drinks are not for the belly, but for the washing of your bodies.
And again, hard liquor is not for the belly, but for the washing of your bodies.

Testimony of John 5:

And the ~~Jewish Passover~~ feast was approaching.
And the feast was approaching.

These newly revealed changes have now been incorporated into the text of the proposed new scriptures.

Continuing in 3 Ne. 21: *“Wo be unto the Gentiles except they repent. ...At that day, whosoever will not repent and come unto my beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, Oh House of Israel.”* (Verses 14, 21) It has been a gift that the people before have failed, because the clock has not started ticking on the gentiles. But it is about to begin. If the gentiles receive the covenant and are willing to obey His commandments He has caused to be restored, the clock will then begin to tick.

“If they will repent and hearken unto my words and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them.” (v. 22) “Church,” as sister Adolfo explained, is not an institution, but a body of

believers. “Church,” she explained, means a spiritual body of believers who are “not of this world,” but belong to a congregation that extends into heaven: a “church of the firstborn,” and “the general assembly” of heaven; a fellowship with angels and the Son, and also God the Father. (See D&C 76:66-67) We seek to belong to that spiritual body, not an institution created by men on earth, subject to the laws of man, and capable of interfering with faith in God. The presiding leader of that congregation is Christ. Seek for a spiritual “Church” as defined by the Lord in the revelations. (D&C 10:67) We want to find that group of believers who will accept and abide covenants from God. Those who are spiritually connected, not institutionally connected. “Church” as defined by the Lord in the revelations (D&C 10:67), not “church” as defined by filing with the corporate Secretary of State creating an institution that owns property. If you want one of those, go choose one, because there is an infinite variety of them clamoring for your money, your attention, and your fidelity. They will promise you what they cannot deliver, and lull you to sleep away the time you have here in this probation.

Many suffer from post-traumatic religious stress. We don’t need to create yet another institutional opportunity to abuse one another. We don’t need to repeat the terrible mistakes that hijacked the opportunity offered by the Lord through Joseph Smith. We should learn from the corrupt institutions claiming Joseph as their founder. I don’t care who thinks they are awake to our awful situation, or how soft their heart is, or how inclined they are to follow God, the Mormon institutions are the perfect mouse trap. Any one called to be the newest member of the Quorum of the 12 or the new President of the Relief Society, couldn’t fix any of their institutions. It cannot be done. They are all part of the great whore, and they are firmly planted in Babylon and cannot escape.

The only way to recover and obtain the Lord’s trust again is to begin anew and to remember the sad lessons of where the failed route of Mormonism’s past takes you.

No matter who it is you trust at the beginning, even so great a man as Joseph Smith--everything is susceptible to corruption and abuse. Any institution that permits inequality will lead inevitably to abuse. Therefore, we need to be equal. We need to be on the same footing. I have seen what result will follow if we organize ourselves into an institution led by a hierarchy. I would rather denounce that inevitable result than to help bring it about. I have taught for years against the gentile “strongman” model. My view has never changed and cannot be changed. I know even the mighty and strong can remain as a servant; for that is the example set by the “King of kings and Lord of lords.” If so great a One as He can remain a servant, then a mere servant can do likewise and shun the opportunity to “rule and reign”—instead teaching and serving alongside peers, friends and fellow-servants.

If we will repent and *“hearken unto my word and harden not our hearts, I will establish my church among them and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among THIS remnant.”* (3 Ne. 21:22, emphasis added) The gentiles can become something other than mere tools to dispossess the fallen Nephites. We can alter our destiny. Instead of remaining among those who will be swept off the land, we can receive this as our inheritance. Our promised land:

“This the remnant of Jacob unto whom I have given this land for an inheritance.” (Id.) Christ is talking about the gentiles. But He is also talking about hearkening to His words as a prerequisite to establish His people. *“Numbered among this the remnant of Jacob unto whom I have given his land as an inheritance. And*

they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob and also many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city which shall be called the New Jerusalem. Then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in who are scattered over all the face of the land unto the New Jerusalem and the power of heaven shall come down among them and I also will be in their midst. At that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea even the tribes which have been lost which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.” (3 Ne. 21:22-26, emphasis added)

I would recommend you all take another look on your own at 3rd Nephi Chapter 21, and in particular pay attention to how the words in the covenant play into the fulfillment of the prophecies and the reclaiming of the gentiles to become part of His people to likewise inherit possession of this land.

If you want a sign that the work of the Father has commenced, I can think of no more tangible or physical sign to hold up to show that the work has commenced and is now available for your review, than the draft of the scriptures. The work is not complete. It is astonishing how badly the scriptures have been corrupted over the last 180 years. Recovering them into a near-original state is the best we can hope for. What should have been preserved and protected perfectly has become like Joseph’s farm in his last dream. Others created this problem, but we must show we do not treat the revelations lightly. Recovering them is a great sign of penitence and devotion. Others departed in the past from respecting the Lord’s word, but that is no excuse for us failing also. WE can repent and return. If it will be received, the scriptures can become a covenant that the Lord intends to vindicate. We do not need to remain in an awful state of blindness. We can do something about it.

Remember that there are more scriptures coming. Second Nephi 29:11-13 tells us that there are records that have been kept by the ten tribes that are yet to be gathered. *The Book of Mormon* itself has significant omissions that are promised to come forth at some future date. But the record that has been given is given to test and to try the people to see if they will accept it. (Ether 4:4-7)

As Paul Durham mentioned in his talk, no one took seriously *The Book of Mormon* until Hugh Nibley. I wrote about that in Chapter 1, *Trial of Faith in Eighteen Verses*. When David O. McKay approached Hugh Nibley, he wanted to know if he seriously believed in the Book of Mormon. He wondered how Nibley could believe because no one was reading, studying or trusting it was an actual ancient record. (See, Boyd Jay Peterson, *Hugh Nibley: A Consecrated Life*, Kofford Books: Salt Lake City, 2002)

With respect to this project now underway, expect opposition. There will also be imitation and pretenders. There will be the deceived and deceivers who will be emboldened. There is always a necessary opposition in all things. It doesn’t happen any other way. But at the end of all this, assuming there is some group, however small (Gideon and his group were reduced from 32,000 to 10,000 to 300) it will be sufficient for the triumph. (Judges 7:2-25)

I hope those who are opposed to this will allow those willing to enter into a covenant to go on in peace. We allow all others from any other of the various sects of Mormonism, to depart from us in peace. I hope that those willing to adopt the covenant are likewise given the opportunity to depart in peace.

Now I’m going to change topics and clarify a few points.

Sustaining of a priest is only required in order for that priest to function outside the family as part of a larger fellowship of believers. Inside the family, there is no such requirement. I did not go to the trouble of being sustained by anyone until someone outside of my immediate family asked me to perform a priestly function. At that point I told them that while I'm qualified inside of my family, I have to meet the same criteria. So I had to delay what they had asked until I could be sustained. I had no authority to act outside my family as a priest without it. Many of you were qualified before I was, but God spares no one. I would not dare proceed without meeting the criteria once the criteria had been set.

Seven women must sustain, one being the wife, if the man is married. Before sustaining, in any fellowship group, you should first ask if any are opposed. If there are people who are opposed, they should be given the opportunity to explain the reasons before there is any further vote taken, so that they know why there is opposition. Those who vote to sustain should consider the opposing views and the opposition's reasons, and deliberate about that before they go forward. But if seven women are still willing to sustain, go forward.

There are three steps. The first is ordination. Any man holding priesthood can ordain another man. Man alone can do this first step. The second, if you're functioning outside of a family, is sustaining, which requires seven women. And thirdly, and this can be done at any time, confirmation must come from heaven. Heaven must ratify. This has been discussed previously in some detail.

All these should precede performing any ordinance in a fellowship. You should keep a record of the line of authority from the one who does the ordination. I would have in my possession a written certificate signed by the seven women proving the sustaining vote, and everyone involved should record it in their personal records, particularly the day when the Lord confirms the authority to the man. The priest ought to keep that in his personal record.

Now I'm changing subjects again: There is an effort underway to collect funds for a temple project that transcends every group. Other than that one "transcending each group project," there is no other general fund or aggregation of funds between fellowships. Each fellowship is independent in its own fund. There is no general fund collected even at these conferences. But conference sponsors may ask for donations to help defray the costs of the conference. That is up to them.

The relief of "the poor among you" refers to the poor among the individual fellowship. If there are no poor among you, then excess donations should go to the temple, but they can be shared as your fellowship determines by common consent.

When a temple exists, there will be a box in the main courtyard where people can make donations. Donations to the temple will go for two purposes: First is maintenance and repair of the temple. Second, it is a general fund for the poor. That fund can be called upon by any fellowship needing assistance with their poor. Anyone who is part of any fellowship is entitled to a request for assistance from that excess temple fund.

There are entirely local and independent fellowshipping groups, comprised primarily of family and friends. This is how Christianity functioned in the days of Christ's apostles in the era of the New Testament. The apostles were traveling missionaries who converted people and taught

them. The early Christians met in small groups in homes or borrowed facilities. That small, independent fellowshiping is the way that this has and will operate, with only two exceptions. First, conferences can be called that are area-wide, region-wide, or general. The conference held in Boise, this conference and the one scheduled for Boise in September are all general conferences and everyone is invited to come to those. Those operate in addition to local fellowships.

Secondly, the temple by its nature is general and the one place that involves all believers, wherever they are located throughout the world. When the temple is functioning, there will be general conferences regularly conducted there. It should be expected also, when the temple is fully organized and operating, that there will be observances of festivals and feasts. However, in the present state of things, these are not expected observances.

I don't think the Lord cares whether you want to practice feasts now or not, that would be up to you. But the Lord has plans for a temple that will expand beyond what current expectations are. When the restoration is sufficient for the Lord to return, the original right belonging to the first generations, or, in other words the rights belonging to the first fathers even Adam—that same priesthood which was in the beginning of the world shall return again at the end. The renewed government will be surrendered back to Christ, who originally gave the right of dominion to Adam and his righteous posterity. The authority will be returned, and will be held by mortal man, and not a translated being. It is necessary for it to be held by a mortal at the end. Then everyone in the line will return the rights and authority that had been given to them so that Christ's right to the government is unquestioned and unchallengeable. All the false governments of men that collectively are nothing more than Babylon the Great will be thrown down. This event requires a temple, where mortals and immortals, the living and the resurrected, angels and Christ can meet to accomplish the task. Adam will be the last in the line to whom dominion will be returned. Then Adam, in the presence of Son Ahman, will return the government to our Lord. This event, Adam-on-di-Ahman, or Adam in the presence of Son Ahman, will happen in the new temple, and will be done before the Lord returns to judge the world.

Funds that are donated to build the temple are going to be fully transparent. At present, the GoFundMe site is public and the funds donated to there are open and public. In time every cent that is donated will be fully accounted for. The Lord requires a record of donations and expenses. They are supposed to be gathered and ultimately maintained at the temple, and will be open for inspection. When the full accounting can be made, I expect the information will be disclosed online at some future date.

Now I want to refer to a verse in the context of the temple. Apply these words solely and exclusively for a moment to the temple. *“Do not expect to eat the bread or wear the garment of the laborer in Zion.”* (D&C 42:42) If you oppose the work, if you stay your hand, if you refuse and others do the labor, don't expect to eat the bread or wear the garment.

Now, I want to address the Spirit of Elias, Elijah and Messiah. Or in other words, those operating under the mandate of the Aaronic, Melchizedek and Patriarchal division of labor.

Let me reiterate it again, because there is at least one angry foolish soul watching out there who persists in redefining the terms I use when I have defined the terms myself. So let me be redundant:

Joseph spoke of three divisions of priesthood. (See *TPJS*, pp. 335-341, a discourse on March 10, 1844) He named these the Aaronic, the Melchizedek and the Patriarchal. And Joseph defined the greatest of these as Melchizedek priesthood because it comprehended all others. I'm not using, and have not used, and have explained before, that since Melchizedek has acquired a definition among all the divisions of Latter-day Saints, I'm not going to try and correct that mistaken idea. Instead, I redefine the terms so I can address the topic and be understood. In my nomenclature, Aaronic refers to the least of these, Melchizedek refers to the next level, and Patriarchal refers to the greatest of these. These are my redefinitions, not Joseph's.

I do this because in the beginning, there was a single priesthood. It was called the Holy Order After the Order of the Son of God. To prevent the too frequent repetition of the name of the Son of God, it was renamed. First it was named after Enoch, as the priesthood of Enoch. Then later it was named after Melchizedek. But among those who did the renaming, they always meant the one original, unified priesthood: the Holy Order After the Order of the Son of God. Yet Joseph spoke about three great divisions. In the beginning, because the first patriarchs had that original singular fullness of the priesthood after the Order of the Son of God, and because Abraham acquired the rights of the fathers or the first father, Adam, and therefore like Adam held the Holy Order After the Order of the Son of God, I use the term "Patriarchal" to refer to that original fullness, and to nothing else.

There is the Spirit of Elias, there is the Spirit of Elijah and there is the Spirit of Messiah. These three great spirits unfolded in the work of God in the generations of man in a steady descent. And like a chiasm, they will again unfold, inverted, and return in an ascent. So that at the end, it will be as it was in the beginning. "Now this same Priesthood, which was in the beginning, shall in the end of the world also," was the prophecy that Father Adam gave. (See Moses 6:7) In the prophecy in the *Book of Moses* –soon to be in the *Book of Genesis*, Enoch was quoting Adam, and Moses was quoting Enoch.

The spirit at the beginning was the spirit of Messiah. Adam dwelt in the presence of God. Adam represents that original fullness. Adam was the first man. Adam received instructions and spoke to God face to face. He dwelt in a temple setting called Eden, from which he was cast out, but he dwelt in a temple. Therefore, Adam represents the Spirit of Messiah.

The Spirit of Elijah is represented by Enoch who, when the Earth was threatened with violence, and men were to be destroyed because of the wickedness upon the face of the Earth, was able to gather people into a city of peace, and to have the Lord come to their city of peace and remove them from the coming violence and destruction. He is a type of the Spirit of Elijah because Elijah would likewise ascend in the fiery chariot into heaven. Enoch is a type of the Spirit of Elijah, because it is the Spirit of Elijah that ascends into heaven to prefigure the return of the Spirit of Messiah in the last day.

The Spirit of Elijah is needed to gather a people to a place that God will acknowledge, will visit and will shield from the coming violence at the destruction of the world. And so Enoch becomes the great type of the Spirit of Elijah, although the name "Spirit of Elijah" is associated with a man who lived later. Elijah duplicated, among a hardened people in a fallen world, the same achievement as Enoch accomplished, albeit Enoch did so with a city, and Elijah did it as a solitary

figure. Yet it will be Elijah and his spirit that in the last days will likewise prepare a city for salvation and preservation.

Then there is the Spirit of Elias, represented by Noah, wherein everything that had gone on before was lost. Things began anew and Noah had a ministry to preserve what had been taught before and was lost by preaching repentance. And so Noah as the messenger, or the Elias, bears testimony of what once was.

Before the Lord's return, these same three spirits need to have been brought into the world. These will complete the plan Adam described in prophecy. It has always been in the heart of the Lord from before the foundation of the world for the fall of man to be reversed. We will return through the same stages as man fell.

The Spirit of Elias declaring the gospel will come again into the world has returned in the person of Joseph Smith, the message he delivered, in the scriptures that he restored, and in the message and practices he taught. No matter how short-lived his message was, he laid a foundation in the Spirit of Elias. Without Joseph's ministry, we could not now move forward. Elias and the Spirit of Elias came through Joseph Smith into the world.

We have yet to take the Spirit of Elias seriously enough to move on to receive something further. There are only two processes. The instant one process ends the other begins. The first process is "restoration" and the second is "apostasy." There is no pause between them. Either there is an active restoration underway, with greater things revealed constantly, or there is apostasy and light is lost. It is impossible to preserve light. Without an active connection to the living vine there is only death. (John 15:4-5)

Joseph was a restorer, and when he died restoration ended. The moment Joseph and Hyrum were killed, the world began to lose light. The pace at which light is now being lost among the various Mormon sects has accelerated. But a new restoration has begun and a new dispensation of the gospel has opened. Whether the light now offered to us will achieve anything more than came in Joseph's time remains an unanswered question. The Lord cannot force us to receive Him; He can only offer. We must accept.

We are now facing a crossroads in which it is possible to continue the work and move forward. Moving forward successfully however, will require us to accept the Spirit of Elijah. This time the Spirit of Elijah is not to prepare a people to ascend into heaven, but instead to prepare a people so that those who come will not utterly destroy them. There must be a people prepared to endure the burning that will come. Just as Enoch's people were prepared, shielded and then worthy to ascend so as to avoid destruction by the flood, the Spirit of Elijah must prepare people to endure the day that shall burn the wicked as stubble.

The Spirit of Elijah can prepare people to gather in a place of peace, to be the only people who are not at war one with another. (D&C 45:69) They must be people willing to accept the Lord's teachings and allow those teachings to govern their daily walk; with each other and with God. Being eager to receive "commandments, not a few," and also "revelations" from the Lord is what the people of Zion must necessarily be willing to do.

We are promised that one will come who will be part of Jesse and part of Ephraim who will set the Lord's house in order again. (D&C 85:7) Although many have claimed this role as theirs, that identity will only be established by the work accomplished. Prideful and foolish claims by those who have done nothing are not just wrong, but wicked. If the work is done and completed, we may be able to recognize the identity. Any fool can run around claiming to be whatever their particular ideology compels them to claim. Angels show themselves to those of a firm mind in every form of godliness. (Moroni 7:30) False and deceiving spirits have no limitation on who they can visit. False spirits are free to visit with the weak minded in every form of vanity. They visit with those who, like the patriarch Reuben, are unstable as water and shall not prosper. (Gen. 49:4) They offend the Lord because they cannot cease to find fault with others. (D&C 88:124) They will be cut off by the Lord. (Ps. 101:5)

I am surprised at how often men and women who should know better depart from the path. When men get a little revelation, they think themselves wise. When they fail to discern between the vain and the true, they open themselves to prideful, vain and angry spiritual guidance. They contend for the attention of others—becoming upset when they are not respected, and falsely accusing others who remain true to the Lord. I spoke about this and compared what was coming to what happened in Kirtland. (D&C 50:2-8) They leave the association of fellow believers and hurl vindictive at the flock. It saddens me to see this happening, even though I told you beforehand that it would.

A false spirit is not difficult to identify. It stirs up fear, anger, resentment, envy, jealousy and false accusation. It makes a man spread false rumors, and make accusations that are untrue and unwarranted. Too many of those who should be lending their strength to this effort are now laboring to undermine it, claiming to have a better path to offer. They want to divide the Lord's sheep, for each to "find Jesus" alone and apart—a plan which would prevent Zion and please the adversary who knows that if he can prevent Zion he can continue to falsely claim to be the god of this world.

The third and final spirit to return is the greatest of all. It was the original spirit from the beginning. It is the Spirit of Messiah. This time, however, it will be the Messiah Himself to bring that Spirit back to the world. This time He will come to His house. He will dwell there. The Spirit of Elijah will prepare people for that return, and the Spirit of Messiah will then claim the world as its Lord and King.

Everything must be prepared in order for Messiah to return. And so in the end, it will be as it was in the beginning. Adam was a type of the Spirit of Messiah, for he dwelled in the presence of God, or the Spirit of Messiah. At the end of the world, it will be the Messiah Himself who returns to dwell among a people who are prepared. This process is a great chiasm. It is the return to the beginning in the same order as the departure through the fall of man. The work of the last days walks backward in time to the point where it all began.

Elias goes before to prepare for a greater work that is coming after, just as the Aaronic ordinances go before. Joseph Smith said that the Spirit of Elias was revealed to him, but "the Spirit of Elijah holds something more. It holds the revelations, ordinances, endowments and sealings necessary to accomplish turning the hearts of the fathers to the children by securing an unbroken

thread between the living and the fathers in heaven. This can only be done in a temple prepared for that purpose.” (IPJS p. 336-337) Without sealing living children to the fathers in heaven, who dwell in glory and who sit upon thrones, the return of the Lord with Enoch and the other thousands who will accompany him would result in none escaping the judgments to come. (Id)

I do not like the way gentiles understand the scriptural term “not lawful” or the term “forbidden.” I think those words convey an idea that is easily misunderstood. I think I would prefer those words to be understood as follows: it is not wise to tell some things to the gentiles because they will abuse it when they learn of it. It is because of the potential for truth to be used to support abuse that some truths are withheld. The Lord makes them understood by the spirit in order to limit access to those who will not abuse their fellow man. (See D&C 76:115-116) When the truth is taught by the power of the spirit, it helps them understand who our Lord is and what He is about.

Likewise, the word “dominion” in the understanding of the gentile can convey the impression of a prison warden exercising control over captives. I think the word “dominion” should be understood instead to convey the idea of a gardener who is responsible for making the garden thrive, grow and bear fruit. To be clear, the three greatest examples of wielding “dominion” in the correct manner as we should understand it are, first: Christ, who is probably without any peer, unquestionably the greatest example of one holding the greatest dominion, and who also likewise showed the greatest example of how to wield dominion. He beseeched people to believe. He pled with them for their own good. He knelt to serve them. He denied that He had a kingdom of this world. (John 18:36) He tried to prepare people for a better one. But He was more intelligent than they all and He was the greatest of them all. (Abr. 3:19) Unquestionably holding the greatest dominion and He wore it as a light thing. His yoke was easy. (Matt. 11:30)

In this world, Adam, after Christ held the greatest dominion. (Gen. 1:26-28) But Adam taught and pled and instructed (Moses 5:12) but did not abridge the agency of his children, even when one of his sons killed another of his sons. Adam did not execute Cain. Cain was sent away. Adam held dominion, but he exercised it like our Lord, pleading for the best interest of others. Adam invited and solicited all to obey God, hoping for their best interests.

The third great example of holding dominion in a godly way was Moses. He is called in scripture “meek above all men which were upon the face of the earth” (Num. 12:3) and yet gentiles depict him as a bully and a strongman. Moses saw no reason to be jealous when others were out prophesying. “Would that all the Lord’s people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them.” (Num. 11:26-29) Moses, like Adam and Christ, is an example of how the word “dominion” should be understood.

All three were gardeners responsible for trying to make their garden thrive, grow and bear fruit. In reality, those who have held the greatest dominion given by God have invariably lived lives of meekness and service. They were the opposite of what gentiles regard as a strongman. They were the opposite of a dictator or boss. They were more like loving grandfathers, gentle gardeners, and encouraging friends—trying to get the best from those who would allow them to teach.

To be clear on what we are trying not to do, which helps to explain what we are trying to do, I want to use a verse from The Book of Mormon. We have to avoid errors that all institutions fall into almost naturally and inevitably:

“The time speedily shall come that all churches which”...and now here’s a list of the “whiches” that must be avoided. This is the list that identifies the churches that will be burned up, and therefore we cannot do these things:

~“built up to get gain.” The people who put on this conference sacrificed, and lost money to do so. The people who have labored on the scripture project volunteered their time. I helped pay for copies to make 25 complete sets available for any of those of you who cannot afford to purchase them. My assumption is that there are young marrying couples with children, or perhaps single mothers who have expenses that make purchasing a set of scriptures a difficult thing. And for at least 25 of those, money has been gathered, books have been purchased and they are out in the lobby. So if there is anyone with a financial need, they are available in the lobby and they are free. The texts are also available free online as an electronic version. But in my view, particularly in households with children, these are important to have as objects in the household for the children to see. Once a final version is completed and accepted, a more traditional form will be printed. They will have the thin ‘onion-skin’ cotton paper, leather binding, and will weigh much less. That will not be done, however, until after the conference in Boise in September. “Built up to get gain” is the one thing we do not and will not do. If you participate in a fellowship, you’re probably losing money. If you are conducting a conference, you are probably losing money. If you are giving talks, as I do, or writing, as I do, or you are assisting in projects, as I do, you are probably sacrificing money. Far from being supported in my work, I work hard to produce a living so I can afford to do some preaching.

There are churches that are built up to get gain. We can’t do that. We shouldn’t even tempt one another to do that. Realize that every one of us is required to sacrifice and that is a good thing. That is a godly thing. It is a reflection of the sincerity of your heart. If you are sacrificing because of this, then you are probably pleasing the Lord. And if your religious practice is building something up to get gain, you are going to be burnt like stubble, so enjoy the gain.

~”And all those who are built up to get power over the flesh....” Having power or influence is as deceitful a thing as riches. I am married to a critic and she refuses to permit me to be proud. I have joked that she “can bitch the varnish off wood” (as the saying goes) because she is strong willed, outspoken and fearless in her advice and counsel. She has trolled online for criticism directed at me. Doesn’t matter how unfair, doesn’t matter how untrue. But she will use that to question, to explore, and require me to address. Some of the most interesting information and entertaining conversations have been private exchanges between my wife and me, where I am on the defense! Since I have no influence with her apart from being able to persuade, and since it is my constant requirement to persuade, she helps to remind me that I must use persuasion, gentleness, meekness, and demonstrate knowledge to preach to others. She is constantly asking me: “Is this your opinion? Is this your best guess? Is this based on evidence that you have read, or does this come from the Lord? Because if it’s any of those first things then you ought to shut up! But if it is that last thing, then help me understand, because that becomes something we want to be sure about.”

I have been trying to expound scriptures in everything that I have done. It is true that on occasion I have been forced to say something other than just expounding scripture, and I dislike doing that and do my best to avoid it. I would rather tell you what is in the mind of the Lord using the body of scripture to persuade you so that the question: “Who are you?” won’t matter. It should

not matter. There is only one thing that matters: what does the Lord expect of us?—what does the Lord expect of you?—what does the Lord expect of me? Let’s figure that out, and then do that.

I was pleased that a group of people got together voluntarily to accomplish the work of recovering the scriptures in a more accurate and purer form. As the preliminary effort was winding down and this conference was approaching, there were several dilemmas left for the scriptures project that needed to be solved. For one of them, I spent nearly two hours talking to Mike Hamill, who was the one assigned by the committee to address the problem. When he and I finished talking, he wrote up an account—because it was his to address by assignment from the committee. I was just advising him, nothing more. Following that conversation, he wrote up something that is in the draft scriptures as Section 170, and Mike Hamill’s name is on it. His name is used because, although I had spent two hours explaining the matter to him, I did not have the right to address the issue for the project. It was his assignment. He wrote it up, he sent it to me as an email. I made very small edit suggestions, and then I sent it back to him. He wrote it; therefor his name is on it.

Then there was another problem that Jeff Savage was assigned to address. He and I spoke for about an hour and forty-five minutes to review the history, scriptures and solution. But it was his assignment, not mine. Therefore, he needed to compose the document for the project. It was clear in his mind, he wrote it, and he actually wrote it up in a way that was better than how I would have written it. If I write something, my wife edits it, and she cuts out words all the time to make what I write more compact and clear.

Someone who received an assignment from the committee has his name on “A Prophet’s Prerogative” because he wrote it. He did not just freelance. It was done with a lot of discussion and understanding preceding it. It is also the practice of the committee to reach unanimous agreement on any issue before a decision is made.

I did not displace Mike Hamill or Jeff Savage in their assignment to compose something to address the problems they encountered. I was reminded of the failure of a committee to compose the Preface to the *Book of Commandments*. I addressed that critical moment earlier, and I have not forgotten the lesson. As I previously explained in *Preserving the Restoration*, this is the lesson from Joseph’s day on this very matter:

Remember Joseph’s admonition on May 26, 1842, “the people should each one stand for himself, and depend on no man or men in that state of corruption... applied it to the present state of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—said if the people departed from the Lord, they must fall—that they were depending on the Prophet, hence were darkened in their minds, in consequence of neglecting the duties devolving upon themselves.” If Joseph Smith had it all to do over again, and wanted to avoid the problems that darkened the minds of believers, how could it best be accomplished? He should just refuse to do that which caused the dependence.

It was easy for Joseph to make himself indispensable. It was tempting to do so. But everybody would have been better off had he refused. In November 1831, a conference was convened to approve publication of the Book of Commandments. The book needed a

preface. A committee was assigned to draft the preface. “[William] McLellin said that he, Sidney Rigdon, and Oliver Cowdery had been given the assignment to write the preface to the Book of Commandments, but when they presented their draft to the conference, the ‘Conference picked it all to pieces’ and requested that J[oseph] S[mith] petition the Lord for a preface. After J[oseph] S[mith] and the elders bowed in prayer, JS, who was ‘sitting by a window,’ dictated the preface ‘by the Spirit,’ while Rigdon served as scribe.” He then dictated what became D&C Section 1. What if Joseph had refused? What if instead he declared God had a revelation, but the committee should receive it? What if Joseph insisted others perform their duties, rather than relieving them of responsibility? Had he declined in November 1831, would the talk given in May 1842 been necessary?

We will make mistakes, but should not make the same ones. Sometimes the way for people to become better acquainted with the Lord is for those who know Him to remain silent and allow others to approach Him. Everyone should gain strength and experience for themselves. (*Id.*, pp. 524-525, footnotes omitted.)

We must learn from their mistakes or we will be doomed to repeat them. When the assignment was passed to others, I believe I lost the right to do the work myself. I will not interfere now and take it upon myself. That would be wrong and lead inexorably to the same problem in our future as the earlier body faced in 1842. The Israelites suffered from the same weakness. (Num. 11:24-35) Even if you forget the lessons, I cannot. I refuse to be the source of the failure.

~”Built up to become popular in the eyes of the world...” As far as I’m concerned it doesn’t matter whether we have 10 people, 300 people, 10,000 people, 32,000, the number doesn’t matter. What matters is that some faithful few get it right. If we get it right, God will provide the increase. So the desire to have something “built up to become popular in the eyes of the world” is a desire for an irrelevancy. If we pursue that, it will sap us of the kind of redemptive power necessary for our religion to matter.

~”Those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world...” We can’t do that. Nor can we allow our lusts to motivate any of the steps we take. There must be sacrifice to produce faith.

~”And to do all manner of iniquity. Yea in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil are they who need fear and tremble and quake. They are those who must be brought low in the dust. They are those who must be consumed as stubble. And this according to the words of the prophets.” So read again the list again of what we are not to be: We cannot be built up to get gain, we cannot get power over the flesh, we cannot be built up to become popular, we cannot seek the lusts of the flesh or the things of the world, and we cannot do all manner of iniquity. Those are the things that must be avoided and those who avoid it, however few, however small, that is who the Lord is looking for. That is the group who will be inclined to gather, receive commandments and obey them.

And then finally, faith is not produced by signs, but signs follow those who believe. (D&C 63:9) That is why Pharaoh was never impressed by the things God did through Moses. Signs are inconsequential. Signs are not controlled by men but are God's to give as God determines. (D&C 63:10) And signs are not supposed to be the subject of boasting. (D&C 84:73) Some of the most remarkable signs that have been given to me are only silently recorded in my journal. Signs exist—they have been given to testify of this work. Many of the signs recorded in the lives of believers may be unknown to you, but there are signs in rich abundance among believers today. The adulterous are the ones who seek signs, according to our Lord, and He said it twice because Matthew's account includes him saying that to two different audiences on two different occasions. (Matt. 12:39; 16:4) Adulterers are sign seekers.

I would include within the definition of the adulterous, as did the Lord, those who commit adultery in their heart, (Matt. 5:28; 3 Ne. 12:28; D&C 63:16) hence, the need for men to reject polygamy. It is adultery in your heart to continue to entertain the possibility that you will one day have multiple wives.

While I claim no right to control, manage or command any other person, I do claim the right to teach. Like any other person who believes in something greater than him or herself, we all have the right to teach what is important to us and have others consider.

In the history of mankind, there are only two documented successes of establishing a city of peace visited by God. In the first, Enoch preached and taught. He assumed only the role of a teacher. People listened, repented, and were able to live in peace with one another. They had one heart and one mind. There were no poor among them. (Moses 7:18-19) Melchizedek also preached and taught. His message was for the people to repent. (Alma 13:17-18) Although called a "prince of peace" and the "king of Salem," Joseph Smith explained these terms were not because he had kingly rule over any group. but it "signifies king of peace or righteousness and not any country or nation." (*WJS*, p. 246)

When God reveals His mind to me, I have every right to teach and preach repentance and urge people to return to God. There are no active covenant people who can fulfill the prophecies on earth today. There is nothing special about any people yet. But the potential to lay claim on blessings and establish a covenant exists.

In 1832, the incipient restoration movement Joseph Smith was laboring to establish was condemned by the Lord. The nascent, Mormonite movement (as it was then called), was rebuked by the Lord. He told them their minds were darkened because they treated lightly what had been given to them. They were plagued with unbelief. He condemned them and warned they would remain under His condemnation until they repented, and not only said but did what the Book of Mormon and other commandments directed them to do. (D&C 84:54-57) Among other things, they were required to "bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom." (*Id.* v. 58)

By 1841, the previous condemnation had not been cured. The Lord threatened them again, warning they would be "rejected as a church, with your dead." (D&C 124:32) He gave a sign to them: If they repented, He would come to their planned, but unbuilt temple and restore the fulness that they had lost. (*Id.* v. 28) He would not let anyone move them out of that place. (*Id.* v. 45) But if they would not obey Him, then they would, "by your own works, bring cursings, wrath, indignation

and judgments” upon themselves. (*Id.* v. 48) They failed to do as He commanded. They were moved out of their place. They failed to receive the fulness from Him. They suffered wintertime expulsion, hunger, famine, pestilence and the judgments of God upon them. They did not receive the covenant. They were unwilling to accept what was offered by the Lord. He was willing to gather them as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings for protection, but they were not interested.

When the Lord determined to renew His work and allow another people the opportunity to receive a covenant from Him, He spoke to me from heaven and provided instruction. Faithful to those instructions, I have labored for years to prepare the minds and hearts of any who wish to receive what is offered by a kind and loving God.

The Book of Mormon is intended to be received as a covenant. The covenant MUST first be delivered to, and accepted by the gentiles in order for the gentiles to be numbered among the remnant of God's people. (3 Ne. 21:22) The gentiles must have a covenant, or they cannot assist in any way to establish the New Jerusalem. (*Id.* v. 23) It will be former gentiles who are called “Ephraim” once restored, to whom all other tribes must come to receive their part in the covenant. (D&C 133:30-34) This will happen once the gentiles have been given the land as their land of promise, an inheritance from God given only to covenant people. (3 Ne. 21:22) At present, the gentiles have been condemned and rejected by the Lord. Therefore, some few must repent and return.

In making an offer to establish a covenant, no one is obligated to accept His offer. The presumption is that gentiles will refuse, as they have done for many generations. Any gentile who does not want to obtain the covenant merely needs to reject the offer, and they remain exactly as they are now. They do not need to rejoice in the offered gift. (D&C 88:33) But if even a tiny few gentiles are willing to accept the covenant, God will receive them and accomplish His work through them. It was always the Lord’s expectation that “few” would receive it and walk in a straight and narrow path. Almost all others will reject it and walk in a broad enough path to accommodate every other false religious idea, false promise, incomplete and damning path that competes with the Lord’s invitation to come to Him.

The work of getting an accurate restatement of what the Lord once offered, and what He now offers and instructs, has been underway for more than a year and a half. It has resulted in a preliminary draft of new scriptures now available for anyone to review and comment on as a draft. When the wise input has been gathered, and the text completed to the best of our present ability, it will be prayerfully submitted to the Lord for His approval. He has taken an active role in the project already, providing several additions of importance to Him. They have been added. Whatever man may think of the project, before it is proposed for acceptance as a covenant it will need to be approved and accepted by the Lord. I expect He will do so, because He has already accompanied the work thus far undertaken.

When a conference in Boise takes place this coming September, the completed project will be offered for acceptance. There will be many who will not want it. They needn’t do anything. But if even a few will accept it, those who do will become at that time part of the covenant people of God, numbered with the remnant, and entitled to inherit this as their land. In turn, God will protect them. If they abide the covenant, He will establish a New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge. His glory and terror will be there, and the wicked will not come unto it. To it will be gathered people

from every one of the tribes of Israel, and they will be the only people who are not at war with one another as the final chapter of the world unfolds. (D&C 45:65-71) The Spirit of God will watch over His covenant people while it withdraws from the rest of the world. In the coming darkness, they will become progressively more warlike and violent, until the earth is filled with bloodshed.

If there are any others who are willing to do so, I intend to join them in accepting the covenant in September. That will allow me to address Christian audiences in California, Texas and Atlanta as a covenant holder offering to them the benefit of accepting what the Lord offers to everyone freely. Any others who accept the covenant can do likewise. If accepted, the covenant needs to be kept. No one other than the Lord will enforce the covenant. But He has at His disposal lightning, pestilence, famine and earthquakes. (D&C 43:25) He has warned of a coming time when there is burning, desolation and lamentation. (D&C 112:24) He has always planned to have covenant people survive the last days with His protection. Anyone who objects to this is free to continue on without accepting God's offer. They are free to persuade others to also reject the covenant and remain alone without God's protection in the coming difficulties. But their opposition cannot prevent it from happening for others who choose to accept the Lord's offer to gather them as a hen gathers her chicks.

As I have explained, there is no need to organize a formal church. We can believe without compulsion, and regard one another as brother and sister, father and mother, people of one heart, without a Pope or president. Below is a quote from *Preserving the Restoration* based on a talk I gave years ago:

If Mormonism is to achieve its prophesied success, that future must come through a return to pure ideals. Holy people must practice the religion. To practice within a hostile legal, cultural and social environment requires the religion to assume a non-corporate form. It must become only a shared idea, privately practiced. Ideas cannot be taxed, controlled, organized or compromised by changing leadership. Ideas can stand apart from all commerce and law. The only thing an idea requires for vitality is for someone to give it a voice. Governments and business interests are powerless to seize an idea and corrupt it. Ideas can be opposed, denounced and argued, but ideas remain free from all control. All that is needed for an idea to live is for it to be remembered.

We are obligated to repent and return. We may not have created the problem, but we cannot expect God to accomplish the work He commanded man to do. Others may have neglected it, but we cannot.

The first step in repenting is to gather the original covenant God offered in the precise terms in which it was offered. That is a very difficult task that many people have been working to accomplish for over a year. There are lively efforts underway to research and find the right language. Repentance requires us to first learn the actual language in the terms God provided when His restoration began. Our condemnation in 1832 was provoked by the failure to both "say" and to "do" what was expected of us when He spoke again and commenced the restoration.

We will need to repent before we will receive any offer from the Lord to covenant with us. He alone will determine if we are permitted to receive His covenant, and what terms He imposes upon us when He covenants. I have no intention to ask Him to provide anything further until we (and I) have shown the respect and penitence of laboring to recover what was lost. I fear if I should ask Him without having the best, recovered covenant language to present to Him that it would be an offense. It is tantamount to asking God to do work that we, in humility and contrition, ought to accomplish on our own. The hallmark of repentance is the labor to return. That is underway, but not completed.

I have a different point of view than most, including even those who are taking the restoration process seriously. I want to be clear about this, although dispensations have been organized differently throughout time, I believe there is only one pattern that will bring Zion.

Adam organized the faithful into a family, because it was the natural law of his day, reflected the order of heaven itself, and he was the father, grandfather, or great-grandfather (etc.) of all his posterity. Therefore, there was in fact a family as the natural state of man in his dispensation.

I bypass Enoch, until later.

Noah likewise had a patriarchal position and his dispensation was naturally a reflection of what went before. But his descendants fell into apostasy and only one generation survived the transfer of faith.

Melchizedek labored among people who were apostate, and I will discuss him with Enoch later.

When Abraham recovered the covenant, the world was apostate and the faithful of his day were of his loins or his household. Therefore, in Abraham's dispensation, he established anew a patriarchy with himself as the head. Following him, the son, Isaac, and grandson, Jacob were in turn the patriarchal heads just as at the beginning.

Moses inherited a disorganized people, and after liberating them from slavery, he established one tribe, Levi, to bear the priesthood and receive tithes and offerings. The Levites were deprived of land and received priesthood as their sole inheritance. All other tribes received land inheritances.

When Christ established His dispensation, He mirrored, or imitated the family of Abraham. The people He ministered to were primarily descendants of Abraham, and so imitating Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Peter, James and John) and the twelve sons of Jacob (twelve apostles) and seventy descendants of Jacob who entered Egypt (Exo. 1:5) with the seventy he ordained and sent out, was a familiar pattern to His audience.

When Joseph Smith mimicked or imitated the pattern of the Lord in establishing a New Testament organization, it was intended to show respect to the Lord. We see that Joseph imitated Christ, who in turn had imitated Abraham.

Adam did not bring Zion. Noah did not bring Zion. Moses did not, nor did Christ, nor Joseph Smith. Of these, no one would doubt that Christ possessed the power and authority, the light and truth, and the capacity to bring Zion. But He did not. Why that would be the case?

The only examples we have of Zion are the two I have by-passed. Those two, Enoch and Melchizedek, did not follow the pattern of the others. They did one thing that escapes most people's notice. They took disorganized people and assembled them into a unified body that was equal, of one heart and one mind, without any poor among them. There is no mention anywhere in scripture of a structure or hierarchy among either of these people. It is clear these two were both ranked among history's most towering spiritual figures. But they led two communities of equals. They assumed no authority other than that of a teacher and preacher of repentance.

When Enoch's and Melchizedek's successes are considered, the pattern of their dispensations stands in contrast to what all others did. Perhaps the Lord's organization of the Palestinian and Nephite churches was done wittingly to prevent prematurely the third Zion foretold in the promises given from the time of Adam. Meaning that the institution of a community of equals who are possessing one heart and one mind was not the objective Christ intended for those of His day. Hierarchy always imposes inequality.

If you want me to claim the right to mediate as judge I decline. I have rebuffed two serious attempts to have myself "sustained" as a leader. I will not regard myself as above my fellow man, nor will I assume I am any less in need of repenting and returning to the Lord. Even if the Lord has required some things of me, I do not claim that distinguishes me above any others. I confine myself to teaching and trying to persuade others. I hope to always allow them to govern themselves. I believe I have the same obligation as any other man: preach, teach, persuade, use longsuffering and love, exhibit pure knowledge and allow others to determine for themselves, free of constraint, if what is offered is light and truth, or darkness and error.

I am content to be the least in Zion, but would very much hope to be permitted to be there, if the Lord will permit it.

The Book of Mormon IS a covenant. In it we have examples of covenant making provided to us so we can understand the process. There have never been any people who have received the covenant offered through The Book of Mormon. When the 1835 conference adopted scriptures, they adopted only the D&C and not the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon as an offered covenant to the gentiles is an essential step required for the gentiles to become numbered with the remnant and obtain the right to inherit the promised land. If it is not received as a covenant by the gentiles, they have no right to be here on this land, or on any other land of promise.

Individuals can and do obtain hope in Christ. Individuals have been "saved" by the Lord on an individual basis from the time of Adam until the present. That will continue till the end of time. But there is a profound difference between saved individuals and a covenant people. The covenant promises to restore Israel and its remnants contained in the Book of Mormon are not fulfilled merely by individuals, but require a covenant people who have united to receive the covenant people status.

Zion and the New Jerusalem are a place, occupied by covenant people, and not something an individual can be or become. People who gather there will all need to be individually redeemed, individually penitent, individually connected to God, but will only belong to the community if they belong to the covenant and are of one heart and one mind and have all things in common between and among them.

If you think becoming one with God, whom you have not seen is challenging, then how much more difficult will it be to become one with your fellow man whom you have seen. (To paraphrase James.)

The failures of the past are examples to learn from so we can do better. They can also inform our fears and blind us to what the Lord has spelled out in the Book of Mormon. The book gives a blueprint of the necessary steps for the gentiles to take for them to become numbered with the remnant and entitled to possess the promised land as their inheritance.

The Book of Mormon has likewise assured the gentiles that the covenant will include “other books” which the gentiles are required to receive. These books will testify of Christ and restore lost knowledge. They will confirm the truth of the earlier testimonies of Christ. These are required for the gentiles to be restored as His people. If we reject anything offered to us by the Lord, then we fail again to obtain what might have been offered.

We face the same test as the ancients. In Moses’ day they accepted the lesser law after they rejected the higher law. The higher law would have been received by covenant had they not rejected it first. Had they been worthy, ancient Israel would have been required to receive the higher law by covenant as well.

Everyone is entirely free to reject anything offered by the Lord. There is no compulsion. If you are not persuaded to take the step, then don't take it. Any reservation will only lead to difficulties later. Everyone should come to peace about the matter before deciding to accept the covenant. We are all allowed to pursue a relationship with God apart from others. There will be those who are willing to accept a covenant and become numbered with the remnant. In the end, it is better if only a very few receive covenant status who are united in heart and mind than to have a larger body that includes the fearful, the doubtful and the skeptical.

Fear is the opposite of faith. When Moses began to fear, “he saw the bitterness of hell.” (Moses 1:20) Christ equated fear with the failure to have faith. (Mark 4:40-41) Fearful and faithless people are conjuring up negative fantasies to oppose this work. That allows the influence of our common enemy to get hold of us. We should not fear, but have faith.

The Lord asked the saints, Of what value is it for God to offer a gift if men refuse to receive the gift? (D&C 88:33) On the other hand, if this is not from God, then there is nothing to trouble. If it is of man, by all means, refuse it.

Taking this offered step will not immediately change anything other than the identity of those gentiles who receive it. It will be years before the process of sweeping away those who are not entitled to the land will begin in earnest.