

Sealing into the Church of the Firstborn

I asked the Lord why it was necessary to be sealed again into the "family of God" if we were already part of the family of God by virtue of spirit birth.

He said he would reveal the answer to me throughout the day and said to read everything I could find about "church of the firstborn". I am collecting everything I read in this document.

Selections from LDS Standard Works

Abraham 1:3 It was conferred upon me from the fathers; it came down from the fathers, from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth to the present time, even the right of the firstborn, or the first man, who is Adam, or first father, through the fathers unto me.

D&C 76:53. And who overcome by faith, and are **sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise**, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true.

D&C 76:54. They are they who are **the church of the Firstborn**.

D&C 76:67. These are they who have come to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of Enoch, and of the Firstborn.

D&C 76:71. And again, we saw the terrestrial world, and behold and lo, these are they who are of the terrestrial, whose glory differs from that of the church of the Firstborn who have received the fulness of the Father, even as that of the moon differs from the sun in the firmament.

D&C 76:94. **They who dwell in his presence are the church of the Firstborn**; and they see as they are seen, and know as they are known, having received of his fulness and of his grace;

D&C 76:102. Last of all, these all are they who will not be gathered with the saints, to be caught up unto the church of the Firstborn, and received into the cloud.

D&C 77:11. Q. What are we to understand by sealing the one hundred and forty-four thousand, out of all the tribes of Israel--twelve thousand out of every tribe? A. We are to understand that **those who are sealed are high priests**, ordained unto the holy order of God, **to administer the everlasting gospel**; for they are they who are ordained out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, by the angels to whom is given power over the nations of the earth, **to bring as many as will come to the church of the Firstborn**.

D&C 78:21. For ye are the church of the Firstborn, and he will take you up in a cloud, and appoint every man his portion.

D&C 88:3. Wherefore, I now send upon you another Comforter, even upon you my friends, that it may abide in your hearts, **even the Holy Spirit of promise; which other Comforter is the same that I promised unto my disciples, as is recorded in the testimony of John**.

D&C 88:4. **This Comforter is the promise which I give unto you of eternal life, even the glory of the celestial kingdom**;

D&C 88:5. **Which glory is that of the church of the Firstborn**, even of God, the holiest of all, through Jesus Christ his Son--

D&C 93:21. And now, verily I say unto you, **I was in the beginning with the Father, and am the Firstborn;**

D&C 93:22. **And all those who are begotten through me are partakers of the glory of the same, and are the church of the Firstborn.**

D&C 107:18. **The power and authority of the higher, or Melchizedek Priesthood, is to hold the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church--**

D&C 107:19. **To have the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to have the heavens opened unto them, to commune with the general assembly and church of the Firstborn, and to enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.**

[Selections from PR from "Witness of the Heavenly Realm"](#)

Lord, what is the Church of the Firstborn exactly? It is the association of those who have become exalted, sons and daughters of Jesus Christ. Christ is the head of the Firstborn; but this special association also consists of those who themselves shall become a Firstborn to the Father, even Jesus Christ in future condescension's. They have now been "called," but few are chosen, for to be chosen they must seek to only do the will of the Father, to give up all, to gain all. They must be willing to set aside their glory to be Savior's on Mount Zion, and eventually a Firstborn in a new world, willing to do as Jesus did; doing all things that the Lord commands them. This is what it means to be a member of the Church of the Firstborn.

I learned that The Spirits of the Just are those that abide in Paradise in the First Heaven. **The Spirits of Just Men and Women Made Perfect are those who have been exalted and become part of the Church of the Firstborn and have chosen to condescend to have more glory added upon them and help in the saving of souls on this world and others.**

I asked about the proper way to pray, whether to Him or the Father. **He said, as I suspected, that when I am born again, He becomes my Father. But when we are in a group we pray to Heavenly Father, because it is through Him that we are led to receive the Baptism of Fire.** Therefore, unless all among us are already in the **Church of the Firstborn** we should pray to Heavenly Father in His name. Or, sometimes the Spirit will tell us to pray to Father, even if He is in our midst. We cannot do wrong in this way. The Spirit will tell you who to pray to.

[Selections from Denver Snuffer blogs:](#)

What the scriptures, visions, and revelations do tell us about the eternal description of the saved is that it is "the Church of the Firstborn" or "the Church of the Lamb." Membership in that group is separate from membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

When modern revelation refers to those who inherit the Celestial Glory, it calls them members of the "Church of the Firstborn" (see, e.g., D&C 76: 67 also 93: 22). Those who are chosen in our day to belong to the Church of the Firstborn are shown only one way in which that takes place. In a revelation given to Joseph Smith while translating the New Testament, Section 77, Joseph gave this explanation of the

latter-day 144,000 saved persons in verse 11: “they are they who are ordained out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, by the angels to whom is given power over the nations of the earth, to bring as many as will come to the church of the Firstborn.”

At the time Joseph received the explanation recorded in Section 77 (March 1832) the church had existed for over two years. When the official name was given in 1838 (D&C 115: 4) the name chosen for the earthly, temporary organization was The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter- day Saints - not the Church of the Firstborn.

The Church of the Firstborn exists on the “other side” so to speak. You qualify to get there by how you live here. But you have to be invited into that church by the “angels to whom is given power” to extend that invitation.

There is a system by which men learn the mysteries of heaven and are saved. That system is set out in Alma 12: 29-30:

- First, angels are sent to prepare men/women.
- Second, they are allowed to behold the Lord’s glory.
- Then they converse with the Lord, at which point they are taught the things which have been prepared from the foundation of the earth for their salvation.
- All of which is driven by the man/woman’s faith, repentance and holy works.

This is in keeping with Joseph Smith’s revelation about those chosen to become a member of the Church of the Firstborn. They are chosen by the holy angels to whom the keys of this power belong. (D&C 77: 11.)

If this isn’t happening, then faith does not exist on the earth any longer. (Moroni 7: 37.) Ministering angels are an indispensable part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That is why those keys were restored so early on in this dispensation, and are so widely disseminated into the Church membership. (See D&C 13 and D&C 107: 20.)

The Lord is in charge. We needn’t worry about how His purposes will all be fulfilled. Patience with the larger picture is easier when we realize that for each of us the smaller, individual picture is what is important. We have plenty to do individually to receive our invitation into the Church of the Firstborn. As we do what is necessary to receive that invitation, then we will become more effective ministers of salvation for others. Worrying about the salvation of all others before being saved ourselves is a needless thought.

The definition of “ordinances of God” are not all contained in a formal church setting. Read again the experiences of others in scripture and you will find that a great deal takes place between the Lord and those who follow Him. When He appears He also ministers. **There is also the description of the “sealing” which will qualify those living in our day to become a member of the Church of the Firstborn, which involves an ordinance performed by “angels to whom is given power” and to whom this ministry belongs. (D&C 77: 11.)**

When the Lord requested Isaac be sacrificed, it wasn’t a “commandment.” The language in the KJV Bible is too coarse to really communicate the idea underlying what happened. It wasn’t a “commandment” to Abraham. It was more of a polite suggestion. It was an expression of the Lord’s preference. The

suggestion was quite gentle. Abraham responded to this polite suggestion from the Lord by proceeding without question. He was willing to sacrifice his long-awaited heir.

Now if you can get your hands around this idea, then you can begin to see the difference between where our relationship with God starts and where it should eventually end. At the beginning, our relationship with God is quite primitive. At the end it is a trusted, loving friend in whom absolute confidence resides in the one who has become His friend.

There is such a profound difference between one end of the spectrum and the other that it hinders our understanding of the examples we see in scripture. We distort things considerably when we view His relationships with others in the scriptures in the same context we relate to Him.

When a person has become a “friend” of God, they are introduced to another level of language and experience with Him. When they become a member of His family, they have yet another kind of relationship. The openness and love that exists, and the accompanying trust that goes with it, is something quite distinct from the coarse beginnings of the path.

The faiths which view our relationship to God as “slave to master” are only in the beginning of the process. From that end things which seem to be alright (and may even be alright) are different from what is found further along the progression.

Your end is to become part of the household of God, a member of the Church of the Firstborn, and a family member of God the Father. When that happens, the relationship is considerably more polite and respectful than it is when you are first experiencing awareness of God’s existence and His commandments to bring us light and truth.

“Wherefore, I now send upon you another Comforter, even upon you my friends, that it may abide in your hearts, even the Holy Spirit of promise; which other Comforter is the same that I promised unto my disciples, as is recorded in the testimony of John. This Comforter is the promise which I give unto you of eternal life, even the glory of the celestial kingdom; Which glory is that of the church of the Firstborn, even of God, the holiest of all, through Jesus Christ his Son—.” (D&C 88: 3-5.)

Therefore, as a singular appearance, should the Lord appear to you, you have received The Second Comforter. However, His ministry is to bring you to the point at which you can receive the promise of eternal life, membership in the Church of the Firstborn, and the promise of the Celestial Kingdom as your eternal inheritance. In the fullest sense, therefore, the final promise of exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom can also be called The Second Comforter, since that is the result of His taking up His abode with you.

The second concept is really a question: Would it be preferable to have the promise of eternal life now than to die uncertain as to your eternal state? If so, then why would you waste your life now in hopes that some other opportunity may exist at some other stage?

If the answer to these questions are “yes” then the original question is simply unimportant. Why wait? The opportunity given to you now should not be forfeited, nor should the work be delayed. Don’t dismiss the Lord’s offered assistance for what you can achieve in mortality for the possibility of something in the after-life. The person described by this phrase is qualified to stand in the presence of God without sin. Clean of all blood and sin - righteous forever. He is Christ's, and Christ is the Father's,

and all that each of them will be is the same; for we shall see Him as He is, because we will be like Him. To be like Him is to be sanctified.

I can use the words, but I am powerless beyond that. This is more than you think it is. Words are inadequate to explain it. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man what great things the Lord has in mind by inheriting these promises. **Indeed, to receive an understanding is to cease to be a man and become something else altogether. A stranger and sojourner here, but a resident with God in another condition altogether. It is written by the Lord concerning them: "These are they who are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly place, the holiest of all. These are they who have come to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of Enoch, and of the Firstborn. These are they whose names are written in heaven, where God and Christ are the judge of all. These are they who are just men made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, who wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood."**(D&C 76: 66-69.)

Such persons are still in this world, but they are also associated with innumerable others who are not present here. Although mortals associate with each other, these individuals obtain a higher order. They connect with a higher plane, because a more sure word has been spoken to them. As a result, they belong to an order of holy priesthood. That priesthood is an order without beginning of days or end of years, from eternity to eternity. This new, higher order, when it occurs can be the spark through which heaven itself can return to the earth.

To others looking in from outside, these are words without meaning, or definition. To those who hold this priestly position, these words are a perfect fit. **The gulf between the two positions is so great that even a common vocabulary won't make meanings connect.**

We proclaim we "have the truth" but we do not preach it. We claim to have authority, but we have no power to redeem and exalt. We pretend it is unlawful to preach mysteries, yet Alma is preaching the deepest doctrines to the non-converted. If we preach the truth, it will attract those whose lives are empty. Why would they join us if what we offer is as trite and superficial as the false religions they already believe?

Is there no need to cry repentance to this generation with power and authority? With the tongue of an angel? To cry out as the Book of Mormon declares the message to the non-believing and skeptical?

It does raise some troubling concerns as we claim to be the "true church" but do not act the part as shown in these scriptures. How are we justified in masking the fullness, hiding the mysteries, putting away deep doctrine that will save, and still proclaim that we are the "only true and living church upon the earth?" Does "living" require us to create sons and daughters of God who are "come to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of Enoch, and of the Firstborn?" If so, why do we hear so little about it in our day?

There are and always have been two churches only. One is true. Its members belong to the Lamb of God. The Lamb, and their Father.

Either you belong to the elect family of Christ, the Church of the Firstborn, or you don't. All other religions and philosophies are false. Read again the description of those who are saved. (See What's in a name?) There are only "two," and one of them is not the Catholic Church, nor the Presbyterian Church,

nor the Lutheran Church, nor The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. However, the ordinances received through The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are expected for those who belong to "the church of the Lamb of God," but there is not a complete overlap of the "church of the Lamb of God" and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Lord has been willing to bring individuals back into His presence on the same conditions throughout all time. Read again The Second Comforter if you do not remember what those conditions are. He is as willing to make you a citizen of Zion, member of the church of the Firstborn, and part of the general assembly today (D&C 76: 66-69) as in the future established Zion spoken of in the verses we have been reviewing. Many have done it in times past. Some have done it in our day. All are offered the same opportunity, but always on the same conditions.

The unchanging Gospel of Jesus Christ is always the same, and its blessings are always available.

When can a person know they have a part in Zion? When the Lord Himself has made them a citizen. When the description given below is the description of their lives, then they may know it will be well with them:

"They are they who received the testimony of Jesus, and believed on his name and were baptized after the manner of his burial, being buried in the water in his name, and this according to the commandment which he has given— That by keeping the commandments they might be washed and cleansed from all their sins, and receive the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the hands of him who is ordained and sealed unto this power; **And who overcome by faith, and are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true. They are they who are the church of the Firstborn.** They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things — They are they who are priests and kings, who have received of his fulness, and of his glory; And are priests of the Most High, after the order of Melchizedek, which was after the order of Enoch, which was after the order of the Only Begotten Son. Wherefore, as it is written, they are gods, even the sons of God — Wherefore, all things are theirs, whether life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are theirs and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's. And they shall overcome all things." (D&C 76: 51-60.)

These are they who have been told by the voice of God from heaven that they have eternal life. They are those who have obtained a hope in Christ.

When the Gospel of Christ is taught, it is always the purpose to bring people to this point. It is not Christ's Gospel when the teachings fall short of declaring this to the audience. Nephi was not trying to get you to improve your behavior or to become a good citizen. He was not attempting to make you a conservative, mainstream American. He was warning you to flee from this corrupt and failing society to a higher place where you can obtain communion with the Church of the Firstborn. A place where you join the household of God.

Zion is not and has never been the product of an institutional organization on this earth. It is a byproduct of there being citizens of heaven living here. Zion is the only way such persons can live with one another. First obtain a hope in Christ, and then all things will be added to you.

John said "God is love" (1 John 4: 8). Of all the power in earth and heaven, the greatest form of power is love. It is the power of creation, and motivation of God, the reason for existence and the purpose behind all we see here. It is the harmonizing attribute between man and woman, man and fellow-man,

God and man, our descendants and ancestors. Our love motivates the highest aspirations, causes our greatest anxieties, moves us to action and summons our greatest will. This is godlike.

The ordinances matter a great deal. They are the physical manifestation of our love for God. They are important and symbolize everything we hope for, and all we desire to be in God's eyes. Our service to our ancestors through Temple work matters. It is the way we show our love for those who went before, even if we do not know a thing about them. The devotion and service we render does not go unnoticed by heaven.

God will preserve our love above everything else. It is in that attribute we find ourselves most like Him. Or, in other words, most like Them. **Heaven is a community. The General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn are all elevated by their love for one another and love for their posterity, and are able to live in peace because they are given over to love.**

Beyond ordinances and rites there is a power by which God governs. It is the power which creates, and which binds together as nothing else in the universe. The ordinances point to it, but you must become love for the Lord to pour power into the things you hope to have preserved.

If Sidney, despite all you have heard and read concerning him, and despite his subsequent disaffection from the church, "received of His fullness" then you should recognize this is NOT so great a thing as to be impossible for you. Take heart.

What is it that the Vision tells us about the exalted hosts?

They are the "church of the Firstborn." (D&C 76: 54.) Meaning they are all sons and daughters of God.

The Father has given "into their hands" what is called "all things." (D&C 76: 55.) That is, they have handled something.

They have "received of His fullness and of His glory." (D&C 76: 56.) Both Joseph and Sidney recite this as having taken place. (D&C 76: 19-20.)

Though it would not be until sometime in 1843 before Joseph began to unfurl in private the process of becoming a "king and priest" unto God, Sidney and Joseph were acquainted with this in the Vision in 1832. (D&C 76: 56-57.) This is the only way such kings and priests can be made; although you can have a ceremony which symbolizes it. Joseph and Sidney's accomplishment was an invitation for others to follow. It was not intended to be the end of the restoration process, but a harbinger of what would follow.

If Joseph and Sidney were the only ones who were to "receive of His fullness" then the prophecies promising a return of Zion could never be fulfilled.

Why are we allowing the restoration to end? Why are we not looking to see a return of Zion? Why are we content to trust others will bring it, when each of us has a responsibility to individually prepare to see it return? What good does it do to study the revelations if we are unwilling to do the works required by the revelations? Is theoretical knowledge and symbolic ritual enough? Will Zion only return as a distant symbol in this dispensation? Will the Lord only symbolically return? Will the world only symbolically end? Will the wicked only be symbolically destroyed?

What is it that you find so compelling about your current plight that you won't awake, arise and look into the matter of the fullness as set out in scripture? To receive it you only need to "love him, and purify yourself before him" and He will "grant this privilege of seeing and knowing for yourself." (D&C 76: 116-117.) But this must be "while in the flesh" and not after you leave here. (D&C 76: 118.) This is the only way you can then be able to "bear his presence in the world of glory." (Id.)

He also taught that "All sins shall be forgiven, except the sin against the Holy Ghost; for Jesus will save all except the sons of perdition. What must a man do to commit the unpardonable sin? He must receive the Holy Ghost, have the heavens opened unto him, and know God, and then sin against Him. After a man has sinned against the Holy Ghost, there is no repentance for him. He has got to say that the sun does not shine while he sees it; he has got to deny Jesus Christ when the heavens have been opened unto him, and to deny the plan of salvation with his eyes open to the truth of it; and from that time he begins to be an enemy." (TPJS, p. 358.)

This last quote is very helpful to understand the concept of the Holy Ghost. It equates this kind of knowledge and experience with having the heavens opened, knowing God, and seeing the sun shine with the Holy Ghost. **In another place Joseph's revelation explained that heirs of Celestial glory will be sealed up to eternal life "by the Holy Spirit of Promise." (D&C 76: 53.) These individuals who receive this "seal" are those who received from Jesus the testimony that He has saved them. (D&C 76: 51.) They have become part of "the Church of the Firstborn" as a consequence of promises given to them by the Father and the Son. (D&C 76: 54-57.) They have become "sons of God" by the decree of the Father. (D&C 76: 58-59.)**

These individuals have received the testimony of Jesus, and the promise of eternal life which is the Holy Spirit of Promise. (D&C 88: 3.)

So, we now have several different concepts found in scripture and Joseph's teachings:

- A power which sustains all of creation.
- A "light of Christ" which is given to all mankind.
- A power which animates the sun, stars and even this earth.
- A power which lets man live, breathe and move, which sustains man from moment to moment.
- A source of revelation.
- An open vision of God the Father and His Son, which includes the promise of eternal life.
- A light or intelligence which proceeds from God's Throne.

These are two distinct beings who are responsible for these various sources affecting mankind for the good: Christ, who has descended and then ascended throughout all of creation to bring the light to everything and everyone. The Father, who is the source from whom flows the power which Christ has brought into creation.

In addition to these two distinct beings, we also have something that can be called:

- " the record of heaven;"
- " the Comforter;"
- " the peaceable things of immortal glory;"
- " the truth of all things;"

- " that which quickeneth all things, which maketh alive all things;"
- " that which knoweth all things, and hath all power according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice and judgment." (Moses 6: 61.)

Therefore, it can be truly said, just as Joseph Smith taught in The Lectures on Faith, that the Holy Ghost represents the "mind of the Father and the Son."

The work of this "baptism of fire" is always sanctification. It brings the recipient into greater contact with God. The end of that increasing contact is to receive the Son, through whose blood you are sanctified. (Moses 6: 59-60.) Once sanctified you are prepared for the presence of the Father. (Alma 45: 16; 1 Ne. 10: 21.) Therefore, this is how you receive "the fullness" (D&C 93: 1920) and are able to join the "general assembly and Church of the Firstborn" (D&C 76: 66-67).

In the Lamanite experience and in the Nephite group who Christ visited in the 3 Nephi account, there came a point at which the heavens opened, a pillar of fire descended, and angels came and ministered to them all. Each were endowed with knowledge of mysteries belonging to God. There was a connection forged between them and those on the other side of the veil. These others are the "general assembly and Church of the Firstborn."

The fullness of the Gospel, the fullness of the Priesthood, and the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost all have as their object to reconnect man to God and God to man. Man is unworthy to enter into God's presence, and therefore, requires a power higher than their own from which to borrow purity. This purifying agent is the Holy Ghost. (3 Ne. 19: 22, 28.) Christ will administer the final rites and confer the final blessings only upon the pure. (3 Ne. 19: 29-33.) The reference to "blood" as sanctifying is a reference to the Lord. (Moses 6: 59-60.) He alone sanctifies.

The Lord is directly involved in the final endowment of fire upon the Holy ones. This is what He explained in January, 1841 to the Saints when He explained to Joseph: "For there is not a place found on earth that he [meaning Christ] may come to and restore again that which was lost unto you, or which he hath taken away, even the fulness of the priesthood." (D&C 124: 28.) The Lord can confer this upon a single man in any location. (See, e.g., D&C 132: 45-50, when Joseph Smith received it long before the first Temple was built.) But to confer it upon a group intended to become His people, He requires His House to be built for Him to meet with and confer these final rites upon them. (D&C 124: 39.) Only there will these things take place. (D&C 124: 40-41.) People can gather and build a Temple. A single man cannot.

When the Lord establishes Zion, He will come dwell with His people there and complete the process of endowing them with His knowledge and power. The power of God will protect these people. (D&C 45: 66- 70.) They cannot be moved because the Lord will not permit it. (D&C 124: 45.) While man does not have the power to do so, the laws of the Celestial Kingdom must be lived for Zion to be established. (D&C 105: 5.) The power to do so comes from God, delivered through His Holy Spirit, making men's spirits Holy. Baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost are necessary parts of bringing mankind back to redemption and into God's presence.

In D&C 77: 11, the 144,000 are explained in modern revelation. They are described as follows: "We are to understand that those who are sealed are high priests, ordained unto the holy order of God, to administer the everlasting gospel; for they are they who are ordained out of every nation, kindred,

tongue, and people, by the angels to whom is given power over the nations of the earth, to bring as many as will come to the church of the Firstborn.”

A Clarifying Question March 27, 2015

I got this email asking for clarifications:

Can you clarify these statements?

Here Denver seems to be saying we can obtain salvation now.

“You’re hedging up the way of your own salvation, and of the salvation of others when you say no one has the privilege in our day yet, to lay hold on salvation. You’re hedging up the way, you are damning yourself, and you are damning those who will listen to you when you say, people in our time are not yet authorized to exercise faith in God unto salvation because you are authorized. I have done so. I have spoken with Him as a man speaks to another. He speaks in plain humility, reasoning as one man with another. He will reason with you.” (40 Years, Faith)

Here he seems to be saying that we can come into the presence of the Lord and by so doing, obtain covenants.

“But in terms of someone whom the Lord has struck a bargain with and made a covenant at the moment we are looking at in 1829, that person was Joseph Smith. **Our Lord is a Man of covenants. Our Lord enters into covenants on a regular basis. To know Him is to covenant with Him.** And Joseph when section 5 was revealed had one.” (40 Years, Be of Good Cheer, Be of Good Courage)

Sounds like priesthood must be obtained in a previous probation or it cannot be obtained here. If it cannot be obtained in this life unless it was had before, how is it ever had in the first place?

“So here priesthood has its beginning before this world even was organized. There is a necessary link between those hallowed days and power here. No person has authority here unless it was first obtained there.” (<http://denversnuffer.blogspot.com/2010/06/alma-133.html>)

Zion can come to individuals:

“The Lord has been willing to bring individuals back into His presence on the same conditions throughout all time. Read again The Second Comforter if you do not remember what those conditions are. **He is as willing to make you a citizen of Zion, member of the church of the Firstborn, and part of the general assembly today (D&C 76: 6669) as in the future established Zion spoken of in the verses we have been reviewing. Many have done it in times past. Some have done it in our day. All are offered the same opportunity, but always on the same conditions.**”

(<http://denversnuffer.blogspot.com/2010/07/3-nepi-21-25.html>)

Zion can't come to individuals:

“**You may think this can be done in isolation as a faithful individual, but Zion will not be built by solitary souls. Nor will the required covenant be offered to an isolated individual. This is about God’s FAMILY.**” (<http://denversnuffer.com/2015/03/a-great-whole/>)

RESPONSE:

People are authorized to exercise faith, just as Lectures on Faith explain. That includes coming back to God’s presence here and now. It likewise includes obtaining covenant status with God and the promise

of exaltation. All that is true. Many have done this in mortality. All who have done so depart this life firm in the hope of a glorious resurrection. (D&C 138:14.) But do not assume you have a correct picture in your head about what happens between the time of the promise (covenant) and when the day of your exaltation will arrive.

One statement by me or in scripture is not EVERYTHING. Never assume you can reduce it to one, simple picture when you are talking about the landscape of eternity, and endless lives.

(It amuses and frustrates my wife when people assume I have disclosed everything I think, understand or know about a subject when I give a two- or three-hour talk.)

Why did the apostles on the Mount of Transfiguration “look upon the long absence of their spirits from their bodies to be a bondage?” (D&C 45:16-17.) [Because going to the Spirit World means a lengthy tenure there, awaiting the resurrection.] Why did John the Beloved (who was among those on the Mount) then ask to “tarry until [Christ] comes in His glory?” (D&C 7:3.) [Because he would rather be here working than in the Spirit World trying to bring people along there.] Why did three Nephites likewise ask that they not “taste of death; but [to] live to behold all the doings of the Father unto the children of men?” (3 Ne. 28:6-8.) [They had the same concern as John.] What were the other nine Nephite disciples really asking when they requested to “speedily come unto [Christ’s kingdom]” instead of either living here or waiting in the Spirit World? [They wanted to rise quickly from the dead and resume the journey as those who had arisen from the dead with Christ.]

These were all men who were in Christ’s presence and had the promise to be exalted. Yet they were either: 1) remaining here without death to minister, or 2) going to what they thought would be “bondage” in the Spirit World to await their eventual resurrection, or 3) dying but then proceeding “speedily” [or immediately] into Christ’s kingdom.

Every one of them would be exalted. But that does not change the distance and paths which must be crossed between here in the flesh and rising to exaltation, or the potential choices that can be made.

Likewise, as a living mortal you can have an association with the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn (a priestly reference that requires you to understand about the “rights of the fathers”) here, now. If you do this you become one of those solitary souls who live as a stranger and sojourner on earth. Your association is with heaven, not with earth. But that does not fulfill the prophecies and covenants regarding Zion. You can have the same kind of life—but if it is your life alone if you live without bringing others with you. You will live without a city, a community, all things in common, no poor among that community, a temple, rites, and the completion of the restoration of all things. You may have a life worthy of Zion, but it will not be a City of Zion, the New Jerusalem. **You can be a “citizen” but you will be a sojourner in exile here.**

If you want to find out how you get priesthood in the “first place” ask God.

Please keep EVERYTHING in mind together. Do not think one isolated statement or paragraph explains EVERYTHING. Further, do not think everything has yet been revealed that needs to be revealed. Thus far I am only taking the things already before us in scripture and weaving them together to persuade some few to believe the restoration can continue. When the time comes, a great deal more can be taught if the restoration does continue.

Following Melchizedek, an apostasy of generations lost the right, and there was no successor for Melchizedek with dominion over the earth, nor a right to be the father of nations (meaning families). Though separated by generations of apostasy, Abraham sought to obtain the right and retrieve what was nearly lost from the world. As father Abraham explained:

I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge, and to be a greater follower of righteousness, and to possess a greater knowledge, and to be a father of many nations, a prince of peace, and desiring to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God, I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers. It was conferred upon me from the fathers; it came down from the fathers, from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth, down to the present time, even the right of the firstborn, or the first man, who is Adam, or first father, through the fathers unto me. (Abraham 1:2-3.)

Abraham obtained the kingdom of God, the patriarchal priesthood, and the right of dominion belonging to the first man, Adam. It remained through descent from Abraham for five generations. Then the restoration ended, and apostasy returned. The apostasy then lasted for generations until Moses. Between Moses and Jesus Christ, the kingdom of God was lost, and only a remnant kingdom of the Jews remained. That remnant was completely overthrown by John the Baptist, who was appointed to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews. Moses and John the Baptist, on the Mount of Transfiguration, transferred the kingdom of God to Christ. He died not only as the rightful “king of the Jews” but also as the rightful heir of Adam, holding dominion over all the earth. In His death, the rightful Heir was sacrificed.