

# September 19<sup>th</sup> 2021 Fireside

## Principles of the Gospel Never Change

Section Six 1843-44, p.308

It was the design of the councils of heaven before the world was, that the principles and laws of the priesthood should be predicated upon the gathering of the people in every age of the world. Jesus did everything to gather the people, and they would not be gathered, and He therefore poured out curses upon them. Ordinances instituted in the heavens before the foundation of the world, in the priesthood, for the salvation of men, are not to be altered or changed. All must be saved on the same principles.

Jonathan's thoughts: So the object of this Fireside tonight is to relate these passages to Marriage. In order to do this properly we need to lay a foundation quickly. Most of this should be review for us as saints but given my experiences in GD class assumptions like that are dangerous things.

So a quick review from the top.

Mormon 9

9 For do we not read that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and in him there is no variableness neither shadow of changing?

1 Nephi 10:18

18 For he is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and the way is prepared for all men from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto him.

So this shows us that God does not change Why is it God can not change?

As we learn in the Lectures on Faith, some of the reasons why God cannot change is:

How can you have faith if God changes?

If there was any variation with God then there could be no Justice, no Mercy, No order, no faith. Without these things there is no God.

Since we know these things do exist then we know there is a God and he is unchanging. If you do not know this you should not be listening to this and I would recommend you stop listening to me now.

From Pg 345 in the TPJS we learn that God once was as we are now.

Or as President Snow liked to put so succinctly "As man now is, God once was; as God now is, man may be"

King Follet Sermon Delivered by Joseph Smith-

Here, then, is eternal life—to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God, the same as all gods have done before

you, namely, by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one; from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, until you attain to the resurrection of the dead, and are able to dwell in everlasting burnings, and to sit in glory, as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power.

Now the question arises, why is this important to Marriage.

If we want to be as God is, then we must go where he goes. So how do we go where he goes? Please open up to D&C 132 if you have your scriptures.

D&C 132

3 Therefore, prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same.

4 For behold, I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory.

5 For all who will have a blessing at my hands shall abide the law which was appointed for that blessing, and the conditions thereof, as were instituted from before the foundation of the world.

6 And as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fulness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fulness thereof must and shall abide the law, or he shall be damned, saith the Lord God.

So here we see that the new and everlasting covenant is a requirement to attain the fullness of His Glory. To further this idea we look to

D&C 131

1 In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

2 And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];

3 And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.

4 He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase.

So now we know the new and everlasting covenant of marriage is required to be as God is, and to dwell where He dwells, in the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom.

So what is the new and everlasting covenant of marriage?

I don't have the time to read the entire chapter

In D&C 132 17-25

1-a man marrying a wife by the Lords word (which is His law),**and** by the new and everlasting covenant, **and** it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of Promise.

2-This entitles him to all things including the continuation of the seeds forever and ever. As long as no murder of the innocent occurs.

3-They shall be Gods, without end, and all things subject unto them and have all power.

4-If we cannot abide this law we cannot attain this Glory

5-Straight is the gate and narrow the way to exaltation and the continuation of lives

6-Verse 24- This is eternal lives—to know the only wise and true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. I am he. Receive ye, therefore, my law. This tells us this is Christs Law.

7-Those that do not both receive him and abide his law taketh the wide way

So the new and everlasting covenant is marriage, and it is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. But wait, if its just marriage whats the big deal. We have had the concept of marriage from the beginning, Beyond doing this in the temple what the big deal. Why the narrow and wide gates, and why do so few enter it? The Lord goes on to detail this covenant of marriage further.

verses 28-37

1-This is the Law of His Priesthood.

2-This promise was given to Abraham and as the seed of Abraham we are able to access this covenant.

3-We are commanded to go and do the works of Abraham

4-If we do not enter into this law you cannot receive the promise of the father.

5-God commanded Abraham, and Sarah gave Hagar to wife. This IS the law. And because this is the law this act fulfilled among other things the promises. What promises? The promise to have children as innumerable as the stars. This is the promise of procreation into the eternities.

6-This promise to procreate into the eternities was fulfilled when he entered into the plurality of wives in the new and everlasting covenant of marriage. Which plurality is by necessity the fulfillment of the law. Which by necessity is also complete obedience.

7-Notice he was married and he had the priesthood for many years prior to this command to marry Hagar. Yet the promise of the father was not fulfilled, and the demands of the law not fulfilled until he entered into plural marriage with Hagar.

8-What else do we learn is an attribute of those that enter into this law? Complete obedience, the Lord gives us the example of Abraham and Isaac as the example of this obedience. Or as it is often referred to as an Abrahamic Sacrifice.

9-This willingness to obey the Lord at all hazards, and in all things, suggests strongly that the requirement Joseph Smith gave us for our calling and election made sure is also fulfilled by consequence of living this law, if it had not already occurred.

10-David was justified in this law as well through the prophet Nathan

11-As well as Solomon, Moses and many others.

12-It was given to Joseph to restore all things including this

If reading D&C 132 does not convince you that The fullness of the new and everlasting covenant of Marriage means the plurality of wives is necessary then respectfully you do not read the scriptures enough to discern clear intent and I would point you to Joseph F. Smith in the Journal of Discourses Volume 20 pages 24-31.

Some people have supposed that the doctrine of plural marriage was a sort of superfluity, or nonessential to the salvation or exaltation of mankind. In other words, some of the Saints have said, and believe, [p. 28b] that a man with one wife, sealed to him by the authority of the Priesthood for time and eternity, will receive an exaltation as great and glorious, if he is faithful, as he possibly could with more than one. I want here to enter my solemn protest against this idea, for I know it is false. There is no blessing promised except upon conditions, and no blessing can be obtained by mankind except by faithful compliance with the conditions, or law, upon which the same is promised. D&C 130:20-21 The marriage of one woman to a man for time and eternity by the sealing power, according to the law of God, is a fulfillment of the celestial law of marriage in part D&C 132:19 and is good so far as it goes—and so far as a man abides these conditions of the law, he will receive his reward therefore, and this reward, or blessing, he could not obtain on any other grounds or conditions. But this is only the beginning of the law, not the whole of it. Therefore, whoever has imagined that he could obtain the fullness of the blessings pertaining to this celestial law, by complying with only a portion of its conditions, has deceived himself. He cannot do it.

These references show us there can be no argument to those of “Common Intelligence” as Joseph Smith would say, that the Highest Realm of the Celestial kingdom is reserved for those that Partake in the fullness of the laws and Promises of Abraham, which is the New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage, Which is by necessity the plurality of wives. Which is the Law of God from the beginning, since before this world was, which Law is administered by Gods Son Jesus Christ. And since God cannot change or have any variance, there are no exceptions to this law. It MUST be fulfilled if one is to have children as innumerable as the stars, and worlds without end, which is to join God as a God in eternal Life.

Joseph’s thoughts: The plan of redemption, with its three divisions, might be likened to a grand three-act play. Act I is entitled “Premortal Life.” The scriptures describe it as our First Estate. (See Jude 1:6; Abr. 3:26-28) Act II, from birth to the time of resurrection, the “Second Estate.” And Act III, “Life After Death or Eternal Life.” In mortality, we are like one who enters a theater just as the curtain goes up on the second act. We have missed Act I. The production has many plots and subplots that interweave, making it difficult to figure out who relates to whom and what relates to what, who are the heroes and who are the villains. It is further complicated because you are not just a spectator; you are a member of the cast, on stage, in the middle of it all! (Boyd K. Packer, “The Play and the Plan” Church Educational System fireside for young adults, May 7, 1995)

Listen to the voice of the Lord your God, even Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, whose course is one eternal round, the same today as yesterday, and forever. (Doctrine and Covenants 35:1)

Proving to the world that the holy scriptures are true, and that God does inspire men and call them to his holy work in this age and generation, as well as in generations of old; Thereby

showing that he is the same God yesterday, today, and forever. Amen. (Doctrine and Covenants 20:11-12)

For he is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and the way is prepared for all men from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto him. For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in these times as in times of old, and as well in times of old as in times to come; wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round. (1 Nephi 10:18-19)

And thou hast beheld in thy youth his glory; wherefore, thou art blessed even as they unto whom he shall minister in the flesh; for the Spirit is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. And the way is prepared from the fall of man, and salvation is free. (2 Nephi 2:4)

We learn the following things respecting the character of God:

- First, that he was God before the world was created, and the same God that he was after it was created.
- Second, that he is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in goodness, and that he was so from everlasting, and will be to everlasting.
- Third, that he changes not, neither is there variableness with him; but that he is the same from everlasting to everlasting, being the same yesterday today and forever; and that his course is one eternal round, without variation.
- Fourth, that he is a God of truth and cannot lie.
- Fifth, that he is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that fears God and works righteousness is accepted of him.
- Sixth, that he is love.

(Lectures on Faith:Lecture Third 13-18)

It is equally as necessary that men should have the idea that he is a God who changes not, in order to have faith in him...For without the idea of unchangeableness in the character of the Deity, doubt would take the place of faith. But with the idea that he changes not, faith lays hold upon the excellencies in his character with unshaken confidence, believing he is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and that his course is one eternal round. (Lectures on Faith:Lecture Third 21)

And I would exhort you, my beloved brethren, that ye remember that every good gift cometh of Christ. And I would exhort you, my beloved brethren, that ye remember that he is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and that all these gifts of which I have spoken, which are spiritual, never will be done away, even as long as the world shall stand, only according to the unbelief of the children of men. (Moroni 10:18-19)

For behold, I am God; and I am a God of miracles; and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and I work not among the children of men save it be according to their faith. (2 Nephi 27:23)

And who shall say that Jesus Christ did not do many mighty miracles? And there were many mighty miracles wrought by the hands of the apostles. And if there were miracles wrought then, why has God ceased to be a God of miracles and yet be an unchangeable Being? And behold, I say unto you he changeth not; if so he would cease to be God; and he ceaseth not to be God, and is a God of miracles. And the reason why he ceaseth to do miracles among the children of men is because that they dwindle in unbelief, and depart from the right way, and know not the God in whom they should trust. Behold, I say unto you that whoso believeth in Christ, doubting nothing, whatsoever he shall ask the Father in the name of Christ it shall be granted him; and this promise is unto all, even unto the ends of the earth. (Mormon 9:18-21)

And if ye are purified and cleansed from all sin, ye shall ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus and it shall be done. But know this, it shall be given you what you shall ask (Doctrine and Covenants 50:29-30)

Micah's thoughts:

## **Some Men "Too Wise to Be Taught"**

Section Six 1843-44, p.309

There are a great many wise men and women too in our midst who are too wise to be taught; therefore they must die in their ignorance, and in the resurrection they will find their mistake. Many seal up the door of heaven by saying, So far God may reveal and I will believe. All men who become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ will have to receive the fulness of the ordinances of his kingdom; and those who will not receive all the ordinances will come short of the fullness of that glory, if they do not lose the whole.

Jonathan's thoughts: [Matthew 18](#)

1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the [greatest](#) in the kingdom of heaven?

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little [children](#), ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever therefore shall [humble](#) himself as this little [child](#), the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Why does becoming as a little child make those that are the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven? Simple answer. Faith and humility. A child does not doubt when a parent tells them anything. No matter how fantastic. A child must be taught to doubt, those that can remove doubt to have the faith sufficient to be counted as a little child can then have nothing withheld from them. This is illustrated in

[Matthew 17](#)

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

What else do little children do? They have the humility to obey over their own judgment when they are instructed in wisdom by their parents. Of we become as little children before Christ, doubting nothing, with the humility to obey, then we are able to learn our wisdom from God. The wisdom in this act is illustrated in:

1 Corinthians 1

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

In these latter days what are some of the pitfalls we see regarding the wisdom of men? Here is Ezra Taft Benson on what I believe to be one of the greatest among the saints, at least in the Western Countries.

“The world worships the learning of man. They trust in the arm of the flesh. To them, men's reasoning is greater than God's revelations. The precepts of man have gone so far in subverting our educational system that in many cases a higher degree today, in the so called social sciences, can be tantamount to a major investment in error. Very few men build firmly enough on the rock of revelation to go through this kind of an indoctrination and come out untainted. Unfortunately, of those who succumb, some use their higher degree to get teaching positions even in our Church educational system, where they spread the falsehoods they have been taught. President Joseph F. Smith was right when he said that false educational ideas would be one of the three threats to the Church within.”

(President Benson, CR, April 1969, p. 12)

So what is the solution to so many who have recieved these false ideas and harmful ideas in their education? Where do they turn? 1st they must be willing to become as a little child and accept the words of God as truth over the wisdom of Men. Ezra Taft Benson again offers us truth.

Ezra Taft Bensons Book An Enemy Hath Done This pg 280-281

“Mormon Philosophy, based on revelations from God, assures us that our Heavenly father is the supreme scientist of our universe, He is the supreme authority of the humanities. God is the supreme authority over politics, economics, on sociology. He knows what's best for human relations. He is the master teacher, with a glorious plan based on freedom of choice for the

building of godlike men and women. He stands today ready to help us reach out and tap the great unseen power as we heed the council of his living mouthpiece, a true prophet of God.”

This shows us that any wisdom that comes from God trumps whatever we may learn from man. Specifically that we should trust the living Prophet to guide us. To take the words of the wisdom of this world is to not only be foolish, but to violate the commandment of idolatry, and depending on the severity to set up a false god upon which we place our faith. So the question as it relates to marriage is how can we prepare ourselves to receive the living prophets words when the new and everlasting covenant of marriage is again permitted to be lived in its fullness preparatory to the establishment of Zion and the Building of New Jerusalem.

Let us turn to the Prophet Joseph Smith for what one of the major stumbling blocks has historically been.

I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions: they cannot stand the fire at all. How many will be able to abide a celestial law, and go through and receive their exaltation, I am unable to say, as many are called, but few are chosen. (20 January 1841, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith [1938], p. 331)

This leads us the issue of tradition, specifically are we willing to abandon our wisdom, our traditions, and our expectations in favor of the wisdom of God as it relates to His new and everlasting covenant of Marriage. Do we have the faith, the humility, and the submission of a little child, unto whom is likened the greatest in the kingdom of God, specifically as it relates to the most important matter, that is marriage. Does our God, our father know best, and do we have the faith, humility, and the courage to follow when his appointed mouthpiece says to follow.

Joseph’s thoughts: Many men will say, “I will never forsake you, but will stand by you at all times.” But the moment you teach them some of the mysteries of the kingdom of God that are retained in the heavens and are to be revealed to the children of men when they are prepared for them they will be the first to stone you and put you to death. It was this same principle that crucified the Lord Jesus Christ, and will cause the people to kill the prophets in this generation. Many things are insoluble to the children of men in the last days. (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 309)

And because my words shall hiss forth—many of the Gentiles shall say: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible. Thou fool, that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible. (2 Nephi 29:3,6)

And by this you may know they are under the bondage of sin, because they come not unto me. For whoso cometh not unto me is under the bondage of sin. And whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice, and is not of me. And by this you may know the righteous from the wicked, and that the whole world groaneth under sin and darkness even now. And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received— Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation. And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all. And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant,

even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written. (Doctrine and Covenants 84:50-57)

1 And the Lord commanded the brother of Jared to go down out of the mount from the presence of the Lord, and write the things which he had seen; and they were forbidden to come unto the children of men until after that he should be lifted up upon the cross; and for this cause did king Mosiah keep them, that they should not come unto the world until after Christ should show himself unto his people.

2 And after Christ truly had showed himself unto his people he commanded that they should be made manifest.

3 And now, after that, they have all dwindled in unbelief; and there is none save it be the Lamanites, and they have rejected the gospel of Christ; therefore I am commanded that I should hide them up again in the earth.

4 Behold, I have written upon these plates the very things which the brother of Jared saw; and there never were greater things made manifest than those which were made manifest unto the brother of Jared.

5 Wherefore the Lord hath commanded me to write them; and I have written them. And he commanded me that I should seal them up; and he also hath commanded that I should seal up the interpretation thereof; wherefore I have sealed up the interpreters, according to the commandment of the Lord.

6 For the Lord said unto me: They shall not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord.

7 And in that day that they shall exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, even as the brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me, then will I manifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations, saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are.

15 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.

16 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.

(Ether 4:1-7,15-16)

Micah's thoughts:

## Men are Saved Through Obedience to Knowledge

Section Four 1839-42, p.217

We have thieves among us, adulterers, liars, hypocrites. If God should speak from heaven, he would command you not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to covet, nor deceive, but be faithful over a few things. As far as we degenerate from god, we descend to the devil and lose knowledge, and without knowledge we cannot be saved, and while our hearts are filled with evil, we are studying evil, there is no room in our hearts for good, or studying good. Is not God good? Then you be good; if He is faithful, then you be faithful. Add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, and seek for every good thing.

The Church must be cleansed, and I proclaim against all iniquity. A man is saved no faster than he gets knowledge, for if he does not get knowledge, he will be brought into captivity by some evil power in the other world, as evil spirits will have more knowledge, and consequently more power than many men who are on the earth. Hence it needs revelation to assist us, and give us knowledge of the things of God.

What is the reason that the Priests of the day do not get revelation? They ask only to consume it upon their lusts. Their hearts are corrupt, and they cloak their iniquity by saying there are no more revelations. But if any revelations are given of God, they are universally opposed by the priests and Christendom at large; for they reveal their wickedness and abominations. (April 10, 1842.) DHC 4:588.

Jonathan's thoughts: So this section is where I start go off script and try to offer more practical information instead of a barrage of quotes and information. I wanted to get the foundation of this laid early so I could attempt to provide some personal experience with these topics as they relate to marriage, knowledge and obedience.

The 1<sup>st</sup> is knowledge of the principle. We must Know that this is a true and correct principle. The references provided in this fireside are sufficient for you to gain a correct knowledge of the principle, though the fullness of knowledge has yet to be revealed. If we need more to accomplish the work, it will be revealed. Until then let us trust in the knowledge we have been given and gain a testimony of it. With the information given if you have not already done so, then it is now time to exercise Moroni 10:3-5

3 Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts.

4 And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

5 And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.

With this in mind I commit all of you who have not already done so, to this very evening get on your knees and ask the Lord with real intent and faith in Christ if these things are true. As you do this I promise that the Lord thru his spirit will manifest the truth of these things unto you in a manner that is undeniable. I know that this will serve as the basis for your testimony as you seek to follow follow and prepare yourself to live the fullness of the New and Everlasting covenant of Marriage. This will be a blessing to you as you work towards Zion within your own home, and as a blessing when the time comes for us to redeem Zion.

Now once you have knowledge and a testimony as to the truth of this, then it is time to learn to practice obedience to this knowledge and prepare in every needful way that we may show God that we have the perfect willingness to abide this Law, preparatory to the establishment of Zion, which will and must happen in our day.

Christ as recorded in John 14

15 ¶ If ye love me, keep my commandments.

D&C 132 while referring to the New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage Christ says this.

24 This is eternal lives—to know the only wise and true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. I am he. Receive ye, therefore, my law.

If we are going to exercise obedience to knowledge, we must better understand what obedience looks like. I have seen similar sentiments as the one I am about to express, but couldn't find the reference, but this is something I have known for a long time and arrived at on my own though it may sound familiar. It goes something like this.

The 1<sup>st</sup> level of obedience is fear of the Lord, and a desire for blessings. We see this played out in the verbiage at church. Blessings this, blessings that, all in an attempt to invite us to obedience. This is how the Lord relates to children in the Gospel, and those that have a child's understanding of a principle. He compels obedience thru fear of missing out or punishment, and invites obedience with blessings. Just as we do with our children. This is manifested in the kinds of responses to Celestial Marriage such as: I will obey because I want to make it to the celestial kingdom. Or, I will obey because I have to, but I don't really like it. This is a child's understanding. This is not meant as an insult, merely a stage of maturity on this topic.

The next level of obedience is Duty. This is what responsible youth do, they obey their parents because it is their duty to do so, and they desire to be good and obedient sons and daughters. They do not like what the parent says at times but they are willing to obey as it is their duty to do so. This often manifests itself in the following line of thought. I will obey because I don't want another woman to miss out on a chance at the celestial kingdom. This sentiment can come from either the man or the woman. Or you may say I will obey, as I know the lord loves me and though am not happy about this I know it is my job to do as my father in heaven asks and I will find a way to bear it.

The final level of obedience is what we should all strive for. That is Love. This is what adult, mature sons and daughters of God do when they are asked. The Lord asks them to obey, and they take no thought for themselves, they take no thought of the blessings or sacrifices, they instead say to themselves. I will go and do and do all that you have commanded, because I Love you. This love over rides all thought of self. This love is charity. It is the pure love of Christ. It is the

end result of perfect obedience, and a perfect willingness to obey. No matter the ask, or the cost. It is the love and obedience required to actually live this law when it is commanded.

Now that we have an idea as to what the general levels of obedience are, we should be able to self evaluate and ask ourselves where we are. Once we have ascertained this knowledge as to the state of our obedience to this law, or willingness to be obedient. The question arises, how can I become more obedient in this law, now that I know where I stand. This is a stunningly simple, and yet excruciatingly difficult one to master. It is best summed up in a word that has a very negative connotation in our culture.

## SUBMISSION

How willing are we to be submissive to our heavenly fathers will for us. This ties directly into consecration, as plural marriage is the consecration of so much of our lives to the work and glory of the Lord.

What is the work and glory of the Lord?

Moses chapter 1

37 And the Lord God spake unto Moses, saying: The [heavens](#), they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man; but they are numbered unto me, for they are mine.

38 And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof even so shall another come; and there is no [end](#) to my works, neither to my words.

39 For behold, this is my [work](#) and my [glory](#)—to bring to pass the [immortality](#) and [eternal life](#) of man.

What is the best way to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man while we are in this mortal probation and into the eternities? Righteous children born into the covenant.

The simple reality is for whatever reason there will be less men than woman, the reason is not revealed. See Isaiah 4

1 And in that day [seven](#) women shall take hold of one [man](#), saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy [name](#), to take away our [reproach](#).

Notice there would be no reproach of they were married covenant women. They may be widows, but there would be no reproach. These are women who will seek the covenant as the purified daughters of Zion.

But even before the events of Isaiah 3 in which the daughters of Zion are purified, we see startling disparities in the amount of faithful single women to men. Both in the church and in Christianity writ large. This is nearing 2 to 1 in many places of heavy concentration of members. If the call to live this today were to go out, we would see the need for this covenant immediately.

Though this is important to understand our desire for obedience should stretch beyond the bounds of this life. The eternal work and glory is greatly compounded into the eternities.

As you study the inherent characteristics of man and woman, and the intelligence's you will come to an understanding.

Women have the unique ability to in the creation of life, Men have the unique ability to bind this life together and organize it. Together they form a perfect union and an equal partnership in the work and glory of the Lord. To bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. As we learn in D&C 132 vs 24, eternal life is the work of this covenant. It is this law. It is the priesthood.

In this law both men and women must bear great responsibility in order to be obedient. Only those able and willing to be obedient enough to bear the weight of this glory will be permitted to procreate in the eternities.

Anyone who does not see or understand this sacrifice is not greater for either of the genders, is blinded by worldly ideals, and likely not currently able to live this in perfect obedience. The men and women shoulder this work and this glory equally, though differently into the eternities.

To be willing to do this is to consecrate yourselves both now, and into the eternities. As we are obedient to this knowledge we are saved, we are able to learn to subjugate all matter, we are able to organize and create the sons and daughters of men, and ultimately bring them into eternal life which is to join us in the patriarchal order, into the priesthood, into the family, that is the work and glory of God forever.

Joseph's thoughts: For all have not every gift given unto them; for there are many gifts, and to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God. To some is given one, and to some is given another, that all may be profited thereby. To some it is given by the Holy Ghost

- to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he was crucified for the sins of the world
- to believe on their words, that they also might have eternal life if they continue faithful
- to know the differences of administration
- to know the diversities of operations, whether they be of God
- the word of wisdom
- the word of knowledge, that all may be taught to be wise and to have knowledge
- to have faith to be healed
- to have faith to heal
- the working of miracles
- to prophesy
- the discerning of spirits
- to speak with tongues
- the interpretation of tongues

And all these gifts come from God, for the benefit of the children of God. (Doctrine and Covenants 46:11-26)

And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me. And then the angel spake, saying: This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth. Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore. And in that day the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam, which beareth record of the Father and the Son, saying: I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, henceforth and forever, that as thou hast fallen thou mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will. And in that day Adam blessed God and was filled, and began to prophesy concerning all the families of the earth, saying: Blessed be the name of God, for because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God. And Eve, his wife, heard all these things and was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient. (Moses 5:6-11)

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

*The glory of God is intelligence*, or, in other words, light and truth. Light and truth forsake that evil one. Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning; and God having redeemed man from the fall, men became again, in their infant state, innocent before God. And that wicked one cometh and taketh away light and truth, through disobedience, from the children of men, and because of the tradition of their fathers. (Doctrine and Covenants 93:36-39)

And the light which shineth, which giveth you light, is through him who enlighteneth your eyes, which is the same light that quickeneth your understandings; Which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space— The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things. (Doctrine and Covenants 88:11-13)

The Spirit of truth is of God. I am the Spirit of truth, and John bore record of me, saying: He received a fulness of truth, yea, even of all truth; And no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments. He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things. (Doctrine and Covenants 93:26-28)

Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand to know and understand...Behold, and lo, I am the Lord thy God, and will answer thee as touching this matter. Therefore, prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same. (Doctrine and Covenants 132:1-3)

And again, verily, verily, I say unto you, if any man have a wife, who holds the keys of this power, and he teaches unto her the law of my priesthood, as pertaining to these things, then shall she believe and administer unto him, or she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord your God; for I will destroy her; for I will magnify my name upon all those who receive and abide in my law. (Doctrine and Covenants 132:64)

Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection. And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come. There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated— And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated (Doctrine and Covenants 130:18-21)

If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal. (Doctrine and Covenants 42:61)

Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Behold, that which you hear is as the voice of one crying in the wilderness—in the wilderness, because you cannot see him—my voice, because my voice is Spirit; my Spirit is truth; truth abideth and hath no end; and if it be in you it shall abound. And if your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things. Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will. (Doctrine and Covenants 88:63,66-68)

And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; (Doctrine and Covenants Micah's thoughts:

84:19-21)

## **The Prophet's Intimation of His Death**

Section Four 1839-42, p.225

As he had this opportunity, he was going to instruct the ladies of this Society, and point out the way for them to conduct themselves, that they might act according to the will of God; that he did not know that he should have many opportunities of teaching them, as they were going to be left to themselves; they would not long have him to instruct them; that the Church would not have his instructions long, and the world would not be troubled with him a great while, and would not have his teachings [in person].

He spoke of delivering the keys of the Priesthood to the Church, and said that the faithful members of the Relief Society should receive them with their husbands, that the Saints whose integrity has been tried and proved faithful, might know how to ask the Lord and receive an answer; for according to his prayers, God had appointed him elsewhere.

He exhorted the sisters always to concentrate their faith and prayers for, and place confidence in their husbands, whom God has appointed for them to honor, and in those faithful men whom God has placed at the head of the Church to lead His people; that we should arm and sustain

them with our prayers; for the keys of the kingdom are about to be given to them, that they may be able to detect everything false; as well as to all the Elders who shall prove their integrity in due season.

### Jonathan's thoughts: Ephesians 5

22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

Understanding this relationship within the family unit is absolutely paramount to understanding marriage and the order of heaven and the priesthood. The priesthood is the organization of the Lords government, the Lords government consists of the family, within the family there is the governance of the relationship. When the Lord says they are bound together to be one flesh this is far more than intimate relations. This is intended to be the manner in which we conduct ourselves. As a body, in perfect harmony, working to further the kingdom, the work, and the Glory of God. Which is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. Within this body the Lord has appointed the Man as the head. He has given us the pattern of this relationship. How the church is to interact with Christ.

Christ interacts with the church by holding the priesthood keys necessary for its progression. Christ acts as a judge, advocate for, and leader for the Church. Christ provides the spiritual direction and bears the responsibility for maintaining the church in righteousness before God. He is accountable in every thing He has been given charge of. But while in the duty of this charge he does not force, as force in contrary to the will and commandments of God. He invites obedience, offers rebuke, and rewards righteousness, and when necessary executes righteous judgment to all those He has been given charge. He stands upon the watchtower to warn of the dangers ahead, and he organizes the church in a manner that best serves the church in that age and circumstance.

These are all things that are expected of Man within the Home. Especially within the New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage. Within this pattern is the charge given to wives to act in one

flesh, as one body in perfect harmony, in the Lords work and Glory. Inasmuch as she is willing to uphold, support, pray for, have faith in, and honor their husband in this regard, the greater the access they will have to the priesthood power offered to them.

Man is given the ability to organize and bind together the family, this is his duty. Woman are given the right and ability to create life, as an equal partner in the creation and management in this family. No body can have 2 heads. Neither can a man serve 2 masters. Christ is the head of the church, and by consequence men. A man is the head of home and therefore woman.

I'll cover this more in a later quote, but Joseph Smith said some very interesting things to the sisters, of which my wife and I have experience.

The prophet started by encouraging the sisters to do all they could to support their husbands in the above model of government. The first question and protest that immediately follows is this: What about if my husband isn't living up to these standards. Why should I place this trust and faith in him?

Something interesting we should note. In this relationship Christ is perfect, men are not, so there must be a way to redress grievances right? There is, and it follows the lines of what we already know in the church. 1<sup>st</sup> you bring this up with your husband, in private and in a respectful manner. As all communication both husband to wife, and wife to husband should be. Then give him time, means, patience and grace to correct these issues. If this does not work the Lord will not leave you in the Lurch forever. If this an abuse issue it should go straight to the Bishop. This is talking about the husband living up to his duties within the home as the spiritual head. If after this you find no correction and living up to his duties, then depending on issue you take it to the Bishop or the Lord. I'll relay a story of how this worked in my own life.

I have an obsessive personality, I often find myself having to check myself as to properly balancing my time. This trait makes me very effective and I usually excel at what I put my mind to. The issue is my family suffers the results. This was an issue that my wife had brought up to me for a couple years and I didn't listen. I would make small, but ultimately temporary changes and the issue remained. She harbored a small degree of resentment towards me and did not pray for me as the lord asked of her. After this came to a head one day about 5 years ago she said I need you to fix this, and I told her if it was actually an issue that needed to be fixed, she had an avenue of redress. I encouraged her to exercise humility and act in the manner the Lord had required of her and If I did not respond the lord would correct me in due time. I was resistant to making the changes or admitting this was an issue and not just a necessary sacrifice as this aspect of me had been an enormous strength that had brought me exceptional success in providing and supporting many people at a very young age. This strength had become my weakness, little to my knowledge at the time. Over the next 18 months my wife acted with grace, humility, patience and supported and prayed for me after the manner the lord had asked. The next 18 months the Lord tore me down to nothing. He took away or told me to give away everything I had earned. He put me in a situation to ask for and require help for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in my life. He humiliated me, and brought me low. As I hit rock bottom, I finally gave up, and in an act of submission in the ruins of my life asked the Lord why? Why have you done this again? You've done this before but I saw the purpose in those times. I have given away all and done all that you asked. His response was, you have done all that I have asked, and for this you are blessed. I chasten those whom I love, and I hear my daughters prayers. She has acted faithfully and you did not respond. Your strength had become your weakness. I have taken all away to teach you to respond to your

wife, in preparation to receive more. I love my daughters and I will not leave them alone. Repent and respond to your wife, and I shall give you back all that I have taken and then some. Your submission and obedience and the faith and obedience of your wife has blessed the two of you greatly. Go forth and do, that she trouble me no more concerning you.

This experience taught me the love and wisdom the Lord has in this system. It serves as a way that all can be tested of their integrity. We can all prove our submission to the Lord, and the Lord can chasten, and if we do not allow ourselves to be chastened then it provides the means by which righteous judgment can be passed and my blessings removed and given to one more worthy. Trust in the Lords ways, and the wisdom of the Lord, and he will show forth miracles, and will deliver you onto one worthy, if you will but endure to the end.

Joseph's thoughts: While he was in possession of all his faculties, and likely to live for many years to lead the Church—in fact the people believed that he would live to redeem Zion—when he was thus situated, impressed by the Spirit and power of God, he called together our leading men, and he bestowed upon the Twelve Apostles all the keys and authority and power that he himself possessed and that he had received from the Lord. He gave unto them every endowment, every washing, every anointing, and administered unto them the sealing ordinances and taught them the character of those ordinances, and revealed unto them the doctrine of celestial marriage, and impressed upon them the importance of their obedience to the same, and made it obligatory upon them that they should obey it and carry it out in their lives, and teach it to others. He taught these brethren that unless they did this the kingdom would stop, it could not make further progress. And filled with the power of God, he blessed them and placed those keys and this authority upon them, and told them that he had thus ordained them to bear off the kingdom. There was no key that he held, there was no authority that he exercised that he did not bestow upon the Twelve Apostles at that time. Of course, in doing this he did not divest himself of the keys; but he bestowed upon them these keys and this authority and power, so that they held them in their fullness as he did, differing only in this respect, that they exercised them subordinate to him as the head of the dispensation. He ordained them to all this authority, without withholding a single power or key or ordinance that he himself had received.

Thus you see these men whom God chose to hold the Apostleship received all this authority from Him. Hence he told the people before he was taken, "I roll this kingdom off on to the shoulders of the Twelve." Probably there are some in this room who heard him talk in this manner. I was but a boy at the time, but I remember it very distinctly. He evidently wanted his brother Hyrum also to be preserved, and for some time before his martyrdom talked about him as the Prophet. But Hyrum, as you know, was not desirous to live away from Joseph; if he was to be exposed to death, he was resolved to be with him. Our revered President, who is present with you today, was with the Prophet and his brother, the Patriarch, at the time of their martyrdom, and was himself shot down, and his life almost despaired of. But God in his providence reserved him for something else, and his enemies did not have power to take his life.

(JD 23:357, George Q. Cannon, The Power and Authority, Etc. Sunday Afternoon, October 29, 1882.)

Joseph Smith holds the keys of this last dispensation, and is now engaged behind the veil in the great work of the last days. . . . No man or woman in this dispensation will ever enter into the celestial kingdom of God without the consent of Joseph Smith. From the day that the priesthood was taken from the earth to the winding-up scene of all things, every man and woman must have

the certificate of Joseph Smith, Junior, as a passport to their entrance into the mansion where God and Christ are. . . .

He holds the keys of that kingdom for the last dispensation---the keys to rule in the spirit world; and he rules there triumphantly, for he gained full power and a glorious victory over the power of Satan while he was yet in the flesh, and was a martyr to his religion and to the name of Christ, which gives him a most perfect victory in the spirit world. He reigns there as supreme a being in his sphere, capacity, and calling, as God does in heaven.” (Brigham Young, October 9, 1859, Journal of Discourses 7:289)

There is an almighty work to perform in the spirit world. Joseph has not yet got through there. When he finishes his mission in the spirit world, he will be resurrected, but he is not yet done there. . . . When his spirit again quickens his body, he will ascend to heaven, present his resurrected body to the Father and the Son, receive his commission as a resurrected being, and visit his brethren on this earth, as did Jesus after His resurrection.” (Brigham Young, March 15, 1857, Journal of Discourses 4:285-286.)

Micah’s thoughts:

### **The Devil's Power to Deceive**

Section Four 1839-42, p.227

The devil has great power to deceive; he will so transform things as to make one gape at those who are doing the will of God. You need not be teasing your husbands because of their deeds, but let the weight of your innocence, kindness and affection be felt, which is more mighty than a millstone hung about the neck; not war, not jangle, not contradiction, or dispute, but meekness, love, purity--these are the things that should magnify you in the eyes of all good men. Achan [see Joshua 7] must be brought to light, iniquity must be purged out from the midst of the Saints; then the veil will be rent, and the blessings of heaven will flow down--they will roll down like the Mississippi river.

If this Society listen to the counsel of the Almighty, through the heads of the Church, they shall have power to command queens in their midst.

I now deliver it as a prophecy, if the inhabitants of this state, with the people of the surrounding country, will turn unto the Lord with all their hearts, ten years will not roll around before the kings and queens of the earth will come unto Zion, and pay their respects to the leaders of this people; they shall come with their millions, and shall contribute of their abundance for the relief of the poor, and the building up and beautifying of Zion.

After this instruction, you will be responsible for your own sins; it is a desirable honor that you should so walk before our heavenly Father as to save yourselves; we are all responsible to God for the manner we improve the light and wisdom given by our Lord to enable us to save ourselves.

Jonathan’s thoughts: The last story I relayed shows forth the strength and power that is displayed when a wife follows the wisdom of the Lord. I would like to spend this time to address the lies that Satan tells and convinces far too

many men and woman of as it relates to the power of Love, Meekness, innocence, kindness and affection.

We do not need more men in this world, and by that I mean we do not need woman to become as men are. Satan has convinced us that power is derived as a result of force, and the ability to exercise force over another. When women think of power, they see positions of authority, these positions of authority then historically are used to oppress all by force, and many times woman to a larger degree. So herein lies the great deception. In Satan's kingdom, authority equals force. To wield authority is derived and maintained by force which results in the ability to oppress, therefore they are deceived by Satan into the belief that the only way to avoid oppression is to hold that authority themselves. Hence the woman in the priesthood argument. In God's kingdom authority is derived by correct ordination and the weight of ones responsibilities and the righteousness of the man in carrying out those responsibilities. President Nelson holds no greater right to force than I do, but the weight of his responsibilities gives him the authority to command me to do something and the Lord expect me to obey. This authority is governed on the principles of righteousness though not on this alone. So then the question arises, what about when a man, in the kingdom of God does not follow these commands and allows himself to act in an unrighteous manner? And why is this allowed to happen?

D&C 121

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

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

36 That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness.

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

So this tells us what happens, the mans authority is withdrawn and the Lord will not permit his priesthood to be used in the exercise of unrighteous dominion. So what about those that do these unrighteous things while in these positions? Whether that be in a calling, or marriage now, or the time when Celestial Marriage is lived in its fullness?

It is important to distinguish the principles from the man. The act of not living worthy of a calling, or as it relates to this priciple of marrage is not an indictment of the principle. Joseph F Smith in the JoD 20 pgs 24-31 shows us this.

The fruits of the Gospel are good; he that has actually embraced the Gospel will do good, only so far as he may err, or depart therefrom. Hence, it is difficult to separate a man's actions from his principles.

There is no difficulty, however, in this matter to those who always bear in mind, that evil and corrupt practices are not the results of obedience to the Gospel, but of disobedience, and of the

perversion of the truth. If we would keep this in our minds we would not cast blame upon the principles themselves when we see or hear of men, who should represent them, do wrong; but we would rather say, the man has departed from his principles and gone into error. It is he that is defective, through not practicing what he professes; the principles are good and holy, and he himself would become so too, if he would but practice them.

The Lord gives men enough rope and time to raise himself up, or lower himself down below into condemnation as President Benson liked to say.

The next part of this deception that is often overlooked in the power and value of the nature of woman to effect change.

The civil war cost 500,000 plus people and was the bloodiest in the history of this nation. But did less to convince and change the hearts of men than the demonstrations of the civil rights era. Why was this tactic so successful? It showed the wickedness of force in responding to innocence, nonviolence, and kindness. In the unwillingness to engage in hatred, anger and to submit themselves in meekness and innocence they showed the country the injustice of oppression for the color of ones skin, and not basing that judgment on the content of character. This injustice, bared with patience, and innocence showed unto the hearts of men the evil and did more to change the hearts of man than over half a million dead. These men and woman showed part of the power of woman. To act in innocence, meekness, love and kindness is to live worthy of love and blessings. To bear this when one has not earned it will have the following affect. Either the man will raise himself up to meet the woman in righteousness, or he will be removed from the equation, by the Lord or his own conscience. These were flawed people, out of the gospel, imagine the power afforded to righteous woman in the gospel. To illustrate this, all men ask yourselves. What was more effective at changing your heart, the fury of your mother or father, or the disappointment of your mother expressed in love and kindness?

This power is so great the adversary has done all he can to make men like women and women like men and in so doing take away both of their power to create Zion. Why is this his objective? Because where Zion exists Satan is bound and powerless. Men, empower yourselves by having the courage and righteousness to lead the home. Woman, empower yourselves with the attributes of godliness to the changing and swaying of the hearts of all those you encounter. These powers combined will create Zion. If either the man or the woman fail, do not let that be your excuse to fulfill your covenants that you may be worthy of another if the situation requires it, but hopefully to the convincing of your spouse to follow the wisdom of the Lord.

Joseph's thoughts: There are two kinds of beings in heaven, namely: Angels, who are resurrected personages, having bodies of flesh and bones— For instance, Jesus said: Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. Secondly: the spirits of just men made perfect, they who are not resurrected, but inherit the same glory. When a messenger comes saying he has a message from God, offer him your hand and request him to shake hands with you. If he be an angel he will do so, and you will feel his hand. If he be the spirit of a just man made perfect he will come in his glory; for that is the only way he can appear— Ask him to shake hands with you, but he will not move, because it is contrary to the order of heaven for a just man to deceive; but he will still deliver his message. If it be the devil as an angel of light, when you ask him to shake hands he will offer you his hand, and you will not feel anything; you

may therefore detect him. These are three grand keys whereby you may know whether any administration is from God. (Doctrine and Covenants 129:1-9)

Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! (2 Nephi 15:20)

For behold, at that day shall he rage in the hearts of the children of men, and stir them up to anger against that which is good. And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell. And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell; and he saith unto them: I am no devil, for there is none—and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, from whence there is no deliverance. (2 Nephi 28:20-22)

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:18-21)

But verily I say unto you, that I have decreed a decree which my people shall realize, inasmuch as they hearken from this very hour unto the counsel which I, the Lord their God, shall give unto them. Behold they shall, for I have decreed it, begin to prevail against mine enemies from this very hour. And by hearkening to observe all the words which I, the Lord their God, shall speak unto them, they shall never cease to prevail until the kingdoms of the world are subdued under my feet, and the earth is given unto the saints, to possess it forever and ever. But inasmuch as they keep not my commandments, and hearken not to observe all my words, the kingdoms of the world shall prevail against them. (Doctrine and Covenants 103:5-8)

In God's eternal plan, salvation is an individual matter; exaltation is a family matter. (*Russell M. Nelson - Salvation and Exaltation April 2008 General Conference*)

This is how I understand the principles of the Gospel and the work we are engaged in. It is an individual work. You and I must secure the blessings of eternal lives for ourselves, through obedience and the mercy of God. We have the volition of our own wills and we can choose evil or good, the society of the wicked or that of the good; we can enlist under the banner of Christ, or under that of Belial. We have this option, and can do whichever we choose. Therefore we must look well to our ways, and see that we choose the right course, and build upon a foundation that will not wash away. We have got to learn to stand or fall for ourselves, male and female. It is true that we are taught in the principles of the Gospel that man is the head of the woman, and Christ is the head of the man; and according to the order that is established in the kingdom of God, it is the duty of the man to follow Christ, and it is the duty of the woman to follow the man in Christ, not out of him. But has not a woman the same volition that the man has? Can she not follow or disobey the man as he can follow or disobey Christ? Certainly she can, she is responsible for her acts, and must answer for them. She is endowed with intelligence and judgment, and will stand upon her own merits as much so as the man. (JD 16:246, Joseph F. Smith, The Instructions Given, Etc. Oct 7, 1873)

Micah's thoughts:

## **Instruction Through the Priesthood**

Section Four 1839-42, p.228

You will receive instructions through the order of the Priesthood which God has established, through the medium of those appointed to lead, guide and direct the affairs of the Church in this last dispensation; and I now turn the key in your behalf in the name of the Lord, and this Society shall rejoice, and knowledge and intelligence shall flow down from this time henceforth; this is the beginning of better days to the poor and needy, who shall be made to rejoice and pour forth blessings on your heads.

When you go home, never give a cross or unkind word to your husbands, but let kindness, charity and love crown your works henceforward; don't envy the finery and fleeting show of sinners, for they are in a miserable situation; but as far as you can, have mercy on them, for in a short time God will destroy them, if they will not repent and turn unto him.

Let your labors be mostly confined to those around you, in the circle of your own acquaintance, as far as knowledge is concerned, it may extend to all the world; but your administering should be confined to the circle of your immediate acquaintance, and more especially to the members of the Relief Society. Those ordained to preside over and lead you, are authorized to appoint the different officers, as the circumstances shall require.

Jonathan's thoughts: Notice the wording of that first statement. I now turn the key, in your behalf in the name of the Lord. We have the head of a dispensation turning a priesthood key for woman that if they will follow these simple commands that they will have knowledge and intelligence flow to them if they will but abide by the requirements he laid out. This will also result in the the means by which the poor and needy will be raised up. This being necessary for consecration and Zion; this is an important charge. He also laid out the bounds of this agreement, and the warnings associated with the blessings of this agreement. The Lord has an agreement that he will abide by, if you will abide by it.

So what are the terms of this agreement?

First the blessing is outlined.

1-Woman will receive the instructions thru the priesthood. This would include the keys given to their husbands, all the way up to the prophet.

2-Knowledge and intelligence will flow down to them.

3-This is the beginning of the ability to care for the poor and needy, as is required in consecration and Zion

Next are the terms of the agreement you are expected to abide.

1-Do not give cross or unkind words to your husbands, let kindness, charity, and love crown your works

2-Don't envy the finery, and fleeting show of the sinners, but have mercy on them

Next is the warning

1-Don't envy the finery as they will be shortly destroyed or refined. See Isaiah 3. This is very, very unpleasant. If you partake in these things you may well find yourself among them.

And finally is the area of responsibility given.

1- Unless appointed in a leadership role in the Relief Society Let your labors be mostly confined to those around you, in the circle of your own acquaintance.

This is a simple agreement that the Lord has made. The question to the woman that hear this, is will you place your faith as a little child to execute the terms of this agreement and expect with faith that the Lord will keep his commandments.

Men, this responsibility also falls to you. If you impede these women in the following the Lords commands, and do not support them in every way given to your power, then it will be required at your hand and you will face the hot displeasure of the Lord at best, and damnation at worst.

Joseph's thoughts: On the subject of revelation, [Joseph] 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. (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 194)

Another example of priesthood authority under the direction of one who holds the keys are the teachings of men and women called to teach the gospel, whether in classes in their home wards or in the mission field. Other examples are those who hold leadership positions in the ward and exercise priesthood authority in their leadership by reason of their callings and under the setting apart and direction of the priesthood leader who holds the keys in the ward or the stake. This is how the authority and power of the priesthood is exercised and enjoyed in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Priesthood authority is also exercised and its blessings realized in the families of Latter-day Saints. By families I mean a priesthood-holding man and a woman who are married and their children. I also include the variations from the ideal relationships such as caused by death or divorce. The principle that priesthood authority can be exercised only under the direction of the one who holds the keys for that function is fundamental in the Church, but this does not apply in the family. For example, a father presides and exercises the priesthood in his family by the authority of the priesthood he holds. He has no need to have the direction or approval of one holding priesthood keys in order to perform his various family functions. These include counseling the members of his family, holding family meetings, giving priesthood blessings to his wife and children, or giving healing blessings to family members or others. Church authorities teach family members but do not direct the exercise of priesthood authority in the family. The same principle applies when a father is absent and a mother is the family leader. She

presides in her home and is instrumental in bringing the power and blessings of the priesthood into her family through her endowment and sealing in the temple. While she is not authorized to give the priesthood blessings that can be given only by a person holding a certain office in the priesthood, she can perform all of the other functions of family leadership. In doing so, she exercises the power of the priesthood for the benefit of the children over whom she presides in her position of leadership in the family. (The Melchizedek Priesthood and the Keys - April 2020 General Conference Dallin H. Oaks)

Micah's thoughts: