

Update References #2

So funny story, before I get into this, Elder Cook gave his talk, I turned to my wife and said “well that was a landmine field, there’s no way I’m going to do a paper on this talk for the blog/YouTube” and I said it about this talk and only this talk. Conference ends and I get a message from tropicalflower asking me specifically to talk about that talk! We read the message and I looked at my wife and said, “are you kidding me? I’m going to die and if I don’t die someone is going to kill me!” I will attempt to go through this landmine field of a talk but I have to say upfront that there is a trigger warning. The ramifications of things said in this talk were far more serious than I believe most members want to face.

I know that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true. I know that I will be standing in this Church until Joseph Smith returns or I die. I sustain my leaders and will follow the direction of the keys wherever it goes, even if I know there is a better way (like that poor sod in 17 Miracles who said that they should wait until spring because they were all going to die, but was still willing to go on the trail with them). If your testimony, however, is on shaky ground (2 Nephi 28), this is probably the worst talk in all of conference for you to study, with or without my help. Study anything else, and skip that video/paper when/if it comes out.

With that said, I will go through the talks with the same pattern as always, the speakers words in black and my commentary in blue, not trying to understand Micah’s will or Micah’s understanding but the Lord’s will and the mind of God, which is intelligence, on the matter. I will start going through the talks at conference and dissecting them starting with the talk by Elder Cook (due to the request), but it should be noted (once again) that that talk was the most “problematic” for people to talk about online that was spoken over the entire weekend. I have written my thoughts, and rewritten my thoughts on that talk over and over again, tying that talk back to the doctrine taught in the scriptures while not coming across “anti- Elder Cook’s talk” is a tight rope that I am trying to work out. I want to put out truth that increases our testimony of the Savior, truth that edifies and lifts and deepens the understanding we should have in the doctrine taught in the Lord’s restored church; this talk was brutal for that and it is why I haven’t posted my work in days. I am still debating if posting it is the right move. Regardless, it is now “done”, and I will now work down from what I thought were the most important talks to the least important (ie. prioritize).

Some people have asked me regarding “good talks vs bad talks” or “good teaching vs bad teaching”. Good talks are grounded in the Lord’s knowledge, will, power, etc. and bad talks are grounded in mammon, politics, earthly knowledge, etc. Pretty simple. To judge a good teacher from a bad teacher to me is as simple as the judging of keys in the Church. “Does this individual have the authority to sit me down and interview me for worthiness?” If the answer to this is yes, then the individual has keys over you. If the answer is no, then the individual does not have keys over you and thus will never be told by the Lord specifics about or for you (Satan and his angels could however). The test for a good teacher is after the teacher leaves, ask the students separately, without looking at their notes, to summarize what the lesson was about. Once they answer that question, ask them, “what was the commitment?” Then you ask the teacher the same questions- summarize your message in one sentence and also the one

thing you wanted your students to do. A master teacher knows that you will never be able to get people to comprehend more than a single message and a single commitment at one time. This single message and single commitment should thread itself through your entire process/lesson/talk. If 70% of your students answer exactly the same, that teacher gets a passing grade. If, however, you ask ten people what the lesson/talk was about and what was the commitment and you get ten different answers, that's a failure. If you ask ten different people the question and they can't even tell you what the message was in one sentence, they cannot even summarize what you said in one sentence and they don't know what the commitment was, that is a catastrophic failure as a teacher. If you ask ten people to summarize a talk, such as Elder Bednar's talk, and ten people all answer "temporal preparedness and food storage" and they answer the commitment "get your temporal salvation and food storage in order", that was an example of monumental success.

If a member tells me that they loved so and so's talk or lesson and I ask them, "oh, summarize the lesson in one sentence" and they can't do it, and then I ask them to tell me what the commitment was and they can't tell me that either, and then they proceed to tell me that "they just felt so good listening to the lesson" we have just witnessed an example of priestcraft. God is intelligence, the Holy Ghost is intelligence. The Holy Ghost would not activate the Light of Christ in you to "make you feel good", only to give you a stupor of thought. The Holy Ghost's job is to expand the mind and intellect of the individual. When an individual uses gimmicks to elicit emotional responses in an audience (ie. chemical responses in the body) and you have not reached any point of edification, there was no commitment or call to Christ, and you are left only with the feeling of "I like this individual and their talk/lesson but I have no idea what the talk/lesson was about and I have no idea what I'm supposed to do after listening to it but I want to keep going back and listening to this individual", that is priestcraft. A master teacher in the words of Elder Hales "will always attach the student to Christ and the doctrine, not to himself" (see my paper Priestcraft).

With that said let's get into some new references that I feel are noteworthy at this time... Once again, I don't have time to watch all of people's work so I will never "endorse" anyone fully save for Hyrum Andrus who I have watched all of his lectures multiple times and the man is solid doctrinally speaking, and in the words of Hyrum "if you can't tell the difference between wheat and chaff... well then go on ahead and eat your chaff!"

His Return: Prophecy, Destiny, & Hope, written by Richard N. Skousen: Due to this book having a reference to Joseph Smith's return I coughed up the money and purchased it and read it over a weekend. The book could and should be read on a chapter by chapter basis, as there really was no attempt at providing or proving points of reference, the author simply stated an event and then listed references for said event. The author provided no points of reference for pretty much all chapters, so reading the book with an attempt to understand last day timelines would be a mistake, it fails to deliver. If however you want events and some references for those events I've read worse. Every chapter seemed to be a summarized version of one of my papers, he'd take an hour long paper, chop out the meat, and then give you what was left without providing points of reference. The "times of the gentiles" chapter was the only chapter that I'd flat out throw out.

YouTube channel Defending Zion, Blake: A better version of what I described above. He does a solid job on taking subjects and providing a summarized account of the topics and he does it all in PowerPoint which I know Boomers like more, so if you hate lecture style or paper style he uses PowerPoint. I have not watched all of his videos, he posts regularly and it is now basically impossible for me to keep up with everyone's suggestions or asking. Two videos I would highly recommend watching however, that are done well enough that I will NOT be doing a version myself (or have done), is that of his "Joseph: A Type", and his "Mirror Principle: 7th Seal". For those confused about the "multiple years of tribulation" or "7th seal vs 6th seal" still, I'd highly recommend watching that short video, and if you are looking to glean as much as humanly possible from the "Joseph in Egypt: A Type of things to come" he gleans pretty much as humanly possible. I'll be recommending people to check those two videos out specifically from this point on.

YouTube channel Ryan Allen: Very similar to Blake in almost every regard. Just found him and he seems to be very similar, almost a "True to the Faith" version of myself, much like Blake. From looking at his channel it doesn't seem like he posts often but each presentation seems based in scripture and not in "feelings" or "dreams" etc. He intentionally leaves out "meat" when teaching, making it ambiguous but what he does teach and present seems pretty solid. Also, like Blake, he used primarily PowerPoint so if for some reason your brain works better with that you will like him as well.

YouTube channel Frank Keele, The Bridegroom Cometh: Now Frank has a "book" I guess you'd call it, called "The Bridegroom Cometh", but it is 160+ pages and so I have not had a chance to fully read it yet, however, I went to his YouTube channel ("Frank") which was surprisingly hidden as it wasn't a "religious channel" and the LDS doctrine and last day timelines videos are buried in his general videos. I have watched all of his 4 part last day timeline videos and he presents the doctrine better than 90% of YouTubers. It is a crying shame his videos have no views and other "LDS" YouTubers who teach mainly "Christian Theology" and not "LDS Theology" have so many more views. He got himself in trouble however with "dates", he should have stayed entirely in the "macro-scale" as dates can and often do prove to be problematic. If you post 100% correct data but get the dates a little off, people are fickle creatures and will throw out everything else you said as though what you said was dependant on said dates. This is also the problem with 7th sealers, they don't have doctrine they are then extrapolating a date from, they are taking a date and hanging all their doctrine on said date, problem being that if the Great and Dreadful day does not occur within the next 6 months their whole house of cards come crumbling down. Frank does a good job presenting macro points of reference but then dumps dates in, which he should make clear as I try to do, that those dates are "speculative in nature", which is very different than the doctrine.

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith: I recommended this book in my first references video but due to what I am seeing online this needs another suggestion. People suggesting that this book somehow because it was first written on a bunch of individual papers and thus "not doctrinal" should I guess throw out their Doctrine and Covenants. The book is doctrinal. The pages verified by the church in the church's own archives. Member's outright ignorance on subjects such as "judging", "pride", etc. would be solved overnight if they just read this book and paid attention to it, a single time. Members are taking the world, or worse, the sectarian beliefs related to judging, pride, faith, hope, charity, etc. and then passing them off as LDS theology. Hint, they are not, and you are wrong. There is "one answer that is

right for everyone”, someone is always right, someone is always wrong, we need to figure out who is who and what is what. Our beloved prophet head of this dispensation spelled out so much truth compiled in that book that it actually hurts my heart and mind realizing how many members are stumbling around ignorantly in the dark purely because they’ve never picked up this book and read it. Get a copy, sit down, and for the love of truth saints, read it! We will never be given more light and truth if we don’t read and understand what has already been given to us. Period.

Ashley and my’s work on the New Testament abridged: I mentioned this in one of my last papers and we just realized that we haven’t posted a link for it on the blog! We will get around to that ASAP. Joseph Smith changed the titles to read “the Testaments of...” Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, etc. which does change the doctrinal implications of said “scriptures”. It is obvious when reading them how much they fed and borrowed from what the other writers put forth, including the format. There are also cases where the stories don’t match up, with one account saying one blind man was healed vs another which said two were healed, for example. Mark and Luke were not AFAWK apostles, and they once again AFAWK were converted after Christ’s death and resurrection, yet they wrote about it as though they were in fact there. They were recording stories as they were handed them by those that had seen it and by those who had been there. My wife and I did the same, we took those four gospels, ie. “what was handed to us” and we made our own version. We did not “modernize it”, ie. we didn’t do a new translation, the verses are still taken word for word from the King James text we just combined the narrative from all four accounts. We also provide at the bottom of each chapter the same references that are found in our LDS scriptures. We break chapters up obviously differently, focusing from a narrative point of view, thus some chapters are longer but most are actually much shorter. It will be posted shortly, it will obviously be free as well but the file will be much larger as it contains in it a lot of pages as well as pictures that we began posting at the start of each chapter.

A Voice of Warning, by Elder Parley Pratt: I had the book in my hand and was reading it and still had to have my wife point out that this book is where AVOW got its name. Wow. Interesting choice and amazed I didn’t pick that up when I heard the name the first time- I heard about them once, read up on them, and haven’t thought about them since. I find most all of those “LDS” sites to be dumpster fires. I frankly avoid them all. This book however, I’d recommend everyone with an eye for reading to give it a one time over. Very interesting and easy to get a hold of. Hard copies of things like The History of the Church or Journal of Discourses are much harder to find.

Discourses of Brigham Young, compiled by John A. Widtsoe: Just got a copy of it, once again, easier to get a copy of, and man was it worth it. The men that surrounded Joseph Smith had an understanding of last day macro-timelines that surpasses most if not all modern prophets and apostles. They also were not afraid to teach it openly. I still have to use digital to read the full works of Brigham Young, Pratt, etc. but this was worth getting for me because I love having hard copies. Solid book.

Doctrines of Salvation, Joseph Fielding Smith: Just got a hold of this book and can’t wait to read it, but I wanted to mention it purely because when I cracked it open a chapter title caught my eye and made me lol and that was chapter 3 “The Holy Ghost, Light of Christ, and Second Comforter”. Can’t wait to read that chapter!

YouTube channel The Art of Righteousness: What a cool channel! I've been impressed with his knowledge of doctrine (in the videos I've seen) which don't hold any blows! He is soft spoken but yet is bold in his delivery and choice of words. Very precise and honest. To top it off he provides a free song at the end of the videos about the subject he was talking about totally for free! Very cool format and very cool presentation and very cool dude. His songs sound like an Our Lady Peace or Breaking Benjamin without the screaming. Listening to him sometimes I expect the screamo to come out, but that is probably just my generation! Worth checking out in my opinion, a solid choice to send to someone out of the church or investigating. Down to earth but yet grounded in doctrine. Very rare combo in the church.

As always I am up for any suggestions people have to read, I am always looking to learn and correct myself when and if I am incorrect on something. Obviously I'm not a fan of priestcraft, and there are a lot of people recommending people on YouTube to me that frankly I would avoid like a plague, but I, like I said in a recent video, I would never tell them to shut down shop and go quietly into the night, I'd suggest learning and getting better, I'd suggest learning the Word before sharing the word, I'd suggest sharing the Word and not your opinion, etc. I'd also suggest strongly to avoid "LDS Vloggers" as a source for your spiritual knowledge. As a source of hope, comradery, etc. obviously, but for the love of truth please don't listen to these people as though they are theologians!

God bless, God Speed, and keep the faith saints!

Micah