

1. Value of Chastisement (p.194-195)

President Joseph arose and said: "Brother Kimball has given you a true explanation of the parable," and then read the parable of the vine and its branches, and explained it, and said, "If we keep the commandments of God, we should bring forth fruit and be the friends of God, and know what our Lord did.

"Some people say I am a fallen Prophet, because I do not bring forth more of the word of the Lord, Why do I not do it? Are we able to receive it? No! Not one in this room. He then chastened the congregation for their wickedness and unbelief, 'for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son and daughter whom he receiveth,' and if we do not receive chastisements then we are bastards and not sons."

On the subject of revelation, he said, a man would command his sons to dig potatoes and saddle his horse, but before he had done either he would tell him to do something else. This is all considered right; but as soon as the Lord gives a commandment and revokes that decree and commands something else, then the Prophet is considered fallen. Because we will not receive chastisement at the hands of the Prophets and Apostles, the Lord chastiseth us with sickness and death. Let not any man publish his own righteousness, for others can see that for him; sooner let him confess his sins, and then he will be forgiven, and he will bring forth more fruit. When a corrupt man is chastised he gets angry and will not endure it. The reason we do not have the secrets of the Lord revealed unto us, is because we do not keep them but reveal them; we do not keep our own secrets, but reveal our difficulties to the world, even to our enemies, then how would we keep the secrets of the Lord? I can keep a secret till Doomsday. What greater love hath any man than that he lay down his life for his friend; then why not fight for our friend until we die? (December 19, 1841.) DHC 4:478-479.

The letter starts with the Prophet saying that Brother Kimball gave a true explanation of the parable of the vine and the branches. The parable is in John in the New Testament and before we read it, we should have a few words defined according to the Bible Dictionary or Topical Guide.

- Abide: To stay forever or permanent
- Endure: To remain firm in a commitment to be true to the commandments of God despite temptation, opposition, and adversity.

JST 15:1-6 1

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

In the parable we are told that the true vine that we must cling to is Jesus Christ and because of our devotion to him we will bear good fruit. The prophet Nephi in the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ explained to his brother Laman and Lemuel who were hardened and blind that the True Vine was the Rock of our Salvation. Nephi also spoke of the restoration of the Hose of Israel in the Last Days.

What are the fruits that come with Jesus Christ as our true vine? S

ee 1 Nephi 15 Verse 15 And then at that day will they not rejoice and give praise unto their everlasting God, their rock and their salvation? Yea, at that day, will they not receive the strength and nourishment from the true vine? Yea, will they not come unto the true fold of God?

Why did Nephi bring up the true vine when he was explaining to his brother the interpretation of Lehi and Nephi's vision? In the same chapter (15) Nephi explains the Tree of Life and the meaning of the fruit on the Tree of Life. There is a connection between the symbols of the Tree of Life and this parable.

Ask yourself, what are the fruits that I have with Jesus Christ as my rock? Are my fruits good and do they testify of Christ?

Next in the parable it says that any branch that produces fruit is pruned (or purged) to bring more fruit. Pruning a tree or branch makes it stronger because it re-grows and produces more fruit than before. The act of pruning can be brutal to a tree. You cut off everything that is producing good fruit and tell the branch "Let me remove this and you will grow back stronger".

When you think about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ there are a few important things to keep in mind. First, the Husbandman (Heavenly Father) loves us and wants all branches to produce fruit. Second, the true vine (Jesus Christ) is and we cannot produce fruit unless we ABIDE in the vine. The pruning process can be called Chastisement or Adversity. These words are also important words and defined in the Bible Dictionary.

- Chastisement: Correction or discipline given to individuals or groups in order to help them improve or become stronger. See also Adversity
- Adversity: Through adversity—trials, troubles, and distress—man can have many experiences that lead to spiritual growth and eternal progress by turning to the Lord. See also Endure, Persecute, Tempt, Temptation

In the Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, he says Because we will not receive chastisement at the hands of the Prophets and Apostles, the Lord chastised us with sickness and death. The reason the Saints could not continue to live in Zion (New Jerusalem) was because they could not endure the correction and be sanctified.

Doctrine and Covenants 101:1-6

1 Verily I say unto you, concerning your brethren who have been afflicted, and persecuted, and cast out from the land of their inheritance—

2 I, the Lord, have suffered the affliction to come upon them, wherewith they have been afflicted, in consequence of their transgressions;

3 Yet I will own them, and they shall be mine in that day when I shall come to make up my jewels.

4 Therefore, they must needs be chastened and tried, even as Abraham, who was commanded to offer up his only son.

5 For all those who will not endure chastening, but deny me, cannot be sanctified.

6 Behold, I say unto you, there were jarrings, and contentions, and envyings, and strifes, and lustful and covetous desires among them; therefore by these things they polluted their inheritances.

Our take away from this section was to really focus on becoming sanctified by relying on the Lord and receiving the fruit from the Tree of Life. The Value of Chastisement is eternal life! We encourage all those who hear this fireside to look at the fruits they produce and ask Lord what more can I do for thee starting right now? Not when my adversity pasts, or when I have more free time. The battle for our souls and redemption is NOW

I was driving somewhere this week and had an experience I've never had before. I don't have any idea what prompted it. I just had a powerful witness that it is a very, very loving thing for the Lord to chasten, test and try us. Several other thoughts followed that made this concept very clear, and I wish I had pulled over and taken notes, but it seemed so clear to me in that moment that it didn't even occur to me it might not stay that way. (And I was driving...) Unfortunately, that clarity of thought faded rather quickly, but I still feel very blessed to have received that witness. It came up in conversation with a friend from church a day or so later, and when I opened these learning prompts for this week, I knew that it is something the Lord wants in the forefront of my mind. I can testify that the Lord is asking us to keep our hearts soft in all things we are called to endure because He knows exactly what we need to experience to help us "be forgiven, and...bring forth more fruit."

D. Todd Christofferson, April 2011 GC

"I would like to speak of one particular attitude and practice we need to adopt if we are to meet our Heavenly Father's high expectations. It is this: willingly to accept and even seek correction. Correction is vital if we would conform our lives "unto a perfect man, [that is,] unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). Paul said of divine correction or chastening, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth" (Hebrews 12:6). Though it is often difficult to endure, truly we ought to rejoice that God considers us worth the time and trouble to correct.

Divine chastening has at least three purposes: (1) to persuade us to repent, (2) to refine and sanctify us, and (3) at times to redirect our course in life to what God knows is a better path."

I would add that all 3 of those purposes are what we need to be able to redeem Zion.

Dallin H. Oaks, "Love and Law" Oct 2009 GC

"God's love for His children is an eternal reality, but why does He love us so much, and why do we desire that love? The answer is found in the relationship between God's love and His laws.

Some seem to value God's love because of their hope that His love is so great and so unconditional that it will mercifully excuse them from obeying His laws. In contrast, those who understand God's plan for His children know that God's laws are invariable, which is another great evidence of His love for His children. Mercy cannot rob justice, [See Alma 42:25] and those who obtain mercy are "they who have kept the covenant and observed the commandment" D&C 54:6].

We read again and again in the Bible and in modern scriptures of God's anger with the wicked [See, for example, Judges 2:12–14, Psalm 7:11, D&C 5:8, 63:32] and of His acting in His wrath [See, for example, 2 Kings 23:26–27, Ephesians 5:6, 1 Nephi 22:16–17, Alma 12:35–36, D&C 84:24] against those who violate His laws. How are anger and wrath evidence of His love? Joseph Smith taught that God "institute[d] laws whereby [the spirits that He would send into the world] could have a privilege to advance like himself." [Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith (2007), 210.] God's love is so perfect that He lovingly requires us to obey His commandments because He knows that only through obedience to His laws can we become perfect, as He is. For this reason, God's anger and His wrath are not a contradiction of His love but an evidence of His love. Every parent knows that you can love a child totally and completely while still being creatively angry and disappointed at that child's self-defeating behavior."

So the purpose of chastening, or divine correction, is to prepare us to live by all of God's laws. But there is a key in what Joseph Smith said above. "Because we will not receive chastisement at the hands of the Prophets and Apostles, the Lord chastiseth us with sickness and death." If we were willing to listen to the Prophets and Apostles, and commit to changing in the ways they are telling us we need to change, the Lord wouldn't need to chastise us with sickness and death. Just like we can choose to be humble or be compelled by the Lord, we can choose to take our chastening and correction from the Prophets and Apostles that speak to us specifically in our day, or the Lord can chasten us by sickness, death, and all sorts of fire and brimstone. This ties in with the groups of Alma vs. Limhi. Alma and his people chose to "receive their chastisement at the hands of the Prophets and Apostles" AKA Abinidi. They committed to those changes, were led out of Nephi, and though they still had to go through a refining process, they were spared the level of trials and tribulations that the people of Limhi had to endure.

1. No more revelations until we learn and live what we have
2. If we don't learn and live what we have the Lord will chasten us which is a sign of His love.
3. The Lord tells us what we need to do at that moment and based off of our choices the Lord can change His commands.

4. Wicked men will not endure chastening while righteous men endure it for they know that confessing of our sins will allow us to bring forth more fruit.

5. Keep revelation sacred when it is sacred and share the gospel

2. Letter to Vienna Jaques (p.26-27)

September 4.--I wrote as follows to Sister Vienna Jaques, at Independence, Missouri:

Dear Sister:--Having a few leisure moments, I sit down to communicate to you a few words, which I know I am under obligation to improve for your satisfaction, if it should be a satisfaction for you to receive a few words from your unworthy brother in Christ. I received your letter some time since, containing a history of your journey and your safe arrival, for which I bless the Lord; I have often felt a whispering since I received your letter, like this: "Joseph, thou art indebted to thy God for the offering of thy Sister Vienna, which proved a savior of life as pertaining to thy pecuniary concerns. Therefore she should not be forgotten of thee, for the Lord hath done this, and thou shouldst remember her in all thy prayers and also by letter, for she oftentimes calleth on the Lord, saying, O Lord, inspire thy servant Joseph to communicate by letter some word to thine unworthy handmaiden, and say all my sins are forgiven, and art thou not content with the chastisement wherewith thou hast chastised thy handmaiden?" Yes, sister, this seems to be the whispering of a spirit, and judge ye what spirit it is. I was aware when you left Kirtland that the Lord would chasten you, but I prayed fervently in the name of Jesus that you might live to receive your inheritance, agreeable to the commandment which was given concerning you. I am not at all astonished at what has happened to you, neither to what has happened to Zion, and I could tell all the whys and wherefore of all these calamities. But alas, it is in vain to warn and give precepts, for all men are naturally disposed to walk in their own paths as they are pointed out by their own fingers, and are not willing to consider and walk in the path which is pointed out by another, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, although he should be an unerring director, and the Lord his God sent him. Nevertheless I do not feel disposed to cast any reflections, but I feel to cry mightily unto the Lord that all things which have happened may work together for good; yea, I feel to say, O Lord, let Zion be comforted, let her waste places be built up and established an hundred fold; let Thy Saints come unto Zion out of every nation; let her be exalted to the third heavens, and let Thy judgment be sent forth unto victory; and after this great tribulation, let Thy blessing fall upon Thy people, and let Thy handmaid live till her soul shall be satisfied in beholding the glory of Zion; for notwithstanding her present affliction, she shall yet arise and put on her beautiful garments, and be the joy and glory of the whole earth. Therefore let your heart be comforted; live in strict obedience to the commandments of God, and walk humbly before Him, and He will exalt thee in His own due time. I will assure you that the Lord has respect unto the offering you made. Brother David W. Patten has just returned from his tour to the east, and gives us great satisfaction as to his ministry. He has raised up a church of about eighty-three members in that part of the country where his friends live--in the state of New York. Many were healed through his instrumentality, several cripples were restored. As many as twelve that were afflicted came at a time from a distance to be healed; he and others administered in the name of Jesus, and they were made whole. Thus you see that the laborers in the Lord's vineyard

are laboring with their might, while the day lasts, knowing "the night soon cometh when no man can work."

(Signed) JOSEPH SMITH.

Vienna Jacques was a woman who consecrated all for Zion. In Doctrine and Covenants 90, the Lord said:

28 And again, verily I say unto you, it is my will that my handmaid Vienna Jaques should receive money to bear her expenses, and go up unto the land of Zion;

29 And the residue of the money may be consecrated unto me, and she be rewarded in mine own due time.

30 Verily I say unto you, that it is meet in mine eyes that she should go up unto the land of Zion, and receive an inheritance from the hand of the bishop;

In the Teachings we learn that Joseph Smith had revelations on Vienna's prayers and she had called out to Lord that she would receive a letter confirming her sins had been forgiven. Also she wanted to know if the chastisement the Lord gave her fulfilled the purposes of the Lord. Here is a branch from the TRUE VINE bringing forth good fruit and recognizing the chastisement of the Lord made her stronger (sins forgiven).

In April of this year, Prophet Nelson asked us to reflect on our chastisement. His words are recorded in What We Are Learning and Will Never Forget. Difficult trials (Chastisement) often provide opportunities to grow that would not have come in any other way.

- 1) Lost Loved Ones
- 2) Lost Jobs
- 3) Lost Livelihoods
- 4) Lost Health

Found

- 1) Deeper faith in our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.
- 2) Fresh perspective on life—even an eternal perspective. You may have found
- 3) Stronger relationships with your loved ones and with the Lord.
- 4) An increased ability to hear Him and receive personal revelation.

What are the things that you have found with the Lord's chastisement? Are you stronger in the faith?

Prophet Brigham Young said, We are now in a day of trial to prove ourselves worthy or unworthy of the life which is to come (DBY, 345).

Prophet Howard W. Hunter

We will all have some adversity in our lives. I think we can be reasonably sure of that. Some of it will have the potential to be violent and damaging and destructive. Some of it may even strain our faith in a loving God who has the power to administer relief in our behalf. ... “

Jesus said, ‘In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.’ (John 16:33.) On the same occasion, he said, ‘Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.’ (John 14:27.) Throughout his life and ministry he spoke of peace, and when he came forth from the tomb and appeared unto his disciples, his first greeting was, ‘Peace be unto you.’ (John 20:19.)

“But Jesus was not spared grief and pain and anguish and buffeting. No tongue can speak the unutterable burden he carried, nor have we the wisdom to understand the prophet Isaiah’s description of him as ‘a man of sorrows.’ (Isa. 53:3.) His ship was tossed most of his life, and, at least to mortal eyes, it crashed fatally on the rocky coast of Calvary. We are asked not to look on life with mortal eyes; with spiritual vision we know something quite different was happening upon the cross.

“Peace was on the lips and in the heart of the Savior no matter how fiercely the tempest was raging. May it so be with us” (“Master, the Tempest Is Raging,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 34–35).

We know that because the Lord loves us, He wants us stronger even in our storms and chastisements. Can we not accept chastisement to become sanctified and redeem Zion? Prayerfully ask the Lord, what more can I learn and help me ready for Zion

This letter to Sister Vienna Jaques, helps us to see the connection between sacrifice and chastisement. Sacrifice is often something we get to choose, while chastening is something we must endure well. Combined together, they purify us and prepare us for the presence of God.

M. Russell Ballard, “The Law of Sacrifice” Oct 1998 GC

“Its [the law of sacrifice] two major purposes are to test and prove us and to assist us in coming unto Christ.

“I have decreed in my heart, saith the Lord, that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy.

“For if ye will not abide in my covenant ye are not worthy of me” (D&C 98:14–15).

The law of sacrifice provides an opportunity for us to prove to the Lord that we love Him more than any other thing. As a result, the course sometimes becomes difficult since this is the process of perfection that prepares us for the celestial kingdom to “dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever” (D&C 76:62).”

Vienna Jaques sacrificed much during her life for the cause of Zion. She did so financially. The money she gave to the church helped missionaries, and ultimately made it possible to purchase land for the Kirtland temple. But she also sacrificed her comforts of life, leaving a very secure and comfortable life in Boston to join with the Saints. After she made these sacrifices, she still endured much tribulation and chastisement. She was forced from her home in Missouri and

Nauvoo, suffered the persecutions with the Saints, crossed the plains at 60, and continued to be a support to the Church until she died at 96. What she didn't do was complain when "as a result, the course sometimes [became] difficult" after she'd already made a large financial sacrifice and yet still had to endure the chastening hand of the Lord.

Lorenzo Snow, Conference Report, October 1900

"The Lord seems to require some proof on our part, something to show that He can depend upon us when He wants us to accomplish certain things in His interest. The reason is...we shall be placed in certain conditions that require very great sacrifice in the interests of humanity, in the interests of the Spirit of God, in the interest of His children..."

When we can show the Lord that we are willing to make a sacrifice of all our worldly possessions, comforts, etc. AND willing to bear with the chastisements of a just and loving God, we will be able to accomplish "certain things in His interest" like living the Law of Consecration and Celestial Marriage, redeeming and building Zion, and most importantly, being worthy to dwell in the presence of God.

1. Chastisement does not mean a loss of inheritance, chastisement is done in love to save our inheritance.
2. The natural inclination of most people is to follow their own finger into the ditch over listening to others, even those who are righteous and have only the best intentions.
3. Great tribulation proceeds the glory of Zion
4. Joseph Smith lists number of baptisms, blessings, healings etc as the way to see that these men were laboring in faith and that the kingdom of God was moving forward

3. Government Established by God (p.251-252)

If Nebuchadnezzar, or Darius, or Cyrus, or any other king possessed knowledge or power, it was from the same source, as the Scriptures abundantly testify. If, then, God puts up one, and sets down another at His pleasure, and made instruments of kings, unknown to themselves, to fulfill His prophecies, how much more was he able, if man would have been subject to His mandate to regulate the affairs of this world, and promote peace and happiness among the human family!

The Lord has at various times commenced this kind of government, and tendered His services to the human family. He selected Enoch, whom He directed, and gave His law unto, and to the people who were with him; and when the world in general would not obey the commands of God, after walking with God, he translated Enoch and his church, and the Priesthood or government of heaven was taken away.

Abraham was guided in all his family affairs by the Lord; was conversed with by angels, and by the Lord; was told where to go, and when to stop; and prospered exceedingly in all that he put his hand unto; it was because he and his family obeyed the counsel of the Lord.

When Egypt was under the superintendence of Joseph it prospered, because he was taught of God; when they oppressed the Israelites, destruction came upon them. When the children of

Israel were chosen with Moses at their head, they were to be a peculiar people, among whom God should place His name; their motto was: "The Lord is our lawgiver; the Lord is our Judge; the Lord is our King; and He shall reign over us." While in this state they might truly say, "Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord." Their government was a theocracy; they had God to make their laws, and men chosen by Him to administer them; He was their God, and they were His people. Moses received the word of the Lord from God Himself; he was the mouth of God to Aaron, and Aaron taught the people, in both civil and ecclesiastical affairs; they were both one, there was no distinction; so will it be when the purposes of God shall be accomplished: when "the Lord shall be King over the whole earth" and "Jerusalem His throne." "The law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

The Prophet Joseph Smith highlighted two examples of Governments established by God. First was Enoch and then next Abraham.

Do we want the blessings of Abraham and Enoch? What were the characteristics of these men of God?

Abraham

- 1) Guided in all his Family affairs
- 2) Conversed with Angels
- 3) Conversed with the Lord
- 4) Told where to go and when to stop
- 5) Prospered in everything he did

Abraham 1: 16

And his voice was unto me: Abraham, Abraham, behold, my name is Jehovah, and I have heard thee, and have come down to deliver thee, and to take thee away from thy father's house, and from all thy kinsfolk, into a strange land which thou knowest not of;

Enoch

- 1) Directed by God
- 2) Received God's law
- 3) Enoch gave the law to his people
- 4) Walked with God
- 5) Translated
- 6) Priesthood or government of God was taken with Enoch

Moses 6:34

Behold my Spirit is upon you, wherefore all thy words will I justify; and the mountains shall flee before you, and the rivers shall turn from their course; and thou shalt abide in me (TRUE VINE), and I in you; therefore walk with me.

Moses 7:69

And Enoch and all his people walked with God, and he dwelt in the midst of Zion; and it came to pass that Zion was not, for God received it up into his own bosom; and from thence went forth the saying, Zion is Fled.

President Brigham Young: Enoch had to talk with and teach his people during a period of three hundred and sixty years, before he could get them prepared to enter into their rest, and then he obtained power to translate himself and his people” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young [1997], 94).

Who is the prophet in our dispensation to prepare people for exaltation and then translate himself and his people? Ask yourself, are you ready to be in the city where Jesus walks? Ask for the chastisement that will make you stronger and sanctified!

The book “Orson Pratt’s Works” has a section in it called The Kingdom of God. It is fantastic reading. He begins with this: “The kingdom of God is an order of government established by divine authority. It is the only legal government that can exist in any part of the universe. All other governments are illegal and unauthorized. God, having made all beings and worlds, has the supreme right to govern them by His own laws, and by officers of His own appointment. Any people attempting to govern themselves by laws of their own making, and by officers of their own appointment, are in direct rebellion against the kingdom of God. The antediluvians were overthrown by a flood, because they rejected the government of the Almighty... The universal desolation and utter abolishment of all the unauthorized man-made governments of the old world, should have been an everlasting warning to all future generations to avoid the same rebellion, and to establish no governments on the earth of human origin...

The kingdom of God is a theocracy. And as it is the only form of government that will redeem and save mankind, it is necessary that every soul should be rightly and thoroughly instructed in regard to its nature and general characteristics.” He then goes on to teach about the nature of God and His “subordinate officers” (aka Prophets), the laws of adoption, and the blessings of living according to the laws of God. It all ties in with the above, but is obviously too long to quote it all here! Add it to your reading list. 😊

John Taylor, “The Mediation and the Atonement” pg. 171

“The plan, the arrangement, the agreement, the covenant was made, entered into and accepted before the foundation of the world; it was prefigured by sacrifices and was carried out and consummated on the cross. Hence, being the mediator between God and man, He becomes by right the dictator and director on earth and in heaven for the living and the dead, for the past, the present and future, pertaining to man as associated with this earth or the heavens, in time or eternity, the Captain of our salvation, the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, the Lord and the Giver of life.”

Christ has purchased us with His blood, and “Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.” !!! Can you imagine how differently the history of the world would have been if only people would have Him to be their God and King? Like Egypt under the superintendence of Joseph, the United States prospered when our leaders and the majority of the people believed in living the laws of God. But, also like Egypt, the oppression of God’s people will lead to our own form of exodus. But I’ll leave Micah to talk about that!

1. All light comes from God
2. God puts bad kings in power as well as good kings, but that is not what he wants. His desire is for a celestial government but when people won’t accept it He has to go through other means. The only way this celestial government works is through prophets and people’s obedience to the prophets.
3. Whenever people listen to a prophet everyone prospers, when people fight against it they are chastened and eventually destroyed.
4. This celestial government is a theocracy with the prophet being in charge of both ecclesiastical and civil affairs
5. This celestial theocracy government will be ushered in as part of the Millennium.

4. Universal Peace to Come from God (p. 252-253)

This is the only thing that can bring about the "restitution of all things spoken of by all the holy Prophets since the world was"--"the dispensation of the fullness of times, when God shall gather together all things in one." Other attempts to promote universal peace and happiness in the human family have proved abortive; every effort has failed; every plan and design has fallen to the ground; it needs the wisdom of God, the intelligence of God, and the power of God to accomplish this. The world has had a fair trial for six thousand years; the Lord will try the seventh thousand Himself; "He whose right it is, will possess the kingdom, and reign until He has put all things under His feet;" iniquity will hide its hoary head, Satan will be bound, and the works of darkness destroyed; righteousness will be put to the line, and judgment to the plummet, and "he that fears the Lord will alone be exalted in that day." To bring about this state of things, there must of necessity be great confusion among the nations of the earth; "distress of nations with perplexity." Am I asked what is the cause of the present distress? I would answer, "Shall there be evil in a city and the Lord hath not done it?"

[Doctrine and Covenants 77:12](#)

[12 Q. What are we to understand by the sounding of the trumpets, mentioned in the 8th chapter of Revelation?](#)

[A. We are to understand that as God made the world in six days, and on the seventh day he finished his work, and sanctified it, and also formed man out of the dust of the earth, even so, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years will the Lord God sanctify the earth, and complete](#)

the salvation of man, and judge all things, and shall redeem all things, except that which he hath not put into his power, when he shall have sealed all things, unto the end of all things; and the sounding of the trumpets of the seven angels are the preparing and finishing of his work, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years—the preparing of the way before the time of his coming.

Priesthood is given to enable us to build up Zion.

We almost fell out of our chairs when we found this quote as a concert of clarity.

Prophet John Taylor teachings from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints website. What is this priesthood given us for? That we may be enabled to build up the Zion of our God. What for?... that we may be the true and proper representatives of God our Father here upon the earth, that we may learn to know his will and do it; that his will may be done on earth as in heaven.

President George Albert Smith taught that “we are not here to while away the hours of this life and then pass to a sphere of exaltation; but we are here to qualify ourselves day by day for the positions that our Father expects us to fill hereafter.”

Going back to the parable from John. Priesthood and the dispensation of the fullness of times is tied to the TRUE VINE of Jesus Christ and that is how New Jerusalem will come down from heaven and the restoration of the 10 tribes.

Doctrine and Covenants 84:18

18 And the Lord confirmed a priesthood also upon Aaron and his seed, throughout all their generations, which priesthood also continueth and abideth forever with the priesthood which is after the holiest order of God

Why must we live up to our Priesthood ordinations and covenants? We are told that Priesthood is what brings about the building up of Zion.

Prophet Nelson included in April 2016: Are we willing to pray, fast, study, seek, worship, and serve as men of God so we can have priesthood power?

Using Prophet Taylor’s words, we can rephrase the question to this for Zion. To be found worthy to use Priesthood power for Zion, am I willing to pray, study, seek, worship and serve God? The parable of the vine is used in Doctrine and Covenants section several times. The servants of God are called to chastise and prune the vineyard in preparation for the Millennium and Universal Peace (See also Jacob 5: 61-74)

Doctrine and Covenants 24: 19 For thou art called to prune my vineyard with a mighty pruning, yea, even for the last time; yea, and also all those whom thou hast ordained, and they shall do even according to this pattern. Amen.

Doctrine and Covenants 39:17 Wherefore lay to with your might and call faithful laborers into my vineyard, that it may be pruned for the last time.

Doctrine and Covenants 71:4 Wherefore, labor ye in my vineyard. Call upon the inhabitants of the earth, and bear record, and prepare the way for the commandments and revelations which are to come.

Doctrine and Covenants 95:4 For the preparation wherewith I design to prepare mine apostles to prune my vineyard for the last time, that I may bring to pass my strange act, that I may pour out my Spirit upon all flesh—

Prophet Nelson continuing with the Price of Priesthood Power

I fear, brethren, that some among us may one day wake up and realize what power in the priesthood really is and face the deep regret that they spent far more time seeking power over others or power at work than learning to exercise fully the power of God. Have you as Apostles of old become strong and steadfast of Christ and your Priesthood? Are you laboring in his vineyard in preparation for the strange act and the sounding of trumpets?

I'm going to cheat a bit because I got to read Ryan and Kelly's paper in advance and just say that I have nothing further to add to what they said.

1. Joseph Smith now says that the only way we get the dispensation of the fulness of times, the only way we get restitution of all things etc is with this government that we discussed in the previous section.
2. Any attempt to create the dispensation of the fulness of times, restitution of all things etc without this theocracy government will end in utter failure, just like all the nations of the earth.
3. In order to get this kingdom or rather when this kingdom will be established will be when the nations of the earth are in freefall. Why will they be in freefall? Joseph Smith answers, the Lord will be spearheading it by coming out of His hiding place and making bare His holy arm.

5. Earth Now Groaning Under Corruption (p.253)

The earth is groaning under corruption, oppression, tyranny and bloodshed; and God is coming out of His hiding place, as He said He would do, to vex the nations of the earth. Daniel, in his vision, saw convulsion upon convulsion; he "beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit;" and one was brought before him like unto the Son of Man; and all nations, kindred, tongues, and peoples, did serve and obey Him. It is for us to be righteous, that we may be wise and understand; for none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand, and they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.

Enoch saw in his vision the creation of the Earth and the pain of the Earth as Satan and wickedness were in the Earth.

Moses 7

26 And he beheld Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced.

48 And it came to pass that Enoch looked upon the earth; and he heard a voice from the bowels thereof, saying: Wo, wo is me, the mother of men; I am pained, I am weary, because of the wickedness of my children. When shall I crest, and be cleansed from the filthiness which is gone forth out of me? When will my Creator sanctify me, that I may rest, and righteousness for a season abide upon my face?

54 And it came to pass that Enoch cried unto the Lord, saying: When the Son of Man cometh in the flesh, shall the earth rest? I pray thee, show me these things.

58 And again Enoch wept and cried unto the Lord, saying: When shall the earth rest?

64 And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest.

Prophet Joseph Smith wrote It is for us to be righteous that we may understand and none of the wicked shall understand. In the previous parables we learned, that by remaining on the TRUE VINE and being chastised that we can be purified.

Who are the righteous and wicked in this day when the earth shall rest?

Doctrine and Covenants 63:54 And until that hour there will be foolish virgins among the wise; and at that hour cometh an entire separation of the righteous and the wicked; and in that day will I send mine angels to pluck out the wicked and cast them into unquenchable fire.

How are we to be tried if not through chastening and adversity that we may be pruned?

Daniel 12: 10 Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

What must you and your family do in your life to shine as the stars?

Daniel 12: 3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Doctrine and Covenants 68:28 And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord.

Ditto to this one.

1. This is tied directly to the last section above. When the Lord is coming out of His hiding place and making bare his arm, the redemption of Zion will take place and the first of many meetings at Adam-ondi-ahman will take place

2. Joseph says it is our job “to be wise” I believe clearly identifying the 10 virgins parable i.e. if you want to be a part of the redemption of Zion and the initial part of building New Jerusalem, have oil.

6. It Behooves Us to Be Wise (p. 253-254)

As a Church and a people it behooves us to be wise, and to seek to know the will of God, and then be willing to do it; for "blessed is he that heareth the word of the Lord, and keepeth it," say the Scriptures. "Watch and pray always," says our Savior, "that ye may be accounted worthy to escape the things that are to come on the earth, and to stand before the Son of Man." If Enoch, Abraham, Moses, and the children of Israel, and all God's people were saved by keeping the commandments of God, we, if saved at all, shall be saved upon the same principle. As God governed Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as families, and the children of Israel as a nation; so we, as a Church, must be under His guidance if we are prospered, preserved and sustained. Our only confidence can be in God; our only wisdom obtained from Him; and He alone must be our protector and safeguard, spiritually and temporally, or we fall.

We have been chastened by the hand of God heretofore for not obeying His commands, although we never violated any human law, or transgressed any human precept; yet we have treated lightly His commands, and departed from His ordinances, and the Lord has chastened us sore, and we have felt His arm and kissed the rod; let us be wise in time to come and ever remember that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." The Lord has told us to build the Temple and the Nauvoo House; and that command is as binding upon us as any other; and that man who engages not in these things is as much a transgressor as though he broke any other commandment; he is not a doer of God's will, not a fulfiller of His laws.

How can you be one of those who are wise and can walk with God like Enoch?

Hosea 14:9 Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

President Eyring in October 2020 described Enoch's day and gave the pattern to follow that we might be sanctified.

"[Enoch's] was a day of wickedness and evil, a day of darkness and rebellion, a day of war and desolation, a day leading up to the cleansing of the earth by water.

"Enoch, however, was faithful. He 'saw the Lord,' and talked with him 'face to face' as one man speaks with another. (Moses 7:4.) The Lord sent him to cry repentance to the world and commissioned him to 'baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son, which is full of grace and truth, and of the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of the Father and the Son.' (Moses 7:11.)

Enoch made covenants and assembled a congregation of true believers, all of whom became so faithful that 'the Lord came and dwelt with his people, and they dwelt in righteousness,' and were blessed from on high. 'And the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.' (Moses 7:18.) ...

"After the Lord called his people Zion, the scripture says that Enoch 'built a city that was called the City of Holiness, even Zion;' that Zion 'was taken up into heaven' where 'God received it into his own bosom;' and that "from thence went forth the saying, Zion is fled.' (Moses 7:19, 21, 69.) ...

“This same Zion which was taken up into heaven shall return ... when the Lord brings again Zion, and its inhabitants shall join with the new Jerusalem, which shall then be established.”

We can be the wise and those faithful Saints who will walk with God in New Jerusalem. As you study the words of President Eyring, do everything that you can to become sanctified and dwell in righteousness?

My testimony: This week has been very difficult for our family. I can testify that the Lord is the only way for eternal life. Our Heavenly Father stands with open arms for those who are wise and working to magnify their Priesthood calling and ordinations. Please be wise for this is your time and your eternal salvation is within Zion and abiding in the new and everlasting covenant.

Stay steadfast! Ryan and Kelly

D&C 103:15-22

15 Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come by power;

16 Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.

17 For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be bled out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm.

18 And as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be.

19 Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence.

20 But I say unto you: Mine angels shall go up before you, and also my presence, and in time ye shall possess the goodly land.

21 Verily, verily I say unto you, that my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., is the man to whom I likened the servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable which I have given unto you.

22 Therefore let my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., say unto the strength of my house, my young men and the middle aged—Gather yourselves together unto the land of Zion, upon the land which I have bought with money that has been consecrated unto me.

I'm going to change Joseph Smith's words above just a hair. You can tell me if you don't think it holds true. "The Lord has told us to [redeem Zion]; and that command is as binding upon us as any other; and that man who engages not in these things is as much a transgressor as though he broke any other commandment; he is not a doer of God's will, not a fulfiller of His laws."

D&C 103:35-36

35 Therefore, as I said unto you, ask and ye shall receive; pray earnestly that peradventure my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., may go with you, and preside in the midst of my people, and organize my kingdom upon the consecrated land, and establish the children of Zion upon the laws and commandments which have been and which shall be given unto you.

36 All victory and glory is brought to pass unto you through your diligence, faithfulness, and prayers of faith.

Diligence: Constant effort to accomplish what is undertaken; exertion of body or mind without unnecessary delay or sloth

1. We must be hearers of the Word and doers of the Word. Joseph gives us the key as to how we may escape more chastening, for there will be those in the redemption of Zion and initial building of New Jerusalem whose chastening will not be so sore. To hear the word and have faith in the word is to have faith as the brother of Jared, that is the first key once again confirmed.

2. The second key is that of exact obedience, once again confirming it to be the second key. Joseph Smith gives a stern warning and a clear as day warning against what he knew would plague the Saints pre-redemption, pre-building of NJ and that is of priestcraft- for obedience is greater than sacrifice. Not only did Joseph Smith know this and see this, all of the prophets of the Book of Mormon saw it as well.

3. The parable of the 10 virgins teaches us that although 10 virgins had made themselves worthy and had faith as the brother of Jared (they waited for the call and had their lamps etc), they did not exercise exact obedience and thus were not prepared.

I would highly recommend going and reading Teachings of the Presidents: Joseph Smith- this is different than Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith- Chapter 19: Stand Fast through the Storms of Life. It will provide wonderful context and fill out what Joseph Smith was teaching in these quotes. You can find the chapter at this link:

<https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/teachings-joseph-smith/chapter-19?lang=eng>

The Lord, in summary, need His theocracy, He needs the New Jerusalem or else we will never have the dispensation of the fulness of times in which we will have the restitution of all things where all things will be made one. This theocracy with Christ as King flows down to a prophet and Joseph Smith was promised to be that prophet. We can humble ourselves or we can be compelled to be humble, that is the story of our future.

My prayer and commitment to us is to humble ourselves and have faith as the brother of Jared and practice exact obedience so that we may escape the scourging. I'll close this fireside with the words of Elder Orson Pratt:

“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

Now I know the habit of praying always in Christendom, that is certain portions of them, they pray in their families and in secret, and have prayer meetings; they pray for this, that, and the other, and say the Lord's prayer and a great many prayers, but the question is do they pray always? He did not tell them to pray the Lord's prayer always, particularly, neither did he tell not to; but this one prayer he did tell them to pray always, and causes it to be written; do WE fulfil it, and do they; it is not to pray always nor to watch always, but it is to pray this particular

prayer always—that we may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and stand before the Son of Man.

Whatever else they might pray in all the varying circumstances of their lives, all right, but this one thing they would be sure to need, to be accounted worthy to escape all those things Christ foretold, and stand before him. And why should they pray this always? Because it is not only the living generation that had to meet it, and had need to be prepared, but it was a chain of prophecy that would be gradually fulfilling from that time until he comes, and whether they passed through the veil or remained in the flesh, one thing was certain, they would all have to meet some part of it; if they lived in Jerusalem they would have some part of it to meet [Jews in Jerusalem] ; or if they were scattered among all nations they would have some part of it to meet [the “remnant” worldwide]; and if they live until there should be signs in the sun, moon, and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations, they would have some part of it to meet [Apparently key signs according to Elder Pratt as to the New Jerusalem, or Zion]; therefore whether they lived in modern or in former times, behind the veil or on this side of it; it was necessary to pray always to be accounted worthy to escape all these things and stand before the Son of Man.

Take care how you get drunk, how you are a glutton, how you are wholly swallowed up in the cares of this world, in accumulating riches, and take care to pray that you may escape all these things, and stand before the Son of Man.

End Quote Elder Pratt (vol. 3, pp. 127-139)