Summation of the Promises Made to the Fathers

God’s Eternal Objective: Generally speaking, God’s overall objective is to bring to pass the immortality (resurrection) and eternal life (godhood) of His children (Moses 13:9). More specifically, D&C 76:50-70, 92-96 tells us that God’s objective is to (1) bring about the spiritual salvation of His children; and (2) unite them as a community (a family, a Zion people, the Kingdom of God), who are of one heart and mind with God (the same knowledge, desires, and goals), who dwell in righteousness (abiding by celestial law empowering them to accomplish their eternal work) and are self-reliant (inherit all the Father has that they might do the same eternal work as the Father). In other words, God’s objective is to bring about a celestial people, ruling in a celestial kingdom, dwelling upon a celestial earth.

God’s “Second Estate” Objectives: D&C 77, the revelation following the vision of graded heaven just referenced, reveals that the “temporal existence” of the earth in its second estate would continue for “seven thousand years,” including the Great Millennium (D&C 77:6-7).

God has revealed several purposes of the second estate (but not all—see D&C 101:32-3). Some are achieved individually (e.g., to get a physical body, experience the knowledge of good and evil, prove obedience choosing good over evil, and participate in marriage and child bearing). These can be experienced by all of Heavenly Father’s children in mortality (being a member of the Church is not a prerequisite). However, there is one major objective that can only be achieved collectively, and by obedience to God’s laws and directed by authorized servants of God: the establishment and perfection of the “kingdom of Zion” which is “the Kingdom of God” (D&C 105:32).

The Promises Made to the Fathers: The “promises made to the fathers” have, as their focus, these objectives. Indeed, each set of promises—from Enoch to David—are the scaffolding upon which the story of sacred history is set. Through their fulfillment, the eternal objectives of God are achieved.

1. Enochian Covenant (promises made to Enoch and Noah)

Summary: Enoch was promised that God will flood the world with a righteous people who will have divine truth and priesthood authority revealed to them from God. They will establish a world wide Zion with New Jerusalem as a center place. Jesus Chris and all the righteous from Adam to his second coming, including Enoch’s Zion, will return to the earth and unite with the latter-day Zion becoming one people—the family of God. Then the earth will rest from wickedness for a thousand years.

Specifics:

- **that** if the posterity of Noah became wicked, would not be destroyed by a flood of water (Moses 7:51);
- **that** a remnant of Noah’s seed will be found among all nations (Moses 7:52);
- **that** he would call upon Noah’s seed. This will be fulfilled in two ways. One, by calling them to repentance (e.g., D&C; 43:20-28; 87:3). Two, calling upon Noah’s seed to be his Her servants (e.g., Al. 13:8; 42:31; D&C 1:17-24; 18:24; 28; 39:13);
- **that** Christ should return to the earth and “the earth shall rest” from the wickedness of [her] children” (Moses 7:60-61).
- In preparation for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, God promised that would flood the world with truth and righteousness (through the Book of Mormon and other divine revelations brought forth through restoration of the Gospel by Joseph Smith and missionary work taking the Gospel to all the world) by which God will gather His elect(God’s “chosen seed” that house of Israel and Gentiles who join with them) from the four quarters of the earth to “an Holy City”—“called Zion, a New Jerusalem”
- Further, he promised that Jesus Christ would return to the earth and establish his tabernacle (house) among them. With him would come Enoch and his Zion as well as “the general assembly of the church of the first-born (i.e., all the righteous dead from the days of Adam to the last days) and they join with the city of Zion (and all her stakes throughout the world) and dwell together. And “for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest” (Moses 7:61-66; JST Gen 9:21-25). These promises establish the Lord’s the objective He will achieve by the end of the seven thousand years of the earth’s temporal existence” (D&C 77:6).

2. Abrahamic Covenant (Promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob)

Summary: While making promises to Abraham, God told him “remember the days of Enoch thy father” (JST Gen 13:14). Certainly, the promises made to Enoch, which were an everlasting covenant (Moses 7:51; JST Gen 9:21-23) will find fulfillment through the promises he would make with him.

In summary, the promises made to Abraham was that his posterity would be innumerable, and become a great nation, would receive the Gospel and Priesthood and would become a blessing to all nations (Gentiles) of the world, indeed; indeed, through Abraham’s posterity “ shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal” (Abr 2:11). These promises, entered made by covenant between Jehovah (Gen 15:7-17) and Abraham (Gen 17:1-27), shall “be fulfilled in the latter days” (1 Ne 15:18).

Specifics:

The promises are summarized in Abr 2:6-11–

- Abraham’s that his posterity would become numerous, even a great nation;
- His seed were ensured that they would have the gospel/priesthood.
- His posterity would have a land where they were free to worship God.
- They “shall bear this ministry and priesthood unto all
nations;” in Abraham’s seed “shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal” (spiritual life with God and heirs to godhood).

It would the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel) that would fulfill the promise to Enoch and Noah that in the latter-days “shall embrace the truth,” “keep all [God’s] commandments,” and “look upward” waiting for the return of Jesus Christ (JST Gen 9:21-22). Even more grand, they would be means by which God would bless all the families of the earth with the Gospel. (Abr. 2:6-11).

3. The Promises to the House of Israel as a Nation

The promises that all nations of the world would be blessed by Abraham’s posterity were to be fulfilled through the seed of Jacob, Abraham’s grandson. They became the size of a great nation while in Egyptian bondage. Jehovah now looked upon the twelve tribes as one people, one nation. He told Moses to say to Pharaoh: “Thus saith the LORD [Heb. Jehovah], Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me” (Ex 4:22-3). They brought before Jehovah at Mt Sinai where He would formally make them a nation, with Jehovah as their God, and His commandments their national law.

Summary: God promised Israel that if they kept His commandments, He would dwell with them, and they would dwell in safety and prosperity in the land of Canaan, the land specifically promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Lev 26:3-13). Their prosperous condition would be noticed by all the nations of the world, who would look begin to look favorably upon Jehovah, eventually seeking Him for temporal and spiritual salvation (Lev 26:2-13; Deut 4:1-24; 28:1-14; 29: 10-16).

If, however, they broke their covenant and all together turned from Jehovah, then He would scatter them among all nations of the earth. They would even lose their identity as Israel, God’s chosen (Lev 26:14-46; Deut 4:25-38; 28:15-68; 29:17-29; Hosea 1:1-9; Jacob 5).

But Jehovah promised that He would gather them again and they would once again become His people, and He would be their God (Lev 26:39-46; Deut 4:29-40; 30:1-20; Ezek 36-37; Jer 30-33; Hosea 1:10-11; 2:1-23). To gather Israel, the Gospel need to be taken to all nations of the world—the Gentiles would be blessed with the Gospel ( Isa 49; 1 Ne 15:12-20; 22:1-29; 3 Ne 15-16, and 21). This is neatly summarized in Zenos’ allegory recorded by Jacob in Jacob 5.

4. The Promises Made to King David

Summary: The promises are these—

- David was promised that his posterity would reign over the house of Israel forever (2 Sam. 7:12-13).
- Initially fulfilled by Solomon, one of David’s sons, but not his firstborn. The Lord promised David that He would adopt Solomon as His firstborn: “I will be his father, and he shall be my son” (2 Sam 7:13).
- The Lord promises that if Solomon sins, He will chasten him, but will not disown him as He did when Saul was king of Israel (2 Sam 7:14-15)

The Davidic covenant is a covenant of reinheritance. It is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:29-36; 13:20-34). All those who come unto Christ through priesthood ordinance, become adopted to Jesus Christ, becoming his sons and daughters (Acts 15:13-18; Romans 8:14-17, 29; Revelation 1:5-6; 3:21; 20:6; 22:5; Mosiah 5:6-8; 15:10-11; 27:24-26). They reinherit the right of firstborn as did Israel when the Lord brought them out of Egypt. Further, the promise given David that God would chastize his son if he transgresses but would not disown him becomes a promise to them as well. Through Isaiah, the Lord called this “an everlasting covenant . . . even the sure mercies of David” (Isa. 55:3; see Acts 13:34; Luke 1:46-55)

This promise of mercy was asked for by Enoch 7:49-50. It is implied in the Abrahamic Covenant—the right of Priesthood and the Gospel was given to Abraham’s seed, therefore, if they turned from God, the Lord was bound to extend mercy and recover them. In the Davidic Covenant it is stated out right.

When Jesus Christ returns to the earth in His Second Coming, He comes in fulfillment of the promises made to the fathers. As He told Joseph Smith:

16 And I will show it plainly as I showed it unto my disciples as I stood before them in the flesh, and spake unto them, saying: As ye have asked of me concerning the signs of my coming, in the day when I shall come in my glory in the clouds of heaven, to fulfil the promises that I have made unto your fathers, 17 For as ye have looked upon the long absence of your spirits from your bodies to be a bondage, I will show unto you how the day of redemption shall come, and also the restoration of the scattered Israel (D&C 45:16-17)