

This Final Glorious Gospel Dispensation

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Let every man upon the face of the whole earth know that the glorious gospel of God is alive and well and prospering in this day.

Let every living soul know that the little stone cut from the mountain without hands has begun to roll forth. In time it will break in pieces all the kingdoms of men and fill the whole earth.

Let it be known that the things “which our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation to be revealed in the last times” are now being poured out upon the Saints; and that we have entered the promised time “in the which nothing shall be withheld” (D&C 121:27–28). The gleams of celestial light which now pierce the darkness of our souls will soon blaze forth in full celestial splendor. The foundation has been laid; the Lord’s house is now being built up on earth.

God, our gracious Father, has restored in these last days the fulness of his everlasting gospel for the benefit and blessing of all his children and for the salvation and exaltation of those who believe and obey.

God, our Father, and Jesus Christ, his Son, by the voice and instrumentality of angelic ministrants, gave to Joseph Smith and his associates every key, power, and priesthood ever held by man on earth. They have set up anew their earthly kingdom, the kingdom of God. That kingdom is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This Church administers the gospel and offers salvation to all who will believe in Christ and live his laws.

What Is the Gospel?

What is the fulness of the everlasting gospel?

It is the plan of salvation—the Father’s eternal plan to save his children.

It is the begetting of spirit children, the teachings and testings of our premortal existence, the creation of worlds without number, and (for us) our inheritance here on planet earth.

It is the fall of Adam, with its temporal and spiritual death, and the ransoming power of the Son of God, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through his laws.

It is all of the laws, rites, and ordinances; all of the truths, powers, and performances; all of the keys, priesthoods, and privileges which bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

It is the atonement of Christ, the redemption of man, the opening of the graves, the wonder and glory of eternal life.

It is faith, repentance, and baptism; it is the gifts of the Spirit, the revelations of heaven, and the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost.

It is eternal marriage and eternal lives and eternal exaltation. It is to be one with the Father and the Son and to reign with them forever on their throne.

It is the tests and trials of this mortal probation; it is sorrow and pain and death; it is overcoming the world and pursuing a godly course in spite of earth and hell; it is keeping the commandments and serving our fellowmen.

And, finally, it is to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the holy prophets, in the kingdom of God to go no more out.

Gospel Grace Is Dispensed in Dispensations

Whenever the Lord reveals the plan of salvation anew so that men do not have to rely solely upon prior dispensations from heaven of the same glories and wonders, it is called a dispensation of the gospel. This may or may not involve a restoration of keys and powers and [page 22] priesthoods. It did when Jesus came to replace the Mosaic dispensation, for instance, but not when the dispensations of Enoch and Noah were ushered in.

We do not know how many dispensations there have been, probably dozens or scores; nor can we be certain how long each lasted, or how one dispensation blended into another. For the present we know only that a gracious God has made his saving truths available at those times and under those circumstances, when men were prepared to receive them.

We live in the dispensation of the fulness of times. That is to say, we live in the dispensation of the fulness of dispensations. We have received all of the “keys, and powers, and glories,” possessed by them of old. Angelic ministrants have come from those Biblical dispensations which had distinctive keys and powers—“all declaring their dispensation, their rights, their keys, their honors, their majesty and glory, and the power of their priesthood” (D&C 128:18–21).

“In the dispensation of the fulness of times,” as Paul promised, the Lord will “gather together in one all things

in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth” (Eph. 1:10). All of the rivers of the past have or will flow into the ocean of the present; already all of the keys and powers have fallen to our lot; in due course all of the doctrines and truths will be manifest to us.

The Dispensation of the Fulness of Times

“It is necessary in the ushering in of the dispensation of the fulness of times, which dispensation is now beginning to usher in,” the Prophet Joseph Smith wrote in 1842 “that a whole and complete and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should take place, and be revealed from the days of Adam even to the present time.” Then he named those who had restored keys and powers: Moroni, Peter, James, and John, Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and “divers angels, from Michael or Adam down to the present” (D&C 128:18–21). The “divers angels” included—among others, perhaps, of whom we are not aware—John the Baptist, Moses, Elijah, and Elias. We do not know the order in which these ancient ones came to bring their rights and powers, but suppose it may have been somewhat as follows:

1. *Moroni*. This ancient Nephite came first on the night of 21 September 1823, when he spent the whole night teaching and counseling Joseph Smith relative to the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the gospel, and what was to be in the latter days. Thereafter he placed the plates in the prophetic hands and gave the youthful Joseph “the keys of the record of the stick of Ephraim” (D&C 27:5; see also JS—H 1:29–60).

Then Joseph Smith, by the gift and power of God, translated and published to the world the Book of Mormon. That volume of holy scripture contains the fulness of the everlasting gospel, stands as a witness of the divine Sonship of Christ, bears record of the prophetic call of Joseph Smith, and proves the truth of the Bible.

2. *John the Baptist*. On 15 May 1829, this son of Zacharias conferred upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery the Aaronic Priesthood and the keys thereof. This gave them “the gospel of repentance, and of baptism of immersion for the remission of sins” which is the preparatory gospel. They were also empowered to make offerings unto the Lord as the sons of Levi had done anciently. (See D&C 13.) Thus the processes began to prepare a people for the Second Coming of the Son of Man as John, in mortality, had prepared repentant persons for the first coming of Christ.

3. *Peter, James, and John*. Shortly thereafter, these three brethren, who were the First Presidency in their day, brought back the Melchizedek Priesthood including

the holy apostleship; they restored the keys of the kingdom; and they conferred the keys of the dispensation of the fulness of times (see D&C 27:12; D&C 81:2; D&C 128:20).

The keys of the kingdom of God on earth (which is the Church) are the rights and powers to direct all of the Lord’s affairs on earth. Because Peter, James, and John came in our day we have again the kingdom, which is the Church, and we have been given the missionary commission commanding and empowering us to preach the gospel to all people in this day.

4. *Moses*. Israel’s great lawgiver, the prophet whose life was in similitude of the Messiah himself, the one who delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage and led them to their land of promise, came to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on 3 April 1836, in the Kirtland Temple. He gave them: (1) “the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth,” and (2) the keys of “the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north” (D&C 110:11).

Since then, with increasing power and in great glory, we have gathered, from their Egyptian bondage as it were, the dispersed of Ephraim and a few others, initially to the mountains of America, but now into the stakes of Zion in the various nations of the earth. The gathering of Israel is a reality. When the ten tribes return they will come at the direction of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for he now holds and will then hold the keys of presidency and direction for this mighty work.

5. *Elias*. After Moses, came Elias. We know not who he was in mortality. There were many prophets who bore that name and title. One was Noah. Apparently this Elias lived in the day of Abraham, and may even have been Abraham himself. In any event he “committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham” (D&C 110:12)—not, be it noted, the gospel of Christ, for that had already been received, but the gospel of Abraham, meaning the great [page 23] commission which God gave Abraham in his day. That commission dealt with families, those of Abraham and his seed, who were and are promised continuance “in the world and out of the world ... as innumerable as the stars; or, if ye were to count the sand upon the seashore ye could not number them” (D&C 132:30).

As Joseph Smith records it, what Elias actually said to him and Oliver Cowdery was that “in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed” (D&C 110:12). And so, the Lord be praised, the marriage discipline of Abraham was restored; it is the system that enables a family unit to continue in eternity; it is the system out of which eternal life grows. The laws and

conditions pertaining to this holy order of matrimony in the new and everlasting covenant constitute “the promises made to the fathers,” which, as Moroni said (quoting Malachi), were to be planted “in the hearts of the children” (D&C 2:2).

6. *Elijah*. That these promises—made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and others of the fathers—might dwell in our hearts (for we are the children of the prophets), Elijah came and conferred the sealing power upon his mortal fellow servants. By virtue of this sealing power all ordinances, both for the living and the dead, may be binding on earth and in heaven (see D&C 110:13–16).

7. *Michael or Adam*. Our first father—Michael, our prince—who stands next to the Lord Jesus Christ in power, glory, and greatness, was “the first man of all men” (Moses 1:34), the first mortal on earth. He stands as the presiding high priest over all his posterity and holds priesthood governance over all things pertaining to this earth.

What keys and powers did he restore? We can only suppose that he brought back the presidency over an earth whose kingdoms will soon become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ; that because he came, men again by the power of the priesthood shall “put at defiance the armies of nations” (Gen. 14:31, JST); and that the earth for the Millennial era shall be renewed and receive again its Edenic state, a state where death and sorrow are swallowed up in gospel glory.

8. *Gabriel or Noah*. Noah preached the gospel to a wicked world and saved eight souls from a watery grave. He brought both temporal and spiritual salvation to those who heeded his word.

Whatever keys he possessed are again vested in the Lord’s earthly prophet. We are not able with finality to say what these keys were, but surely once again the power is here to preach the gospel and bring a temporal and a spiritual salvation to those who are prepared to abide the day. As the waters of Noah once drowned the wicked so will the coming fires burn those “that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thes. 1:8).

9. *Raphael*. Who Raphael was we do not know. But we do know that someone came from all the dispensations having distinctive keys and powers. No one else is named as having come from the dispensation of Enoch, and we suppose Raphael is either Enoch or someone else from that day of grace.

Enoch’s day was one in which Zion was built up and her people were translated and taken up into heaven. Could it be that the keys from his dispensation are the ones that will bring to pass a Millennial quickening of the earth? We do know, of course, that the city of Enoch

will return in the Millennial day to join with the earthly zion then built up by mortals.

10. “*Divers angels*.” Whether there may have been other angelic ministrants who restored keys and powers, we do not know. But this we do know: Every key, power, and priesthood ever held by a mortal on earth has been restored. All such came to Joseph Smith and his associates and these keys are now vested in the First Presidency and the Twelve. They lie dormant, in a sense, in all but the senior Apostle of God on earth. Since keys are the right of presidency, only one man—the President of the Church—can exercise them in their fulness at one time.

It is of these keys and these brethren that the Lord says: “For unto you, the Twelve, and those, the First Presidency, who are appointed with you to be your counselors and your leaders, is the power of this priesthood given, for the last days and for the last time, in the which is the dispensation of [page 24] the fulness of times. ...

“Verily I say unto you, behold how great is your calling” (D&C 112:30–33).

We come now to a consideration of how the things we have received and those we shall yet receive in this dispensation affect us in our lives and in our ministerial labors. Some of the characteristics of our dispensation are glorious indeed, for they make available to the Saints the joys of the gospel and the wonders of eternity; others are and will be the cause of great sorrow and suffering for us and for all men, for they appertain to the plagues and desolations to be poured out upon the earth without measure.

Blessings of Our Dispensation

As to the blessings and wonders poured out upon us—

We have received the same gospel, the same priesthoods, the same keys, the same ordinances, and the same plan of salvation revealed to them of old. We have the fulness of the everlasting gospel and are able to seal men up unto eternal life in our Father’s kingdom.

We are legal administrators with full power to perform every rite and ordinance needed to endow men with power from on high, to prepare them to rise in glorious immortality, to enable them to pass by the angels and the gods who guard the way and then to enter into the highest heaven and be as God is.

We hold, as did Peter and the Apostles of old, the keys of the kingdom, and we are thereby able to bind and loose on earth and have our lawful acts eternally bound or forever loosed in the heavens above.

We have received the gift of the Holy Ghost and enjoy all of the gifts of the Spirit to some degree, so that we are able to receive revelation, to see visions, to entertain angels, to sanctify our souls, and to see the face of God while we yet dwell in this world of sin and sorrow.

We are in process of completing the restoration of all things, of gathering Israel and building Zion, of preparing a people for the Second Coming of the Son of Man, and of ushering in the Millennial era of peace and righteousness.

We hope we shall abide the day of his coming, that we shall be selected to rule and reign with him for a thousand years, and that finally we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God to go no more out.

We take comfort in a divine promise vouchsafed to us which has never been given of God in any previous dispensation. It is that the gospel and all that appertains to it shall never again be taken from the earth. It is that the Church and kingdom will prevail; never again will there be a universal apostasy with the consequent need for a restoration; this time the knowledge of God is destined to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

We also find comfort in the promise that when the Lord comes, "he shall reveal all things" (D&C 101:32). Then we shall see the complete fulfillment of the promise that "those things which never have been revealed from the foundation of the world, but have been kept hid from the wise and prudent, shall be revealed unto babes and sucklings in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times" (D&C 128:18).

Trials of Our Dispensation

As to the desolations, upheavals, and trials of the latter days—

We shall see more of these than at any time in the history of the earth. There will be earthquakes, floods, plagues, and famines in all parts of the earth. There will be wars, desolation, destruction, and death in every nation and among every people. Gadianton bands will prey upon their fellows; crime and degeneracy and wickedness will increase on every hand. Lust and immorality and perversions and all the evils of Sodom and Gomorrah will sweep the earth as with a flood. The dispensation of the fulness of times is the one in which the Lord is preparing the vineyard to be burned; it is the day when every corruptible thing will be destroyed; it is destined to be a day of vengeance and destruction where the wicked are concerned. As it was in the days of Noah so shall it be in the day of the coming of the Son of Man.

In the midst of all this the Lord's Saints are

commanded to stand in holy places and be not moved. The tests coming to them as individuals will be no different than those poured out upon people in [page 25] ages past. Testing and trials are the common lot of all mankind in all ages. We are here to see if we will bridle our passions and overcome the evils of the world in spite of earth and hell. Life never was intended to be easy. What though some suffer and die, what though they lay down their lives for the testimony of Jesus and the hope of eternal life—so be it—all these things have prevailed from Adam's day to ours. They are all part of the eternal plan; and those who give their "all" in the gospel cause shall receive the Lord's "all" in the mansions which are prepared.

The Work Ahead in Our Dispensation

What, then, lies ahead for us as the Saints of the Most High?

Ours is the most glorious of all dispensations. In it will come to pass the destruction of evil and the triumph of truth. So far the foundation has been laid. We are now building the house of the Lord upon that foundation. We have many things yet to do.

We have yet to gain that full knowledge and understanding of the doctrines of salvation and the mysteries of the kingdom that were possessed by many of the ancient Saints. O that we knew what Enoch and his people knew! Or that we had the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon, as did certain of the Jaredites and Nephites! How can we ever gain these added truths until we believe in full what the Lord has already given us in the Book of Mormon, in the Doctrine and Covenants, and in the inspired changes made by Joseph Smith in the Bible? Will the Lord give us the full and revealed account of the creation as long as we believe in the theories of evolution? Will he give us more guidance in governmental affairs as long as we choose socialistic ways which lead to the overthrow of freedom?

We have yet to attain that degree of obedience and personal righteousness which will give us faith like the ancients: faith to multiply miracles, move mountains, and put at defiance the armies of nations; faith to quench the violence of fire, divide seas and stop the mouths of lions; faith to break every band and to stand in the presence of God. Faith comes in degrees. Until we gain faith to heal the sick, how can we ever expect to move mountains and divide seas?

We have yet to receive such an outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord in our lives that we shall all see eye to eye in all things, that every man will esteem his brother as himself, that there will be no poor among us, and that all men seeing our good works will be led to glorify our

Father who is in heaven. Until we live the law of tithing how can we expect to live the law of consecration? As long as we disagree as to the simple and easy doctrines of salvation, how can we ever have unity on the complex and endless truths yet to be revealed?

We have yet to perfect our souls, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel, and to walk in the light as God is in the light, so that if this were a day of translation we would be prepared to join Enoch and his city in heavenly realms. How many among us are now prepared to entertain angels, to see the face of the Lord, to go where God and Christ are and be like them?

We have yet to preach the gospel in every nation and to every creature. This must be done before the Second Coming. Ours is a missionary dispensation. In the waters of baptism every member of the Church covenants to stand as a witness of Christ at all times and in all places and under all circumstances, even unto death. So far we have scarcely scratched the surface where this great commission is involved. Billions of the earth's inhabitants yet walk in darkness and have little present hope of hearing the warning voice of a legal administrator, one sent of God to herald the glad tidings of salvation. We need more missionaries, many more valiant souls who will use their time and their means to bring joy and hope to the honest in heart in all nations.

We have yet to search out our ancestors and perform the ordinances of salvation and exaltation for them in the temples of the Lord. Ours is the great dispensation of vicarious ordinances; it is the era in which all who are worthy, and who believe and obey in the spirit world, shall be inheritors of all the blessings of that God who loves all his children and desires all to gain salvation in his eternal kingdom. We need more temples, an expansion of the name extraction program, more vicarious ordinances performed for and on behalf of our brethren and sisters beyond the veil. In due course we shall build a temple in Jackson County and yet another in Old Jerusalem, to say nothing of great numbers of such holy houses in many nations.

We have yet to gather Israel into the stakes of Zion, to be established in all nations. We have yet to build up Zion and to establish her stakes as places of refuge among all people and in all nations. Ours is a message for all men; the gospel of Christ—and none other—has the power to save and exalt.

We have yet to prepare a people for the Second Coming of him whose we are, whose gospel we have received, and on whose errand we labor. Our time, talents, and wealth must be made available for the building up of his kingdom. Should we be called upon to sacrifice all things, even our lives, it would be of slight

moment when weighed against the eternal riches reserved for those who are true and faithful in all things.

This is the dispensation in which saviors shall come up upon Mount Zion and the kingdom shall be the Lord's as the prophets foretold. The glorious gospel is and shall prosper forever. Shall we not now, as a Church and as a people and as the Saints of latter days, build on the foundations of the past and go forward in gospel glory until the great Jehovah shall say: "The work is done; come ye, enter the joy of your Lord; sit down with me on my throne; thou art now one with me and my Father."