

From Adam to Deuteronomy

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ADAM AND THE BEGINNING

In October 1994 General Conference, President Gordon B. Hinckley reiterated what the prophets have taught from the days of Joseph Smith regarding the potential of man:

“... the whole design of the gospel is to lead us, onward and upward to greater achievement, even, eventually, to godhood. This great possibility was enunciated by the Prophet Joseph Smith in the King Follet sermon (see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 342-62) and emphasized by President Lorenzo Snow. It is a grand and incomparable concept: *As God now is, man may become!*” (1)

As an essential part of the plan to attain godhood, it was necessary for man to leave the presence of God and come to earth in order to experience a mortal probation. Though we are not told all the reasons for our coming to mortality (see D&C 101:32-33), the scriptures and prophets have taught that we have come here (1) to receive a physical body in order to (2) experience the knowledge of good and evil, (3) prove our obedience to God in the face of good and evil, and (4) prove ourselves worthy of godhood through righteous parenthood. (2)

The Creation of Earth and Man

To fulfill these purposes, the Lord through a process of six progressive creative periods created the earth. Toward the end of the sixth creative period, having brought forth both plants and animals, the Mosaic account reads: “And I, God, said unto mine Only Begotten, which was with me from the beginning: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and it was so. And I, God, said: Let them have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth” (Moses 2:26). The account speaks of man’s creation in these words: “And I, the Lord God, formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Moses 3:7).

This statement was not intended to be a literal account of Adam’s creation but only to signify that man was created from the elements of this earth. The English translation of this verse loses an important word play. The Hebrew word for ‘man’ is *adam* and for ‘ground’ is *adamah*. Hence *adam* came from *adamah* or man is made of the elements of this earth.

The exact process of Adam’s creation is not stated in the scriptures. However, in 1909 the First Presidency declared regarding the creation of man: “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, basing its belief on divine revelation, ancient and modern, proclaims man to be the *direct and lineal offspring of Deity*.” (3) Therefore, Adam was called “the son of God” (Moses 6:22).

After Adam’s creation, the Lord said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; wherefore, I will make an help meet for him” (Moses 3:18). The phrase “help meet for him” translates the Hebrew words *ezer kinigdo* which literally means a help “as opposite him” or “as against him.” (4) In this sense, *ezer kinigdo* means “his counterpart.” Adam was like one wing of an airplane. But without his *ezer kinigdo*, the other wing, (which is opposite but equal to

him), Adam could not “fulfill the measure of his creation.” The Lord then created a woman, Eve, to be “an help meet for him.”

That Eve was to be an equal partner to Adam, and not one whom he would have dominion over, is portrayed in the Mosaic account of Eve’s creation. After declaring that He would make an “help meet” for Adam, the Lord brought all the animals that He had created before Adam “to see what he would call them.” “And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field.” Then the account states: “but as for Adam, there was not found an help meet for him” (Moses 3:19-20). His *ezer kinigdo* was not found among the animals which Adam had been previously given dominion over (see Moses 2:28). The account then records the figurative creation of Eve from one Adam’s ribs (Moses 3:22), symbolizing that she was not only created from the same “dust of the earth” as Adam but that she belongs at Adam’s side as an equal partner in bringing forth children and raising them righteously. Understanding this, Adam said, “This I know now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh ... Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh” (Moses 4:23-24).

Adam and the Fall

Joseph Smith taught, “Adam was made to open the way of the world.” (5) This was accomplished through the Fall of Adam. (6) After creating the earth and Adam and Eve, God created a garden for Adam and Eve to live in. Though it was forbidden by God (Moses 3:16-17), it was necessary for Adam and Eve to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. By eating the fruit, the Fall was brought about. And the Fall initiated mortality.

It seems the reason the fruit was forbidden was a matter of responsibility. If God would have commanded Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit, then God would have been responsible for their fall. Therefore God would not be in a position to save His posterity. The consequences of the Fall — which will be discussed momentarily — must come by man’s agency rather than God imposing fallen conditions upon his children. When Adam and Eve chose to eat the fruit by their own volition, God was free to implement a plan that would help them overcome the consequences.

Consequences of the Fall

Though the Fall was a necessary part of God’s plan, from a human perspective the Fall brought both positive and negative results. The positive results of eating the fruit were twofold. First, Adam and Eve could have children (Moses 6:48; cf. 2 Nephi 2:20-25). As a result, God’s children could continue their progression by coming from premortality to mortality. Second, because of the mortal experience, Adam, Eve, and their posterity could “be as gods, knowing good and evil” (Moses 4:11-12, 28; cf. 2 Nephi 2:18). After the Fall, Eve recognized with joy the importance of their decision to eat the fruit in these words: “Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil” (Moses 5:11).

Acquiring a knowledge of good and evil is vital for God’s children. Without it they could not become as He is. Elder James E. Talmage wrote: “A knowledge of good and evil is essential to the advancement that God has made possible for His children to achieve; and this knowledge can be best gained by *actual experience*, with the contrasts of good and its opposite plainly discernible.” (7) Mortality is necessary to the acquisition of the knowledge of good and evil.

Elder Talmage said: “A knowledge of good and evil is essential to progress, and the school of experience in mortality has been provided for the acquirement of such knowledge.” (8) President George Q. Cannon declared: “It is for this purpose that we are here. God has given unto us this probation for the express purpose of obtaining a knowledge of good and evil—of understanding evil and being able to overcome the evil—and by overcoming it receive the exaltation and glory that He has in store for us.” (9) In light of this, at the beginning of World War I, the First Presidency gave the following instruction to the Church:

“God, doubtless, could avert war, prevent crime, destroy poverty, chase away darkness, overcome error, and make all things bright, beautiful and joyful. But this would involve the destruction of a vital and fundamental attribute in man — the right of agency. It is for the benefit of His sons and daughters that they become acquainted with evil as well as good, with darkness as well as light, with error as well as truth, and with the results of the infraction of eternal laws. Therefore he has permitted the evils which have been brought about by the acts of His creatures, but will control their ultimate results for His own glory and the progress and exaltation of His sons and daughters, when they have learned obedience by the things they suffer. The contrasts experienced in this world of mingled sorrow and joy are educational in their nature, and will be the means of raising humanity to a full appreciation of all that is right and true and good.” (10)

The negative side of all this is that the acquisition of knowledge of good and evil brings dire consequences both in mortality and in eternity. Enoch taught: “Because of that Adam fell, we are; and by his fall came death; and we are made partakers of misery and woe. Behold Satan hath come among the children of men, and tempteth them to worship him; and men have become carnal, sensual, and devilish, and are shut out from the presence of God” (Moses 6: 49). Later, the Book of Mormon confirmed this saying that the Fall of Adam brought upon Adam, Eve, and “all mankind a spiritual death as well as a temporal, that is, they were cut off from the presence of the Lord” (Alma 42:7,9; see also 2 Nephi 2:21; 9:6; Mosiah 16:3; Alma 12:22; 22:12; Helaman 14:16; Mormon 9:12).

The spiritual death of Adam and Eve was dramatically symbolized by Adam and Eve’s expulsion from the Garden of Eden. After leaving the garden, “cherubim and a flaming sword” were placed at the entrance of the garden (Moses 4:31) to physically stop Adam and Eve (and their posterity) from coming into the presence of God and partaking of the tree of life (Moses 5:4) and, as made clear in the Book of Mormon, thus living forever with the consequences (Alma 12:26-27; 42:3-5). The cherubim represent the justice of God that will not allow unworthy beings to come into his presence (the same as the river of filthy water in Lehi’s dream of the tree of life — 1 Nephi 8:13-26; 12:18). They are what Brigham Young taught, “the angels who stand as sentinels” guarding the way “to the presence of the Father.” (11)

The Need for the Atonement

The scriptural account records that after Adam and Eve were driven from the garden, they “began to till the earth, and to have dominion over all the beasts of the field, and to eat [their] bread by the sweat of [their] brow.” Further, “Adam knew his wife, and she bare unto him sons and daughters, and they began to multiply and to replenish the earth. And from that time forth, the sons and daughters of Adam began to divide two and two in the land, and to till the land, and to tend flocks, and they also begat sons and daughters” (Moses 5:1-3).

Though much time and energy were spent in eking out a life for themselves and their children in that virgin world, Adam and Eve had not forgotten God. They must have felt the pangs of their fallen

condition. Being expelled from the presence of God must have at times been overwhelming. They must have wondered what they could do to return back into God’s presence. We are told that “Adam and Eve, his wife, called upon the name of the Lord, and they heard the voice of the Lord from the way toward the Garden of Eden, speaking unto them, and they saw him not; for they were shut out from his presence” (Moses 5:4). Though we are not specifically told what they prayed for, the account tell us that the Lord told them to “worship the Lord their God” and to “offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord.” Adam responded obediently by offering sacrifices to God (Moses 5:5).

Through the offering “of the firstlings of their flocks,” Adam was introduced to the atonement of Jesus Christ. The account reads: “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” (Moses 5:6-7). Adam and Eve were taught that acceptance back into the presence of God would be possible only through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The things taught Adam were accompanied by the witness of the Holy Ghost: “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” (Moses 5:9).

Adam and the Ordinances of the Priesthood

Adam was taught that the atonement would be made effective for each person through the exercise of faith, repentance, and reception of the Holy Ghost (Moses 5:8; 6:51-52). Adam was confused. The only way to initiate mortality was by eating the forbidden fruit. Why must there be an atonement made for something that he was supposed to do? So he asked, “Why is it that men must repent and be baptized in water?” (Moses 6:53) In response the Lord first said: “Behold I have forgiven thee thy transgression in the Garden of Eden” (Moses 6:51-53). Adam and Eve *had* acted appropriately in the garden by eating the fruit thus opening the way for God’s children to come to mortality. However, eating the fruit brought upon Adam, Eve, and all mankind, mortal and eternal consequences. An atonement must be made in order to free man from these consequences. Orson Pratt taught of the role of the Christ’s atonement in freeing man from the consequences of Adam’s fall:

“We believe that through the sufferings, death, and atonement of Jesus Christ all mankind, without one exception, are to be completely and fully redeemed, both body and spirit, from the endless banishment and curse to which they were consigned by Adam’s transgression; and that this universal salvation and redemption of the whole human family from the endless penalty of the original sin, is effected without any conditions whatever on their part; that is, they are not required to believe or repent, or be baptized, or do anything else, in order to be redeemed from that penalty; for whether they believe or disbelieve, whether they repent or remain impenitent, whether they are baptized or unbaptized, whether they keep the commandments or break them, whether they are righteous or unrighteous, it will make no difference in relation to their redemption, both soul and body, from the penalty of Adam’s transgression.” (12)

Because of Christ’s atonement for Adam’s transgression, the Lord forgave them *unconditionally* for their transgression in the garden: Adam and Eve did not need to repent of their eating of the forbidden

fruit. “Hence came the saying abroad among the people, that the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt [Adam’s transgression in the garden]” (Moses 6:54).

The Lord then explained why men have need of repentance and baptism: “Inasmuch as thy children are conceived in sin, even so when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good” (Moses 6:55). The meaning of this statement is clear when the following is understood. Though Adam’s transgression in the garden was completely forgiven, the consequences of his transgression would have lasting effects upon all mankind. With the Fall, the physical nature of Adam and Eve changed. They became mortal or natural, subject to all the ills of mortality including the capacity to sin. This mortal condition would be passed on to their posterity. Of this, Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote: “The natural birth creates a natural man, and the natural man is an enemy to God. In his fallen state he is carnal, sensual, and devilish by nature. Appetites and passions govern his life and he is alive — acutely so — to all that is evil and wicked in the world.” (13) Further, the world into which Adam’s posterity would be born is a sinful world where men have become “carnal sensual and devilish” (Moses 5:13). Therefore, the enticement of sin will be continually before Adam’s posterity. Being born in a natural body and into a sinful world, Adam’s posterity would thus be “conceived in sin.” In such a condition, when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good.” When this happens, each person suffers a personal fall, doomed to endure the eternal consequences of their own actions.

Though man is not responsible for Adam’s fall, they will be accountable for their own actions while in mortality. (14) Orson Pratt taught that the “universal redemption from the effects of original sin, has nothing to do with redemption from our personal sins; for the original sin of Adam, and the personal sins of his children, are two different things.” (15) The atonement for the fall of Adam will not save each man from his personal sins. An individual atonement is required. Thus a modern revelation states that the mission of Christ was to redeem “mankind from the fall, and from individual sins” (D&C 138:19).

Adam learned that the atonement for personal sin is *conditional!* He was taught that Christ’s atonement for personal sin would become effective *only after* an individual exercises faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and enters into the priesthood ordinances outlined by the Lord (see Moses 6:58-68).

Desiring to overcome his personal spiritual fall, Adam entered into the ordinances prescribed by the Lord. The scriptural account gives this description of the ordinances: “He was baptized, and the Spirit of God descended upon him, and thus he was born of the Spirit, and became quickened in the inner man.” After being baptized and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, he entered into “the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity” (Moses 6:64-67).

What was the “order” that Adam entered into? President Ezra Taft Benson explained: “When our Heavenly Father placed Adam and Eve on this earth, He did so with the purpose in mind of teaching them how to regain His presence. Our Father promised a Savior to redeem them from their fallen condition. He gave them the plan of salvation and told them to teach their children faith in Jesus Christ and repentance. Further, Adam and his posterity were commanded by God to be baptized, to receive the Holy Ghost, and to enter into the order of the Son of God. (See Moses 6.) To enter into the order of the Son of God is the equivalent today of entering into the fulness of

the Melchizedek Priesthood, which is only received in the house of the Lord.” (16)

Becoming Sons of God

Because Adam had received the temple ordinances, the Lord said: “thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity.” He then said: “Behold, thou art one in me, a son of God; and thus may all become my sons.” (Moses 6:67-68). This statement teaches that having passed through the ordinances of the priesthood, Adam was called a son of God! Further, all could become sons of God in the same way. But are we not taught that we are already sons and daughters of God? Why would we have to go through priesthood ordinances to become what we already are?

The answer. When one is called “a son of God,” it means he or she is entitled to inherit all the Father has. But because of the Fall of Adam, each person born into the world has inherited a fallen, mortal condition. As such, they have lost their inheritance as a child of God and are subject instead to inherit the misery of their fallen condition. In order to escape this fate and receive the fulness of the Kingdom of God, each person must be reinherited by becoming a “son of God” again. (17) The Lord declared: “... I say unto you, that as many as receive me, to them will I give power to become the sons of God ...” (D&C 11:30; see also, 3 Ne. 9:17; Moroni 7:26, 48; D&C 34:3; 35:2; 45:8; Moses 7:1). The power to become sons of God is obtained by receiving all the priesthood ordinances of the gospel by which men become adopted into the family of God. (18)

Adam’s Posterity and the Holy Order

Having learned of the gospel plan, the Lord commanded Adam and Eve to “teach these things freely unto [their] children” (Moses 6:58). Obediently, “Adam and Eve blessed the name of God, and they made all things known unto their sons and their daughters.” However, “Satan came among them, saying: I am also a son of God; and he commanded them, saying: Believe it [the gospel taught by Adam and Eve] not; and they believed it not, and they loved Satan more than God. And men began from that time forth to be carnal, sensual, and devilish” (Moses 5:12-13).

Though many of the posterity of Adam and Eve went astray, many also believed and received the gospel through the ordinances of the holy priesthood. “The order of this priesthood which was established in the beginning was patriarchal. The authority descended from father to son, and those who held it were high priests.” (19) Doctrine and Covenants 107:41 states: “This order was instituted in the days of Adam, and came down by lineage in the following manner . . .” Then follows a list of the line of authority through which the priesthood was made available to the posterity of Adam. We are then told: “Three years previous to the death of Adam, he called Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, and Methuselah, who were all high priests, with the residue of his posterity who were righteous, into the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and there bestowed upon them his last blessing.” After receiving this last blessing, “the Lord appeared unto them” (D&C 107:42-54).

Of this event, Joseph Smith stated: “This is why Adam blessed his posterity; he wanted to bring them into the presence of God.” (20) Commenting on this, President Ezra Taft Benson taught: “How did Adam bring his descendants into the presence of the Lord? The answer: Adam and his descendants entered into the priesthood order of God. Today we would say they went to the house of the Lord and received their blessings.” Continuing, President Benson said: “If a couple are true to their covenants, they are entitled to the blessing of the highest degree of the celestial kingdom. These covenants today

can only be entered into by going to the house of the Lord. Adam followed this order and brought his posterity into the presence of God. He is the great example to follow. When our children obey the Lord and go to the temple to receive their blessings and enter into the marriage covenant, they enter into the same order of the priesthood that God instituted in the beginning with father Adam.” (21)

ENOCH AND THE CITY OF ZION

Wickedness prevailed over the earth at the time of the meeting at Adam-ondi-Ahman. After Adam’s death, Enoch, seventh from Adam, apparently became the head of the holy order. Enoch was twenty five years old when he was ordained to the priesthood, and sixty-five when he received the fulness of the priesthood from Adam at the meeting at Adam-ondi-Ahman (D&C 107:48, 53). That same year, Enoch “begat Methuselah” (Moses 6:25).

About that time, he was given a gospel dispensation to administer to the inhabitants of the earth with the command to preach repentance to the people of his day (Moses 6:26-33). Upon his call, the Lord said: “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, and I in you; therefore walk with me” (Moses 6:34). This was a reaffirmation of an oath made by God to Enoch as well all those who enter into the holy order of God. The Joseph Smith Translation reveals this oath in these words:

“For God having sworn unto Enoch and unto his seed with an oath by himself; that every one being ordained after this order and calling should have power, by faith, to break mountains, to divide the seas, to dry up waters, to turn them out of their course;

“To put at defiance the armies of nations, to divide the earth, to break every band, *to stand in the presence of God*; to do all things according to his will, according to his command, subdue principalities and powers; and this by the will of the Son of God which was before the foundation of the world.” (JST Genesis 14:30-31; emphasis added)

It is in this oath that we are told the purpose and power of the order of God. The purpose of the priesthood is to bring God’s children back into His presence (as in the meeting at Adam-ondi-Ahman) and become even as God. The power of the priesthood is to make that aim possible. The oath of God to those who enter into the order of God obtained by making covenants with God in holy temples is that he will give them power to overcome all things that stand in the way of their progress of coming into His presence and becoming as He is. Of this, Elder Bruce R. McConkie stated: “Those who abide by the conditions of the holy covenant of the priesthood shall have power, by faith, to govern and control all things upon the earth, and they shall ‘stand in the presence of God,’ being as he is and living the kind of life he lives. And to show the immutability of his word, he swears with an oath by himself and in his own name, that all these things shall surely come to pass.” (22)

We are told that “men having this faith, coming up unto this order of God, were translated and taken up into heaven” (JST Genesis 14:32). This was not meant to mean that they were taken literally into the presence of God in the celestial kingdom, the final resting place for the righteous. (23) However, the context seems to imply that those who were translated were placed in a realm where they were free from the evil effects of this world while being promised the future celestial resurrection which would bring them into the presence of God. At the same time they did not experience the pangs of longing for their physical bodies that apparently annoy disembodied spirits waiting the resurrection (see D&C 45:17; 138:14-15).

It was through the power and authority of this order that Enoch preached the gospel. (24) Many repented and followed him. Through the power and authority of this order “he led the people of God, and their enemies came to battle against them; and he spake the word of the Lord, and the earth trembled, and the mountains fled, even according to his command; and the rivers of water were turned out of their course; and the roar of the lions was heard out of the wilderness; and all nations feared greatly, so powerful was the word of Enoch, and so great was the power of the language which God had given him. There also came up a land out of the depth of the sea, and so great was the fear of the enemies of the people of God, that they fled and stood afar off and went upon the land which came up out of the depth of the sea” (Moses 7:13-14).

Through the power and authority of this order, Enoch established a city called, “the City of Holiness,” even “Zion” (Moses 7:19). Through the power and authority of this order, Enoch led his people in living the law of consecration (Moses 7:18), the law that governs the celestial kingdom. (25) And eventually, “in process of time,” it was through the power of this order that Enoch and his people were translated and taken up into heaven (Moses 7:21). (26)

FROM NOAH TO ABRAHAM

Noah and the Flood

In a vision, the Lord showed Enoch that after his city was translated, the world would be filled with wickedness. Then Enoch saw “Noah, and his family; that the posterity of all the sons of Noah should be saved with a temporal salvation” (Moses 7:41-42). This “temporal salvation” would require the power of the priesthood. Therefore, “it came to pass that Methuselah, the son of Enoch, was not taken [i.e., translated with the city of Enoch], that the covenants of the Lord might be fulfilled, which he made to Enoch; for he truly covenanted with Enoch that Noah should be of the fruit of his loins” (Moses 8:1). Methuselah begat Lamech and Lamech begat Noah. Noah was prepared at a young age to carry the responsibility he was foreordained to bear for we are told that “Noah was ten years old when he was ordained under the hand of Methuselah” (D&C 107:52).

Noah had three sons: Japeth, Shem, and Ham. The scriptures teach that “Noah and his sons hearkened unto the Lord, and gave heed, and they were called the sons of God” (Moses 8:13). Being called “the sons of God” means that they had entered into the holy order of God.

The world into which Noah and his sons lived was extremely wicked. The Mosaic account states: “the wickedness of men had become great in the earth; and every man was lifted up in the imagination of the thoughts of his heart, being only evil continually” (Moses 8:22). Sadly, the daughters born to Noah’s sons were adversely affected by the wickedness of the world. The account reads: “And when these men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, the sons of men [i.e., those outside of the covenant] saw that those daughters were fair, and they took them wives, even as they chose [i.e., the daughters married outside the temple]. And the Lord said unto Noah: The daughters of thy sons have sold themselves; for behold mine anger is kindled against the sons of men, for they will not hearken to my voice” (Moses 8:14-15).

Noah was called to preach repentance to the people of his day: “And the Lord ordained Noah after his own order, and commanded him that he should go forth and declare his Gospel unto the children of men, even as it was given unto Enoch” (Moses 8:19). Along with his grandfather, Methuselah, and father, Lamech, Noah cried repentance unto the people. (27) Unfortunately, the people did not listen. In fact,

they became worse: “The earth was corrupt before God, and it was filled with violence” (Moses 8:28). Therefore the Lord decided to “destroy all flesh from off the earth” (Moses 8:30). This was to be accomplished through by flooding the earth with water.

The flood was to be the earth’s baptism to cleanse it from all wickedness. (28) Orson Pratt taught: “The first ordinance instituted for the cleansing of the earth, was that of immersion in water; it was buried in the liquid element, and all things sinful upon the face of the earth were washed away. As it came forth from the ocean floor, like the new-born child, it was innocent; it rose to newness of life. It was its second birth from the womb of mighty waters—a new world issuing from the ruins of the old, clothed with all the innocence of this first creation.” (29)

Joseph Smith taught, “Noah was born to save seed of everything, when the earth was washed of its wickedness by the flood.” (30) This was the “temporal salvation” spoken of by the Lord to Enoch. The Lord designed to accomplish this salvation through the construction of a large boat - the ark - into which Noah, his righteous family members, and selected representatives of every kind of animal would live during the time the floods ruled the earth. Noah received instructions on how to build the ark (Genesis 6:14-16). Noah was obedient to the Lord. When the floods came upon the earth, Noah, his family, and the chosen animals went into the ark where they found refuge from the flood (see Genesis 7).

After the flood waters began to recede, the ark rested “upon the mountains of Ararat” (Genesis 8:4). “And God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons’ wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth” (Genesis 8:15-17). They did so.

After the flood, the Lord promised Noah that He would never destroy the earth by flood again. A bow would be set in heaven as a token of this promise. The Lord then said: “And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant, which I made unto thy father Enoch; that, when men should keep all my commandments, Zion should again come on the earth, the city of Enoch which I have caught up unto myself. And this is mine everlasting covenant, that when thy posterity shall embrace the truth, and look upward, then shall Zion look downward, and all the heavens shall shake with gladness, and the earth shall tremble with joy; and the general assembly of the church of the firstborn shall come down out of heaven, and possess the earth, and shall have place until the end come. And this is mine everlasting covenant, which I made with thy father Enoch” (JST Genesis 9:15-25).

Noah, like Adam, began making a life for him and his family in a virgin world. It was an age of renewal — an opportunity to begin a new world set squarely on the gospel path.

Tower of Babel and Apostasy Renewed

The time of renewal did not last. Within a few generations, Noah’s descendants began to go astray. Eventually, the majority of the world had apostatized from the gospel taught by Noah and his sons. This is portrayed in the story of the building of the tower.

The scriptural account speaks of the descendants of Noah as being of “of the same language, and of the same speech” (Genesis 11:1). This statement seems to imply that all the world was of the same mind and thought. Unfortunately, this unity of thought seems to be more or less like the people in the days of Noah, of whom it was said that

“every man was lifted up in the imagination of the thoughts of his heart, being only evil continually” (Moses 8:22). Many moved from the mountains to the plain of Shinar (Mesopotamia) where Satan put into their hearts to “to build a tower sufficiently high that they might get to heaven” (Genesis 11:2-4 and Helaman 6:28).

The tower may have been the prototype of the ziggurats or temple towers found in ancient Mesopotamia. These were high towers built with sloping, stepped sides that led to a temple built on top. The names given to these towers indicate that they were thought of as conduits between earth and heaven: “The House of the Link between Heaven and Earth,” “The House of the Seven Guides to Heaven,” “The House of the Foundation-Platform of Heaven and Earth.”

The building of the tower was an egotistical attempt by man to get to heaven by virtue of his own power. That is to say, they began to establish their own religion(s). The same could be said of them as was said of the people in the days of Joseph Smith: “they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof” (Joseph Smith History 1:19). Again: “They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall” (D&C 1:16).

This last statement is fitting, for the place where the tower was built became known as Babylon. The account reads: “And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth” (Genesis 11:5-9).

The Akkadian word *Babylon* means “gateway to a god.” The Hebrew word for Babylon is *Babal* which sounds much like the Hebrew word *babel*, meaning confused. This word play in Hebrew suggests that the beginning of man’s apostasy, and thus his confusion, began in Babylon where the tower was built. By confounding and scattering the people, the Lord attempted to thwart man’s apostasy. It was in those days that the Jaredites were driven from the place of the tower to the promised land (Ether 1-4).

From Shem to Abraham

It is in this apostate setting that Abraham was born. The biblical account lists Abraham as ten generations removed from Noah through Shem. Though Shem, who is called “the great high priest” (D&C 138:41), was righteous, his direct line descendants became wicked. We are told in the Book of Abraham that Abraham’s fathers had “turned from their righteousness, and from the holy commandments which the Lord their God had given unto them, unto the worshiping of the gods of the heathen” (Abraham 1:5). Abraham was born in Ur, a Mesopotamian city whose exact location is disputed. The Book of Abraham gives us the clear picture that it was a city of abominable religious practices (Abraham 1). These descendants of Shem (Semites) had become corrupted.

But not all of Noah’s descendants had apostatized from the truth. Living also in the days of Abraham was a descendant of Noah whose

righteousness is renowned: Melchizedek. Melchizedek was evidently a prince by birth, for he became king of Salem (later Jerusalem— Gen. 14:18; Ps. 76:2), where he reigned “under his father” (Alma 13:18). “Melchizedek was a man of faith, who wrought righteousness; and when a child he feared God, and stopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire” (JST Gen. 14:26). Yet the people among whom he lived “waxed strong in iniquity and abomination; yea, they had all gone astray; they were full of all manner of wickedness” (Alma 13:17).

Though living among a wicked people, Melchizedek “exercised mighty faith, and received the office of the high priesthood according to the holy order of God” (Alma 13:18). This priesthood was after the order of the covenant that God had made with Enoch (JST Gen. 14:27), and Melchizedek ruled both as king and priest over his people.

As high priest, some of his functions were keeping “the storehouse of God” where the “tithes for the poor” were held (JST Gen. 14:37-38), preaching repentance (Alma 13:18; cf. 5:49), and administering ordinances “after this manner, that

thereby the people might look forward on the Son of God . . . for a remission of their sins, that they might enter into the rest of the Lord” (Alma 13:16; JST Gen. 14:17). With extraordinary goodness and power, Melchizedek diligently administered in the office of high priest and “did preach repentance unto his people. And behold, they did repent; and Melchizedek did establish peace in the land in his days” (Alma 13:18). Consequently, Melchizedek became known as “the prince of peace” (JST Gen. 14:33; Heb. 7:1-2; Alma 13:18). “His people wrought righteousness, and obtained heaven” (JST Gen. 14:34), apparently through the doctrine of translation.

As a king and high priest of the Most High God (Gen. 14:18), Melchizedek holds a place of great honor and respect among Latter-day Saints. An example of righteousness and the namesake of the higher priesthood, he represents the scriptural ideal of one who obtains the power of God through faith, repentance, and sacred ordinances, for the purpose of inspiring and blessing his fellow beings. Consequently, the name of the holy order was renamed in his honor. The Doctrine and Covenants states that Melchizedek was “such a great high priest” that the higher priesthood was called after his name. “Before his day it was called *the Holy Priesthood, after the Order of the Son of God*. But out of respect or reverence to the name of the Supreme Being, to avoid the too-frequent repetition of his name, they, the church, in the ancient days, called that priesthood after Melchizedek, or the Melchizedek Priesthood” (D&C 107:2-4; italics in original).

Melchizedek received the priesthood “through the lineage of his fathers, even till Noah” (D&C 84:14). And it was from Melchizedek that Abraham received the priesthood (D&C 84:14).

ABRAHAM AND THE COVENANT

The Major Promises of the Abrahamic Covenant

The majority of the Old Testament book of Genesis centers on the lives of the great patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Chapters 12-25 tell of the life of Abraham beginning with a brief recitation of the promises God made to Abraham. However, in the Book of Abraham found in the Pearl of Great Price, we learn of the early life of Abraham. Further, the most complete rendition of the promises made to Abraham is recorded in the Book of Abraham and will be included in this summary.

Abraham was born and raised in Ur of the Chaldees at a time when Egyptian influence, both political and religious, was felt over much

of the ancient Near East (Abr. 1). We know little of his first contact with the gospel save that he became an ardent supporter of Jehovah which nearly cost him his life (Abr. 1:1-18). Having escaped the Egyptian priests who tried to kill him because he would not submit to Egyptian religious practices, Abraham fled his homeland and went to Haran, a neighboring area (Abr. 2:1-5).

While in Haran, the Lord introduced Abraham to the covenant of exaltation. This is recorded in Abraham 2:6-11. From these verses we can synthesize the promises given to Abraham, and later to Isaac and Jacob. The promises can be categorized into three general areas. Each category has promises that are to be fulfilled both in mortality and eternity. The following chart lists the categories of promises with both the mortal and eternal promises.

THE PROMISES MADE TO ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB

Category	Mortal Promises	Eternal Promises
1. Posterity	Abraham was promised a large posterity that would become a great nation.	Abraham was promised that he would have eternal increase.
2. Land	Abraham was promised that his posterity would have a special land to live in (a promised land)- a land where his posterity is free to worship God the way He intends.	Abraham was promised that he would have an eternal promised land known as the celestial kingdom.
3. Gospel and Priesthood	1. Abraham was promised that his posterity would have all the blessings of the gospel and priesthood. 2. Abraham was promised that through his posterity all nations would be blessed with the opportunity to have the gospel.	Abraham was promised that he would have eternal life or exaltation in the celestial kingdom (which is the ultimate blessing of the gospel and priesthood).

This covenant is known both as the Abrahamic Covenant and the marriage covenant for time and all eternity for when a man and woman are married in the temple they receive all the blessings promised to Abraham. The key to receiving the eternal blessings is the mortal blessing. Note the following:

- * **Posterity** Abraham and Sarah were promised that they would have posterity while in mortality. Their faithfulness in bearing and raising a righteous family would insure that they would have the blessing of eternal increase or posterity in the eternities.
- * **Land** Abraham and Sarah were promised that their posterity would have a land. The importance of this can be seen in the fact that Abraham was raised in a land without religious freedom. Therefore, the promise of land would insure that Abraham's posterity would have a land where they could worship God the way God intended. Through proper worship of God, Abraham and his posterity would ultimately receive an eternal land of inheritance - the celestial kingdom!
- * **Gospel** Abraham and Sarah were also promised that their posterity would have gospel or priesthood privileges. Further, they were promised that their posterity would become a blessing to all nations of the world by bringing them gospel opportunities. The eternal fulfillment of this promise is that if Abraham and his posterity and any who join the truth faith through Abraham's

posterity lived the gospel fully they would receive exaltation or eternal life.

Often, LDS scholars emphasize the promises of posterity and gospel. Nevertheless, *the land* is of major importance in understanding the history of Israel in the Old Testament. It is quite evident that for Abraham and his descendants, *the land* became the symbol of the Lord honoring the covenant he made with Abraham and, later, his descendants. If Abraham's descendants kept the covenant, they would receive and maintain a prosperous life in the land. However, breaking the covenant would result in losing the land which was tantamount to losing prosperity, divine protection, and ultimately the Lord's saving grace given to man through the gospel (the atonement).

The Abrahamic Covenant and the Atonement

There is a principle associated with the Abrahamic covenant that is essential in understanding God's dealings with His children. Because the Lord promised Abraham that his posterity would have gospel/priesthood rights, the Abrahamic covenant insures that if Abraham's posterity ever strayed from the gospel covenant, the Lord would do all in His power to bring them back into the covenant. This is only possible if the law of justice, which would condemn Abraham's posterity because of their disobedience, could be satisfied. Thus, the role of Jesus Christ, in part, was to satisfy the law of justice making it possible for Abraham's posterity (and any gentile who unites himself with Abraham's posterity by covenant) to return to God's covenant and receive the same blessings promised to Abraham.

This concept is important in understanding the purpose of the Book of Mormon. Moroni stated that the Book of Mormon was written "to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever—And also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST" (Title Page, Book of Mormon).

Essentially all the standard works are a historical account of the Abrahamic covenant, including prophecies of its fulfillment.

Abraham Enters into the Covenant

The incident of Abraham 2:6-11 seems only to be preparatory to Abraham's actually entering into the covenant. The rest of Abraham's story is recorded in Genesis 12-25. After leaving Haran, Abraham traveled a great distance until he arrived at the land of Canaan. After traveling some distance in the land, he stopped at Shechem [modern Nablus], a sacred area near the center of the land of Canaan. While there, the Lord declared to Abraham that the land of Canaan was the land promised to Abraham and his posterity. Abraham built an altar (Gen. 12:6-7) memorializing Jehovah. This incident established Shechem as the sacred center of the land of promise for future generations. (It will be shown that several important Biblical events have Shechem at their center.)

Sometime later, the Lord said to Abraham, "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land [the land of Canaan] to inherit it." In response, Abraham asked the Lord, "whereby shall I know that I shall inherit?" (Gen. 15:7-8). In response, the Lord told Abraham to bring him a certain number of animals. Abraham secured the animals and then cut them in half, laying the severed halves together. Why? Abraham understood that the Lord intended to formalize the promises He had made with Abraham through a covenant ritual.

Covenant rituals in the ancient world generally involved cutting and blood. In some cases animals were cut in half. (31) Then after reciting the terms of the covenant, the parties making the covenant

would pass between the severed parts of the animal (thus identifying themselves with the animal) suggesting that if they did not keep their part of the covenant then what was done to the animal would be done to them: i.e., they would be killed. In fact, the proper way to say in Hebrew, "he made a covenant" is "he *cut* a covenant." (For another Old Testament example, see Jeremiah 34:18-19.)

After the animals were cut in half, the Lord stated the terms of the covenant. Abraham's posterity would become enslaved in another land for four generations (a generation was one hundred years). At the end of that period the Lord would bring them out of bondage and give them the land of Canaan. Then the Lord, represented by a smoking furnace and a burning lamp, passed between the severed animals (Gen. 15:13-18). Abraham then knew the land would be his.

In Genesis 15, only the Lord entered in the covenant. Genesis 17 records the occasion relative to Abraham's entering into the covenant. The ritual which initiated the covenant on Abraham's part also involved cutting and blood. The ordinance was that of circumcision. Circumcision became the token of the covenant throughout Old Testament history. The one entering into the covenant cut off his foreskin symbolizing that if he did not keep his part of the covenant that he and his posterity would be cut off from the presence of the Lord even as he had cut off the foreskin.

The Abrahamic Covenant is "Made Sure"

In Genesis 17:1, Abraham was told what his part of the covenant was in these terms: "walk before me, and be thou perfect" (Gen. 17:1). To walk before the Lord is to be obedient to all that God requires. When one is obedient to all that God commands, he then is assured by God that the blessings promised him for his obedience will be given to him (D&C 82:10; 130:20-21).

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the Lord will thoroughly prove those who come unto him and when he finds that they are "determined to serve Him at all hazards, then [they] will find [their] calling and [their] election made sure." (32) Abraham was fully tested by the Lord and was found obedient in all things (D&C 132:37).

The testing of Abraham forms the basis of the Abraham story found in Genesis 12-22. In these chapters, it can be seen that the testing of Abraham followed a pattern: he was asked to give up something earthly for a higher or Godly cause. In the end, Abraham never really gave up anything for he was always blessed with something better. For example, he was asked by the Lord to give up his homeland and inheritance only to be given an eternal land and inheritance by the Lord (Gen. 12:1-3). Again, when strife arose between his herdsman and the herdsman of his nephew, Lot, Abraham gave Lot the best part of his land that there might be peace between them. Yet, God assured him that he had not really given up anything for in the end the whole of the land would be his and his posterity (Gen. 13:5-17). On another occasion, Sarah had given Abraham her handmaid, Hagar, to bear a child in her behalf. Then contention arose between Sarah and Hagar because Hagar attempted to assume a status that was not rightfully and legally hers (that of being a full wife to Abraham instead of a handmaid raising up a child for Sarah). Consequently, Sarah told Abraham to expel Hagar from the tribe because of Hagar's unethical behavior (Gen. 16). In so doing, Abraham lost his son and heir. Yet, the Lord promised Abraham and Sarah that they would have a son of their own that would be the heir of Abraham (Gen. 17). That son was Isaac.

The ultimate test of Abraham's obedience to God came when he was asked Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice to him (Gen. 22:1-2). This struck against everything God had taught Abraham about the

wickedness of human sacrifice. Moreover, by offering Isaac as a sacrifice, Abraham would lose his heir, the child through whom the promises of the Abrahamic covenant would come (Heb. 11:18-19). Nevertheless, Abraham was obedient to the command of God and would have sacrificed Isaac had the Lord not intervened and stopped Abraham at the very moment he was about to slay his son (Gen. 22:10-12). This test of Abraham's obedience proved that Abraham was "determined to serve God at all hazards," therefore the Lord assured Abraham that the covenant was now in full force (Gen. 22:15-18). This is confirmed in modern revelation (see D&C 132:29-37).

Abrahamic Covenant Extended to Isaac and Jacob

The covenant made with Abraham was also to be made with his son, Isaac. Since the covenant was made as part of the marriage covenant, it was essential that Isaac marry a worthy woman within the covenant. This was graphically emphasized when Abraham sent his servant to procure a wife for Isaac. To his servant, Abraham said: "Put forth I pray thee thy hand under my hand, and I will make thee swear before the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son, of the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell; but thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred and take a wife unto my son Isaac" (JST Gen. 24:2). Of this, President Spencer W. Kimball said: "Marrying outside the faith has always been forbidden. For example, the Lord inspired Abraham to marry a near relative rather than a Gentile. In respect of his son's bride, Abraham commissioned his servant to go on a long and uncomfortable journey to obtain a girl of Isaac's own faith." (33) Abraham's servant was obedient. He found for Isaac a most wonderful woman, Rebekah (Gen. 24). Eventually, the promises given to Abraham were given to them (Gen. 26:1-5).

Like Sarah, Rebekah was barren. Therefore, Isaac "intreated the Lord for his wife" that she might conceive. Isaac's pleading was heard and Rebekah conceived (Gen. 25:20-21). Her pregnancy was full of difficulty. The account says that the "children struggled (Heb. *ratstats*, meaning to crush) together within her." She was probably unaware that she was having twins. Trusting in the Lord, she turned to Him and asked why she was having such a hard pregnancy. The Lord responded: "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger" (Gen. 25:22-23). The prophesy given to Rebekah was clear. From these two children would come two nations that would continually strive against one another. Further, the firstborn would NOT receive the birthright but the second born would, therefore, "the elder shall serve the younger." Finally, the two children were born. The firstborn was called Esau and the second was named Jacob.

The birthright was a special status given to the firstborn son. To the receiver, it meant the family line and name would continue through him. Further, he was also given a double portion of the inheritance (Deut. 21:17). Among the patriarchs, the birthright appears to have carried an additional responsibility, that of priesthood responsibilities. Therefore, among the patriarchs, the birthright was given to the son who was most qualified. It appears that the father formalized the birthright through a special blessing wherein the son was acknowledged as the principal heir.

The Genesis account tells the story of Esau selling Jacob his birthright for a pottage and bread (Gen. 25:29-34). This story ends with this statement: "thus Esau despised (Heb. *bazah*, meaning to hold in contempt or find worthless) his birthright." The story reveals Esau's attitude towards the birthright while at the same time showing how bad Jacob wanted it. Eventually, Esau married two women out

of the covenant, "which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah" (Gen. 26:34-35). This should have disqualified Esau as the birthright son.

For whatever reason, Isaac, was going to give the birthright to Jacob anyway. But Rebekah, who had received the revelation from the Lord that Jacob would receive the birthright, had Jacob deceive his father into giving him the blessing (Gen. 27). When Isaac realized what had happened, he did not revoke the blessing but rather told Jacob not to "take a wife of the daughters of Canaan" but go to the land where his mother came from. There he would find a wife suitable for the position he had been given by blessing. He further said, "And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham" (Gen. 28:1-5).

As Jacob journeyed to the land of his mother, he came to a certain spot where he decided to rest for the night. While sleeping, "he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Then the Lord made the same covenant with him as he did with Abraham and Isaac. When he arose in the morning, he said, "Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:10-17). He called the name of the place, Bethel, meaning the "house of God."

Speaking of this incident, Elder Marion G. Romney said: "Pondering upon the subject of temples and the means therein provided to enable us to ascend into heaven brings to mind the lesson of Jacob's dream ... When Jacob traveled from Beersheba toward Haran, he had a dream in which he saw himself on earth at the foot of a ladder that reached to heaven where the Lord stood above it. He beheld angels ascending and descending thereon, and Jacob realized *that the covenants he made with the Lord there were the rungs on the ladder that he himself would have to climb in order to obtain the promised blessings* — blessings that would entitle him to enter heaven and associate with the Lord.

"Because he had met the Lord and entered into covenants with him there, Jacob considered the site so sacred he named the place Bethel, a contraction of Beth-Elohim, which means literally 'the House of the Lord.' He said of it: '... this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' (Gen. 28:17.)

"Jacob not only passed through the gate of heaven, but by living up to every covenant he also went all the way in. Of him and his forebears Abraham and Isaac, the Lord has said: '... because they did none other things than that which they were commanded, they have entered into their exaltation, according to the promises, and sit upon thrones, and are not angels but are gods.' (D&C 132:37.)

"Temples are to us all what Bethel was to Jacob." (34)

Eventually, Jacob made his way to the land of his mother's birth. While there, he lived with Rebekah's brother, Laban. In time he married two of Laban's daughters, Leah and Rachel, and two of their handmaids, Bilhah and Zilpah (Gen. 29-30). To these four women eleven sons were born, the last being

Joseph. After several years, Jacob, with his wives and children, returned to the land of Canaan. On the way, he left his family and spent the night alone. What happened that night is at best vague: Jacob had a mysterious encounter. What exactly took place between these two is unclear. But three things are sure: Jacob was given a

new name, he was blessed, and he saw God face to face (Gen. 32:24-32). Recalling this experience to Joseph later in life, Jacob said that he had been redeemed from evil through the heavenly ministrant (Gen. 48:16).

After returning to the land of Canaan, the Lord instructed Jacob to take his family to Bethel, where the Lord first appeared to Jacob. Jacob complied. While there, the Lord appeared to Jacob and reconfirmed the name change and the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 35:1-15). He then journeyed to the southern part of the land of Canaan to live. While on the way, Rachel died while giving birth to a twelfth son, Benjamin (Gen. 35:16-20). After settling in the land, Reuben, Jacob's firstborn through Leah, "went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine" (Gen. 35:22) thus disqualifying him for the birthright blessing (see 1 Chron. 5:1-2).

MOSES AND THE EXODUS

How the Twelve Tribes of Israel Came to Live in Egypt

In Genesis 37 and 39-50, the story of Joseph, the eleventh son of Jacob, is recounted. In this story, Joseph, who was favored by Jacob and who was to be given the birthright in Reuben's place, was despised by his older brothers. They sold Joseph as a slave to a band of Ishmaelites who in turn sold him to Potiphar, an Egyptian official. Through a process of events, Joseph rose from slavery to become second in command of all of Egypt. In that position, Joseph prepared Egypt for seven years of famine, a catastrophe he had prophesied would happen. When the famine came, Jacob and his sons were forced to come to Egypt for food. As a result of this, Joseph was once again reunited with his father and brothers. Pharaoh invited Jacob and his family to live in Egypt. Jacob was initially reluctant to go to Egypt, but the Lord insured him that it was essential in fulfilling the covenant: "I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation." Then the Lord promised him that he would bring Israel back to the land of promise again (Gen. 46:1-4). When Jacob arrived in Egypt, Pharaoh gave the best part of the land, the land of Goshen (in the delta area of the Nile), to him and his sons.

Before he died, Joseph prophesied concerning the tribes of Israel. He prophesied that Israel would be brought into bondage but that the Lord would raise up a prophet to deliver them from their captors and bring "out of this land unto the land which he swore to Abraham, and unto Isaac, and to Jacob" (JST Gen. 50:24, 29, 34-36). He then prophesied that Israel would be "scattered again." However, he said that God would bring "them to a knowledge of their fathers in the latter days; and also to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord." At that time, God will "restore them, who are of the house of Israel, in the last days" (JST Gen. 50:31-32).

The Twelve Tribes are Brought into Bondage

The Book of Exodus tells of Israel's escape out of Egyptian bondage. While in Goshen, the twelve tribes of Israel made Egypt their permanent place of residence. During this time "the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them" (Ex. 1:7). Sometime after Joseph and the Pharaoh died, "there arose a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph" (Ex. 1:7). Fearing that the Israelites would become greater than the Egyptians, but wanting them to build their cities for them, this new Pharaoh brought the Israelites into bondage. They remained in this condition for many years.

During this period of time, the Israelites gradually began to believe in and worship the Egyptian gods. Like most peoples of the ancient Near East, the Egyptians were polytheistic; that is, they believed in

many gods. To the Egyptians, these gods controlled all the elements that allow men to live. They believed that by performing various rituals the gods would look kindly upon them and control the elements in such a way that mankind could survive and be happy. These rituals often involved immoral acts performed during the ritual action in the presence of the idols of the various gods located in temples or sanctuaries. As the Israelites began to follow Egyptian religious practices, they lost the knowledge of the gospel, the religion of the god their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

However, the Lord was not going to allow this situation to continue. According to the promise that he had made with Abraham (that he would bless Abraham's posterity with the gospel), the Lord now set his hand to restore Israel to the knowledge of the gospel. This required the work of a prophet.

Moses, the First Gatherer of Israel

Sometime around 1300 B.C., the man ordained of God to restore the gospel to Israel and free them from bondage was born. His name was Moses. Elder McConkie stated that, "Moses, the man of God, continued the work of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in standing as a father and friend and founder of the family of Israel." (35) Moses was born a Hebrew but raised an Egyptian in Pharaoh's court. When he was forty, Moses killed an Egyptian who was "smiting an Hebrew" slave. When this was found out, Moses fled Egypt for his life. He went to the land of Midian in the Sinai wilderness (Ex. 2:11-15). While there he lived with Jethro, the priest of Midian and a descendent of Abraham through Keturah, Abraham's third wife (Gen. 25:1-4). Jethro gave to Moses one of his daughters to marry (Ex. 2:21). He also conferred upon Moses the Melchizedek priesthood (D&C 84:6).

While Moses was in the Sinai, "the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob" (Ex. 2:23-24). According to the terms of the covenant, Abraham's descendants would be given a land where they could worship God and live his gospel. To this end, the Lord called Moses to redeem Israel from bondage.

The calling of Moses came forty years after Moses fled Egypt. While tending his flocks near Mt. Sinai (sometimes called Mt. Horeb) the Lord called to Moses from a bush that appeared to be on fire but "was not consumed" (Ex. 3:1-2). As Moses approached this "great sight," the Lord said, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Ex. 3:5). This was not an ordinary mountain but the "mountain of God" or the Lord's holy temple (Ex. 1:1). The Lord introduced himself to Moses, saying, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Ex. 3:6), thus recalling the Abrahamic covenant. He then told Moses that he was to return to Egypt and bring the Israelites out of bondage and lead them to the very mountain that Moses was standing upon (Ex. 3:7-12). At the sacred mountain of Sinai, the children of Israel were to meet with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and sacrifice unto him, or in other words, they were to come to the temple and enter into a covenant with their God (Ex. 3:13-18). All this would be preparatory to the children of Israel going to the promised land.

The Exodus of Israel From Egyptian Bondage

Moses returned from Sinai to the court of Pharaoh in Egypt. To Pharaoh, Moses said, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go" (Ex. 5:1). To no surprise, Pharaoh refused the request.

Under the direction of God, Moses levied a series of nine plagues upon Egypt (Ex. 7-9).

The plagues were intended to accomplish two things: (1) to show to both Egypt and Israel that the gods of Egypt were false, and thus (2) to soften Pharaoh's heart so that he would follow the only true and living God and allow the children of Israel leave Egypt. Each plague was designed to accomplish this by showing that the God of the Hebrews had power over the various elements that the Egyptians believed were controlled by their false gods. For example, the Egyptians believed that the Nile was controlled by the god Hapi. However, when the Lord through Moses caused the Nile to turn to blood (a sign of death), the Egyptian's religious rituals could not stop the plague but only add to it. Hence, Egypt was shown that the god of Israel had control over the life-giving Nile and not their false deity, Hapi. Further, through the progression of each plague, Egypt and Israel was shown that the god of Israel was not limited in power but in fact the god over all the earth;

The plagues should have softened Pharaoh's heart. However, instead of softening his heart, Pharaoh hardened his heart (JST Ex. 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10). The Lord then sent a tenth plague upon all Egypt *including* Goshen. This was the plague of the death of the first born (Ex. 10). The Israelites were taught that in order to avoid this plague, they were to participate in the ordinance of the Passover (Ex. 11-12). This was a special dinner which involved the eating of a roasted lamb with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. After the "destroying angel" (D&C 89:21) went throughout Egypt killing the firstborn of every man and animal, Pharaoh relented and allowed the children of Israel to be released from bondage. Then God, represented by a pillar of fire and smoke, led the children of Israel out of Egypt (Ex. 13:20-22).

The scriptural account tells us that God did not lead the Israelites out of Egypt by way of the nearest or quickest route which was "through the way of the land of the Philistines," but instead "God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea" (Ex. 13:17-18). After releasing Israel from bondage, Pharaoh hardened his heart again, and led his army to recapture the Israelites. With Pharaoh's army to their back and the Red Sea to their front, Israel was hemmed in. Seeing there was no apparent way to escape the Egyptians, the children of Israel complained to Moses regarding their plight. To this, Moses said, "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Upon that, the Lord parted the Red Sea and caused the children of Israel to pass through on dry ground. However, when the Egyptians tried to pass through the Red Sea, the Lord caused the waters to return, thus destroying the Egyptian army (Ex. 14:5-31).

Once through the Red Sea, Moses and the children of Israel were in the barren desert of the Sinai peninsula where both food and water were scarce. As the Israelites journeyed to Mt. Sinai, they hungered for food and water. The children of Israel murmured to Moses saying that it would have been better to have remained in Egypt where at least they had food and water. In consequence of their grumbling the Lord provided bread from heaven (manna) on a daily basis (Ex. 16) and on one occasion he had Moses heal bitter water (Ex. 15:23-26) and on another occasion he supplied water from a rock (Ex. 17). Thus, after leaving Egypt the children of Israel lived off the sustenance of the Lord.

The Exodus Story is a Type of the Plan of Redemption

The Exodus story has become a type and shadow of what an must do to escape the bondage of this world that comes because of sin so that he might enter into the promised land of the celestial kingdom. Just as the first step of Israel's escape from bondage was the death of the firstborn, so the first step of our deliverance from sin is the death of

Christ. As Israel followed Moses to the promised land, so we must exercise faith in living prophets who speak the mind and will of Christ whose words will lead us to exaltation. As Israel was led through the Red Sea to be saved from the destruction of the Egyptians, we must all be baptized to be saved from the eternal consequences of our sins. (In 1 Cor. 10:1-2, Paul tells us that the crossing of the Red Sea was symbolic of baptism. Further, note that the parting of the Red Sea is similar to the ritual of the cutting of the covenant in Genesis 15 where the animals were cut in half and the one making the covenant walked between the severed pieces.)

As Israel was fed bread and water from heaven instead of given the food of this world, so we must live the ways of God instead of the ways of the world. Finally, as we will now see, as Israel was brought to Mt. Sinai to enter into covenants with God before entering into the promised land, so we must be brought to the temple to enter into covenants with God that will prepare us to enter into the celestial kingdom.

ISRAEL AT MT. SINAI

In the third month of their journey from Egypt, the children of Israel arrived at the base of Mt. Sinai where they "camped before the mount" (Ex. 19:1). Their stay lasted for eleven months. It was the Lord's intent to establish the descendants of Abraham as a unified people with one God and one religion. To the Israelites, the Lord said: "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar [Heb., valued property] treasure unto me above all people ... and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Ex. 19:5,6). It was also the Lord's design to get the Israelites ready to "behold the face of God" or bring them into his presence (D&C 84:23).

The Preparatory and Higher Gospel

In order to be prepared to enter into the presence of God and receive all the blessings he had in store for them, Israel would have to enter into and keep all the ordinances of both the lower and higher or everlasting gospel. The lower gospel is known as the preparatory gospel and consists of "the gospel of repentance and of baptism, and the remission of sins, and the law of carnal commandments [such as the ten commandments]" (D&C 84:26-27). Or in other words, it is the first principles and ordinances of the gospel (A.of F. 4). The preparatory gospel is entered into by covenant. Upon entrance into the preparatory gospel, the initiate has entered into the "strait and narrow path" that leads to eternal life.

Once on the strait and narrow path, one must enter into the ordinances of the higher gospel before being qualified to come into the presence of God and live. The higher gospel is variously called the "the everlasting covenant of the holy priesthood" (JST Deut. 10:2) or the "holy order, and the ordinances thereof" (JST Ex. 34:1; see also Alma 13 and Moses 6:67). The holy order consists of the ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood. President Ezra Taft Benson stated: "To enter into the order of the Son of God is the equivalent today of entering into the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood, which is only received in the house of the Lord" (*Ensign*, Aug. 1985, p. 43). It is only by active participation in these ordinances that men and women can prepare themselves to enter into God's presence (see D&C 84:19-22).

Israel Enters into the Preparatory Gospel

The first step in becoming "an holy nation" (or Zion society) worthy of entering the presence of God was for the children of Israel to enter into the preparatory gospel by covenant. Exodus 19-24 gives an account of the children of Israel entering into the preparatory gospel by covenant. To prepare for the covenant, the children of Israel were

sanctified and their clothes were washed (Ex. 19:10-11). The mountain was also prepared by establishing a border around the base between the people and the mountain with the injunction that no one was to touch the border or pass beyond it lest they should be put to death (Ex. 19:12-13). On the third day, the Lord descended on top of the mountain, his divine presence being represented by “fire and smoke” (Ex. 19:16-25). In the hearing of the Israelites, the Lord gave to Moses the 10 commandments (or “carnal commandments”) as part of the preparatory gospel (Ex. 20; Deut. 5).

Exodus 24 records the ritual the Israelites participated in when they entered into the covenant where they promised to obey the 10 commandments. After putting the covenant into writing, Moses built an altar at the base of the mountain and placed twelve stones representing the twelve tribes of Israel around the altar. Moses then read to the children of Israel the terms of the covenant. In response, the Israelites said, “All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.” Then Moses sprinkled the blood of sacrificed animals on the altar (representing God) and the children of Israel (most likely the twelve stones) suggesting the retributive nature of the covenant (the same as when the Lord passed between the pieces of the severed animals in Gen. 15). That is, if the children of Israel broke their covenant they would suffer death even as the sacrifices from whom the blood had come. Moses referred to this as the “blood covenant” in these terms: “Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words” (Ex. 24:8). (These words were used similarly by the Savior when introducing the sacrament of the new covenant in Matt. 26:28.)

Moses Receives the Higher Law

After entering by covenant into the preparatory gospel, the next step for Israel to become “an holy nation” involved entering into higher covenants or ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood. In preparation for this, the Lord informed Moses that he was to once again come to the mountain where he would receive tables of stone upon which these higher ordinances and laws would be written (Ex. 24:12). For forty days and nights, Moses was in the presence of God upon the mountain. Against common belief, this is the first time Moses was on the mountain for 40 days and nights. During this time, Moses received the higher law. Then the details of *both* the preparatory and higher gospel were written on the tables of stone “with the finger of God” (Ex. 31:18).

While on the mount, Moses not only received the tables of stone upon which the fullness of the gospel was written but he also received detailed instructions concerning the building of a portable temple commonly called the Tabernacle wherein the ordinances of both the preparatory gospel and the higher law could be performed (Ex. 25-31). The Hebrew name of the Tabernacle is *ohel mo'ed*, which is best translated “tent of meeting.” This is an appropriate name for this structure because the Tabernacle was the place where the Israelites were to prepare to meet God and live in his presence.

The Tabernacle consisted of a large rectangular courtyard within which was placed the sanctuary. Entrance into the courtyard was through a single gate which located on the eastern side. The sanctuary was found on the western end. Between the gate and the sanctuary there was an altar for sacrifice and a laver (a large metal bowl full of water) for ritual washings. This is where the ordinances associated with the preparatory gospel (or Aaronic Priesthood) would be performed. Beyond the laver was the sanctuary or temple. The sanctuary was divided into two rooms. The forerom was called the holy place while the back room was known as the most holy place or the holy of holies. In the holy place there was a seven-branched candelabrum, a table with twelve loaves of bread placed thereon, and an altar of incense. The altar of incense was placed

immediately before a veil which separated the holy place from the most holy place. The furnishings of the holy place were associated with the ordinances of the higher gospel (or Melchizedek Priesthood). In the most holy place was placed an ark known as the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant represented the throne of God.

It appears from D&C 84:19-24, that the Lord initially intended that the children of Israel would pass through the ordinances of both the preparatory gospel (performed in the courtyard) and higher gospel (performed in the holy place) thus qualifying them to come into his presence symbolized by the passing through the veil into the most holy place (where God’s presence was represented by the Ark of the Covenant). However, as we will now see, Israel lost their right to the Melchizedek priesthood portion of the temple.

Israel Breaks the Covenant

During the 40 days Moses was on the mount, the children of Israel turned back to Egyptian idolatry. They fashioned a golden calf and participated in the fertility cult worship with its immorality (Ex. 32:1-6). In so doing, they violated the ten commandments they had covenanted with the Lord that they would obey. Hence, the covenant was broken, forcing God into the position of executing the demands of the broken covenant: Israel must be destroyed! At the moment God was going to satisfy justice, Moses interceded in behalf of his people, reminding God of the covenant he made with Abraham, saying, “Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever” (Ex. 32:13). In response, the Lord said: “If they will repent of the evil which they have done, I will spare them, and turn away my fierce wrath; but, behold, thou shalt execute judgment upon all that will not repent of this evil this day” (JST Ex. 32:14). We find within this story Moses as a type of Christ wherein he demonstrates the mediatorial role of Christ. Further, this story illustrates the powerful role of the Abrahamic covenant in the salvation of Israel.

When Moses came off the mount he found the children of Israel participating in the fertility cult worship. He threw down the tables of stone breaking them as a sign of the broken covenant and the loss of the higher law they would have received (Ex. 32:19). He then stood outside of the camp and cried, “Who is on the LORD’s side?” (Ex. 32:26). Those repenting of their actions came to where Moses was standing while the rest were executed by the tribe of Levi (Ex. 32:27-29).

Law of Moses Given in Place of the Higher Law

Moses returned to Mt. Sinai once again for another forty days and forty nights (Ex. 34:28) where he received divine assurance that the Lord would once again own his people and bring them to the promised land (Ex. 32:31-33:23). The Lord then commanded Moses to “hew two other tables of stone” whereon the terms and conditions of a new covenant were written. This included everything that was written on the first set of tables “save the words of the everlasting covenant of the holy priesthood” or the higher ordinances of the temple (JST Deut. 10:2; see also JST Ex. 34:1-2 and D&C 84:23-27). In other words, the higher gospel or Melchizedek Priesthood order was removed thus denying the children of Israel the ordinances that would enable them to come into the presence of the Lord. In place of the higher gospel, Moses received what became known as the “law of Moses” (much of which is found in the Books of **Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy**). The prophet Abinadi said that the law of Moses was “a law of performances and ordinances, a law which they [Israel] were to observe strictly from day to day, to

keep them in remembrance of God and their duty towards him” (Mosiah 13:30). The Apostle Paul taught that it was intended to be a “schoolmaster” that would “bring [Israel] unto Christ” and the higher law (Galatians 3:24). Essentially, the law of Moses was a set of laws that were given to the Israelites that might be thought of as object lessons that illustrated the importance of the preparatory gospel and explain how it functioned. Hence, the preparatory gospel was the focus of the law of Moses. This law was not only to be the religious code of the Israelites but also their civil code.

After returning from the mount with the new set of stone tablets, Moses explained the new law and covenant to the children of Israel (Ex. 34:29-35:19). Then the children of Israel entered into a covenant to keep the law of Moses (Ex. 34:27-8). This covenant replaced the covenant the children of Israel had made in Exodus 24.

The Construction of the Tabernacle

Though the higher ordinances of the Melchizedek priesthood (those which would have been performed in the sanctuary or temple) were excluded from the law of Moses, thus essentially cutting the people off from the sanctuary or presence of the Lord, the building of the portable temple or Tabernacle was nevertheless necessary. The reason was this: the altar of sacrifice and laver located in the outer courtyard, which were essential in performing the ordinances associated with the preparatory gospel, would naturally play an essential part in the performances and ordinances of the law of Moses. Further, the fact that the common Israelite was cut off from the sanctuary should have been a constant reminder that higher laws and ordinances were necessary in order for man to come back into the presence of God. The law of Moses did not provide those ordinances and laws. These must come at a future time.

How much of this the children of Israel understood is not known. Nevertheless the building of the Tabernacle was important to them in order to live the law of Moses. Consequently, after the children of Israel entered into the covenant of the law of Moses, “they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing” and brought all the offerings necessary for the construction of the Tabernacle (Ex.35:21). The Tabernacle was then constructed. After its completion, the cloud of smoke and fire (which led the children of Israel out of Egypt and which rested upon Mt. Sinai) descended upon the portable temple indicating God’s acceptance (Ex. 40:34-38). Further, the Tabernacle would be the residence of Jehovah and no longer Mt. Sinai. Wherever Israel went, their God would be with them. However, Israel would never be able to behold God’s presence for they remained cut off from the presence of God. This was dramatically symbolized by the veil that separated the holy place from the most holy place for according to the law of Moses the common Israelite could not pass through the veil into the most holy place.

ISRAEL WANDERS FOR FORTY YEARS

Having entered into a covenant with the Lord and built a portable temple, Israel was now ready to inherit the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The “camp of Israel” dissembled and began their march to the promised land (Num. 9).

The Book of Numbers recounts Israel’s travels from Mt. Sinai to the borders of the promised land, which eventually took forty years. One of the major theological themes of the Book of Numbers focuses on holiness. It is the desire of God to dwell with his people. But that is only possible if the people remain holy which is obtained through obedience to the laws of the Lord. The rituals of the law of Moses were symbolic of what man must do to come into a state of reconciliation with God so that they might dwell with God.

The book is divided into three main sections. In the first section (1:1 - 10:10), Israel still at the area around Mt. Sinai prepared for their journey. A census was taken in which all the people were numbered (hence the name of the book) in order to form a military roster (ch. 1). The order in which the tribes were to set their tents around the tabernacle when camped was given (chs. 2-3). The placement of the twelve tribes around the tabernacle dramatized the concept that God desired to be in the midst of his people and that He should be at the center of their lives. In order for the Lord to dwell in their midst, the Book of Numbers makes it clear that Israel must remain holy. This was true even while marching. Laws regarding the purity of the people were given (chs. 5-8). Those who were unclean were to remain without the camp of Israel. Before leaving Sinai, Israel kept the passover (ch. 9). Israel would know when to camp when the cloud rested upon the tabernacle. When the cloud lifted they knew it was time to journey (ch. 9). Finally, the cloud lifted and Israel began their trek to the promised land (ch. 10).

In the next section (10:11 - 20:13) Israel journeyed from Sinai to Kadesh, just south of the land of Canaan, the promised land. In this section, Israel murmured and rebelled several times. Each rebellion constituted a breach of the covenant made between Israel and God thus rendering Israel unholy. Each rebellion ended with disastrous consequences. One of these rebellions must be discussed. After arriving at Kadesh, twelve spies were sent to spy out the land (Num. 13:1-25). Upon their return, they gave a report saying that the land is a fruitful land, “Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great” (Num. 13:27-28). This caused a stir among the Israelites. Caleb and Joshua, two of the spies, tried to convince the people that with the Lord’s help they could defeat the inhabitants of Canaan. But the other ten spies said, “We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.” The children of Israel believed the words of the ten spies and would not go into the land (Num. 13:30-14:10). The Lord then declared that Israel would remain in the wilderness until that generation of Israelites (those twenty years and older) passed away hoping the next generation would have the faith to follow the Lord into the promised land (Num. 14:26-39). Thus for forty years Israel “wandered” in the wilderness. The majority of their “wandering” took place in the Kadesh area.

The second section ends with the story of Moses and the waters of Meribah (20:1-13). Because of Israel’s murmuring for want of water, the Lord told Moses and Aaron to gather Israel before a “rock.” The Lord told Moses to “speak” to the rock “and it shall give forth his water.” But Moses did not follow the instructions exactly. Gathering Israel before the rock, he said, “Must we fetch you water out of this rock?” In saying this, he gave Aaron and himself the credit for the miracle instead of God. He then smote the rock with his rod rather than to speak to it. Though water came out, the Lord was displeased with Moses and his carelessness. Therefore, the Lord forbade Moses from entering the promised land (Num. 27:14). The lesson was clear: even the prophet of God must follow the directives of the Lord exactly or suffer the consequences. But before judging the Lord to hastily, it will be seen that the Lord translated Moses - taking him to heaven without tasting death. This reflects the Lord’s true feelings towards Moses. In the third section (20:14 - 36:13), the camp of Israel left Kadesh and made their way to the steppes of Moab on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. As they journeyed, the children of Israel once again murmured. Fiery serpents plagued the camp of Israel. Many died. When the people realized their sin, they plead for deliverance from the serpents. The Lord commanded Moses to make a brazen serpent and set it on a pole. He then was to lift in the eyes of the people. All those who would look upon the serpent would be saved (21:4-9). The Book of Mormon often refers to this story - it

being a type of Christ (see 1 Ne. 17:41; Alma 33:18-20; Hel. 8:14-15).

Eventually the children of Israel were led by Moses until they came to rest east of the Jordan River near the north end of the Dead Sea. The forty years of wandering were now complete. The children of Israel now prepared themselves to enter the promised land. Joshua was called and set apart to lead Israel into the promised land (ch. 27). Moses apportioned the land among the twelve tribes.

As part of the preparation, Moses delivered three discourses reviewing the history of Israel from the exodus from Egypt through the forty years of wandering. These discourses comprise **The Book of Deuteronomy**. In these discourses, the terms of the covenant or law of Moses were reviewed after which the children of Israel renewed their covenant with the Lord (Deut. 29:1). Moses' mission was now complete. He departed from the children of Israel, ascended Mount Nebo where the Lord showed him all the land of Canaan, saying, "This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying I will give it unto thy seed" (Deut. 34:1-4). Moses was then translated and taken from the earth. (36) This was done in order that he could return to deliver keys to Peter, James, and John (Matt. 17:1-13).

References

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, in October 1994 General Conference, *Ensign*, November 1994, p. 48; also *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988.), p. 179.
2. For an excellent summary of these four reasons, see Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), pp. 27-28.
3. Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, Anthon H. Lund, *Messages of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (1833-1951). 6 vols., ed. James R. Clark (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1975), 4:206 (emphasis added).
4. As Adam Clark wrote, "If the word be rendered scrupulously literally, it signifies one like, or as himself, standing opposite to or before him. And this implies that the woman was to be a perfect resemblance of the man possessing neither inferiority nor superiority but being in all things like and equal to himself." (REFERENCE)
5. Joseph Fielding Smith, ed. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Press, 1938), p. 12.
6. President Ezra Taft Benson taught the importance of understanding the Fall in these words: "Just as a man does not really desire food until he is hungry, so he does not desire the salvation of Christ until he knows why he needs Christ. No one adequately and properly knows why he needs Christ until he understands and accepts the doctrine of the Fall and its effect upon all mankind." (In Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 106-107; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 85)
7. James E. Talmage, *A Study of the Articles of Faith*. 12th ed., rev. (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1978), 54; emphasis added.
8. James E. Talmage, *The Vitality of Mormonism* (Boston: The Gorham Press, 1919), 46.
9. George Q. Cannon, *Journal of Discourses*. (Edited by George D. Watt, et al. 26 vols. Liverpool: F. D. Richards, et al., 1854-1886), 26:190-191.

10. Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund, Charles W. Penrose, *Messages of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (1833-1951). 6 vols., ed. James R. Clark (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1975), 4:325-326.

11. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* 2:31; also *Discourses of Brigham Young*, Compiled by John A. Widtsoe. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978) p. 416; *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (Published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1997), p. 302.

12. Orson Pratt, *Remarkable Visions* (n.p., n.d.), 12.

13. Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), p. 282.

14. This is the meaning of the second Articles of Faith: "We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression." See Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:49.

15. Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses*, 1:329.

16. Ezra Taft Benson, "What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children About the Temple," *Temples of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, pp. 42-43; also, *Ensign*, Aug. 1985, p. 8; emphasis added.

17. This is known as the law of adoption. The law of adoption is completed when a child is sealed to his or her's parents. Adopting children to parents began during the administration of Wilford Woodruff. Prior to his administration, people were being adopted to anyone. However, President Woodruff received a revelation clarifying the order of this ordinance. In April General Conference of 1984, he said: "When I went before the Lord to know who I should be adopted to (we were then being adopted to prophets and apostles), the Spirit of God said to me, 'Have you not a father, who begot you?' 'Yes, I have.' 'Then why not honor him? Why not be adopted to him?' 'Yes,' says I, 'that is right.' I was adopted to my father, and should have had my father sealed to his father, and so on back; and the duty that I want every man who presides over a temple to see performed from this day henceforth and forever, unless the Lord Almighty commands otherwise, is, let every man be adopted to his father. When a man receives the endowments, adopt him to his father; not to Wilford Woodruff, nor to any other man outside the lineage of his fathers. That is the will of God to this people." (*Collected Discourses*, (Edited by Brian H. Stuy. 5 vols. Burbank, California, and Woodland Hills, Utah: B.H.S. Publishing, 1987-1992), Vol.4)

Children born to parents who are already married for time and all eternity are "born in the covenant," meaning they are automatically sealed to their parents and are thus born legal heirs to the kingdom. In other words, they are automatically adopted into the family of God at birth! Elder James E. Talmage declared: "Children born to parents thus married under the celestial law are heirs to the Priesthood; 'children of the covenant' they are called; no ordinance of adoption or sealing is required to give them place in the blessed posterity of promise." (*The House of the Lord: A Study of Holy Sanctuaries, Ancient and Modern*. 1912 ed., reprint. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1962]., p.88.)

However, children born to parents who are not married in the temple must receive the sealing or adoption ordinance (See Wilford Woodruff, *The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff* [Compiled by G. Homer Durham. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1946], pp.154-156; *Messages of the First Presidency*, 2: 278-279; 5:112.).

President George Q. Cannon, then a member of the First Presidency, stated: "It is not necessary, where parents are thus sealed together by the authority of the Holy Priesthood for time and for eternity, that their children should be adopted or be sealed to them. They are legitimate heirs of the Priesthood and of the blessings of the new and everlasting covenant. But not so with those who have been born outside of this covenant. There has to be some ordinance performed in order to make them legitimate; and that ordinance, the Prophet Joseph revealed, was the ordinance of adoption; that is, that which covers the ordinance or law, although we do not use the word adoption when we seal children to parents; we call that sealing." (*Collected Discourses*, Vol.4, George Q. Cannon, April 8, 1894).

18. See Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed., rev. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), p. 394.

19. Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:160.

20. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p.159.

21. Ezra Taft Benson, "What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children About the Temple," *Temples of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, pp. 43-44; also, *Ensign*, Aug. 1985, p. 9; also, *Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p.257.

22. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p.314

23. Joseph Smith taught, "Many have supposed that the doctrine of translation was a doctrine whereby men were taken immediately into the presence of God, and into an eternal fullness, but his is a mistaken idea." One must be resurrected to come into the presence of God and obtain eternal fullness. "This distinction is made between the doctrine of the actual resurrection and translation: translation obtains deliverance from the tortures and sufferings of the body, but their existence will prolong as to the labors and toils of the ministry, before they can enter into so great a rest and glory" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p.170). Eventually, translated beings obtain a celestial resurrection and receive the fullness of joy (see 3 Nephi 28).

24. Alma 13:6 and D&C 42:11 teach the necessity of the priesthood or the holy order in order to preach the gospel.

25. Joseph Fielding Smith stated: "We read in the Pearl of Great Price how Enoch was called to cry repentance, and through his diligent labors he gathered together those who were willing to make covenant to serve the Lord. These made covenant to obey the celestial law, or the law of consecration, for this is a celestial law, and the celestial kingdom is governed by it. They were willing to give all that they had, even their lives to the kingdom of God. The result was that they became so righteous that they 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.'—Moses 7:69." (*The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes*. 9th ed. [Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1951], pp. 273-274)

26. Joseph Smith taught "Now the doctrine of translation is a power which belongs to this Priesthood." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p.170)

27. Of this, Joseph Fielding Smith said: "It is generally thought that the Lord called Noah, when he had determined to cleanse the earth with the flood, and sent him out alone to preach to the wicked inhabitants. It is sometimes said, without basis in fact, that Noah preached 120 years; and nothing is said of the preaching of other witnesses. Let me call your attention to the fact that Noah was not alone in bearing witness. It is recorded in the Pearl of Great Price

that: 'It came to pass that Methuselah, the son of Enoch, was not taken, that the covenants of the Lord might be fulfilled, which he made to Enoch; for he truly covenanted with Enoch that Noah should be of the fruit of his loins. And it came to pass that Methuselah prophesied that from his loins should spring all the kingdoms of the earth (through Noah), and he took glory unto himself.' Now Methuselah, grandfather of Noah, was a righteous man and a prophet. He knew by the spirit of revelation that the flood would come in the days of Noah. Moreover, he lived until the year of the flood when he died. Do you not think that this righteous man was also declaring repentance to the perverse world, and warning them of the flood which was to come? Again, Lamech, father of Noah, was also a righteous man and he lived until five years before the flood. It is reasonable to suppose that he, too, was preaching to the people, as well as his father and his son." (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:204).

28. See Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:320; Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:274; McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p.289; Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:291-292; John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, 26:74-75; George Albert Smith, Conference Report, April 1922, p.50.

29. Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:331.

30. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p.12.

31. See, Meredith G. Kline, "Oath and Ordeal Signs," *Westminster Theological Journal* (Vol. 27, 1964-65), pp. 115-139; Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Meaning of the Animal Rite in Genesis 15," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* (Vol. 19, 1981), pp. 61-78; Martin Noth, "Old Testament Covenant-making in the light of a Text from Mari," in *The Laws in the Pentateuch and other Studies*(Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1967), pp. 108-117 ;David L. Petersen, "Covenant Ritual: A Tradition-Historical Perspective," *Biblical Research* (Vol. 22, 1977), pp. 7-18;G. J. Wenham, "The Symbolism of the Animal Rite in Genesis 15: A Response to G. F. Hasel," *JSOT* 19 (1981) 61-78," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* (Vol. 22, 1982), pp. 134-137;Donald J. Wiseman, "Abban and Alalah," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* (Vol. 12, 1958), pp. 124-129.

32. Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 150.

33. Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969), p.240.

34. Marion G. Romney, "Temples - The Gates to Heaven," *Ensign*, March, 1971, p. 16; emphasis added.

35. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p. 522.

36. See JST Deut. 34:5-7; Alma 45:19; Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 158.