

“He That Thrusteth in His Sickle with His Might ... Bringeth Salvation to His Soul”: Doctrine and Covenants Section 4 and the Reward of Consecrated Service

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1. Overview

The keywords of Section 4 are “work” and “service.” “Work” appears three times¹ as a description of the great thing that God is about to do as He restores and extends His Kingdom to the inhabitants of the earth. In remarkable balance, the terms “serve” or “service” also appear three times,² describing the role of those who desire to assist in the Lord’s work and emphasizing the joint nature of this cooperative activity between God and His servants.

In verse 2, we are enjoined to serve God “with all [our] heart, might, mind, and strength” — in other words, to fully consecrate ourselves and all that we possess to the work. The wholehearted nature of the service we are called to render is exemplified in the figure of the laborer, who is required to thrust in his sickle “with his might,” that he may bring “salvation to his soul.”³

Because the laborer is positioned in its central verse, it is clear that Section 4 is as much preoccupied with the salvation of the laborers as it is with the salvation of those whom they serve. This focus is also demonstrated by the emphasis in verse 5 on the covenants whose making and keeping initially “qualify [one] for the work”⁴ and, in verse 6, on the divine attributes that result from a lifetime of faithful, unwearied service to God and His children. The final verse of Section 4 fittingly describes the culminating blessing bestowed upon those who thus “endure to the end, in following the example of the Son of the living God”⁵: these laborers shall “knock” on the gate of heaven “and it shall be opened unto [them].”⁶ And “thus saith the Father” to them: Ye shall have eternal life.⁷



Figure 1. *Joseph Smith, Prophet and Seer*, 2011

2. Preface: *The Lord's Summary of Section 4 (Verses 1–2)*

2.1. *Verse 1: A Marvelous Work*

D&C 4:1: *Now behold, a marvelous work is about to come forth among the children of men.*

a marvelous work. The announcement that a marvelous work is “about to come forth” is repeated four additional times in the Doctrine and Covenants.⁸ In each of these passages, there is a clear allusion to Isaiah 29:14 and 2 Nephi 25:17, 26.⁹ The prophecy of Isaiah 29 refers to a “book,” consistent with the Book of Mormon prophecy that God “shall bring forth his words unto them ... for the purpose of convincing them of the true Messiah.”¹⁰ Of course, this refers to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, but it also heralds both the glorious appearance of modern revelation and the eventual recovery of additional works of ancient scripture that are still hidden up in our day.¹¹ In addition, the prophecy makes it clear that the “marvelous work” includes the full scope of the restoration of the Gospel¹² and the gathering in the last days that “I may set my hand again the second time to recover my people, which are of the house of Israel.”¹³

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How does scripture describe the growth of the kingdom of God in the last days? Borrowing vivid word pictures from the book of Isaiah,¹⁴ the Doctrine and Covenants describes the kingdom of God as a tent whose expanse increases continually outward from its “center place”¹⁵ through the establishment of “stakes, for the curtains or strength of Zion.”¹⁶

At the time D&C 101 was received, the “center place” of the tent would have been understood as Jackson County, Missouri, the intended location of the New Jerusalem, and the ever-expanding curtains of the tent would have represented the growing number of outlying stakes¹⁷ that were eventually destined to span the whole earth — and, ultimately, to unite in perfect reflection with their counterpart in heaven.¹⁸ The revelations make it clear that it is “in Zion, and in her stakes, and in Jerusalem” that are to be found “those places which [God has] appointed for refuge.”¹⁹ God’s whole purpose is to draw the people of the world to such places of safety, the express purpose of the Church being “for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion.”²⁰

Though the glory of God’s presence no longer fills the whole earth as it did at Creation, it has never been completely withdrawn. In a movement similar to the divine concealment that the Lurianic *kabbalah* terms “contraction,”²¹ the fulness of God’s glory is, as it were, concentrated in one place — the Temple — which continues to represent in microcosm the image of what will someday again become the model for a fully renewed Creation, happy in the divine rest of an eternity of Sabbaths.²² Until that day, however, the Temple remains “to space what the Sabbath is to time, a recollection of the protological dimension bounded by mundane reality. It is the higher world in which the worshiper wishes he could dwell forever. . . . The Temple is the moral center of the universe, the source from which holiness and a terrifying justice radiate”²³ to the dark and fallen world that surrounds it.

Fittingly, just as the first book of the Bible, Genesis, recounts the story of Adam and Eve being cast out from Eden, its last book, Revelation, prophesies a permanent return to the Garden of God for the sanctified.²⁴ In that day, the veil that separates man and the rest of fallen creation from God will be swept away, and all shall be “done in

earth, as it is in heaven.”²⁵ In the original Garden of Eden, “there was no need for a temple — because Adam and Eve enjoyed the continual presence of God” — likewise, in John’s vision “there was no temple in the Holy City, ‘for its temple *is* the Lord God.”²⁶

marvelous. The word “marvelous” appears throughout the standard works, most often to describe the work of God.²⁷ As in other scriptural uses of the terms “marvelous” and “wonderful,” the modern meanings of “extremely good or pleasing”²⁸ and “inspiring delight, pleasure, or admiration”²⁹ are misleading. Instead, the meanings of these two words as they are used in the King James Version are closer to the idea of “astonishing” — in other words, they are intended to indicate that the work will *cause* the children of men to marvel and wonder.³⁰ Hence Avraham Gileadi translates the familiar Isaiah 29:14 phrase that the Lord will bring about “a marvelous work and a wonder” as follows: “therefore it is that I continue to astound these people with wonder upon wonder.”³¹ The sense is that the doings of God will be “shocking and amazing”³² to all people — a source of “bafflement”³³ that will cause the “wisdom of [the] wise [to] fail, and the prudence of [the] prudent [to] vanish.”³⁴ Scripture testifies that it is God’s work — not the carping of its critics — that ultimately will turn the world “upside down.”³⁵

2.2. Verse 2a: *Embark in the Service of God*

D&C 4:2a: *Therefore, O ye that **embark** in the service of God ...*

embark. This word appears nowhere else in scripture, nor does it appear in the teachings of Joseph Smith. It is a perfect fit for the context of verse 2.

The term comes from the French *embarquer*, from *em-* (in) and *barque* (bark, ship). A figurative meaning of “embark” that applies to the beginning of any important or demanding course of action³⁶ was well understood in the time of Joseph Smith.³⁷ The imagery of a voyage is apt as a description of man’s response to the call of God: embarking in the service of God requires a firm resolve to leave one’s familiar labors and companions to take up a new work for which one is never fully prepared, and at a destination which is never adequately known in advance. Adding to the drama is the realization that after

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Figure 2. Glen S. Hopkinson, 1946: *The Journey Begins*

the vessel sets sail, one cannot with impunity abandon ship nor even look back longingly at the retreating shoreline.³⁸ “Remember Lot’s wife.”³⁹

Then there is the problem of provisioning. Although Lehi’s family was told to abandon their precious things as they departed into the desert, they were allowed — mercifully — to bring their “provisions and tents”⁴⁰ with them. But what of others among God’s “pilgrims”⁴¹ whom He requires to set out into the wilderness more rashly, without the luxury of advance preparation and resourcing? Among the most “astonishing” and “baffling” aspects of the Lord’s “marvelous work” is that, despite all odds, such “fools for Christ’s sake”⁴² survive and thrive. They do so, not expecting that vital living water will be provided from the lush “rivers of Babylon,”⁴³ as any sensible person might suppose. Rather, as with the children of Israel, they know that what they need to sustain them in their wanderings will flow to them — impossibly — from solid rock through discreet displays of divine power “in the very moment”⁴⁴ as they continue, undistracted, to press forward:⁴⁵

Not forever by still waters
Would we idly rest and stay;
But would smite the living fountains
From the rocks along our way.

Someday the Saints will settle in Zion; then they will enjoy enduring “green pastures” and untroubled “still waters.”⁴⁶ But that time is not yet. *Our* day, says the Lord, “is a day of warning, and not

a day of many words.”⁴⁷ It is a day of “hastening,”⁴⁸ where the “rest of the Lord”⁴⁹ still lies too far in the distance for us to think we can lay back in “carnal security,”⁵⁰ “take [our] ease,”⁵¹ and passively wait for the world to be saved. Though a lazy holiday in the plains of Sodom ever-invitingly beckons, our summons to “embark in the service of God” calls us, like Abraham, to a life in a lonely wilderness, as “strangers”⁵² in a “strange country,”⁵³ with the words: “*leckh-leckha*”⁵⁴ — get up and get going!⁵⁵ “A ship in port is safe,” said the venerable Navy Captain Grace Hopper, “but that is not what ships were built for.”⁵⁶

Having embarked, we soon learn with surprise how short is a mortal voyage undertaken at the Lord’s command. Advancing age and retreating prospects of continued service confront us with the clash between the skewed priorities of our past life and the aspirations of our better selves.⁵⁷

Now, the prospect of death overshadows all others for me. I am like a man on a sea voyage nearing his destination. When I embarked, I worried about having a cabin with a porthole, whether I should be asked to sit at the captain’s table, who were the more attractive and important passengers. All such considerations become pointless, however, when I shall soon be disembarking.

2.3. Verse 2b: *See That Ye Serve Him*

D&C 4:2b: ... *see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind, and strength* ...

serve him with all your heart, might, mind, and strength. A careful examination of the Hebrew of Deuteronomy 6:5, a companion scripture to D&C 4:2, will reveal that it is essentially a statement of the law of consecration, the crowning law of the ordinances.⁵⁸ It forms part of the beloved *Shema Yisrael*,⁵⁹ “recited twice daily by all pious Jews and written on their doorposts and phylacteries. ... It draws out the implications of the first commandment in Exodus 20:2–3.”⁶⁰ Jesus called it the “first *and great* commandment.”⁶¹



Figure 3. “Shema Yisrael” at the Knesset Menorah in Jerusalem

Although Section 4 tells us that we are to *serve* God⁶² with all our “heart, might, mind, and strength,” Deuteronomy 6:5 tells us to “*love* the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”⁶³ Love and service were equated by Jesus when He said: “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”⁶⁴ Let us now digress to examine in more detail the Hebrew of Deuteronomy 6:5.

Deuteronomy 6:5: *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

love the Lord thy God. The great Jewish biblical scholar Rashi explained that to love God specifically means to “perform his ... commandments out of love.”⁶⁵ David L. Lieber agrees, explaining:⁶⁶

Israel’s duty to love God is inseparable from action and is regularly connected with the observance of His commandments.⁶⁷ In ancient Near Eastern political

terminology, “love” refers to the loyalty of subjects, vassals, and allies. One of the striking parallels between political treaties and the covenant between God and Israel is the requirement that vassals “love” the suzerain — i.e., act loyally to him — with all their heart. The command to love God accordingly may be understood as requiring one to act loyally toward Him, though an emotional response is also called for.

with all thine heart. This phrase can be interpreted as equivalent to the English term “wholeheartedly.”⁶⁸ It is a sincere engagement of the complete self that eschews any competing interests. Lieber further observes:⁶⁹

The opposite of wholehearted love is not hatred but apathy — going through the motions with no passion, no real caring (whether one is describing one’s attitude toward God or toward family members). As Aaron Zeitlin wrote:

Praise Me, says God, and I will know that you love Me.
Curse Me, says God, and I will know that you love Me ...
But if you look at the stars and yawn,
If you don’t praise and you don’t curse,
then I created you in vain, says God.

By way of contrast, Jeremiah 29:13 reads: “And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me *with all your heart.*”⁷⁰

with all thy soul. Rashi⁷¹ and the *Mishnah* interpret this identically as “even if he takes your soul.”⁷² Lieber renders this as “even at the cost of your life.”⁷³ Moshe Weinfeld compares the love and loyalty required by Deuteronomy 6:5 to the demands of devotion “from the Hittite period down to the Roman period,” sometimes expressed by “giving the hand”⁷⁴ in a ceremony witnessed by a covenantal assembly containing divine witnesses.⁷⁵ Weinfeld finds “in the Hittite treaties that the subordinate party is obliged to serve the sovereign ‘with all the heart and soul’ and even be prepared to die for him, a feature with occurs later in the Assyrian loyalty oath.”⁷⁶ Similarly, in Greek and Roman loyalty oaths he finds “obligations to fight for life and death. In the loyalty oath of the Paphlagonians to Caesar Augustus, we read

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that one is not to spare body or soul ... to stand up to any danger whatsoever.”⁷⁷

with all thy might. The Hebrew phrase (*b'khol m'odekha*) could be rendered as “exceedingly,” i.e., “comparable to the more common phrase for ‘very, very much’ (*bim'od m'od*), implying with all the power and means at one’s disposal.”⁷⁸ However, tradition typically renders this more specifically as “with all your possessions” or “with all your money.”⁷⁹ Note that the New Testament equivalent to “possessions” is *mammon*.⁸⁰

Taking these nuances of meaning into consideration, the gist of Deuteronomy 6:5 might be rendered as follows:

And thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God out of love, wholeheartedly, with all your might and all your possessions, even at the cost of your life.

Note the resemblance in the spirit of this verse to President Ezra Taft Benson’s definition of the law of consecration as being “that we consecrate our time, talents, strength, property, and money for the upbuilding of the kingdom of God on this earth and the establishment of Zion.”⁸¹

2.4. Verse 2c: *Stand Blameless*

D&C 4:2c: ... *that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day.*

stand blameless before God at the last day. When we will have learned to live the law of consecration in its fulness, having proved our determination to serve God “at all hazards,”⁸² we are prepared to “stand blameless before God at the last day”⁸³ — in other words “in the day of judgment.”⁸⁴ On that day, “every man [will] be accountable for his own sins”⁸⁵ — taking into consideration both what each has “done” and what has been left “undone.”⁸⁶

Standing is and has always been the posture of worthiness and readiness.⁸⁷ It is by being raised by the hand to the upright position that we are prepared to hear the word of the Lord and then to perform His bidding promptly and with exactness. It is no mere coincidence that



Figure 4. *Yahoel Lifts the Fallen Abraham*, Codex Sylvester, 14th century

before heavenly messengers can perform their errands to Ezekiel,⁸⁸ Daniel,⁸⁹ and Paul,⁹⁰ they must first command these men to stand on their feet.⁹¹ As biblical scholar Robert Hayward has said: “You stand in the temple,⁹² you stand before the Lord,⁹³ you pray standing up⁹⁴ — you can’t approach God on all fours like an animal. If you can stand, you can serve God in His temple.”⁹⁵ If you are stained with sin, you cannot, with integrity, stand in His presence.⁹⁶

In the scene is depicted above, the fallen Abraham gratefully testified that the Angel Yahoel “took [him] by [his] right hand and stood [him] on [his] feet.”⁹⁷ Other prophets such as Enoch,⁹⁸ Abraham,⁹⁹ Daniel,¹⁰⁰ and John¹⁰¹ were also grasped by the hand of an angel as part of their heavenly visions. Through the ordinances of the priesthood, each of us may be given the knowledge and power to rise from our fallen state and stand in safe assurance in the presence of God.

blameless. The Hebrew term *tamim*, which corresponds to the English term “blameless,”¹⁰² “is mostly found in ritual contexts” and “describes a sacrificial animal that is without blemish, as in Exodus

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12:5 and Leviticus 1:3, 10. Only such an animal is acceptable to God, says Leviticus 22:17–25. As applied to human beings, *tamim* acquired a moral dimension connoting ‘unblemished’ by moral fault — hence a person of unimpeachable integrity. Such an individual enjoys God’s fellowship, according to Psalms 15 and 101:6.”¹⁰³ When paired with the word *tsaddik*,¹⁰⁴ it signifies “wholly righteous.”¹⁰⁵

Following Gordon Wenham,¹⁰⁶ Michael Morales discusses scriptural assertions about the “righteousness” and “blamelessness” of Noah and “its correspondence with Psalm 15:1–2, considered by Koch to be the clearest example of a temple entrance liturgy”:¹⁰⁷

Yahweh, who may dwell in Your tent, who may tabernacle
on Your holy mount?

Whoever’s walk is blameless, whoever’s deeds are righteous.



Figure 5. Antoine Gadan, 1854–1934: *Les Moissonneurs*, 1910

3. Those with Desires to Serve Are Called (Verse 3)

D&C 4:3: *Therefore, if ye have desires to serve God ye are called to the work;*

if ye have desires to serve God. Our “holy desires” are to be offered up to the Lord in His House.¹⁰⁸ God will hear and answer prayers that are offered in the manner He has prescribed.¹⁰⁹ In His mercy, He will frustrate, insofar as the principles of wisdom and agency dictate,

wicked desires that would bring ruin to the righteous and wicked alike,¹¹⁰ while blessing the faithful, whether in time or eternity, with every righteous desire of their heart.¹¹¹ To those laborers who, like their Savior, find joy in saving souls,¹¹² God will grant the power to “bring thousands of souls to repentance.”¹¹³

ye are called to the work. Though individuals are initially *called* to the work because of their righteous *desires*, it remains to them whether they will actually *perform* the work with their might. Not all who are called will be chosen or “elected.”¹¹⁴



Figure 6. *The Wedding Garment*

The difference between calling and election parallels the distinction between receiving the *authority* of the priesthood and possessing *power* in the priesthood. The authority of the priesthood “comes by way of ordination; power in the priesthood comes through faithful and obedient living in honoring covenants.”¹¹⁵ Similarly, it is one thing to wear white clothing as a *symbol* of priesthood power, and yet another to be endowed or clothed in actuality “with power from on high.”¹¹⁶ Connecting the endowment of power with the idea of putting on glorious clothing is Elder James E. Talmage’s discussion of what he calls the *Parable of the Royal Marriage Feast* in Matthew 22. Referring to the wedding garment required of all legitimate guests at the feast, he observes:¹¹⁷

The Greek original in the mention of the wedding garment is *enduma* ... The noun is related to the Greek verb *enduein*, “to put on, as a garment.”

After the guests were seated, the Lord of the feast noticed one man who was not wearing the wedding garment¹¹⁸ — in other words, he had not been clothed through faithfulness to his covenants with actual “power from on high.”¹¹⁹ Because no man could sit at the feast without the wedding garment, this man was immediately bound

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and “cast ... into outer darkness.”¹²⁰ Though the man might have known enough to deceive the outer doorkeepers, he could not fool the Bridegroom, who knew his situation perfectly. As Nephi taught, the Bridegroom, who is “the keeper of the [final] gate,” “is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; ... he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name.”¹²¹ The lesson the Master drew from this parable is that: “many are called, but few are chosen, wherefore all do not have on the wedding garment.”¹²²

4. One’s Own Soul May Be Saved Through Vigorous Labor to Save Others (Verse 4)

D&C 4:4: *For behold **the field is white already to harvest**; and lo, he that **thrusteth in his sickle with his might, the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul**;*

These words, featured within the central verse of Section 4, emphasize the need for vigorous, continuous labor during the short time available.¹²³ Those who fail to labor will perish with the wicked when the vineyard is burned.¹²⁴

the field is white already to harvest. The whiteness of the field is a sign of its readiness to be reaped and burned.¹²⁵ As Richard Cowan observes:¹²⁶

The field is not “all ready to harvest” but “already to harvest”¹²⁷ — that is, the harvest is not just about to begin but is now in progress.

Because the reaping and burning has already begun, the tone of the Lord of the harvest necessarily is one of earnest urgency. It is “the eleventh hour, and the last time that [the Lord] shall call laborers into [His] vineyard.”¹²⁸ The laborers are few.¹²⁹ Laborers must reap “immediately”¹³⁰ “while the day lasts,”¹³¹ for, when daylight disappears, “then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed.”¹³²

thrusteth in his sickle with his might. This phrase highlights the strenuous nature of the labors required. The true servants of the Lord will be known not only “by their desires” but also by “their works.”¹³³ They “open [their] mouths and spare not.”¹³⁴ To those who “will not

open their mouths,” the Lord declares that He is “not well pleased” and proclaims “wo unto such,” for His “anger is kindled against them.”¹³⁵

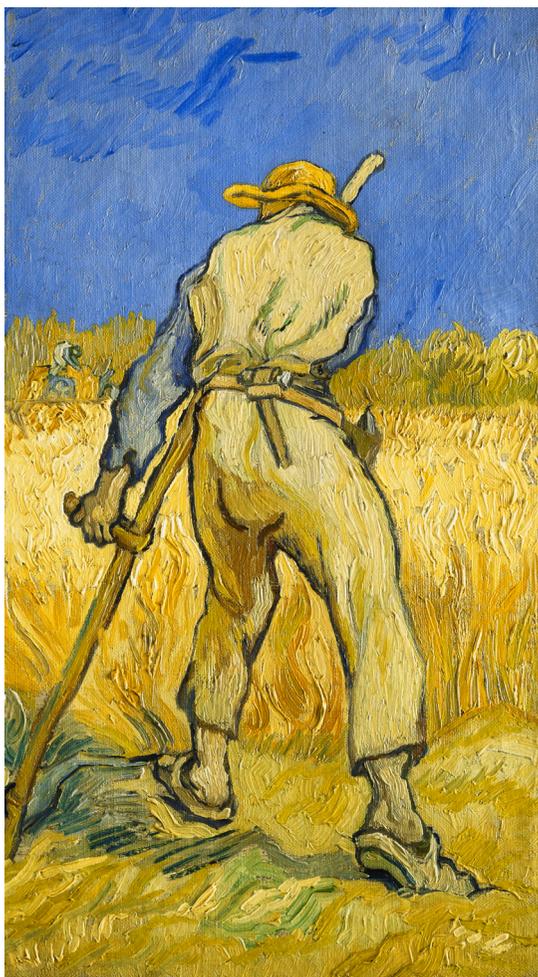


Figure 7. Vincent van Gogh, 1853–1890:
Le Moissonneur

“secured in the garner” will “possess eternal life” while the tares will suffer “unquenchable fire.”¹³⁸

The sword of the Spirit, which is the word that comes through the voice of God, performs a similar function to that of the sickle. It is “quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the

sickle. The sickle of the laborer, the sword of the Spirit, and the veil of the temple share a common feature: they divide the righteous from the unrighteous — saving the former and condemning the latter.

The responsibility of the one who wields the sickle is to “gather the wheat from the midst of the tares.”¹³⁶ Though “both grow together” they are to be separated in the end, once and for all: “in the time of harvest” the reapers are to “gather ... together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them,” then to “gather the wheat into [the Lord’s] barn”¹³⁷

The wheat thus



Figure 8. William Bell Scott, 1811–1890: *The Renting of the Veil*, 1867–1868

joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.¹³⁹ The sharp blade of this sword enables God’s laborers to discern between the righteous and the wicked.¹⁴⁰

The temple veil is also a separator — it creates a barrier of protection for those unprepared to enter within. However, to the righteous this barrier is permeable, allowing them access to the presence of God. Stephen T. Whitlock¹⁴¹ elucidates this concept with reference to the historical conflation in the term “cleave” of two closely related word forms with nearly opposite meanings (“to divide” and “to unite”¹⁴²). He observes that this happenstance has provided English speakers a useful way to conceive of the ambivalent nature of the veil as a human-divine boundary: “the difference between whether a boundary is used to divide or unite ... man and God is completely dependent on the orientation of man,¹⁴³ in that returning to God’s presence requires that we be like Him.¹⁴⁴ To the extent that we are not like God we are

separated,¹⁴⁵ and this separation is for *our* benefit because it gives us ‘space’ to repent.”¹⁴⁶

*with his might.*¹⁴⁷ That is, with complete consecration of all one’s personal energies and possessions.

the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul. Those who “thrust in [their] sickle with [their] might”¹⁴⁸ will be “laden with sheaves upon [their] backs.”¹⁴⁹ Moreover, they will bring “everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God” to their *own* soul.¹⁵⁰ “By reclaiming an erring brother, we save both him and ourselves,” writes Elder Bruce R. McConkie. “Our sins are hidden (remitted) because we ministered for the salvation and blessing of another.”¹⁵¹

5. Qualifications for the Work:

Faith, Hope, Charity, and Love (Verse 5a)

D&C 4:5: *And **faith, hope, charity, and love**, with an eye single to the glory of God, **qualify him for the work.***

faith, hope, charity, and love. Verse 5 adds “love” to the Apostle Paul’s famous triad of virtues. This change allows the foursome “faith, hope, charity, and love” to stand alongside “heart, might, mind, and strength” as a rhetorical parallel. However, despite the temptation to read a difference between “charity” and “love,”¹⁵² it seems wisest to assume they are meant as synonyms. Twice elsewhere in the published words of Joseph Smith¹⁵³ and four times in the Book of Mormon,¹⁵⁴ the two terms are specifically equated.

In the context of 1 Corinthians, Joseph Fitzmyer notes that the “The triad [of faith, hope, and charity] is meant to replace the threesome of tongues, prophecy, and knowledge of vv. 1–2 and 8.”¹⁵⁵ Tongues, prophecy, and knowledge are temporary gifts while faith, hope, and charity are permanent.

Harold Child has written an eloquent hymn about the “transcendent three”¹⁵⁶ virtues of faith, hope, and charity. He agrees with Moroni¹⁵⁷ in describing their inseparable nature as an “invincible union.”¹⁵⁸ But these three virtues are more than a set of essential character traits. In addition, as part of the “guarded tradition of the Apostles”¹⁵⁹ that are transmitted to the reader in 1 Corinthians¹⁶⁰ and



Figure 9. Eugène Carrière, 1849–1906: *Intimacy, or The Big Sister*, ca. 1889

elsewhere in scripture,¹⁶¹ these terms are used to describe “stages in a Christian’s earthly experience.”¹⁶²

The connection between faith, hope, and charity and the doctrine of Christ can be summarized briefly as follows: All who are determined to become followers of Christ must first begin by *repenting* and exercising *faith* in Him, which brings about a justificatory¹⁶³ remission of their sins through *baptism*¹⁶⁴ — a preparatory ordinance of the Aaronic Priesthood that enables those who have received it to leave the telestial world of sin and death (corresponding to the courtyard in the Israelite temple), and to enter the transitional terrestrial world (corresponding ritually to the Holy Place). Baptism prepares disciples for the work of *hope*. The work of *hope* is to receive and keep all the additional ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood, beginning with the ordinance bestows the right to receive and enjoy, through worthiness, the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Keeping the covenants associated with the ordinances endows disciples of Christ with the increased knowledge and strength they need to remain patient and steadfast through the testing process of sanctification.¹⁶⁵ As they continue to “press forward”¹⁶⁶ with “*unshaken faith*”¹⁶⁷ on this path, they will develop “*a perfect brightness of hope*,”¹⁶⁸ and a *love of God and of all men*¹⁶⁹ that enables them to consecrate themselves and everything they possess to the building up of the kingdom of God.¹⁷⁰ Then, if they have proven themselves able to bear, believe, hope, and endure in *all things*¹⁷¹ and continue to “endure to the end, in following the example of the Son of the living God,”¹⁷² having been “chastened and tried, even as Abraham,”¹⁷³ and being “filled”¹⁷⁴ with *charity*, “the *pure love of Christ*,”¹⁷⁵ they are prepared to advance to the threshold of the celestial world — corresponding ritually to the veiled entry to the Holy of Holies — and to hear the Father’s sure declaration: “Ye shall have eternal life.”¹⁷⁶

Anciently, faith, hope, and charity formed the three principal rungs, as it were, on a “ladder of virtues,”¹⁷⁷ an ancient symbol of the process of spiritual progression by which the disciple, enabled by the grace of God, climbs to perfection. In the reconstructed version of a sermon given on 21 May 1843 that was published in the *History of the Church*, the Prophet drew on the book of Genesis to teach about the ladder of exaltation. He associated the “three principal rounds of Jacob’s ladder” with “the telestial, the terrestrial, and the celestial glories or kingdoms.”¹⁷⁸ These, in turn, naturally correlate to symbolic representations of these three differing glories within the temple,¹⁷⁹ what Joseph Smith described in an 1832 statement about Jacob’s ladder as equating to the “mysteries of godliness.”¹⁸⁰ In addition, as we have already seen, stages of progression relating to faith, hope, and charity correspond to the general sequence of ordinances and blessings described in scripture as “the doctrine of Christ.”¹⁸¹

Speaking of Jacob’s dream of the heavenly ladder in Genesis 28, a modern apostle, Elder Marion G. Romney, said: “Jacob realized that the covenants he made with the Lord 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.”¹⁸² When Joseph Smith taught the Saints about the perfecting and protecting power of charity, he was not

speaking merely about the renunciation of sin and the acquisition of a Christlike character but also about the means by which blessings promised in priesthood ordinances could be confirmed definitively upon those who endure in faithful covenant-keeping to the end: “Until we have perfect love we are liable to fall, and when we have a testimony that our names are sealed in the Lamb’s Book of Life we have perfect love, and then it is impossible for false Christs to deceive us.”¹⁸³

Faith. The journey through the Israelite temple began in the temple courtyard. This courtyard can be compared with the “World Room” in the Salt Lake Temple, a representation of the fallen state of existence or telesstial glory.¹⁸⁴ In the courtyard of the Israelite temple were located the altar of sacrifice¹⁸⁵ and the laver of water used by priests for purification before they entered the temple.¹⁸⁶ David Calabro has compared the function of the temple altar of sacrifice to the description in Moses 5 of the obedience of Adam and Eve and their attentiveness to the ordinance of sacrifice after they were driven from the Garden of Eden. Likewise, he has linked the function of the laver to the account of Adam’s baptism that is given in Moses 6.¹⁸⁷ John Thompson observes: “As one ascends to the Holy of Holies, there appears to be an expectation of participating in preparatory rites and laws of an Aaronic order associated with the courtyard that give one access to the temple, wherein further rites and laws of a higher order will be manifest, allowing one to enter into the presence of God in the Holy of Holies.”¹⁸⁸

Consistent with such a picture, Hebrews 11, Ether 12, and Moroni 7 emphasize the undergirding quality of *faith*, not as mere belief in the truth or falsity of some proposition,¹⁸⁹ but as “the moving cause of all action.”¹⁹⁰ As such, faith necessarily accompanies every righteous striving to follow the Savior Jesus Christ.

In one of the culminating chapters of his record, Nephi emphasizes the specific ordinances that accompany faith.¹⁹¹ More pointedly, it may be said that “faith *produces* ordinances”¹⁹² Joseph Fielding McConkie notes that “in establishing these principles [of the doctrines of salvation] relative to baptism, Nephi established principles that apply with equal force to all ordinances of salvation.

Salvation [in the celestial kingdom of God] ... is Nephi's subject — baptism is but the illustration."¹⁹³

Moroni 7 provides an excellent summary of the way faith provides a basis for the entire process of salvation, from beginning to end. Mormon opens by exhorting listeners to exercise the discerning power of the "light of Christ"¹⁹⁴ to judge "with a perfect knowledge"¹⁹⁵ "every thing which inviteth to do good"¹⁹⁶ and which "is of God"¹⁹⁷ from "whatsoever persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God"¹⁹⁸ — which things are "of the devil."¹⁹⁹ He emphasizes that it is through *faith* that the children of men are called to *repentance*²⁰⁰ in "divers ways"²⁰¹ by God's messengers — for example, both through "angels"²⁰² and through "prophets."²⁰³ By this means "men began to *exercise faith* in Christ"²⁰⁴ and by virtue of keys restored to the earth by divine messengers and exercised by mortal priesthood holders they may be *baptized*.²⁰⁵ Thus each disciple may be enabled to "lay hold upon every good thing"²⁰⁶ up to and including the ability to "become the sons of God,"²⁰⁷ being "saved by *faith in his name*."²⁰⁸

Hope. The journey into the Israelite temple proper commenced as the priest left the courtyard to "draw near" to God in the Holy Place with "*full assurance of faith*" having been cleansed through both the outward ordinances of sacrifice and washing and the inner transformations produced through repentance and purification from sin.²⁰⁹ The Holy Place can be compared to the "Terrestrial Room" in modern LDS temples,²¹⁰ a representation of the greater glory that Adam and Eve experienced when "all things were confirmed unto Adam, by an holy ordinance."²¹¹ It is a place where disciples are meant to "wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts."²¹² In this state of existence, they participate in further covenant-making and testing to see whether they will "hold fast the profession of [their] faith [= Greek *elpis*, hope] without wavering."²¹³ For those who endure to the end, the Terrestrial Room provides a transition symbolic of the resurrection to the Celestial Room through the Veil of the Temple,²¹⁴ "that is to say, [the] flesh [of our Redeemer]."²¹⁵ For:²¹⁶

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ye must be born again into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit, and be cleansed by blood, even the blood of mine Only Begotten into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven;²¹⁷ that ye might be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory.

Note the distinction between the “words of eternal life” — meaning the sure promise of exaltation that can only be received in an anticipatory way “in this world” — and “eternal life” itself, which will be given “in the world to come.”



Figure 10. *Charity with an Anchor*, 1876

The hope experienced in this state of existence is not a “natural hope” for “bodily and worldly matters — the hope that our job will be rewarding, that our children will do well in school, that we will get a raise. Christian hope is the hope for salvation.”²¹⁸ Those who prove themselves ready through their faithfulness to the Gospel are chosen or elected to inherit the kingdom “according to a preparatory redemption”²¹⁹ and they obtain the first hope of attaining it through the “earnest of the Spirit in [their] hearts.”²²⁰ Through continued faithfulness and receiving and keeping all the ordinances of the Gospel, this initial, dim hope will be replaced by a “*perfect brightness of hope*”²²¹ (as described by Nephi), “*a more excellent hope*”²²² (as described by Mormon), or “*the full assurance of hope*”²²³ (as described by Paul). In this manner, faithful disciples are brought “unto the *end*,”²²⁴ where, according to Moroni, they “receive an inheritance in the place which [the Lord has] prepared.”²²⁵ This perfect “hope cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast.”²²⁶



Figure 11. *The Woman at the Tomb and the Ascension, ca. 400*

Although we have entered the gate of repentance and baptism²²⁷ by exercising “unshaken faith,” “relying *wholly* upon the merits”²²⁸ of Christ, it is intended that we grow spiritually through a combination of our efforts and His strengthening power in gradual fashion until, someday, we come to “be like him.”²²⁹ Moroni 7:41 explains that the ultimate goal of receiving an inheritance in the presence of God is the central theme of these additional covenants and ordinances found in the temple: “And what is it that ye shall *hope* for?

Behold I say unto you that ye shall have *hope* through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, *to be raised unto life eternal.*”²³⁰ With startling specificity, Hebrews 6:18–20 associates sacred ordinances with the quality of *hope* in great detail. Paul addresses as his audience all those of us who “have claimed his protection by grasping the *hope* set before us.”²³¹ Continuing the description, he writes: “That *hope* we hold. It is like an anchor for our lives, an anchor safe and sure.”²³² It enters in through the veil, whose Jesus has entered on our behalf as a forerunner, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”²³³

Alluding to the blessings of the Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood,²³⁴ Paul assures the Saints of his time of the firmness and unchangeableness of God’s promises as they “grasp the hope set before [them].”²³⁵ The “two irrevocable acts” that provide firm assurance to

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disciples are “God’s promise and the oath by which He guarantees that promise.”²³⁶ By this scripture, we are meant to understand that so long as the we hold fast to the Redeemer, who has entered “through the veil on our behalf ... as a forerunner,” we will remain firmly anchored to our heavenly home, and the eventual realization of the promise “that where I am, there ye may be also.”²³⁷ According to Margaret Barker, there is also undoubtedly the sense that “Jesus, the high priest, [stands] behind the veil in the Holy of Holies to assist those who [pass] through.”²³⁸ According to Harold Attridge: “The anchor would thus constitute the link that ‘extends’ or ‘reaches’ to the safe harbor of the divine realms ... providing a means of access by its entry into God’s presence.”²³⁹ David Moffitt argues that just as Jesus was “exalted ... above the entire created order — to the heavenly throne at God’s right hand,” so “humanity will be elevated to the pinnacle of the created order.”²⁴⁰ And as the Son received “all the glory of Adam,”²⁴¹ so “His followers will also inherit this promise if they endure ... testing.”²⁴²

Moroni provides a beautiful and concise encapsulation of how the qualities of faith and hope associated with the blessings of the temple prepare disciples to enter the presence of God: “Wherefore, whoso believeth in God might with surety *hope* for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of God, which *hope* cometh of *faith*, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God.”²⁴³ It must be understood, of course, that priesthood ordinances received on earth provide only an initial “hope for a better world,” and not the actual entrance into it.²⁴⁴

Charity. The Holy of Holies in the Israelite temple, can be compared with the Celestial Room in the Salt Lake Temple along with the bordering apartments connected to it.²⁴⁵ It represents the highest of the three kingdoms of glory, where those who, in the likeness of their Savior, have “overcome all things”²⁴⁶ and are heirs of eternal life and exaltation may dwell forever and ever. All this, however, is dry recital without an understanding of the enduring²⁴⁷ flame that provides light, life, and warmth — and glory — to this place of supernal joy: *charity*.

On this point the scriptures are very clear. Although Moroni affirms that the joint effects of “faith, hope, and charity bringeth unto”²⁴⁸ Christ, Paul describes charity alone as “the bond of perfectness”²⁴⁹ and therefore “the greatest of these”²⁵⁰ three virtues. Indeed, Mormon calls charity “the greatest of *all*,”²⁵¹ without which we are “nothing.”²⁵² More specifically, Moroni teaches that “except men shall have charity they cannot inherit that place which [Jesus Christ has] prepared in the mansions of [His] Father.”²⁵³

Moroni affirms that “ye receive no witness” — meaning the sure witness that came when Christ personally “showed himself unto our fathers”²⁵⁴ — “until after the trial of your faith.”²⁵⁵ “And there were many whose faith was so exceedingly strong ... who could not be kept from within the [heavenly] veil,²⁵⁶ but truly saw with their eyes the things which they had beheld [previously] with an eye of faith, and they were glad.”²⁵⁷ It is in serving God and their fellow man “at all hazards,”²⁵⁸ having obtained a “fulness of the priesthood of God ... in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it ... by keeping all the commandments and obeying all the ordinances of the house of God,”²⁵⁹ and having reached the point where their “bowels [are] full of charity,”²⁶⁰ the “pure love of Christ,”²⁶¹ that His disciples are prepared to have their calling and election made sure. Whether in this life or the next, they will receive the blessings of being sealed up to eternal life and exaltation — if they remain faithful to the end.²⁶² According to Nephi, “a love of God and of all men” is the final requirement of all those who “endure to the end”²⁶³ and receive the promise of “all that [the] Father hath.”²⁶⁴ “There are many called, but few are chosen”²⁶⁵ in this ultimate sense of the word. “And why are they not chosen? Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men.”²⁶⁶ Their “bowels are not filled with charity”²⁶⁷ which is, as Hugh Nibley affirms, the “essence of the law of consecration.”²⁶⁸

Nibley similarly affirms that full obedience to the law of consecration, the ultimate test of charity, is “the consummation of the laws of obedience and sacrifice, is the threshold of the celestial kingdom, the last and hardest requirement made of men in this life”²⁶⁹ and “can only be faced against sore temptation.”²⁷⁰ It is through our willingness to pay the painful price of experience that we come to

know God.²⁷¹ And knowing God *is* eternal life, as we read in John 17:3: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”²⁷²

Although Abraham previously had received the blessings of patriarchal marriage, and then had been made a king and a priest under the hands of Melchizedek,²⁷³ Abraham’s “election sure” came only afterward, when he demonstrated his willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac.²⁷⁴ In Hebrews 11:19, the evidence of Abraham’s absolute consecration in the sacrifice of his son and the form of the blessing he received are described respectively using the language of death and resurrection. In trying to make sense of this idea, we might remember that in some Jewish²⁷⁵ and early Christian²⁷⁶ creedal formulations bearing on accounts of Abraham’s sacrifice, one finds the idea that Isaac actually died, ascended to heaven, and was resurrected — though it should be remembered that these eschatological ideas fit equally well in ritual context.

For example, scenes painted above the Torah Shrine niche in the Dura Europos synagogue not only illustrate the death and resurrection of Isaac but also make the temple context of this symbolism clear, showing how it is linked to the temple motif of those who have demonstrated their faithfulness by living the law of consecration in its fulness being permitted to come “within the [heavenly] veil”²⁷⁷ to be shown “all things”²⁷⁸ personally by the Lord Himself (Figure 12). The panel is filled with symbols of Jewish worship: the *menorah* (left) representing here the Tree of Life,²⁷⁹ a representation doors of the Temple in Jerusalem (center), and the sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham (right). In front of the altar, a ram is caught in the thicket, and behind it is what appears, at first glance, to be someone in a tent.

Although the figure in the background is often identified as Sarah,²⁸⁰ it is difficult to see why she would have been included in this scene. Moreover, were this figure a female, one would have expected a head covering and colored clothing, as with other Jewish women shown in the Dura murals.²⁸¹ A more plausible interpretation is given by Margaret Barker,²⁸² who interprets the scene of Isaac as showing “a figure going up behind a curtain held open by a disembodied hand — the symbol of the LORD [shown to the left of Isaac]. Since the temple curtain represented access to the presence of God, this



Figure 12. *Decorations above the Torah Shrine.*
Center of west wall, Dura Europos Synagogue

seems to depict Isaac going to heaven.” Harold Attridge concludes that “Isaac’s rescue from virtual death²⁸³ on the sacrificial pyre is symbolic of the deliverance that all the faithful can expect.”²⁸⁴ Likewise, Abraham’s recovery of what he had once thought lost is symbolic of the reward of eternal life that comes through wholehearted consecration of all things.

In his carefully-worded paraphrase of Paul’s description of faith, hope, and charity²⁸⁵ within the thirteenth Article of Faith,²⁸⁶ Joseph Smith pointedly distinguished between the early Saints’ previous attainments with respect to faith (“We believe all things”) and hope (“we hope all things”), and their as yet unfulfilled aspirations with respect to charity.²⁸⁷ In the Saints’ current state, their strivings for charity could accurately be characterized only in terms of a partial attainment and a yearning for the necessary strength to realize, eventually, its perfection: “we have endured *many* things, and *hope* to be able to endure *all* things.”²⁸⁸ While the notion of enduring to the end is often associated with the general idea of continuing faithful to the end of one’s mortal life, in scripture it is made clear that it means

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receiving all priesthood ordinances and successfully overcoming whatever tests and trials one may be called to experience²⁸⁹ “through the endurance of *faith on his name* to the end.”²⁹⁰ More specifically, Nephi confirms that it means enduring to the end of the path that leads to eternal life,²⁹¹ namely, the definitive affirmation by the Father that one’s calling and election has been made sure. The Prophet Joseph Smith further explained:²⁹²

Though [the Saints addressed by Peter²⁹³] might hear the voice of God and know that Jesus was the Son of God, this would be no evidence that their election and calling was made sure,²⁹⁴ that they had part with Christ, and were joint heirs with Him. Then they would want that more sure word of prophecy,²⁹⁵ that they were sealed in the heavens and had the promise of eternal life in the kingdom of God.

Then, having this promise sealed unto [us is] an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast. Though the thunders might roll and lightnings flash, and earthquakes bellow, and war gather thick around, yet this hope and knowledge would support the soul in every hour of trial, trouble, and tribulation. Then knowledge through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the grand key that unlocks the glories and mysteries of the kingdom of heaven ...

Then I would exhort you to go on and continue to call upon God until you make your calling and election sure for yourselves, by obtaining this more sure word of prophecy, and wait patiently for the promise until you obtain it.

Joseph Smith’s requirement of continuing to “call upon God” in prayer is consistent with the final exhortation of Mormon regarding the culminating charge of charity that produces “a more excellent hope”:²⁹⁶

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ; that ye may become the sons of God; that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall

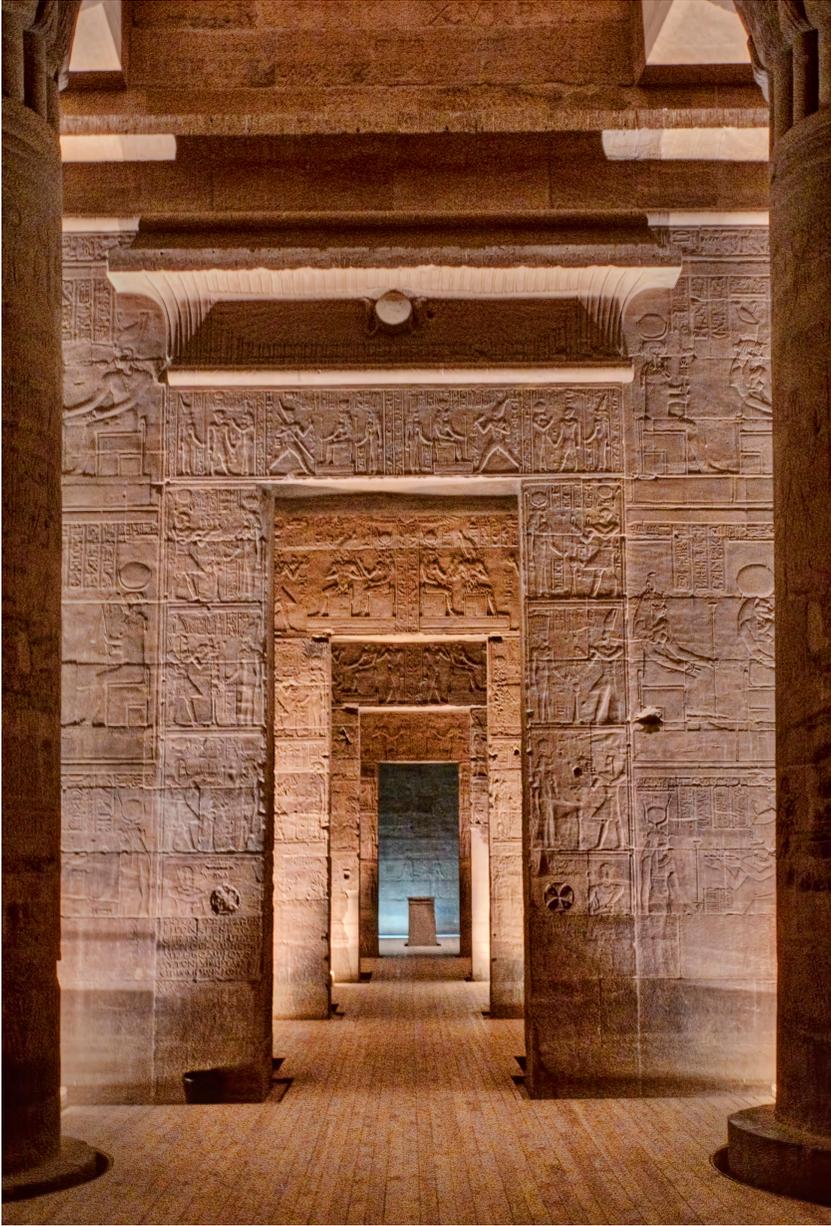


Figure 13. Stephen T. Whitlock, 1951:- *Temple of Isis, Philae, Egypt*, 2015. Passage through an ascending sequence of spaces of increasing holiness by means of a series of narrow doors or gateways is a near-universal feature of ancient temples.

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see him as he is; that we may have this hope; that we may be purified even as he is pure. Amen.

In his discussion of early Christian and Jewish temple rituals, Tvedtnes notes that “prayer opens the veil to allow one to enjoy the presence of God.”²⁹⁷

6. *Qualifications for the Work: An Eye Single to the Glory of God (Verse 5b)*

D&C 4:5: *And faith, hope, charity, and love, with an eye single to the glory of God, qualify him for the work.*

with an eye single to the glory of God. Matthew 6:22–23, which includes a reference to the idea of the eye being “single,” “has been the object of many investigations, and indeed it raises a host of questions.”²⁹⁸ Hans Dieter Betz²⁹⁹ devotes sixteen pages of his masterful commentary to the topic, including an extensive discussion of parallels from Jewish writings and an excursus describing ancient Greek theories of vision. Also at issue is how to understand the use of the Greek term *haplous*³⁰⁰ as a description of the eye:

Haplous is literally “single”³⁰¹ or “simple,”³⁰² but it has a varied and subtle range of meanings. Its use with the eye is reported only in late sources, but the sense “clear/sound/healthy” is a natural development, perhaps originally over against the possibility of some form of double or fractured vision. In ethically colored contexts the “singleness” involved is related to wholeheartedness,³⁰³ integrity,³⁰⁴ sincerity,³⁰⁵ or generosity.³⁰⁶

Whereas the New Testament does not elaborate directly on the contextual meaning of the eye being “single,”³⁰⁷ the phrase receives partial explanation in two places in modern scripture.³⁰⁸ In both places, it accords with the idea of “being motivated by singleness of purpose.”³⁰⁹ This is consistent with the fact that one of the two Book of Mormon references to the concept,³¹⁰ all six references in the Doctrine and Covenants,³¹¹ and all three references in the teachings of Joseph Smith³¹² describe the idea in terms of the eye being single *to the glory of God*. John W. Welch explains:

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The old law of sacrifice was explicitly replaced by that of the “broken heart and contrite spirit,”³¹³ and whereas previously the sacrificial animal was to be pure and without blemish [*haplous*], now the disciples themselves are to become “single” [*haplous*] to the glory of God.³¹⁴

Whether one is speaking of giving one’s heart, one’s service, or one’s possessions, to have an “eye that is single to the glory of God” connotes “single, undivided loyalty”³¹⁵ and no double-mindedness.³¹⁶ Such an one must have God alone as Master.³¹⁷ Only when the disciple’s eye is perfectly single may one see the Father face to face:³¹⁸

And if your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things.

Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God,³¹⁹ and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will.

7. *The Qualifications for the Work Elaborated (Verse 6)*

D&C 4:6: ***Remember faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, godliness, charity, humility, diligence.***

The earliest manuscript of what is now D&C 4 ends just before the final word of v. 3 — in other words it contains “ye are called to the” but does not contain the word “work.” The editors of the *Joseph Smith Papers* volume containing the manuscript note that pages 3–10, which presumably would have included, among other things, the rest of the revelation, are missing.³²⁰ The 1833 *Book of Commandments* contains the earliest extant form of this verse: “Remember temperance, patience, humility, diligence, &c.”³²¹

The 1833 list of virtues was expanded in the version of the revelation published in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants: “Remember *faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness,*

godliness, charity, humility, diligence.”³²² The italicized words reflect the new additions to the list. The expansion of the list increases its similarity to the one given in 2 Peter 1:5–7: “giving all diligence: faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity.” However, there are some differences. Besides adding “humility” to the list in 2 Peter, D&C 4 reverses the order of “godliness” and “brotherly kindness” and moves “diligence” from its place in the preface to the very end of the list. A later revelation, D&C 107:30, instructs the priesthood quorums on how their business should be conducted. It follows the list of 2 Peter exactly, while in addition mentioning the need for decisions of the quorums “to be made in all righteousness, in holiness, and lowliness of heart, meekness, and long suffering.” That the order and content of the list changes across different passages of modern scripture should be no surprise to students of the Bible where the same kind of variation is attested.³²³

2 Peter 1:3–11, long suspected by scholars such as Käsemann as being a “clear example of Hellenistic, non-Christian thought insidiously working its way into the New Testament,”³²⁴ is now generally accepted as “fundamentally Pauline”³²⁵ and, hence, thoroughly consonant with the ideas of early Christianity. The emphasis of these verses, as in D&C 4 as a whole, is on the finishing and refining process of *sanctification*, not the initiatory process of *justification*.³²⁶ According to Richard Bushman, D&C 4 does not concern itself with “rid[ding] oneself of the burden of sin, but [of making] oneself worthy of the great work that [lies] ahead.”³²⁷

In reading and contemplating these lists of virtues, we are meant to learn something about the components needed for the full development of the individual to spiritual maturity “unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”³²⁸ To those in whom the qualities of divine nature “abound” the Lord makes a specific “promise”: namely, that “they shall not be unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord.”³²⁹ In other words, in D&C 4 verse 6 as in verse 5, they are told that they shall receive a personal witness of the Lord Himself by entering into His presence. In an insightful article, John W. Welch has shown how the number ten in the ancient world — which conveys the idea of perfection, especially divine

completion, and likewise corresponds to the number of virtues in the list of D&C 4:6 — relates to human ascension into the holy of holies or highest degree of heaven:³³⁰

“The rabbinic classification of the ten degrees of holiness, which begins with Palestine, the land holier than all other lands, and culminates in the most holy place, the Holy of Holies, was essentially known in the days of High Priest Simon the Just, that is, around 200 BCE.”³³¹ Echoing these ten degrees on earth were ten degrees in heaven. In the book of 2 Enoch, Enoch has a vision in which he progresses from the first heaven into the tenth heaven, where God resides and Enoch sees the face of the Lord, is anointed, given clothes of glory, and is told “all the things of heaven and earth.”³³² ...

Kabbalah, a late form of Jewish mysticism, teaches that the ten Sefirot were emanations and attributes of God, part of the unfolding of creation, and that one must pass through them to ascend to God’s presence.³³³

2 Peter 1:4 sounds the keynote of the biblical list of the virtues of the perfected disciple, reminding readers of the “exceeding great and precious promises” that allow them to become “partakers [= Greek *koinonos*, ‘sharer, partaker’] of the divine nature.” The *New English Bible* captures the literal sense of this latter phrase: namely, the idea is that the Saints may “come to share in the very being of God.”³³⁴ Unlike the LDS, who are comfortable with the idea of sharing “the very being of God,” Eastern Orthodox proponents of the doctrine of *theosis* are wary of the straightforward interpretation of “divine nature” in its cultural context. They are quick to point out that: “We are gods in that we bear His image, not His nature [i.e., His essence].”³³⁵ That being said, apart from this important ontological difference, there are many similarities between the doctrine of *theosis* and LDS teachings about exaltation, as Catholic scholar Jordan Vajda has so competently detailed.³³⁶

The enumerated virtues that follow, to which Christian disciples are exhorted to give “all diligence”³³⁷ are not presented as a randomly-sorted laundry list but rather as part of an ordered progression leading

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to a culminating point,³³⁸ a rhetorical form in Hellenistic, Jewish, and Christian literature called *sorites*, *climax*, or *gradatio*.³³⁹ Harold Attridge explains the ladder-like property of the personal qualities given in lists of this form: “In this ‘ladder’ of virtues, each virtue is the means of producing the next (this sense of the Greek is lost in translation). All the virtues grow out of *faith*, and all culminate in *love*.”³⁴⁰ Joseph Neyrey observes that the Christian triad of faith, hope, and charity in 2 Peter 1:5–7 (which were previously introduced in D&C 4:5) “forms the determining framework in which other virtues are inserted” in such lists.³⁴¹ The table below summarizes key words in scriptural passages from Paul, Peter, and D&C 4:6 that illustrate this idea:

Romans 5:1–5	2 Peter 1:5–7	D&C 4:6
<i>faith</i>	<i>faith</i>	<i>faith</i>
	virtue	virtue
peace	knowledge	knowledge
	temperance	temperance
<i>hope</i> [patience, experience] ³⁴²	<i>patience</i>	<i>patience</i>
	godliness	
	brotherly kindness	brotherly kindness
		godliness
<i>love</i>	<i>charity</i>	<i>charity</i>
		humility
		diligence

Though some elements of the three lists differ,³⁴³ the reward of divine fellowship for the disciples is the same. In 2 Peter 1:4, 8, 10, they are promised that they will become “partakers of the divine nature,” and that they will ultimately be fruitful “in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ,” thus, in Joseph Smith’s reading, making their “calling and election sure.” In Romans 5:2, they are told that they will “rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” This means that they can look forward with glad confidence, knowing that they “will be able to share in the revelation of God — in other words, that [they] will come to know Him as He is.”³⁴⁴ In D&C 4:7, they are told that they will “knock, and it shall be opened unto [them].”³⁴⁵

Similar ascending sequences that include faith, hope, and charity, the crowning virtue, can be correlated to Joseph Smith’s teachings about the process of exaltation, as rooted in “knowledge of the



Figure 14. Herrad of Hohenbourg; *The Ladder of Virtues*, late twelfth century. The figure of Charity, representing those who have had their election “made sure,” is depicted as having reached the summit of the ladder. Her hand is extended toward the hand of the Lord, shown emerging from a cloud and holding the crown of Life. Other personages below her fall short as they are attracted by one thing or another. The hermit is too busy cultivating his garden and neglects his prayers; the reclusive monk longs for sleep; the alms-seeking monk falls for a large basket filled with pieces of silver — what his heart treasures most; the priest’s attention is not occupied by his church but rather by friends, good food and drink, lusts of the flesh, and simony (i.e., the selling of ecclesiastical privileges for money); the nun chatting with the priest is seduced by the pleasures of the world and by family wealth; while the lay woman (attracted to jewels and beautiful lodgings) and the soldier (tempted by horses, arms, and other soldiers to command) have hardly begun the climb. At the bottom of the ladder, the Devil, whose temptations have ensnared all except Charity herself, appears in the form of a dragon, while his minions take steady aim at their victims with bow and arrow. The caption on the ladder bears a message of encouragement, proclaiming that all those who have fallen will have the opportunity, through sincere penitence, to begin their climb anew.

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priesthood.”³⁴⁶ Thus, to Latter-day Saints, it is not surprising to see this passage end with Peter’s plea for disciples to “make [their] calling and election [= Greek *ekloge*] sure [= Greek *bebaios*, ‘reliable, unshifting, firm’]”³⁴⁷ through the practice of these virtues, “For in this way entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly added to you.”³⁴⁸ Though it is true that no explicit mention is made in the Bible of the performance of rites inculcating this divine pathway of virtues, it is equally true that a lecture based on 2 Peter 1:3–11 would not in the least be out of place as a summary of progression through LDS temple ordinances.

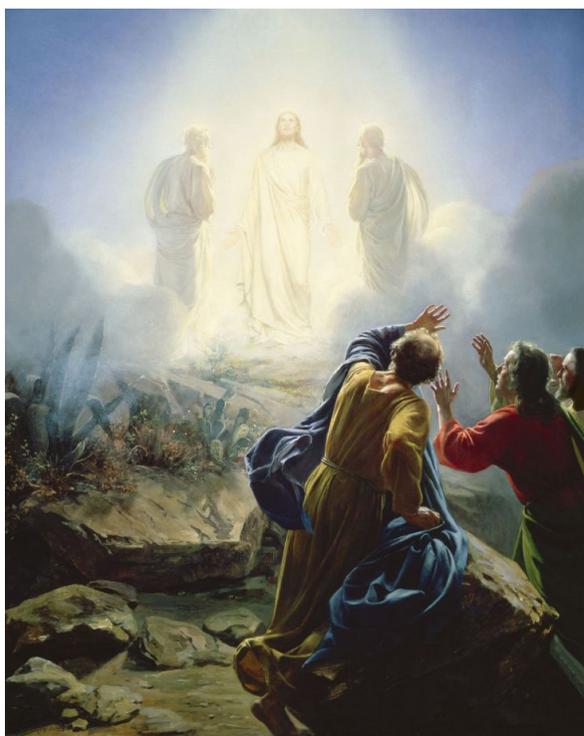


Figure 15. Carl Heinrich Bloch, 1834–1890: *The Transfiguration*

Continuing his effort to “stir ... up” the Saints “in remembrance of these things” (vv. 13, 12), Peter reminds his readers of his firsthand experience at the Mount of Transfiguration. The overall account is cryptic, and translators have struggled, in particular, with the reference to the “more sure word of prophecy” in verse 19—a “*crux interpretum*” for the entire book according to Neyrey.³⁴⁹

Alluding to Peter's description of these events, the Prophet taught that there are "grand secrets" in this chapter that "no man can dig out, unless by the light of revelation . . . as the things that are written are only hints of things which existed in the prophet's mind."³⁵⁰ No doubt, Joseph Smith saw these "hints" as pointing to knowledge and keys received by Peter, James, and John on the Mount,³⁵¹ including the firm "promise from God," received personally for themselves, that they should "have eternal life. That is the more sure word of prophecy."³⁵²

Though non-LDS commentators understandably fail to grasp the full nature and import of Peter's experience on the Mount of Transfiguration, some at least clearly sense the implication of his subsequent words³⁵³ for readers of the epistle. According to the editors of the *ESV* Bible "believers are admonished to 'pay attention' to the certainty of the 'prophetic word.' In the contrast between 'we have' and 'you will do well,' Peter is apparently emphasizing that the interpretation of the apostles ('we') is to be regarded as authoritative for the church ('you')"³⁵⁴ — while striving themselves, meantime, to obtain the same "prophetic word" that Peter possessed (i.e., "take heed [unto *our* more sure word], as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in *your* hearts)."³⁵⁵ Not only Jesus and Peter, but every one who keeps "all the commandments" and obeys "all the ordinances of the house of the Lord"³⁵⁶ can look forward to hearing the Father's declaration that they have become as His beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased.

8. *The Reward of the Laborer (Verse 7)*

D&C 4:7: ***Ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Amen.***³⁵⁷

The "strait gate"³⁵⁸ of baptism³⁵⁹ and the "narrow . . . way"³⁶⁰ of discipleship³⁶¹ to which men and women are called culminate in a final entry point that leads to the presence of the Father. We are instructed to approach that entry point with a very specific "three-fold petition,"³⁶² namely:³⁶³

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Ask, and it shall be given you; *seek*, and ye shall find; *knock*, and it [meaning the final barrier that separates us from the Father] shall be opened unto you:



Figure 16. *A New Bishop Knocks Three Times with a Mallet on the Door of the Cathedral as Part of a Roman Catholic Entrance Ritual*³⁶⁴

Matthew Bowen correlates this threefold promise to the temple symbolism of faith, hope, and charity, as outlined above. He notes that “‘ask’ and ‘seek’ correspond to the Hebrew verbs *sh’l* and *bqsh*, which were used to describe ‘asking for’ or ‘seeking’ a divine revelation, often in a temple setting,”³⁶⁵ and Jack Welch has argued that the symbolism of knocking is best understood “in a ceremonial context.”³⁶⁶ However, it should be remembered that the temple ordinances also foreshadow actual events in the life of faithful disciples who endure to the end.³⁶⁷

Following the instruction to ask, seek, and knock, the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 7 adds an instructive passage of scripture. In these new verses, Jesus responds to questions from his disciples about those who — rejecting the possibility of entering, like Moses, into the presence of God — assert instead that the “law” is sufficient for their salvation. Confirming the personal nature of the expected reply to the threefold petition of the qualified disciple, the Savior tells his followers to say to these skeptics of God’s goodness:³⁶⁸

What man among you, having a son, and he shall be standing out, and shall say, Father, open thy house that I may come in and sup with thee, will not say, Come in, my son; for mine is thine; and thine is mine?

For whom are these teachings intended? It is clear from the context,³⁶⁹ as well as from the teachings of President John Taylor,³⁷⁰ that these instructions are not meant for the world at large but rather for the Saints — His “sons” — who have received the covenants that, if kept, prepare them to pass within the final barrier of the celestial kingdom and to be crowned with the fulness of its glory. At that final barrier, there will be a conversation between these Saints and the Father where the name of the Lord will be invoked as part of the qualifications for entry into the Divine Presence.³⁷¹ However, in contrast to what seems to be implied by Matthew 7:8,³⁷² Jesus elsewhere made it clear that “not every one” that comes to that place ritually will be admitted someday to the actual presence of the Father.³⁷³ Jesus taught:³⁷⁴

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Many will say to me in that day: Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?

And then will I profess unto them: I never knew you [cf. “Ye never knew me” (JST Matthew 7:23)]; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

“How is it that the Lord has not known them? The Hebrew word “know” [*yada*] has a broad range of meanings. One of them is covenantal.”³⁷⁵ The Lord knows and is known by only those individuals who have received and kept all of His ordinances and covenants.³⁷⁶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie further explains:³⁷⁷

Jesus is saying: “Ye never knew me so fully as to be sealed up unto eternal life with your callings and elections made sure, and since you did not magnify your callings in the priesthood, you shall be cast out and be as though I never knew you.”

By way of analogy to the Jewish law that specified that an “advocate cannot represent a client whom he or she does not know personally,”³⁷⁸ Jesus is saying that He cannot act as a Mediator for one who is a

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stranger to Him, and that if, on the day of final judgment³⁷⁹ such persons are found to have “[wasted] the days of [their] probation,”³⁸⁰ they must be “cast out” from the Lord’s presence. Clearly, as John Bunyan expressed it, “there [is] a way to hell, even from the gate of heaven.”³⁸¹

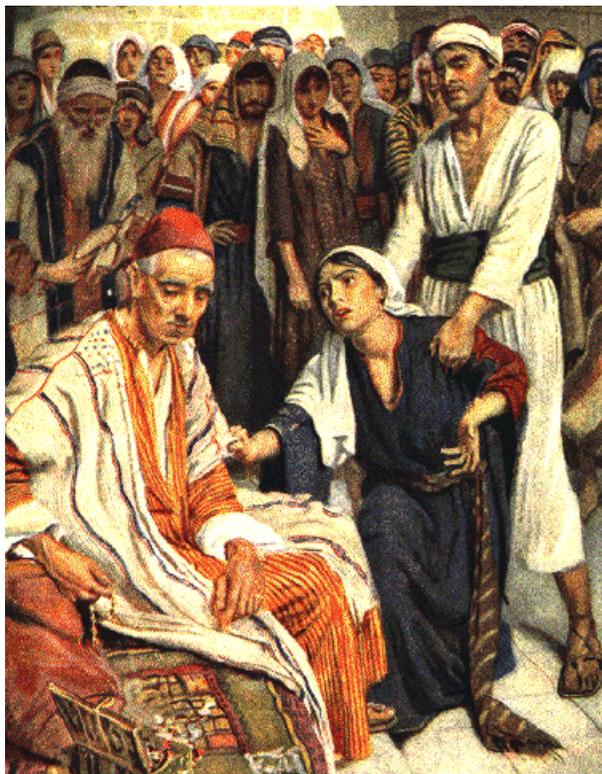


Figure 17. Harold Copping, 1863–1932: *Parable of the Judge and the Widow*

Those who are prepared to enter, however, are admonished to continue to petition the Lord in unwearied diligence until they receive the promised blessings. In this regard, there is no better lesson than that of Jesus’s little-remembered parable of the importunate widow and the unjust judge, a recurring allusion in the teachings of the Joseph Smith.³⁸² The parable is a lesson in persistence to the worthy disciple who asks, seeks, and knocks. It reads:³⁸³

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was

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in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

Harvey summarizes the cultural background of the story:³⁸⁴

The setting was a small town. A widow—which was a byword for someone reduced to poverty through no fault of her own — had been the victim of some fraud or sharp practice, and in order to recover her money she had to go to law. In such cases, this did not involve a formal sitting of a court; it was sufficient for the parties to agree upon a qualified lawyer to arbitrate between them. The little town, in any case, may have possessed only one such lawyer; if so, the widow’s only hope of redress lay in persuading this lawyer to attend to her case. Now it was a fundamental principle of Jewish justice that a judge received no payment. There was therefore only a moral obligation for the lawyer to attend to all the cases brought before him. This particular lawyer was not sensitive to his moral obligations — he cared nothing for God or man; possibly he waited until litigants brought him a present before he concerned himself with their affairs. But the widow, by again and again thrusting her papers in front of him, finally got her way.

... The justice of the widow’s claim is taken for granted; the point is the difficulty she had in getting it attended to.

In what sense can God be compared to such a judge? Elder Talmage explains:³⁸⁵

Jesus did not indicate that as the wicked judge finally yielded to supplication, so would God do; but He pointed out that if even such a being as this judge, who “feared not God, neither regarded man,” would at last hear and grant the widow’s plea, no one should doubt that God, the Just



Figure 18. William Holman Hunt, 1827–1910: *The Importunate Neighbour*, 1895

and Merciful, will hear and answer ... The Lord’s purpose in giving the parable is specifically stated; it was “to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint” [= Greek *ekkakeo*, to be weary or to lose heart].

How did Joseph Smith apply this parable to the fulfillment of the promises made to those who demonstrate by their discipleship that they believe, hope, and can endure all things? In an 1839 discourse on the topic of the Second Comforter, he taught that it is “our privilege to pray for and obtain”³⁸⁶ the knowledge that we are sealed up to Eternal Life. As we pray for this privilege, we should also prepare for it. To this end, we are told in revelation to “give diligent heed to the words of eternal life,” and to “live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.”³⁸⁷ The Prophet explained that it is the First Comforter, the Holy Ghost, which “shall teach you” until the joyous moment when, at last, as the Savior promised, “ye [shall] come to Me and My Father.”³⁸⁸ Encouraging each of us to follow the example of the importunate widow, Joseph then said:³⁸⁹

God is not a respecter of persons. We all have the same privilege. Come to God. Weary Him until He blesses you.

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Figure 10. *Charity with an Anchor*, 1876. Stained glass panel by Ward and Hughes from the cathedral in Lichfield, England. Photograph DSC03665, 23 September 2008, Jeffrey M. Bradshaw.

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Figure 12. *Decorations above the Torah Shrine.* Center of west wall, Dura Europos Synagogue. In Kraeling, Carl H., C. C. Torrey, C. B. Welles, and B. Geiger. *The Synagogue. The Excavations at Dura-Europos Conducted by Yale University and the French Academy of Inscriptions and Letters: Final Report VIII, Part I.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1956, Plate 51. With permission of Yale University Press.

Figure 13. Stephen T. Whitlock, 1951-: *Temple of Isis, Philae, Egypt*, 2015. With permission. Image Reference: IsisSanctuary-Philae-19Oct2015.jpg.

Figure 14. Herrad of Hohenbourg: *The Ladder of Virtues*, late twelfth century. The Warburg Institute, with assistance of Elizabeth Witchell. From R. Green et al., Hortus, 2:352, Orig. Fol. HD 215v. (Plate 124). Photograph of C. M. Engelhardt, Hortus, Plate IX, located in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, New York, with the assistance of Eileen Sullivan.

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Figure 17. Harold Copping, 1863–1932: *Parable of the Judge and the Widow.* http://www.biblepicturegallery.com/frames.htm?members/member_page.php (accessed 21 December 2015).

Figure 18. William Holman Hunt, 1827–1910: *The Importunate Neighbour*, 1895. With permission, National Gallery of Victoria.

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Endnotes

- 1 D&C 4:1, 3, 5.
- 2 D&C 4:2 (twice), 3.
- 3 D&C 4:4.
- 4 D&C 4:5.
- 5 2 Nephi 31:16. Cf. Matthew 24:13; Mark 13:13; James 5:11; 1 Nephi 13:37; 22:31; 2 Nephi 9:24; 31:20; 33:4; Omni 1:26; 3 Nephi 15:9; Mormon 9:29; D&C 14:7; 18:22; 20:25, 29.
- 6 D&C 4:7.
- 7 2 Nephi 31:20.
- 8 D&C 6:1, 11:1, 12:1, 14:1.
- 9 See 1 Nephi 14:7; 22:8; 2 Nephi 29:1 for a similar context of usage.
- 10 2 Nephi 25:18.
- 11 See, e.g., Article of Faith 1:9; 1 Nephi 13:34–42; D&C 9:2; 93:18.
- 12 Cf. B. R. McConkie, *Millennial Messiah*, p. 107.
- 13 2 Nephi 29:1.
- 14 Isaiah 33:20, 54:2.
- 15 D&C 57:3. For a broader discussion of this topic, see S. L. Olsen, *Mormon Ideology*, pp. 19–41.
- 16 D&C 101:21.
- 17 See D&C 133:9.
- 18 Revelation 3:12, 21:2; Moses 7:62–64. See J. M. Bradshaw *et al.*, *God’s Image 2*, pp. 115–123, 158–162, 178–182.
- 19 D&C 124:36; cf. D&C 45:66, 115:6. Explicitly mentioning these two places of safety in a close parallel to the text of Matthew 24:15, D&C 133:12–13 reads:

Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles
flee unto Zion.

And let them who be of Judah flee unto Jerusalem,
unto the mountains of the Lord's house.

- 20 D&C 84:2, emphasis added; cf. Revelation 14:1.
- 21 Hebrew *tzimtzum*. See also the gradual and seemingly reluctant departure of God from Jerusalem and its temple in Ezekiel (T. D. Alexander, *From Eden*, pp. 56–57). A number of other Jewish sources likewise describe the similar process of the removal of the *Shekhinah* — representing God's presence — in seven stages (H. Schwartz, *Tree*, p. 51, cf. pp. 55–56).
- 22 Articles of Faith 1:10. See J. D. Levenson, *Temple and World*, pp. 297–298; T. D. Alexander, *From Eden*, pp. 24–26, 42.
- 23 J. D. Levenson, *Temple and World*, p. 298.
- 24 Revelation 22:1–5. See M. Barker, *Revelation*, pp. 327–333; R. D. Draper et al., *Promises*; T. D. Alexander, *From Eden*, pp. 13–15.
- 25 Matthew 6:10.
- 26 W. J. Hamblin et al., *Temple*, pp. 14–15. See Revelation 21:22. Levenson finds a similar concept in his retranslation of the proclamation of the seraphim in Isaiah's vision. Rather than chanting: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts: The whole earth is full of his glory" (Isaiah 6:3), Levenson (J. D. Levenson, *Temple and World*, pp. 289–290) gives the more accurate rendering of: "The fulness of the whole earth (or, world) is his glory":

In cultic contexts, the term for "glory" (*kabod*) has a technical meaning; it is the divine radiance ... that manifests the presence of God [cf. Exodus 40:34, 1 Kings 8:11] ... If my translation of Isaiah 6:3 is correct, then the seraphim identify the world in its amplitude with this *terminus technicus* of the Temple cult. As Isaiah sees the smoke filling the Temple, the seraphim proclaim that the *kabod* fills the world (verses 3–4). The world is the manifestation of God as He sits enthroned in His

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Temple. The *trishagion* is a dim adumbration of the rabbinic notion that the world proceeds from Zion in the same manner that a fetus, in rabbinic etymology, proceeds from the navel.

- 27 It appears sixteen times in the Old Testament, six times in the New Testament, fifteen times in the Book of Mormon, twelve times in the Doctrine and Covenants, and once in the Pearl of Great Price.
- 28 American Heritage Dictionary, s.v. marvelous.
- 29 Ibid., s.v. wonderful.
- 30 By way of analogy, consider the line in the popular song “Home for the Holidays” that says, “The traffic is terrific.” The song is not extolling the excellent quality of highway throughput at Christmas time but rather warning that the increased volume of automobile traffic is a frightful prospect for holiday drivers.
- 31 A. Gileadi, *Apocalyptic Book*, 29:14, p. 75. Cf. K. L. Barker, *Zondervan*, Isaiah 29:14, p. 1073: “Therefore once more I will astound these people with wonder upon wonder.”
- 32 H. W. Attridge et al., *HarperCollins Study Bible*, Isaiah 29:14, p. 949.
- 33 A. Berlin et al., *Jewish*, Isaiah 29:14, p. 841: “Truly, I shall further baffle that people with bafflement upon bafflement.”
- 34 Ibid., Isaiah 29:14, p. 841. Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:18–25.
- 35 Isaiah 29:16; 2 Nephi 27:27.
- 36 See American Heritage Dictionary, s.v. embark.
- 37 N. Webster, *Dictionary*, s.v. embark: “To engage in any business; to undertake in; to take a share in.”
- 38 Luke 9:62; D&C 133:15.
- 39 Luke 17:32. See Genesis 19:24–26.
- 40 1 Nephi 2:4.
- 41 Hebrews 11:13; 1 Peter 2:11; D&C 45:13.
- 42 1 Corinthians 4:10.

- 43 Psalm 137:1.
- 44 D&C 24:6; 100:6.
- 45 L. M. Willis, *Father, Hear*.
- 46 Psalm 23:2.
- 47 D&C 63:58.
- 48 See D&C 88:73.
- 49 Alma 12:36; 13:12; 60:13; Moroni 7:3.
- 50 2 Nephi 28:21.
- 51 Luke 12:19.
- 52 Hebrews 11:13.
- 53 Hebrews 11:9.
- 54 Hebrew transliteration of the initial words of God to Abraham in Genesis 12:1. The phrase is also used to refer to the part of the Jewish cycle of Torah reading corresponding to the first part of the story of Abraham, Genesis 12:1–17:27.
- 55 H. W. Nibley, *Drama*, p. 449 translates this as “keep moving!” R. E. Friedman, *Commentary*, p. 48 admits that “[n]o translation fully captures the sense of the Hebrew (‘Go you,’ ‘Get you,’ ‘Go for yourself’)” and states his belief that “it is better to use no English term than to use any of the possible equivalents, all of which are clumsy English and do not convey the Hebrew.” U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, p. 311, after giving several examples of similar biblical usage concludes that the phrase should be understood here as follows: “Go, you by yourself, or only with those who are united to you in unique relationship, go on the way that belongs to you alone, and leave behind your kinsfolk among whom you have lived till now and who do not wish or are not able to associate themselves with you in your new way.”
- 56 Cited in H. W. Nibley, *Leaders*, pp. 497–498.
- 57 M. Muggeridge, *Things*, p. 166, cited in N. A. Maxwell, *Grounded*, p. 113. Muggeridge continued:

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As I do not believe that earthly life can bring any lasting satisfaction, the prospect of death holds no terrors. Those saints who pronounced themselves in love with death displayed, I consider, the best of sense; not a Freudian death-wish. Likewise, Pastor Bonhoeffer when he told his Nazi guards, as they took him away to be executed, that for them it was an end but for him a beginning; in that place of darkest evil he, the victim, shining and radiant. The world that I shall soon be leaving seems more than ever beautiful; especially in its remoter parts, grass and trees and sea and rivers and little streams and sloping hills, where the image of eternity is more clearly stamped than among streets and houses. Those I love I can love even more, since I have nothing to ask of them but their love; the passion to accumulate possessions or to be noticed and important, is too evidently absurd to be any longer entertained.

A sense of how extraordinarily happy I have been, and of enormous gratitude to my creator, overwhelms me often. I believe with a passionate, unshakeable conviction that in all circumstances and at all times life is a blessed gift; that the spirit which animates it is one of love, not hate or indifference, of light, not darkness, of creativity, not destruction, of order, not chaos; that, and all that is known about it, now and henceforth, has been benevolently, not malevolently, conceived, when the eyes see no more and the mind thinks no more, and this hand now writing is inert, whatever lies beyond will similarly be benevolently, not malevolently conceived. If it is nothing, then for nothingness I offer thanks; if another mode of existence, with this old worn-out husk of a body left behind, like a butterfly extricating itself from its chrysalis, and this floundering, muddled mind,

now at best seeing through a glass darkly, given a longer range and a new precision, then for that I likewise offer thanks (M. Muggeridge, *Things*, p. 166).

- 58 President Ezra Taft Benson observed that all the covenants made up to this point are preparatory, explaining that: “Until one abides by the laws of obedience, sacrifice, the gospel, and chastity, he cannot abide the law of consecration, which is the law pertaining to the celestial kingdom” (E. T. Benson, *Teachings 1988*, p. 121). See also D&C 78:7.
- 59 Literally, “Hear [O] Israel,” the first two words of the famous passage of exhortation and proclamation that is found in Deuteronomy 6:4–6.
- 60 R. T. France, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 845. See Deuteronomy 6:8–9.
- 61 Matthew 22:36, emphasis mine.
- 62 Cf., e.g., Deuteronomy 10:12–13; D&C 59:5.
- 63 Emphasis mine. For additional parallels that stress love rather than service, see, e.g., Deuteronomy 10:12–13; 30:6; Matthew 22:35–40; Mark 12:28–35; Luke 10:25–29; D&C 59:5. 2 Nephi 25:29 uses similar words to enjoin his listeners to “*worship him* [Christ, the Holy One of Israel] with all your might, mind, and strength, and your whole soul” (emphasis added). Alma told his wayward son Corianton that he must “*turn to* the Lord with all your mind, might, and strength” (Alma 39:13, emphasis added).

Elsewhere in Deuteronomy the twofold formula of heart and soul is used (Deuteronomy 10:12–13; 30:6). The fourfold formula in Section 4 of heart, might, mind, and strength is found only in the Doctrine and Covenants (cf. D&C 59:5; 98:47). Each of the three instances in the Book of Mormon varies. In 2 Nephi 25:29, we find might, mind, strength, and soul; in Alma 39:13, mind, might, and strength appear; and in Moroni 10:32

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we read the same words in a different order: might, mind, and strength. Twice in the New Testament we read heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30). Luke gives us the fourfold formula of heart, soul, strength, and mind (Luke 10:27).

Explaining how the New Testament variants of the phrase differ in wording while retaining the same essential meaning, Matthew France writes (R. T. France, *Gospel of Matthew*, pp. 845–846):

The quotation [in Matthew 6:37] follows the LXX version for the first two clauses, but the use of *dianoia*, “thinking,” in place of LXX *dynamis*, “strength,” is surprising. The LXX rendering is the normal understanding of Hebrew *meod*, though it can also mean “abundance,” and the targums translate it by *mammon*, “possessions” ... In Mark 12:30 both *danoia* and *ischys*, “strength,” are used, resulting in four clauses instead of the three of Deuteronomy 6:5. The existence of variant versions of a text in constant liturgical use is not surprising (cf. versions of the Lord’s Prayer today), but “thinking” looks more like a variant of either “heart” or “soul” than of “strength.” It is therefore possible that Matthew took Mark’s expanded version (the *four* clauses of which we have no parallel in contemporary literature except here in Luke) and, realizing that the original had only three clauses, removed the last rather than one of the more nearly synonymous first three. The resultant list has a rather more “internal” feel as compared with the more practical implications of loving God with one’s strength or possessions. But the main point remains clear, that one is to love God with all that one is and has.

64 John 14:15.

65 Rashi, *Deuteronomy Commentary*, p. 71.

66 D. L. Lieber, *Etz Hayim*, p. 1025.

67 See Deuteronomy 10:12–13; 11:1, 13; 19:9; 30:16.

68 Sometimes Jewish interpreters interpret this as involving a dedication of both the good and the evil inclinations of the heart. James Kugel explains (J. L. Kugel, *How to Read*, p. 342):

To the ancient interpreters' way of thinking, the human heart is divided between two inclinations, the one to good and the other to evil. It is not enough, therefore, to love God with one's good inclination, since that will leave it still at war with the evil inclination; rather, one must work to convert the evil inclination to love God as well.

69 D. L. Lieber, *Etz Hayim*, p. 1025.

70 Emphasis added.

71 Rashi, *Deuteronomy Commentary*, p. 71.

72 J. Neusner, *Mishnah*, Berakhot 9:5, p. 14. "According to Mizrahi, this means that a person should be willing to give his life for the sanctification of the Name of God when the situation calls for it. According to Eimek HaNetziv, it means that a person must feel love of God even if his life is being taken for His sake."

73 D. L. Lieber, *Etz Hayim*, p. 1025. See, for example, "the account of Akiva's death by torture at the hands of the Romans (*Babylonian Talmud* Ber. 61b; see also Y. i. Chaviv, *Ein Yaakov*, pp. 59–60; H. N. Bialik et al., *Legends*, 2:1:177, p. 238)."

74 M. Weinfeld, *Common Heritage*, p. 181. Thanks to David Calabro for alerting me to this reference.

75 *Ibid.*, pp. 189–190.

76 *Ibid.*, p. 181.

77 *Ibid.*, p. 182.

78 D. L. Lieber, *Etz Hayim*, p. 1025.

79 J. Neusner, *Mishnah*, Berakhot 9:5, p. 14; Rashi, *Deuteronomy Commentary*, p. 71. Rashi gives the following explanation of why "with all your money" must be stated separately from the idea that a person must give even his life for God: "There can be

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a person whose money is more precious to him than his body. This is why it says ‘with all your money.’”

Kugel (J. L. Kugel, *How to Read*, p. 342) gives an alternative interpretation:

Rabbi Akiba, finding the phrase “with all your might” somewhat anticlimactic after “with all your soul,” suggested that it might be understood (because of the similar sound of the words meaning “your might” and “thankful”) as “for *all* things [I] thank You,” that is, that one ought to express gratitude to God no matter whether one’s portion is good or bad.

Further explaining the grammatical basis for this conjectural emendation, Kugel writes (*ibid.*, p. 732 n. 12):

The weakening of *aleph* to phonetic zero in late and post-biblical Hebrew is well attested; it turned *me’od* into *mod*. M. Bar Asher (2000) has suggested that this is the reason for the rise of adverbial *moda* (= *me’od*) in Qumran Hebrew. Given this reduction of *aleph*, R. Akiba’s reading of Deuteronomy 6:5 seems, more precisely, to have divided the verse in two: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul; and in all things [say: “I] give thanks to You,” that is *ubakkol [‘ani] modekka*.

D&C 59:7–8: “Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things. Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.”

80 See Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:9, 11, 13.

81 E. T. Benson, *Teachings 1988*, p. 121; cf. G. B. Hinckley, *Teachings 1997*, p. 147; H. B. Lee, *Teachings 1996*, p. 318.

82 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 27 June 1839, p. 150.

83 See also D&C 5:35; 9:14; 17:8; 18:24; 52:44; 75:16, 22; 88:102.

- 84 See D&C 75:22. See also Matthew 10:15; 11:22, 24; Mark 6:11; 2 Peter 3:7; 1 John 4:17; Alma 9:15; Mormon 7:10; D&C 19:3; 38:5; 41:12; 60:15; 70:4; 75:21, 22.
- 85 D&C 101:78.
- 86 Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42.
- 87 For example, while the Lord *sits* on His throne, the “host of heaven” is “*standing* by him on his right hand on his left” (1 Kings 22:19; cf. 2 Chronicles 18:18), ready at all times to depart instantly on the Lord’s errand.

Moreover, from the perspective of moral rather than physical readiness, Draper et al. note that the statement “here am I, send me” (Moses 4:1) carries the intrinsic claim “that the speaker is in the right path, ready to do the Lord’s bidding” (R. D. Draper et al., *Commentary*, p. 38; cf. Genesis 22:1; Isaiah 6:8; Acts 9:10; Abraham 3:27). Likewise, Auerbach observes that the phrase is “not meant to indicate the actual place where Abraham is but a moral position in respect to God, who has called to him — Here am I awaiting thy command” (E. Auerbach, *Mimesis*, p. 8; cf. H. Fisch, *Presence*, p. 307). In *Midrash Rabbah*, this phrase is associated with the sure confirmation of Abraham’s priesthood and kingship (H. Freedman et al., *Midrash*, Genesis (Vayera) 15:6, 1:486):

Now Abraham said, “Here am I — ready for priesthood, ready for kingship, and he attained priesthood and kingship. He attained priesthood, as it says, “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever after the manner of Melchizedek” (Psalm 110:4); kingship: “Thou art a mighty prince among us” (Genesis 23:5).

In Moses 4:1, the fact that Satan’s intentions were already in direct opposition to God’s plan falsified his claim of moral readiness (“here am I, send me”), substantiating the scriptural statement that the Devil is “a liar from the beginning” (D&C 93:25). His duplicitous assertion, in contrast to the sincere proposition of Christ, seem to parallel the words of the two sons

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in Matthew 21:29–30, as first noted in the insightful analysis of J. W. Welch, *Thy Mind*, p. 71; J. W. Welch, *Symbolism in the Parable*. To understand why this may be the case, note that the term “go” in KJV v. 30 is not in the Greek text but is entirely conjectural on the part of the translators (see *ibid.*, p. 109). What if, instead of “go,” one supplied the words: “Here am I” as conveying the spirit of the second son’s response? Such a claim of moral readiness to do the Lord’s will would exactly fit the situation, and would be consistent with both the original manuscripts of Moses 4:1 and also the corresponding Hebrew of Abraham’s response in Genesis 22:1.

Observe that in Moses 4:1, both OT1 and OT2 have Satan saying “Behold I” (S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, pp. 50, 599) rather than “Behold, here am I,” as rendered in later editions. Likewise, in striking concordance with Joseph Smith’s wording, Auerbach asserts that the Hebrew word behind Abraham’s similar reply to God (KJV Genesis 22:1 “Here I am” = Hebrew *hinne-ni*) ought to be translated literally as “Behold me” (E. Auerbach, *Mimesis*, p. 8) — or, as one might render it less awkwardly in French, “*me voici*.”

In light of all this, a reading for Matthew 21:29–30 consistent with this line of thinking might be proposed:

He answered and said, “It is not my will,” [cf. Moses 4:2; Luke 22:42. See also J. W. Welch, *Symbolism in the Parable*, pp. 106–107] but afterward he felt sorry [see F. W. Danker et al., *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 640; regretted (see J. W. Welch, *Symbolism in the Parable*, p. 108); or, perhaps, felt compassion; cf. *Ibid.*, p. 106: “reconciling himself to the task”), and went.

And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, “[Here am] I, Lord.” [cf. the reading of Moses 4:1 above] and went not.

For an extensive discussion of the significance of “standing” in scripture, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Standing in the Holy Place*.

- 88 Ezekiel 2:1–2: “And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.”
- 89 Daniel 10:11: “O Daniel, ... understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent.”
- 90 Acts 26:16: “But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness.”
- 91 Nickelsburg explains (G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 14:24–15:1, p. 270):

The seer must be rehabilitated and accepted into the divine presence before he can receive his commission. Restoration by an angel becomes a typical feature in visions, where, however, it is the angel whose appearance causes the collapse.

See also Joshua 7:6, 10–13:

6 ¶ And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the eventide, he, and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. ... 10 ¶ And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? 11 Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff. 12 Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies but turned their backs before their enemies because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. 13 Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O

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Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies,
until ye take away the accursed thing from among
you.

92 E.g., Deuteronomy 10:8, 18:7; 2 Chronicles 29:11.

93 E.g., Luke 1:19.

94 See, e.g., Luke 18:13.

95 Notes taken by David J. Larsen on a unpublished talk by Robert Hayward (R. Hayward, Aramaic Paradise).

96 E.g., 1 Esdras 8:89–90.

97 A. Kulik, *Retroverting*, Apocalypse of Abraham 10:1–4, p. 17. The translation of the caption to this image reads: “I heard a voice saying, Here Oilu, sanctify this man and strengthen (him) from his trembling and the angel took me by the right hand and stood me on my feet and said to me, stand up oh friend of God who has loved you.” Kulik’s translation of the corresponding text in the *Apocalypse* reads: “And when I was still face down on the earth, I heard the voice of the Holy One, saying, ‘Go, Yahoel, the namesake of the mediation of my ineffable name, sanctify this man and strengthen him from his trembling!’ And the angel whom he sent to me in the likeness of a man came, and he took me by my right hand and stood me on my feet. And he said to me, ‘Stand up, <Abraham,> the friend of God who has loved you, let human trembling not enfold you. For behold I am sent to you to strengthen you and to bless you in the name of God.” (A. Kulik, *Retroverting*, 10:3–6, pp. 17–18). Compare Daniel 8:17–18; 10:9–11. For parallels between this ancient text and the book of Moses, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, pp. 694–696. Many parallel depictions show the resurrected Christ raising up the dead by the same gesture (see, e.g., J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, pp. 38–39; J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, pp. 471–473).

Falling in weakness after a vision of God is a common motif in scripture. Daniel reported that he “fainted, and was sick certain days,” and of a second occasion he wrote: “I was left alone ... and there remained no strength in me ... and when I heard

the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground” (Daniel 8:26; 10:8–9). Saul “fell to the earth” during his vision and remained blind until healed by Ananias (Acts 9:4, 17–18). Lehi “cast himself on his bed, being overcome with the Spirit” (1 Nephi 1:7). Similarly, Alma “fell to the earth; and it was for the space of three days and three nights that [he] could not open [his] mouth, neither had [he] the use of [his] limbs” (Alma 36:10; cf. Mosiah 27:12, 18–19). Of his weakness following the First Vision, Joseph Smith wrote: “When I came to myself again, I found myself lying on my back, looking up into heaven. When the light had departed, I had no strength . . . ” (JS-H 1:20).

- 98 G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 1 Enoch 14:24, p. 267: “And one of the holy ones came to me and raised me up and stood me [on my feet]”; G. W. E. Nickelsburg et al., *1 Enoch*, 71:3, p. 93: “And the angel Michael . . . took me by my right hand and raised me up”; P. Alexander, *3 Enoch*, 1:5, p. 256: “He grasped me with his hand before their eyes and said to me, ‘Come in peace into the presence of the high and exalted King’”; *ibid.*, 48A:2, p. 300: “I went with him, and, taking me by his hand, he bore me up on his wings.”
- 99 J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, p. 684 figure 53–13.
- 100 Daniel 8:18: “he touched me, and set me upright”; Daniel 10:9–10: “then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground. And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees.”
- 101 Revelation 1:17: “I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me.”
- 102 It is often translated as “perfect” in the Old Testament (e.g., Genesis 6:9).
- 103 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 50.
- 104 E.g., in the description of Noah in Genesis 6:9.
- 105 U. Cassuto, *Noah to Abraham*, pp. 48–49.
- 106 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, p. 170.

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- 107 L. M. Morales, *Tabernacle Pre-Figured*, pp. 183–184.
- 108 D&C 95:16. Cf. Joseph Smith—History 1:15.
- 109 Bathsheba W. Smith, wife of Elder George A. Smith, was taught this principle by the Prophet: “Once when speaking in one of our general fast meetings, he said that we did not know how to pray to have our prayers answered. But when I and my husband had our endowments in February, 1844, Joseph Smith presiding, he taught us the order of prayer” (B. W. Smith, *Recollections*, p. 345).
- 110 Psalm 140:8–9; D&C 3:3. Cf. Ephesians 2:2–4; D&C 88:121; 101:6; 117:4.
- 111 Psalm 37:4–5. Cf. 1 Nephi 2:16; Enos 1:12; Alma 7:18; 9:20; 18:35; D&C 5:23–24; 6:20, 27; 7:8; 11:17, 27; 67:1–14; 125:4.
- 112 D&C 7:8.
- 113 Alma 26:22. Cf. D&C 7:1.
- 114 D&C 121:34. Cf. D&C 95:5: “There are many who have been ordained among you, whom I have called but few of them are chosen.” See also Matthew 20:11–17; Revelation 17:14–15; Alma 13:3–4; D&C 3:10; 24:1; 52:1; 55:1; 108:4 For a discussion of the blessings of election, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 59–65.
- 115 The entire statement by Elder Packer reads: “Authority in the priesthood comes by way of ordination; power in the priesthood comes through faithful and obedient living in honoring covenants. It is increased by exercising and using the priesthood in righteousness” (B. K. Packer, *Power*, p. 9. Cf. B. K. Packer, *Aaronic Priesthood*).
- 116 Luke 24:49.
- 117 J. E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 504 n. 6.
- 118 Matthew 22:11.
- 119 Luke 24:49.
- 120 Matthew 22:13.
- 121 2 Nephi 9:41.

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- 122 JST Matthew 22:14.
- 123 See Alma 34:32–35.
- 124 Isaiah 24:6; 33:12; Malachi 4:1 (3 Nephi 25:1); Matthew 13:40; John 15:6; 2 Peter 3:10; 1 Nephi 22:15, 23; 2 Nephi 26:4, 6; Jacob 5:7, 47, 77; 6:3; D&C 29:9; 31:4; 38:12; 64:23–24; 86:7; 88:94; 101:66; 133:64.
- 125 See D&C 31:4. Cf. D&C 86:7. Cf. the imagery of the “great winepress of the wrath of God” in Revelation 14:13–20 and Joel 3:13.
- 126 R. O. Cowan, *Answers*, p. 9.
- 127 Cf. Joel 3:13; John 4:34–36.
- 128 D&C 33:3.
- 129 Matthew 9:37. Cf. Luke 10:2.
- 130 Mark 4:29.
- 131 D&C 6:2–3; 11:3; 12:3; 13:3; 14:3.
- 132 Alma 34:33.
- 133 D&C 18:38. Cf. Alma 41:3; D&C 11:27.
- 134 D&C 33:9.
- 135 D&C 60:2.
- 136 *Hymns* (1985), #319, Ye Elders of Israel.
- 137 Matthew 13:30. Cf. D&C 38:12; 86:1–7; 88:94;
- 138 D&C 101:65–66.
- 139 Hebrews 4:12–13. Cf. D&C 6:2; 11:2; 12:2; 14:2; 33:1–2. Harold Attridge calls the passage in Hebrews a “rhapsody on God’s penetrating word” (H. W. Attridge et al., *Hebrews*, p. 133). “The vital power of the word consists in its ability to penetrate the innermost depths of the human being ... The summary is ... paradoxical, since it is possible to conceive of neither the points where soul and spirit nor those where joint and marrow join” (ibid., pp. 134, 135).

- 140 Matthew 7:1 reads: “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” However the Joseph Smith Translation alters these words: “Judge not *unrighteously*, that ye be not judged: *but judge righteous judgment* (S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, NT 1, p. 173, spelling and punctuation modernized).
- 141 S. T. Whitlock, 16 August 2012.
- 142 See discussion of the confusion in D. Harper, *Dictionary*, cleave (1), cleave (2); J. A. Simpson et al., *OED*, s.v. cleave (2), 305, p. 267.
- 143 See, e.g., D&C 52:5–6, 93:1.
- 144 See, e.g., Leviticus 19:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:13; 1 John 3:2; 3 Nephi 27:27; D&C 88:40, 107; J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, p. 77 n. 1–14. D&C 84:19–21 describes the transformative influence of the ordinances that confer a “power of godliness” upon those who keep these rites in righteousness (D. L. Belnap, Introduction, pp. 4–5):

[T]here is a relationship between the performance of priesthood ordinances (or rituals) and the expression (or manifestation) of the power of godliness. ...

The term “godliness” is found twenty-two times in the scriptures, the majority of which are found in the New Testament. Perhaps the most familiar reference for Latter-day Saints is 2 Timothy 3:2–5, which describes the general condition of man in the last days: “Men shall be lovers of their own selves, ... without natural affection ... [and] having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” In these references, godliness does not appear to serve as a synonym for the power of God but is instead the correct or proper way of interacting with the divine from the mortal perspective and thus refers to the interactive nature of the mortal-divine relationship, even the embodying of that relationship. In other words, it is a state that a

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mortal must achieve in order to interact with divinity. Thus, if one is to be transformed to enter into the divine social state, or receive exaltation, the power of godliness must be made manifest in him, and this manifestation, or awareness, according to Doctrine and Covenants 84:20, is found in the ordinances of the Gospel under the authority of the priesthood.

For additional discussion of the sort of transformative experience made possible within the ordinances, see B. C. Hafen et al., *Contrite Spirit*, pp. 70–74; J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, pp. 185–192 (esp. pp. 191–192); J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 111–116 (esp. pp. 114–115).

- 145 See, e.g., D&C 1:14, 50:8, 56:3, 63:63, 64:35, 85:11, 101:90, 133:63.
- 146 See Alma 12:24.
- 147 Cf. D&C 6:2–3; 11:3; 12:3; 13:3; 14:3.
- 148 D&C 4:4.
- 149 D&C 33:9.
- 150 D&C 6:3. Cf. D&C 11:3; 12:3; 13:3; 14:3.
- 151 B. R. McConkie, *NT Commentary*, 3:279.
- 152 In at least one other instance, Joseph Smith separates the two words with an “and.” Speaking to the Nauvoo Relief Society, he said “let kindness, charity, and love crown your works” (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 28 April 1842, p. 229; J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, 28 April 1842, p. 118).
- 153 “charity (or love)” (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 4 January 1833, p. 16; J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Documents, July 1831-January 1833*, 4 January 1833, p. 354); “Charity, which is love” (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 23 July 1843, p. 316). Note that “Charity, which is love” is missing from the official record of the 23 July 1843 discourse (J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1843–1844*, 23 July 1843, p. 66). It was added retrospectively by Church historians. The original notes made at the time include the words “love”

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and “friendship,” but not “charity.” However, it is easy to see a possible allusion to 1 Peter 4:8 (“charity shall cover the multitude of sins”) that is paralleled in Elder Richards’ record (“covered all the faults among you”).

154 2 Nephi 26:30; Ether 12:34; Moroni 7:47; 8:17.

155 J. A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, p. 501.

156 Where Hope Is Shining.

157 “if a man have faith *he must needs have hope*” (Moroni 7:42, emphasis added); “he cannot have faith and hope, save he shall be meek, and lowly of heart . . . and if a man be meek and lowly I heart, and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, *he must needs have charity*” (Moroni 7:43–44).

158 Where Hope Is Shining:.

159 A. M. Hunter, *Paul*, pp. 22–23. “‘The tradition of the apostles is guarded,’ says the writer of the Epistle to Diognetus somewhere about the middle of the second century. But it is probably that ‘guarded tradition’ played an important role in Christianity at an earlier date. . . . If we seek evidence for this ‘guarded tradition’ in the early Christian literature, there is of course the emphatic witness of the Pastorals, with its call to ‘guard the deposit’ and to ‘hold fast the pattern of sound words’ (see 2 Timothy 1:13–14; or again the allusion in Jude (1:3) to ‘the faith once delivered to the saints.’ But even in Paul’s day it is probable that some attempt was made to fix and guard the Christian tradition. . . . ‘Hold the traditions which ye were taught whether by word or our epistle’ says 2 Thessalonians 2:15. 1 Corinthians 11:2 exhorts the Corinthians ‘to hold fast the traditions even as I delivered them unto you.’ Indeed, the two pieces of *paradosis* quoted in this letter — 1 Corinthians 11:23f. and 15:3f. — probably represent examples of this guarded tradition, taught by catechists to converts when they became members of the church or to missionaries when they received their commission” (ibid., p. 22).

Affirming that Paul’s writings were more in the mainstream of apostolic tradition than many

exegetes have supposed, Hunter writes: “We have, in the past, exaggerated St. Paul’s originality and creativeness. He was to an extent we have never fully realized indebted to the Christianity which existed before and alongside of him. There is much in St. Paul’s theology and thinking that is common and apostolic” (ibid., p. 9).

- 160 See, e.g., 1 Corinthians 7:10; 11:23–25; 15:3ff. See also ibid., pp. 118–120.
- 161 See Romans 5:1–5; Galatians 5:5–6; Ephesians 4:2–5; Colossians 1:4–5; 1 Thessalonians 1:3; 5:8; Titus 2:2; Hebrews 6:10–15; 10:19–26. See also 1 Peter 1:3–8; 2 Nephi 31; Ether 12; Moroni 7:1ff.; D&C 12:8. See, e.g., J. H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude*, pp. 154–155 for a discussion of the Hellenistic, Jewish, and Christian background of such chains of virtues and their varied appearance and sequence in biblical passages.
- 162 E.g., Joseph Fitzmyer: “Others maintain that Paul is thinking rather of two stages in a Christian’s earthly experience. In 2:6–3:4 Paul has already spoken of these stages, using the vocabulary, *nēpios* and *teleios*, of an “immature” and “mature” Christian, or referring to the “fleshy” and “spiritual” aspects of the earthly Christian life. Now he has contrasted *ek merous* and *to teleion* in vv. 10 and 12, and the *arti* and the *tote* in v. 12 would refer to these two stages of such earthly life” (J. A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, p. 501). By way of contrast, the Book of Mormon seems to associate the three theological virtues with *three* stages in the progression of the Christian toward eternal life.
- 163 B. C. Hafen, *Broken*, p. 166; D. A. Bednar, Clean Hands; H. M. Smith et al., *Commentary*, p. 104; D. T. Christofferson, Justification; Romans 5:1; D&C 20:30.
- 164 2 Nephi 31:9, 17–18.
- 165 H. M. Smith et al., *Commentary*, p. 104; Helaman 3:35; D&C 20:31.
- 166 2 Nephi 31:20.

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- 167 2 Nephi 31:19, emphasis added.
- 168 Cf. Hebrews 6:11: “And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the *full assurance of hope* unto the end” (emphasis added); Ether 12:32: “And I also remember that thou hast said that thou hast prepared a house for man, yea, even among the mansions of thy Father, in which man might have *a more excellent hope*; wherefore man must hope, or he cannot receive an inheritance in the place which thou hast prepared” (emphasis added).
- 169 2 Nephi 31:20, emphasis added.
- 170 See J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, pp. 213–215.
- 171 See 1 Corinthians 13:7; Moroni 7:48. Compare Articles of Faith 1:13.
- 172 2 Nephi 31:16.
- 173 D&C 101:4.
- 174 Moroni 7:48.
- 175 Moroni 7:47, emphasis added. See also v. 48. Compare 1 Peter 1:22; Jacob 3:2.
- 176 2 Nephi 31:20.
- 177 R. Guénon, *Symboles*, pp. 336–339; J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 7 April 1844, pp. 346–348, 354; M. C. Thomas, Brother of Jared; M. C. Thomas, Hebrews; N. M. Sarna, *Mists*, p. 82.
- 178 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 21 May 1843, p. 305. Because Church historians later expanded the relevant allusion in the original notes of the discourse into a full paragraph of polished prose, modern scholars raise the legitimate question as to whether those historians correctly intuited the gist of the Prophet words in this context. In J. M. Bradshaw, *Now That We Have the Words*, I argue that this statement was not made up from whole cloth by later Church historians who compiled Joseph Smith’s manuscript history. I adduce evidence from a source not available to them that something like this statement may have been mistakenly transposed from its original place near

the end of the discourse and then erroneously conflated with an earlier reference to a “ladder.”

Joseph Smith’s statement about the “three principal rounds of Jacob’s ladder,” if authentic, would have been recognized by the Prophet’s fellow Freemasons (see further discussion in J. M. Bradshaw, *Faith, hope, and charity: The ‘three principal rounds’ of the ladder of heavenly ascent*). Unlike the allegories of Masonic ritual, which contain beautiful truths while eschewing salvific claims, modern temple doctrines and ordinances purport a power in the priesthood that imparts sanctity to their simple forms, making earthly symbols holy through connecting them to the living God.

- 179 J. L. Carroll, *Reconciliation*, p. 95 n. 18.
- 180 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, August 1832, pp. 12–13: “They are they who saw the mysteries of godliness ... they saw angels ascending and descending upon a ladder that reached from earth to heaven.” Cf. 1 Timothy 3:16; D&C 19:10; 84:19–21.
- 181 Hebrews 6:1; 2 John 1:9; 2 Nephi 31:2; 32:6; Jacob 7:2, 6; 3 Nephi 2:2.
- 182 M. G. Romney, *Temples*, pp. 239–240. See H. W. Nibley, *Sacred*, pp. 579–581.
- 183 D. Q. Cannon et al., *Far West*, 25 October 1831, p. 23; J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 25 October 1831, p. 9; cf. 2 Peter 1:5–11, Moroni 8:25–26. For a more detailed discussion of how faith, hope, and charity relate to priesthood ordinances and the ancient idea of a ladder of heavenly ascent, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Faith, Hope, and Charity*.
- 184 J. E. Talmage, *House of the Lord 1912*, pp. 187–188.
- 185 Leviticus 1:2; 2:1, 13; 23:13.
- 186 Exodus 30:17–21.
- 187 D. Calabro, *Joseph Smith and the architecture of Genesis*, pp. 171–172. See also J. M. Bradshaw, *LDS Book of Enoch*, pp.

57–58. Calabro further clarifies (D. Calabro, *Joseph Smith and the architecture of Genesis*, p. 172):

While there is no evidence that the temple laver was used as a baptismal font, it was definitely large enough to suggest such a use, and Joseph Smith’s specifications for a baptismal font modeled after the Solomonic laver for the Nauvoo Temple show that he understood it in this connection.

188 J. S. Thompson, *How John’s Gospel portrays Jesus as the Way of the temple*, p. 312.

189 See, e.g., W. C. Smith, *Belief and History*. See also M. Weinfeld, *Common Heritage*. Thanks to David Calabro for these suggestions.

New Testament scholars today would generally affirm “that the scriptural notion of faith is fiduciary, a trusting, entrusting of oneself, and also obedience, fidelity; and in other ways more than intellectual” (W. C. Smith, *Belief and History*, p. 72). However, Wilfred Cantwell Smith documents the unfortunate transformation meaning of the word “faith” in modern thought to something closer to mere “belief,” fueled in part by the fact that in Hebrew and Greek there is “a verbal form to go along with the noun-concept ‘faith,’” whereas in English, “there is not” (*ibid.*, p. 45). Summarizing this change, Smith writes:

The affirmation “I believe in God” used to mean: “given the reality of God as a fact of the universe, I hereby pledge to Him my heart and soul. I committedly opt to live in loyalty to Him. I offer my life to be judged by Him, trusting His mercy.” Today the statement may be taken by some as meaning: “Given the uncertainty as to whether there be a God or not, as a fact of modern life, I announce that my opinion is ‘yes.’ I judge God to be existent.” Insofar as a moral commitment and one’s life behavior are involved, they could add: “And I trust my judgment.” To say that so-and-so

believes that so-and-so believes in God may mean:
The idea of God is part of the furniture of that
man's mind.

“Faith precedes belief,” writes Smith. “Belief follows after faith” (ibid., pp. 78, 79). This seems consistent with Alma’s well-known discourse on faith where he affirms that “faith is not to have a perfect knowledge of things; therefore if ye have faith ye hope for things which are not seen, which are true” (Alma 32:21). The faith of which Alma speaks is what leads the humble in heart to repentance and baptism (Alma 32:13–19). Knowledge comes afterward, as the result of the exercise of faith (Alma 32:28–43).

- 190 J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Published Revelations*, Lectures on Faith 1:10, p. 316 (p. 6).
- 191 2 Nephi 31.
- 192 M. S. Nyman, *Hope*, pp. 296–297, emphasis added.
- 193 J. F. McConkie, *Promise*, p. 163.
- 194 Moroni 7:19.
- 195 Moroni 7:15.
- 196 Moroni 7:16.
- 197 Moroni 7:16.
- 198 Moroni 7:17.
- 199 Moroni 7:17.
- 200 Moroni 7:31.
- 201 Moroni 7:24.
- 202 Moroni 7:22.
- 203 Moroni 7:23. Cf. Moroni 7:31–32.
- 204 Moroni 7:25.
- 205 Note that baptism is the central subject of chapters 6 and 8 of Moroni. See also 2 Nephi 31:4–13.

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- 206 Moroni 7:19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 28. Cf. Moroni 10:30: “every good gift.”
- 207 Moroni 7:26.
- 208 Moroni 7:26.
- 209 Hebrews 10:22.
- 210 J. E. Talmage, *House of the Lord 1912*, pp. 188–189.
- 211 Moses 5:59.
- 212 Helaman 3:35.
- 213 Hebrews 10:23.
- 214 J. E. Talmage, *House of the Lord 1912*, p. 189.
- 215 Hebrews 10:20.
- 216 Moses 6:59.
- 217 The phrase “into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,” contained in the first manuscript of the JST (see S. H. Faulring, *et al.*, *Original Manuscripts*, p. 102), is not present in the canonized version of the Pearl of Great Price. For more on meaning and background of this verse, see J. M. Bradshaw, *By the Blood*.
- 218 J. E. Faulconer, *Life of Holiness*, p. 207.
- 219 Alma 13:3.
- 220 2 Corinthians 1:22, 5:5; cf. Ephesians 1:14.
- 221 2 Nephi 31:20, emphasis added.
- 222 Ether 12:32, emphasis added.
- 223 Hebrews 6:11, emphasis added.
- 224 Hebrews 6:11, emphasis added.
- 225 Ether 12:32.
- 226 Ether 12:4. J. H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude*, p. 155 concludes that we are meant to read “steadfastness” as “hope” in 1 Thessalonians 1:3 and Titus 2:1.
- 227 2 Nephi 31:17.

228 2 Nephi 31:19, emphasis added. Certainly there is truth in Stephen Robinson’s emphasis on the difference in magnitude between the “61 cents” we contribute toward our salvation and the unfathomably costly contribution that Jesus Christ made on our behalf (S. E. Robinson, *Believing*, pp. 31–34). However, there are major differences between Latter-day Saint beliefs and extreme versions of “grace-oriented” theologies—as exemplified by Charles Spurgeon’s famous line: “If there be but one stitch in the celestial garment of our righteousness which we ourselves are to put in, we are lost” (cited in B. B. Warfield, *Plan*, p. 51).

Just as Jesus Christ will put all enemies beneath his feet (1 Corinthians 15:25–26), so Joseph Smith taught that each person who would be saved must also, with His essential help, gain the power needed to “triumph over all [their] enemies and put them under [their] feet” (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 14 May 1843, p. 297. See also 17 May 1843, p. 301; 21 May 1843, p. 305), possessing the “glory, authority, majesty, power, and dominion which Jehovah possesses” (L. E. Dahl et al., *Lectures*, 7:9, p. 98; cf. 7:16 — note that the authorship of these lectures, traditionally ascribed to Joseph Smith, is uncertain).

As Riddle explains (C. C. Riddle, *New*, p. 228), “the covenant of baptism is [not only] our pledge to seek after good and to eliminate all choosing and doing of evil in our lives, [but] also our receiving the power to keep that promise,” i.e., through the gift of the Holy Ghost. For us, Jesus Christ is not only our Redeemer but also the literal prototype of the process of probation that each of us is to pass through if we are to follow Him.

229 1 John 3:2; Moroni 7:48.

230 Moroni 7:41.

231 S. Sandmel et al., *New English Bible*, Hebrews 6:18, emphasis added. Matthew Bowen observes that there is a pun on Hebrew *tiqvah* (“hope”) in the word for “cord” (*tiqvah*) hung from the window in Joshua 2:15, which was the “true token” between Rahab and the Israelite spies (M. L. Bowen, 7 March 2016).

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One is also reminded of the iron rod in the vision of the Tree of Life recorded by Lehi and Nephi (1 Nephi 8:19–20, 24, 30; 11:25; 15:23) and its ancient analogues that were used in the ascent of holy mountains (see J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, pp. 143, 473). Further afield, Bowen also notes that the *Mishnah* talks about how ropes or cords were tied to the high priest in case he died in the Holy of Holies (e.g., from an irruption of the glory of God) so that he could be pulled out.

- 232 Cf. Ether 12:4 (emphasis added): “which *hope* cometh of *faith*, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast.” J. H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude*, p. 155 reads “steadfastness” as “hope” in 1 Thessalonians 1:3 and Titus 2:1.
- 233 S. Sandmel et al., *New English Bible*, Hebrews 6:18–20.
- 234 D&C 84:33–48. See also M. G. Romney, Oath, p. 17 and J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*.
- 235 S. Sandmel et al., *New English Bible*, Hebrews 6:18.
- 236 K. L. Barney, *NT Footnotes*, 3:82 n. d. See also M. G. Romney, Oath, p. 17.
- 237 John 14:3. See also Hebrews 4:14; H. W. Attridge et al., *Hebrews*, pp. 118–119.
- 238 M. Barker, *Risen*, pp. 42–43. See also Gregory Nazianzen, Oration 39, 16, p. 358; Origen, Luke, Homily 24 on Luke 3:15–16, p. 103; 1 Corinthians 3:13.
- 239 H. W. Attridge et al., *Hebrews*, p. 184; cf. pp. 185, 222–224. See also L. T. Johnson, *Hebrews*, pp. 172–173. Comparing the symbol of the anchor to an image in Virgil, Witherington concludes that he was “thinking no doubt of an iron anchor with two wings rather than an ancient stone anchor” (B. Witherington, III, *Letters*, p. 225). The shape of the anchor with two wings would recall both the covenant and the oath by which the former is “made sure” (2 Peter 1:10).

The symbol of the anchor evokes the tradition of pounding nails into the Western Wall of the Jerusalem Temple. Rona writes: “Older texts reveal a now forgotten custom of the ‘sure nails.’”

This was the practice of bringing one's sins, grief, or the tragedies of life to the remains of the temple wall and 'nailing' them in a sure place. The nails are a reminder of Isaiah's prophecy [22:23–25] that man's burden will be removed when the nail in the sure place is taken down" (D. Rona, *Revealed*, p. 194). Christian use of anchor imagery goes back to "the first century cemetery of St. Domitilla, the second and third century epitaphs of the catacombs" (Christian Symbols, Christian Symbols). Although the anchor is frequently depicted in connection with a figure representing the Hope afforded by Jesus Christ, it is, from the perspective of those who aspire to a place in God's presence, an even more appropriate companion to the crowning blessings associated with the requirement of Charity, as shown in Figures 5 and 7. In 2 Nephi 31:20, Nephi associates this "love of God and of all men" with the ultimate attainment of both a "perfect brightness of hope" and the sure promise of the Father ("Ye shall have eternal life").

240 D. M. Moffitt, *Atonement*, pp. 300–301.

241 This phrase, applied by Moffitt to Jesus Christ and His followers, originated with the Jews in Qumran. See, e.g., G. Vermes, *Complete*, Rule of the Community (1QS), 4:22–26, p. 103. For a more detailed study of the meaning of this concept in the context of the theology of the Qumran Community and of early Christians, see C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Glory*.

242 D. M. Moffitt, *Atonement*, p. 301.

243 Ether 12:4, emphasis added.

244 Emphasizing the anticipatory nature of temple ordinances, Brigham Young explained that "a person may be anointed king and priest long before he receives his kingdom" (J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 6 August 1843, 5:527). Moreover, Elder John A. Widtsoe taught (J. A. Widtsoe, *Work*, p. 33):

Great eternal truths make up the Gospel plan.
All regulations for man's earthly guidance have
their eternal spiritual counterparts. The earthly
ordinances of the Gospel are themselves only

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reflections of heavenly ordinances. For instance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and temple work are merely earthly symbols of realities that prevail throughout the universe; but they are symbols of truths that must be recognized if the Great Plan is to be fulfilled. The acceptance of these earthly symbols is part and parcel of correct earth life, but being earthly symbols they are distinctly of the earth and cannot be accepted elsewhere than on earth. In order that absolute fairness may prevail and eternal justice may be satisfied, all men, to attain the fulness of their joy, must accept these earthly ordinances. There is no water baptism in the next estate nor any conferring of the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of earthly hands. The equivalents of these ordinances prevail no doubt in every estate, but only as they are given on this earth can they be made to aid, in their onward progress, those who have dwelt on earth.

245 J. E. Talmage, *House of the Lord* (1912), pp. 189–194.

246 D&C 50:35; 75:16, 22; 76:60.

247 Moroni 7:47: “charity . . . endureth forever”; 1 Corinthians 13:8: “Charity never faileth.”

248 Ether 12:28. Cf. Alma 13:29: “Having faith on the Lord; having a hope that ye shall receive eternal life; having the love of God always in your hearts, that ye may be lifted up at the last day and enter into his rest.” Elder Neal A. Maxwell has written: ““Charity initiates and sustains all the other spiritual qualities in much the same way that courage sustains these qualities at the testing point” (N. A. Maxwell, *Brim with Joy*, p. 265).

249 Colossians 3:14.

250 1 Corinthians 13:13.

251 Moroni 7:46, emphasis added.

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- 252 Moroni 7:44.
- 253 Ether 12:34. “Celestial customs will invariably refuse admission to a disciple devoid of [celestial] love” (N. A. Maxwell, *Choose*, p. 16).
- 254 Ether 12:7.
- 255 Ether 12:7. Cf. 1 Peter 3:7.
- 256 Cf. Ether 3:19.
- 257 Ether 12:19. See also vv. 20–21.
- 258 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 27 June 1839, p. 150.
- 259 Ibid., 11 June 1843, p. 308.
- 260 D&C 121:45.
- 261 Moroni 7:47.
- 262 See J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 59–65.
- 263 See 2 Nephi 31:20.
- 264 D&C 84:38.
- 265 D&C 121:34; cf. Matthew 20:16, 22:14; D&C 95:5–6.
- 266 D&C 121:34–35.
- 267 D&C 121:44. I prefer the word “charity” to “love” in this context, if only because the nature of the love described here differs so greatly from the ordinary manifestations of “love” one finds in the modern world. In his brilliant Roman Catholic commentary on Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, Joseph Pearce concludes that “the right sort of love can lead us to heaven, whereas the wrong sort can condemn us to hell” (J. Pearce, *Shakespeare on Love*, pp. 15–16). On the saving and damning manifestations of “love,” see also C. S. Lewis, *Loves*.
- 268 H. W. Nibley, *Foundation*, p. 172.
- 269 Ibid., p. 168.
- 270 H. W. Nibley, *Sacred*, p. 34.
- 271 See D&C 122:1–8. Francis Webster was remembered for his eloquent testimony that he and others in his handcart company

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became “acquainted with [God] in our extremities,” by this means obtaining an “absolute knowledge that God lives” (C. M. Orton, Francis Webster, p. 140). Donald Carson insightfully observes: “If the child prevails with a thoughtful father, it is because the father has molded the child to his way. If Jacob prevails with God, it is Jacob who is wounded (Genesis 32:22–32)” (D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, p. 186). Citing the experience of Stephen, who saw the Lord “in the agonies of death,” Elder Orson Hyde taught (O. Hyde, 6 October 1853, p. 125):

True it is, that in the most trying hour, the servants of God may then be permitted to see their Father, and elder Brother. “But,” says one, “I wish to see the Father, and the Savior, and an angel now.” Before you can see the Father, and the Savior, or an angel, you have to be brought into close places in order to enjoy this manifestation. The fact is, your very life must be suspended on a thread, as it were. If you want to see your Savior, be willing to come to that point where no mortal arm can rescue, no earthly power save! When all other things fail, when everything else proves futile and fruitless, then perhaps your Savior and your Redeemer may appear; His arm is not shortened that He cannot save, nor His ear heavy that He cannot hear; and when help on all sides appears to fail, My arm shall save, My power shall rescue, and you shall hear My voice, saith the Lord.

For additional discussion and application of the related principle of “waiting upon the Lord,” see B. C. Hafen et al., *Contrite Spirit*, pp. 96–127.

- 272 Cf. D&C 132:23–24. The Prophet Joseph Smith further explained: “No one can truly say he knows God until he has handled something, and this can only be in the holiest of holies” (J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 1 May 1842, 4:608). Elder Bruce R. McConkie elaborates (B. R. McConkie, *New Witness*, p. 492):

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What greater personal revelation could anyone receive than to see the face of his Maker? ... And is it an unseemly or unrighteous desire on man's part to hope and live and pray, all in such a way as to qualify for so great a manifestation? There is a true doctrine on these points, a doctrine that is spelled out as specifically and extensively in the revealed word as are any of the other great revealed truths. There is no need for uncertainty or misunderstanding and surely, if the Lord reveals a doctrine, we should seek to learn its principles and strive to apply them in our lives. This doctrine is that mortal man, while in the flesh, has it in his power to see the Lord, to stand in His presence, to feel the nail marks in His hands and feet, and to receive from Him such blessings as are reserved for those only who keep all His commandments and who are qualified for that eternal life which includes being in His presence forever.

In another place, Elder McConkie wrote (B. R. McConkie, *Promised Messiah*, pp. 582–584):

“Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God”—and now we come to the crowning promise of the Gospel—”and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will” (D&C 88:68). That is the Lord's promise, His great promise, His crowning promise, His last promise. What is there that can excel in importance the obtaining of that spiritual stature which enables one to see the Lord? And so the next words spoken by the Lord to His friends were: “Remember the great and last promise which I have made unto you” (D&C 88:69).

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Then follows some counsel relative to right living, which is climaxed with these words, the full import of which is known only by those who are endowed with power from on high in holy places: “Sanctify yourselves; yea, purify your hearts, and cleanse your hands and your feet before me, that I may make you clean; That I may testify unto your Father, and your God, and my God, that you are clean from the blood of this wicked generation” (D&C 88:74–75; cf., e.g., J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 23 January 1833, 1:323–324). Why? “That I may fulfill this promise, this great and last promise,” this promise that you shall see me and that I will unveil my face, that I may fulfill this promise “which I have made unto you, when I will” (D&C 88:75). To those of understanding, we say: The purpose of the endowment in the House of the Lord is to prepare and sanctify His saints so they will be able to see His face, here and now as well as to bear the glory of His presence in the eternal worlds.

“How do men obtain a knowledge of the glory of God, His perfections and attributes?” asked the Prophet Joseph Smith. His answer: “By devoting themselves to His service, through prayer and supplication incessantly strengthening their faith in Him, until, like Enoch, the Brother of Jared, and Moses, they obtain a manifestation of God to themselves” (L. E. Dahl et al., *Lectures*, Lecture 2 Questions and Answers, p. 64, see also 2:55, p. 51).

In his charge to the Twelve Apostles in modern times, Oliver Cowdery said the following (see J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, February 1835, 2:195–196, 198):

... [I]t is necessary that you receive a testimony from heaven for yourselves; so that you can bear testimony to the truth of the Book of Mormon,

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and that you have seen the face of God. That is more than the testimony of an angel. When the proper time arrives, you shall be able to bear this testimony to the world. When you bear testimony that you have seen God, this testimony God will never suffer to fall but will bear you out; although many will not give heed, yet others will. You will therefore see the necessity of getting this testimony from heaven.

Never cease striving until you have seen God face to face. Strengthen your faith; cast off your doubts, your sins, and all your unbelief; and nothing can prevent you from coming to God. Your ordination is not full and complete till God has laid His hand upon you. We require as much to qualify us as did those who have gone before us; God is the same. If the Savior in former days laid His hands upon His disciples, why not in latter days?. . .

You have our best wishes, you have our most fervent prayers, that you may be able to bear this testimony, that you have seen the face of God. Therefore call upon Him in faith in mighty prayer till you prevail, for it is your duty and privilege to bear such testimony for yourselves.

Commenting on this charge, Elder McConkie wrote (B. R. McConkie, *Promised Messiah*, pp. 594–595):

Few faithful people will stumble or feel disbelief at the doctrine here presented that the Lord's apostolic witnesses are entitled and expected to see his face, and that each one individually is obligated to "call upon Him in faith in mighty prayer" until he prevails. But the Twelve are only a dozen in number. There are seldom more than fifteen men on earth at a time who have been ordained to the holy apostleship, which brings us to another statement made by Elder Cowdery in

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his apostolic charge (J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 2:196): “God does not love you better or more than others.” That is, apostles and prophets do not gain precedence with the Lord unless they earn it by personal righteousness. The Lord loves people, not office holders. Every elder is entitled to the same blessings and privileges offered the apostles. Indeed, “an apostle is an elder” (D&C 20:38); such is the title by which he is proud to be addressed. The priesthood is greater than any of its offices. No office adds any power, dignity, or authority to the priesthood. All offices derive their rights, virtues, authorities, and prerogatives from the priesthood. It is greater to hold the Melchizedek Priesthood than it is to hold the office of an elder or of an apostle in that priesthood. The Lord loves his priesthood holders, all of whom are given the same opportunity to do good and work righteousness and keep the commandments. All of the elders in the kingdom are expected to live the law as strictly as do the members of the Council of the Twelve, and if they do so live, the same blessings will come to them that flow to apostles and prophets.

Apostles and prophets are named as examples and patterns of what others should be. The Quorum of the Twelve should be a model quorum after which every elders quorum in the Church might pattern its course. ...

I repeat: apostles and prophets simply serve as patterns and examples to show all men what they may receive if they are true and faithful. There is nothing an apostle can receive that is not available to every elder in the kingdom. As we have heretofore quoted, from the Prophet’s sermon on the Second Comforter (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 27 June 1839, p. 149): “God has not revealed anything

to Joseph, but what He will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them.” It follows that everything stated by Elder Oliver Cowdery in his charge to the apostles could also be given as a charge to all elders. Every elder is entitled and expected to seek and obtain all the spiritual blessings of the Gospel, including the crowning blessing of seeing the Lord face to face.

273 Genesis 14:17–24 and JST Genesis 14:25–40.

274 See Ehat and Cook in J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, p. 305 n. 29. After emphasizing Abraham’s status as a “friend” of God after demonstrating his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, E. Douglas Clark summarizes scriptures and teachings of Joseph Smith confirming Abraham’s “election sure” which occurred at that time (E. D. Clark, *Blessings*, pp. 217–218):

[W]hen God announced the blessings, it was not just by promise but by oath, as emphasized by the letter to the Hebrews: “When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by Himself. ... And so, after [Abraham] had patiently endured, he obtained the promise” (Hebrews 6:13, 15). So what did it mean for the Almighty to swear by Himself? God was really saying, according to the Midrash, “Even as I live and endure for ever and to all eternity, so will My oath endure for ever and to all eternity” (citing Kasher, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation*, 3:160). It was the unconditional promise of eternal life, his calling and election made sure, which, says Joseph Smith, comes to a man after “the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve him at all hazards” (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 27 June 1839, p. 150). Accordingly, explained Joseph Smith, it was “the power of an endless life ... which; Abraham obtained by the

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offering of his son Isaac” (J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, 27 August 1843, p. 245), an event that “shows that if a man would attain to the keys of the kingdom of an endless life, he must sacrifice all things” (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 27 August 1843, p. 322).

The rabbis stated that at the beginning of the great trial, when God had first called Abraham’s name and he had answered “Here am I,” the real meaning was “Here am I—ready for priesthood, ready for kingship, and he attained priesthood and kingship” (H. Freedman et al., *Midrash*, Vayera 55:6, 1:486). Similarly, Joseph Smith stated that by the “oath of God unto our Father Abraham,” his children were “secured [to him] by the seal wherewith [Abraham had] been sealed” (J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, 13 August 1843, p. 241). In the greatest irony of Abraham’s life, only by binding Isaac for the sacrifice had Abraham bound him to himself in the eternal bonds of priesthood sealing.

Cf. Hebrews 6:11, 13–15, emphasis added: “And we desire that every one of you do shew the *same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end*: ... 13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, 14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. 15 And so, *after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.*”

275 See, e.g., H. W. Attridge et al., *Hebrews*, p. 335 n. 25; W. L. Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, p. 363.

276 See, e.g., W. L. Lane, *Hebrews 9–13*, p. 362.

277 Ether 12:19.

278 Ether 12:21.

279 See, e.g., J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, pp. 68, 77.

280.. See, e.g., E. R. Goodenough, *Dura Symbolism*, 9:67–77.

- 281 Moon observes that Jewish women “depicted in the synagogue frescoes wear pink, brown, beige, and beige-yellow — not white, forbidden by the Mishnah. White, we should explain, was exclusive to men, especially to those of status, as the figures of Moses and others in the frescoes attest ... [In addition,] Jewish women were required to cover their head” (W. G. Moon, *Nudity*, pp. 596–597).
- 282 M. Barker, *Temple Themes*, p. 28.
- 283 P. M. Eisenbaum, *Hebrews* 11, p. 162 observes that the motif of a “near-death experience” of the hero appears more than once in *Hebrews* 11. In the case of Isaac: “What is stressed is that from one who was almost never born, and who after being born was almost killed, the descendants of Abraham, the descendants of God’s faithful ones, are born” (*ibid.*, p. 163).
- 284 H. W. Attridge *et al.*, *Hebrews*, p. 335. Cf. L. T. Johnson, *Hebrews*, p. 295, explaining the Greek behind the phrase stating that Abraham receive Isaac “in a figure” (i.e., “figuratively speaking” (J. Dunnill, *Covenant*, p. 178)): “The phrase *en parabole* points in two directions. Abraham received Isaac ‘back’ literally, when God stopped the sacrifice and Isaac was able to accompany his father home ... As in the use of the same phrase in 9:9, however, the author may also imply another symbolic dimension, namely the resurrection from the dead that occurred in Christ and is anticipated by believers.” On the connection between *Hebrews* 11 and *Romans* 4, see L. D. Hurst, *Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 121.
- 285 See 1 *Corinthians* 13:7. Cf. *Moroni* 7:45–47. Conzelmann argues for a correlation between the admonition of Paul in 1 *Corinthians* 13:7 and the mention of faith, hope, and charity in 1 *Corinthians* 13:13: “Verse 7 is formally speaking a conclusion, but in content a verbal description of the triad of v. 13” (H. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, p. 224).

Note that Joseph Smith changes the subject of the description — in 1 *Corinthians*, it is charity that bears, believes, hopes, and endures all things,

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whereas in the thirteenth Article of Faith, the “we” implicitly makes the Latter-day Saints into the subject of the phrase.

So far as I am aware, the possibility of a richer view of the meaning of faith, hope, and charity that relates to the priesthood ordinances and the ladder of heavenly ascent has not been explored previously by LDS scholars. For example, in his *Articles of Faith*, Elder James E. Talmage entitles his chapter on the thirteenth Article of Faith “Practical Religion” and emphasizes the wholesome and generous practices of LDS in everyday life (J. E. Talmage, *Articles*, pp. 389–412). Neither the explicit use of the language of 1 Corinthians 13:7 nor the implicit allusion to faith, hope, and charity is mentioned. In a similar approach to this article of faith, Elder McConkie entitles his chapter “Pure Religion and Undefined” and briefly discusses the commitment of the Saints to moral principles that is “a natural outgrowth of believing the eternal truths that save” (*B. R. McConkie, New Witness*, p. 701).

286 Articles of Faith 1:13.

287 Although it is not known whether Joseph Smith was involved in directing or reviewing the punctuation of the original 1844 publication of the thirteenth Article of Faith in I. D. Rupp, *History*, p. 410, the placement of the quotation marks (even though the contents of the quote are not a word-for-word parallel) highlights the contrast between Joseph Smith’s view of the the Saints’ limited capacity to endure and the exact parallel in the descriptions of the three qualities as they are listed in 1 Corinthians 13:7 (i.e., “believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things”):

... indeed we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul; “we believe all things: we hope all things:”

we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things.

- 288 Emphasis added. Bailey writes the following with respect to the Greek verb for “endure”: “Paul uses a compound word. In this case the term he chooses is *hupo-meno*. *Hupo* has to do with ‘under’ and *meno* means ‘to remain.’ As a compound, this word describes ‘The affliction under which one remains steadfast.’ If *makrothumia* is the patience of the powerful, *hupomene* is the *patience of the weak* who unflinchingly endure suffering. The example of Mary standing silently at the foot of the cross is a matchless demonstration for every Christian of this crucial form of patient love. Mary can do nothing to change the horrible events taking place around her. Her only choice is to exercise *hupomene* and at great cost remain rather than depart that scene of suffering. Jesus Himself is the supreme example of the same virtue (K. E. Bailey, *Paul*, p. 368).
- 289 E.g., Matthew 24:9–13; Mark 13:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:4; 2 Timothy 2:3; 4:5; Hebrews 12:7, 20; James 5:10–11; 1 Peter 2:19, 10.
- 290 Moroni 8:3.
- 291 See especially 2 Nephi 31:15, 20. See also 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Nephi 13:37; 22:31; 2 Nephi 9:24; 33:4; 3 Nephi 15:9; Mormon 9:29. For more on this concept, see B. A. Gardner, *Second Witness*, 2:445–446. With regard to the meaning of “enduring to the end,” Elder B. C. Hafen and M. K. Hafen, observe (B. C. Hafen et al., *Contrite Spirit*, pp. 57–58):

Sometimes ... we refer to the first principles as if they represented the entire process of discipleship. When we do that, “endure to the end” can sound like an afterthought, as if our baptism and confirmation have hooked us like a trout on God’s fishing line, and so long as we don’t squirm off the hook, He will reel us safely in. Or some assume that “endure to the end” simply describes the “no worries” stage of life, when our main job is to just

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enjoy frequent trips to our cozy retirement cottage while refraining from doing anything really bad along the way.

But there *is* more. As President Russell M. Nelson has said, “Enduring to the end ... means the endowment and sealing ordinances of the holy temple” (Russell M. Nelson, “Begin with the end in mind,” Seminar for New Mission Presidents, June 22, 2014. For a summary of Elder Nelson’s talk, see S. J. Weaver, *Begin Missionary Work*). And Noel and Sydney Reynolds, former president and matron of the Mount Timpanogos Utah Temple, believe that “endure to the end” is a gospel principle that is paired with the temple endowment, just as repentance is paired with baptism. President Reynolds said this is the stage when we decide if we really want to become as the Father and the Son are (stake conference talk, Orem Utah Sharon Stake, May 17, 2014). Nephi offered a similarly expansive view of “enduring” — we should “*endure to the end, in following the example of the Son of the living God*” (2 Nephi 31:16, emphasis added). The first principles will always be first — yet they are but the foundation for pressing on toward the Christlike life: “Therefore *not leaving* the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us *go on unto perfection*; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, ... [and] baptisms” (JST Hebrews 6:1–2, emphasis added).

- 292 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 14 May 1843, pp. 298–299. The only other allusion to this scripture made by Joseph Smith is the following, made in a letter to his uncle Silas (J. Smith, Jr., *Writings*, 26 September 1833, p. 323, spelling and punctuation modernized, emphasis added):

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Paul said to his Hebrew brethren that God being more abundantly willing to show unto the heirs of his promises the immutability of his council “confirmed it by an oath.” He also exhorts them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

“Notwithstanding we (said Paul) have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.” Yet he was careful to press upon them the necessity of continuing on until they as well as those who inherited the promises might have the assurance of their salvation confirmed to them by an oath from the mouth of Him who could not lie, for that seemed to be the example anciently and Paul holds it out to his brethren as an object attainable in his day. And why not? I admit that, by reading the scriptures of truth, saints in the days of Paul could learn beyond the power of contradiction that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had the promise of eternal life confirmed to them by an oath of the Lord, but that promise or oath was no assurance to them of *their* salvation. But they could, by walking in the footsteps and continuing in the faith of their fathers, obtain for themselves an oath for confirmation that they were meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light.

293 2 Peter 1:1–21.

294 2 Peter 1:10.

295 2 Peter 1:19.

296 Ether 12:28; Moroni 7:48.

297 J. A. Tvedtnes, *Rituals*.

298 H. D. Betz et al., *Sermon*, p. 449.

- 299 Ibid., pp. 437–453.
- 300 For examples illustrating the range of meaning of the term, see F. W. Danker et al., *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 104.
- 301 Matthew 6:22: “The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.” Luke 11:34: “The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light.”
- 302 E.g., C. Osiek, *Shepherd*, 1:2:4, p. 46: “Hermas ... is filled with simplicity and great innocence.” Ibid., 3:9:1, p. 80: “I raised you in great simplicity, innocence, and reverence.”
- 303 E.g., Ephesians 6:5: “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ.” Colossians 3:22: “Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God.”
- 304 E.g., S. Sandmel et al., 1 Maccabees, 2:60, p. 199: “Daniel was a man of integrity.” In a chapter of the *Testament of Issachar* that uses the English term “integrity” four times to translate a description of Issachar’s character, he also says: “I lived my life with singleness of vision” (H. C. Kee, *Testaments, Issachar*, 3:5, p. 803). See also the allusions to how vision relates to integrity in *ibid.*, Issachar, 4:6, p. 803: “For he lives by the integrity of his soul, and perceives all things by the rectitude of his heart, making no place for an outlook made evil by this world’s error, in order that he might envision no turning aside from any of the Lord’s commands.”
- 305 E.g., Romans 12:8: “he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity.” “The interpretation ‘generosity, liberality’ has frequently been proposed for Romans 12:8 ... but this sense ... is in dispute, and it is probable that ... the sense of “sincere concern, simple goodness” is sufficient” (F. W. Danker et al., *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 104).
- 306 See examples in S. T. Lachs, *Rabbinic Commentary*, pp. 127–128. “The noun form of the word ‘single’ is used for ‘generosity’

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(... 2 Corinthians 8:2; 9:11, 13; James 1:5)” (D. E. Garland, *Reading Matthew*, p. 81).

307 Matthew 6:22; Luke 11:34. See also 3 Nephi 13:22.

308 Mormon 8:15: “For none can have power to bring it to light save it be given him of God; for God wills that it shall be done with an eye single to his glory, or the welfare of the ancient and long dispersed covenant people of the Lord.”

D&C 27:2: “For, behold, I say unto you, that it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament, if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my glory — remembering unto the Father my body which was laid down for you, and my blood which was shed for the remission of your sins.”

309 F. W. Danker et al., *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 104.

310 Mormon 8:15.

311 D&C 4:5; 27:2; 55:1; 59:1; 82:19; 88:67.

312 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, August 1832, p. 11, p. 77; J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 2:318.

313 3 Nephi 12:19. See also 2 Nephi 2:7; 4:32; 3 Nephi 9:20; Ether 4:15; Moroni 6:2. These scriptures demonstrate that this sacrifice is to be directly connected with baptism.

314 See Matthew 6:22; 3 Nephi 13:22.

315 D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, p. 178.

316 See James 1:7. Cf. 2 Nephi 31:13; Moroni 7:5–13; 10:4; D&C 8:1.

317 Matthew 6:24. See C. S. Keener, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 233.

318 D&C 88:67–68.

319 Notice the movement in the passage from the *eye* being single to the *mind* being single. On the equivalence between the “eye” and the “heart” in the context of Matthew 6:21–23 and elsewhere in scripture, see D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, p. 178.

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- 320 J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Manuscript Revelation Books, Facsimile Edition*, p. 11.
- 321 J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Published Revelations, Book of Commandments 3:2*, p. 21 (p. 9).
- 322 Ibid., 1835 Doctrine and Covenants 31:2, p. 468 (p. 158), emphasis added. The term “&c.” at the end of the 1833 version is omitted in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants. This 1835 version “reflects editing marks made in chapter 3 of Oliver Cowdery’s copy of the Book of Commandments, indicating that the latter was used as a source text for the former” (ibid., p. 468 n. line 1, p. 468). For a facsimile reproduction of this page from Oliver Cowdery’s copy of the Book of Commandments, see ibid., p. 601.
- 323 See J. H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude*, pp. 154–155.
- 324 J. Starr, *Partakers*, p. 81.
- 325 N. Russell, *Deification*, p. 151.
- 326 J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 21–23. See also B. C. Hafen et al., *Contrite Spirit*, pp. 222–223.
- 327 R. L. Bushman, *Beginnings*, p. 95.
- 328 Ephesians 4:13.
- 329 D&C 107:31.
- 330 J. W. Welch, *Counting to Ten*, p. 57.
- 331 E. J. Bickerman, *Jews in the Greek Age*, p. 134. Cf. D. W. Parry, *Demarcation*, pp. 413–414.
- 332 F. I. Andersen, *2 Enoch*, 1:110–161, p. 140.
- 333 In an unpublished manuscript, Samuel Zinner has shown that in several ancient Christian writings, what later surfaced as the Jewish Sefirot appear as Christian virtues (S. Zinner, *The Kabbalistic Sefirot: Overlooked prototypes in first- and second-century Christian literature*).
- 334 S. Sandmel et al., *New English Bible*, 2 Peter 1:4, p. 299. See also J. H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude*, pp. 159–160.

- 335 J. N. Sparks et al., *Orthodox Study Bible*, p. 1692.
- 336 J. Vajda, *Partakers*.
- 337 2 Peter 1:5.
- 338 Elder Bruce R. McConkie affirmed that there is “an additive order to the attaining of these attributes” (J. F. McConkie et al., *Revelations*, p. 68).
- 339 H. A. Fischel, Uses of Sorites. An earlier, Israelite form of sorites was used, e.g., in Joel 1:3; Genesis 36:31–43; 1 Chronicles 1 and 2. Matthew 1:1–17 and M. Lieber, Pirkei Avos, 1:1, pp. 6–11 are famous examples of the classic form of sorites in use during the Hellenistic period as applied to lists of genealogy and transmission of authority. As to the use of ethical or ethico-metaphysical sorites similar to Romans 5:3–5 and 2 Peter 1:5–7 in Jewish and Roman literature, see, e.g., H. Marks et al., *English Bible*, Wisdom 6:17–20, 2:739; J. Neusner, *Mishnah*, Sotah, 9:15:III:MM, p. 466; L. A. t. y. c. B.-C. Seneca, Epistuale Morales 2, 85:2, pp. 286–287; M. T.-B. Cicero, De Legibus, 1:7:22–23, pp. 320–323. For an example of sorites in modern revelation, see D&C 84:6–17. Sorites arguments have been studied extensively by philosophers since the late nineteenth century because of logical paradoxes that can arise in some formulations (D. Hyde, Sorites Paradox).
- 340 H. W. Attridge et al., *HarperCollins Study Bible*, p. 2068 n. 1:5–7.
- 341 J. H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude*, p. 155. I have substituted the KJV terms for these virtues where they differ from Neyrey’s list. I have also corrected the ordering of these lists where it differed from scripture.
- 342 Matthew Bowen observes that the Hebrew word for hope (*tiqvah*), often equated with “patience” in the New Testament, comes from a root that means to “wait” (M. L. Bowen, March 7 2016). He suggests that this may reflect the process of approaching the veil and being prepared in all things into enter the presence of the Lord (cf. D&C 136:31). Romans 5:3–4 defines hope as the result of “patience/endurance” (=

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- steadfastness; Greek *hupomene*) and “experience” (= character, proof, testing; Greek *dokime*), developed in tribulation. See also 1 Thessalonians 1:3; 2 Thessalonians 1:4; 2 Timothy 3:10; Titus 2:2; Hebrews 6:12; 2 Peter 1:6; Revelation 2:19; Alma 7:23; D&C 4:6; 6:19; 107:30 where patience either complements or replaces “hope” in the list. Elsewhere in the New Testament and the Book of Mormon, the similar quality of “longsuffering” (Greek *makrothymia*) is mentioned, often in conjunction with patience. See Ephesians 4:2; 1 Corinthians 13:4; 2 Corinthians 6:6; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 1:11; 3:12; 2 Timothy 3:10; Alma 7:23; 13:28; 17:11; 38:3; Moroni 7:45; D&C 107:30; 118:3; 121:41.
- 343 Neyrey points out that 2 Peter 1:5–7, unlike Romans 5:1–5, supplements the group-specific qualities of faith, hope, and charity with more properly Greco-Roman virtues. He compares the combination of vertically and horizontally oriented virtues within the list to the division in the Ten Commandments between the laws that govern relationship with God and fellow man. Moreover, citing Philo, *Special Laws*, 2:211–213, pp. 438–441, he sees the numerical count of eight virtues as “suggesting a certain wholeness or completeness. ... All of the specifically Christian virtues are joined with the more popular ones to suggest a completeness of moral response. ... Wholeness, moreover, is found in attention to virtues in regard to body (self-control) and spirit as well as thought and action. In this wholeness, then, holiness is urged, a completeness of moral excellence to all.” See J. H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude*, pp. 154–155 d.
- 344 J. E. Faulconer, *Life of Holiness*, p. 209. Cf. 1 John 3:2; D&C 38:8; 50:45; 76:94; 93:1. Faulconer continues: “Since the word ‘glory’ can also be taken to mean ‘perfection,’ as in Romans 3:23, Jesus Christ has brought us into a place where we can rejoice in a hope that we will see the perfection of the Father in its brightness and majesty. We will see the Father in the Son, and we will see Him by being in His presence.”
- 345 See more on this in the section regarding D&C 4:7 below.

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- 346 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 21 May 1843, p. 305.
- 347 2 Peter 1:10.
- 348 J. H. Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude*, 2 Peter 1:11, p. 106.
- 349 *Ibid.*, pp. 178–179.
- 350 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 21 May 1843, p. 304.
- 351 *Ibid.*, 2 July 1839, p. 158.
- 352 J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, 21 May 1843, p. 209.
- 353 *I.e.*, 2 Peter 1:19.
- 354 L. T. Dennis et al., *ESV*, p. 2419 n. 1:19.
- 355 Emphasis added. Likewise, summarizing the thrust of Peter’s arguments, Lee writes (S. S. Lee, *Jesus’s Transfiguration*, p. 143):
- I believe that [the] theological thinking of 2 Peter is almost equivalent to both the Markan discipleship of following Jesus in his suffering, death, and glorification (Mark 8:27–9:13) and Paul’s understanding of the believers’ continuous transformation into the image of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18–4:6).
- 356 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 11 June 1843, p. 308.
- 357 Matthew 7:7. Just as the verse in the 1833 *Book of Commandments* corresponding to D&C 4:6 originally contained a truncated version of the list of virtues from 2 Peter 1:5–7 (J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Published Revelations, Book of Commandments* 3:2, p. 21 [p. 9]), so D&C 4:7 contains a truncated version of Matthew 7:7 (cf. Luke 11:9; 3 Nephi 14:7; 3 Nephi 27:29).
- 358 Matthew 7:13.
- 359 See 2 Nephi 31:8–9, 17.
- 360 Matthew 7:14.
- 361 See 2 Nephi 31:19–20.
- 362 J. W. Welch, *Sermon*, p. 72; J. W. Welch, *Light*, pp. 170–171. In the D&C version of this concept, the middle phrase (“seek, and ye shall find”) is omitted. It is possible that the ellipsis was

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accidental, as was, apparently, the omission of some items from the list of virtues in the 1833 version of today’s D&C 4:6. It is also possible that the omission was deliberate, as some have conjectured was the case in the exclusion of “thy kingdom come” from the Book of Mormon version of the Lord’s prayer (compare Matthew 6:10 with 3 Nephi 13:10). Welch justifies the exclusion of the phrase in the Savior’s sermon to the Nephites in light of the fact that “God’s Kingdom had already come both in heaven through Christ’s victory over death and on earth that day in their midst” (J. W. Welch, *Sermon*, p. 95; cf. K. Stendahl, *Third Nephi*, p. 147). See also D. A. Bednar, *Power to Become*, pp. 152–153.

363 Matthew 7:7.

364 This photo was taken of Bishop Brian Joseph Dunn on 25 January 2010, when he was installed as the Ordinary of the Antigonish, Nova Scotia diocese. M. B. Brown, *Cube*, p. 6 writes: “He knocks three times and recites part of Psalm 24 — which is an ancient Israelite temple entrance text. This triple knocking and Psalm citation ceremony can be traced back among normative Christians to a very early period [see *ibid.*, pp. 16–17]. For example, if Luke 13:22–30 is compared with chapters 21 and 22 of the book of Revelation a clear set of parallels materializes [see *ibid.*, pp. 14–16].” See also A. L. Gaskill, *Sacred Symbols*, pp. 230–232 for a description of Catholic *Porta Santa* and “dedication” rites that require a threefold knocking prior to admission through a closed door.

365 Matthew Bowen comments (M. L. Bowen, *Thy Will Be Done*, p. 243):

The Greek verbs meaning “ask” and “seek” correspond to the Hebrew verbs *sh’l* and *bqsh*, which were used to describe “asking for” or “seeking” a divine revelation, often in a temple setting. [Tvedtnes] detects a further temple echo in “knock” (J. A. Tvedtnes, *Temple Prayer*, p. 90), which should resonate with Latter-day Saints. The two divine passive reward clauses “it shall be given

you” and “it shall be opened to you” also may suggest a temple situation with Jesus as “keeper of the gate” (2 Nephi 9:41–42. See J. Gee, Keeper).

These suppositions are supported by Nephi’s assertion, “If ye cannot understand, ... it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock; wherefore, *ye are not brought into the light* but must perish in the dark” (2 Nephi 32:4, emphasis added). A person’s being “brought into” a place seems to imply the presence of a keeper-of-the-gate figure or *paralempstor*, as when Jesus promised the disciples, “I will come and receive [*paralempsomai*] you to myself” (John 14:3). The “light” would then be that part of the temple where God’s full presence shines as represented by the Holy of Holies. ... Granted, there are additional senses in which one might understand this reward clause. However, if the temple is the locus par excellence of inquiring, asking, and seeking revelation from the Lord (see Psalm 27:4), then the divine passive to be “brought into the light” probably connotes being brought into the light of the Lord’s countenance (see Numbers 6:24–27), a full reception of the blessings of the Atonement or the royal “adoption” (Romans 8:15–23), the greatest possible “revelation.”

Regarding “revelation,” Bowen continues (M. L. Bowen, *Thy Will Be Done*, p. 248 n. 41):

The word “revelation” from Latin *revelatio* originally connoted “a taking away of the veil” (compare Greek *apokalyptein*, “uncover”). This idea is depicted in 2 Corinthians 3:14–18, where Paul connects “liberty” (Greek *eleutheria*; Greek *aphesis*, “release”) to revelation and beholding the Lord’s glory with “open face” and being transformed into His glory (see 2 Corinthians 3:15–19). We note again Paul’s declaration that creation anxiously

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awaits the “*revelation [apokalypsin]* of the sons of God” and being “delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty [*eleutherian*] of the children of God” (Romans 8:19, 21).”

366 J. W. Welch, *Sermon*, p. 72.

367 See, e.g., 1 Corinthians 13:12; D&C 93:1. Cf. J. A. Widtsoe, *Work*, p. 33. Also cited in A. K. Parrish, *Widtsoe*, pp. 307–308.

368 JST Matthew 7:17.

369 Matthew 7:6:

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

Welch observes that “Such a requirement of secrecy is a common feature of ritual initiations or temple ordinances” (J. W. Welch, *Light*, p. 169), noting that “the Joseph Smith Translation is exactly concerned with the requirement of keeping certain sacred things secret. It adds: ‘The mysteries of the kingdom ye shall keep within yourselves, . . . for the world cannot receive that which ye, yourselves, are not able to bear’ (JST Matthew 7:10–11)” (J. W. Welch, *Sermon*, p. 72). For additional discussion, see *ibid.*, pp. 70–72; J. W. Welch, *Light*, pp. 168–170.

370 President Taylor said (J. Taylor, 6 January 1879, p. 120):

We are told that, “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?” Yet to all such he will say, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” You say, that means the outsiders. No, it does not. Do they do many wonderful works in the name of Jesus? No; if they do anything, it is done in the name of themselves or of the Devil. Sometimes they will do things in the name of God; but it is simply an act of blasphemy.

This means you, Latter-day Saints, who heal the sick, cast out devils, and do many wonderful things in the name of Jesus. And yet how many we see among this people of this class — that become careless, and treat lightly the ordinances of God’s house and the priesthood of the Son of God — yet they think they are going, by and by, to slide into the kingdom of God. But I tell you unless they are righteous and keep their covenants they will never go there. Hear it, ye Latter-day Saints!

371 See J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 37–39.

372 I.e., “For *every one* that asketh receiveth ...” (Matthew 7:8).

373 J. W. Welch, *Sermon*, pp. 72–73 further explains (cf. J. W. Welch, *Light*, pp. 170–171):

Actual experience among Christians generally shows that the promise articulated here should not be understood as an absolute one: Many people ask, and seek, and knock; yet, in fact many of them do not find. Moreover, there is reason to believe that Jesus expected his true followers to seek for something out of the ordinary: An early saying from *Oxyrhynchus* attributed to Jesus reads, “Let him who seeks not cease seeking until he finds, and when he finds, he will be astounded, and having been astounded, he will reign, and having reigned, he will rest” (cf. B. Layton, *Greek Gospel of Thomas*, 2:1–4, p. 154). It is crucial that a person come to the Father correctly (see 3 Nephi 14:21), and for all who seek and ask at this point in their progression — after believing and accepting the requirements in the Sermon that precede this invitation — for them it will be opened.

374 Matthew 7:21–23.

375 J. W. Welch, *Sermon*, p. 77. Cf. J. W. Welch, *Light*, pp. 178–179.

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- 376 In Amos 3:2, the Lord describes His covenant people as those who He has *known*: “You only *have I known* of all the families on earth. Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.” They are not only known by Him, but also *know* him: “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am *known of mine*” (John 10:14). Joseph Smith explained that the fulness is only given to those who have received and kept all the commandments and ordinances: “If a man gets the fulness of the priesthood of God he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments and obeying all the ordinances of the house of the Lord” (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 11 June 1843, p. 308). See also J. W. Welch, *Sermon*, pp. 77–78.
- 377 B. R. McConkie, *NT Commentary*, 1:255.
- 378 H. D. Betz et al., *Sermon*, p. 551 n. 23.
- 379 See JST Matthew 7:31, which makes it clear that the setting of Matthew 7:21–23 is the final judgment.
- 380 2 Nephi 9:27.
- 381 J. Bunyan, *Progress*, p. 181.
- 382 On all other occasions besides the one cited in the body of this chapter, the Prophet applied the lessons of the parable to the early Saints’ quest for justice from government leaders. Six days prior to the Lord’s reiteration of the parable and its application to the need of the Saints to importune for redress in the loss of their lands in Jackson County Missouri (D&C 101:81–94), Joseph Smith aptly alluded to the parable and counseled the Saints. His wording paralleled parts of the later revelation (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 10 December 1833, p. 36, emphasis added. See also J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, discourse probably given October 1843, p. 415 and A. C. Skinner et al., *Parables*, pp. 104–108):

Therefore, this is my counsel, that you retain your lands, even unto the uttermost, and employ every lawful means to seek redress of your enemies; and pray to God, day, and night, to return you in peace

and in safety to the lands of your inheritance: and when the judge fail you, appeal unto the executive; and when the executive fail you, appeal unto the president; and when the president fail you, and all laws fail you, and the humanity of the people fail you, and all things else fail you but God alone, and you *continue to weary Him with your importunings, as the poor woman did the unjust judge*, He will not fail to execute judgment upon your enemies, and to avenge His own elect that cry unto Him day and night.

In a letter to his uncle John Smith written on June 17, 1844 (ten days before his martyrdom), the Prophet indirectly alluded to the parable in the context of instructions in case of mob violence against the Saints in Nauvoo. In this instance, the “unjust judge” that was to be wearied was Governor Thomas Ford of Illinois (J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 6:486, emphasis added):

We have sent to the Governor, and are about to send again, and we want you to send affidavits and demand the attention of the Governor, and request protection at his hand, in common with the rest of us that by our *continual wearying* we may get him to investigate the whole matter.

383 Luke 18:1–8.

384 A. E. Harvey, *Companion* (1970), pp. 274–275.

385 J. E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 405. Regarding the New Testament context of application, A. E. Harvey, *Companion* (1970), pp. 274–275 comments as follows:

The application of the parable follows easily. Christians needed to have no doubt about the rightness of their cause; but, in the face of calumny and persecution, they longed for vindication. This was expected to take the form of a reversal of present values, a bringing to light of the things

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known only to faith, and the visible establishment of the Christian community as the chosen people of God—in short, the end of the present order, the judgment, and the new age. Those things were taking longer to come than perhaps the earliest generation of Christians expected (a disappointment which may underlie the difficult phrase, “while he listens patiently to them”; and alternate rendering is ... “while he delays to help them”—which would make this clearer). But they must keep on praying for them. If even a neglectful human judge yielded at last to constant entreaties, how much more certainly would God vindicate his chosen! But that moment of vindication would always involve judgment. Anyone who had lost faith (perhaps because of the delay) would have reason to fear it. “When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

386 J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, p. 14, punctuation modernized.

387 D&C 84:43–44.

388 J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, p. 15, punctuation modernized. Cf. D&C 84:45–47.

389 *Ibid.*, p. 15, punctuation and capitalization modernized, words in brackets added.

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