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The Beatitudes in the Book of Mormon

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The Beatitudes in the Book of Mormon

1 And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words unto Nephi, and to those who had been called, (now the number of them who had been called, and received power and authority to baptize, was twelve) and behold, he stretched forth his hand unto the multitude, and cried unto them, saying: (3 Nephi 12:1a).

That is extremely important: Jesus had just established a theocratic government and had been speaking to the Twelve whom he had chosen. Now he speaks to the entire “multitude”—a congregation of “about two thousand and five hundred souls; and they did consist of men, women, and children” (3 Nephi 17:25). His introduction testifies that the blessings of priesthood and sacral kingship he was about to discuss are not reserved to the leaders but are instead intended for all the Saints.

**2 Blessed [enjoying “the state of the gods”]
are ye if ye shall give heed unto the words of these twelve
whom I have chosen from among you to minister unto you,
and to be your servants; and unto them I have given power
that they may baptize you with water (3 Nephi 12:1b).**

This first Beatitude is about obedience to the Brethren because they hold the keys of the Kingdom and no ordinances are “acceptable” without their authority. Each of the following statements by the Prophet Joseph help explain why that is true:

The main object was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house and the glories of His kingdom, and teach the people the way of salvation; for there are certain ordinances and principles that, when they are taught and practiced, must be done in a place or house built for that purpose.

It was the design of the councils of heaven before the world was, that the principles and laws of the priesthood should be predicated upon the gathering of the people in every age of the world. Jesus did everything to gather the people,

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and they would not be gathered, and He therefore poured out curses upon them. Ordinances instituted in the heavens before the foundation of the world, in the priesthood, for the salvation of men, are not to be altered or changed. All must be saved on the same principles.

It is for the same purpose that God gathers together His people in the last days, to build unto the Lord a house to prepare them for the ordinances and endowments, washings and anointings, etc. One of the ordinances of the house of the Lord is baptism for the dead. God decreed before the foundation of the world that the ordinances should be administered in a font prepared for the purpose in the house of the Lord. ...

If a man gets a fullness 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. Where there is no change of priesthood, there is no change of ordinances, says Paul.⁸⁷³

Further:

If men would acquire salvation, they have got to be subject, before they leave this world, to certain rules and principles, which were fixed by an unalterable decree before the world was. ...

The organization of the spiritual and heavenly worlds, and of spiritual and heavenly beings, was [past tense] agreeable to the most perfect order and harmony: their limits and bounds were fixed irrevocably, and voluntarily subscribed to in their heavenly estate by themselves, and were by our first parents subscribed to upon the earth. Hence the importance of embracing and subscribing to principles of eternal truth by all men upon the earth that expect eternal life.⁸⁷⁴

And after that ye are baptized with water, behold, I will baptize you with fire and with the Holy Ghost; therefore blessed [enjoying “the state of the gods”] are ye if ye shall believe in me and be baptized, after that ye have seen me and know that I am (3 Nephi 12:1c).

⁸⁷³ Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet*, 308.

⁸⁷⁴ Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet*, 324-25.

There is an important distinction here. The Twelve had the power to baptize with water, but the Savior himself will baptize with fire and the Holy Ghost. When someone lays his hands on another person's head and says, "Receive the Holy Ghost," those are the words of a command. It is also an authoritative promise. The promise is that one may do so, but the command implies that one must learn how to receive the Holy Ghost. That comes through patience and practice. One learns, through faith and repentance how to listen to the Spirit; how to know that its feeling is different from all other feelings; and how to ask questions and receive answers that are confirmed by that feeling. Eventually, one is able to fulfill the command then, as with a mantle of light, one receives the Holy Ghost as a gift from the Savior. (We find that described in verse 6.)

Having spoken to and about the people who were present, the Savior then expanded his discussion beyond his immediate audience and speaks about those who would not be there to see him.

**2 ...Yea, blessed [enjoying "the state of the gods"] are they
who shall believe in your words,
and come down into the depths of humility
and be baptized,
for they shall be visited with fire and with the Holy Ghost,
and shall receive a remission of their sins (3 Nephi 12:2).**

This is not just a review of the first principles and ordinances of the gospel, it is a focus statement about how to prepare for what is coming next. Having a remission of one's sins is a fundamental and necessary step that is accomplished not just by baptism, but also through the process of receiving the Holy Ghost. Here the Savior explains that they will be "visited with fire and with the Holy Ghost." Moroni later explained that after people had "been received unto baptism," they "were wrought upon and cleansed by the power of the Holy Ghost" (Moroni 6:4). What the Savior describes next is what follows in reality.⁸⁷⁵

⁸⁷⁵ While many of the Beatitudes are clearly quotes or paraphrases from specific Old Testament sources, others cannot be identified as such—probably because our scriptures are not complete. Verse 3 is an example of that. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" does not appear in our Old Testament. Yet we know it was familiar to the Nephites because it is often found in the Old Testament portion of the Book of Mormon. An example

**3 Yea, blessed [enjoying “the state of the gods”]
are the poor in spirit
who come unto me,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (3 Nephi 12:3).**

That Beatitude is easier to understand if one reads it backwards to discover first its object and then its method. The object is: “for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” That does not say they shall be citizens of the kingdom, it says it is “theirs”—they shall own it. People who own kingdoms are called priests and kings. So, implicitly, the beatitude says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit who come unto me, for they are the priests and sacral kings of the kingdom of heaven.”

To “come unto me” means precisely what the words say. It is not about just doing good things, it means one must go to the place where he is. The entire purpose of the drama of the New Year festival was to bring one behind the veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the world. Understood symbolically, the phrase “come unto me” happened when one had passed beyond the veil and entered the Holy of Holies of Solomon’s Temple—God’s earthly throne room—to be in the presence of Jehovah. Taken quite literally it meant one must come to the place where Christ is.⁸⁷⁶

Implicitly then, the Beatitude says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit who came through the veil of the ancient temple to the place where they may meet God, for they are the priests and kings of the kingdom of heaven.”

The question now is “Who are the ‘poor in spirit’?”

Commentators on Matthew’s text insist the phrase has nothing to do with being impoverished. “Poor” does not mean lacking either spirit, spirituality, or worldly goods. There is nothing about poverty that precludes one’s coming to Christ. Similarly, there is nothing about emotional, spiritual, or worldly poverty that qualifies one to come to the

is:

37 And I say unto you again that he cannot save them in their sins; for I cannot deny his word, and he hath said that no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore, how can ye be saved, except ye inherit the kingdom of heaven? Therefore, ye cannot be saved in your sins. (Alma 11:37)

⁸⁷⁶ See Bednar, “Clean Hands and a Pure Heart,” 80-82.

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place where the Savior is, or to be anointed to become a king or queen, unless that “poverty” is acquired in righteousness and according to eternal law. The “poor in spirit” are not spiritually impoverished, but “those living in uprightness, or ‘perfection.’”⁸⁷⁷

The only kind of poverty that fits those criterion is acquired through sacrifice. “Sacrifice” does not mean to lose something or to give it up; rather, it means to make it sacred—to set it apart. Throughout the scriptures—even while animal sacrifices were still performed under the Law of Moses—the sacrifice the Lord declared to be most acceptable was that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. The Savior explained the meaning of this Beatitude a few moments later when he said:

19 And behold, I have given you the law and the commandments of my Father, that ye shall believe in me, and that ye shall repent of your sins, and come unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Behold, ye have the commandments before you, and the law is fulfilled.

20 Therefore come unto me and be ye saved; for verily I say unto you, that except ye shall keep my commandments, which I have commanded you at this time, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven (3 Nephi 12:19-20).

Earlier, when the Lord spoke to the Nephites out of the darkness, he explained that a broken heart and a contrite spirit is the acceptable sacrifice:

18 I am the light and the life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

19 And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings.

20 And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost (3 Nephi 9:18-20a).

⁸⁷⁷ Albright and Mann did with “poor in spirit” the same sort of thing they did with “fortunate.” They translated it as “humble in spirit,” then in the footnote they suggested an altogether different and more powerful meaning: they wrote that it meant “Those living in uprightness, or ‘perfection.’” That idea is remarkably close to enjoying “the state of the gods.” (Albright and Mann, *Matthew*, 45-46.)

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The Psalmist had promised:

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart;
and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit (Psalm 34:18).

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice;
else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:
a broken and a contrite heart,
O God, thou wilt not despise (Psalm 51:16-17).

The Lord reiterated the same principle to the Prophet Joseph:⁸⁷⁸

Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness [*zedek*], even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit (D&C 59:8).

It is apparent that the phrase “poor in spirit” is a reference to those who have made the sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit in the context of the ordinances of the ancient temple, and in preparation to entering the Lord’s presence there, and becoming priests and kings of the kingdom of heaven. Thus, one way of reading this Beatitude might be, “Blessed are those who make the sacrifice, who come to where I am, for they are the sacral kings of the kingdom of heaven.”

In the Beatitudes, the Savior will repeat the phrase “theirs is the kingdom of heaven” again. That repetition leads one to believe that the use of the phrase here in verse three represents the ancient tradition of first anointing one to become king, then later actually anointing him as king, which apparently is represented as occurring later on in verse 10.⁸⁷⁹

⁸⁷⁸ See also D&C 35:15; 56:17-20; 88:17-19. Twice Isaiah equates the poor and the meek with those who will embrace the gospel (Isaiah 11:1-7, 12; 29:18-19).

⁸⁷⁹ For a discussion of the practice of anointing one to become king, then later as king, see the section called, “The Mortal World,” the chapter called, “Act 2, Scene 2: Anointed to Become King.”

**4 And again, blessed [enjoying “the state of the gods”]
are all they that mourn,
for they shall be comforted (3 Nephi 12:4).**

This is a paraphrase from Isaiah 61, which is a prophecy of the Lord’s visit to the Underworld during the period between his own death and his resurrection. President Joseph F. Smith saw in vision the fulfilment of Isaiah’s prophecy. In recording his own vision, President Smith used much of Isaiah’s language:

While this vast multitude waited and conversed, rejoicing in the hour of their deliverance from the chains of death, the Son of God appeared, declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful (D&C 138:18; compare Isaiah 61:1).

When President Smith identified the persons who were waiting to welcome the Savior, he included:

Isaiah. ... who declared by prophecy that the Redeemer was anointed to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound (D&C 138:42).

Knowing that, we have the key to understanding what non-LDS scholars consider to be one of the most perplexing chapters in the Old Testament. One of the things they cannot understand is why verse 3 contains the entire ancient priestly and royal coronation ceremony,⁸⁸⁰ then concludes with a wedding ceremony in verse 10.

Isaiah 61 appears to be a commentary on the last third of Psalm 22, which is also a prophecy that the Savior will enter the Underworld and conquer death and hell.⁸⁸¹ Isaiah begins by recalling the Savior’s anointing at the Council in Heaven:

1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to

⁸⁸⁰ For discussion of coronation ceremony, see chapters beginning, “Act 2, Scene 9: The Coronation Ceremony in Isaiah 61.”

⁸⁸¹ For a discussion of Psalm 22, see the chapter called, “Act 2, Scene 7: Jehovah Conquers Death and Hell.”

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preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives [those in the spirit prison], and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord
(Isaiah 61:1-2a).

In the Old Testament, that which is “acceptable” is performed in righteousness—*zedek*—with the proper authority, in the right place and the right way, using the right words, and dressed the right way:⁸⁸²

and the day of vengeance⁸⁸³ of our God; to comfort all that mourn (Isaiah 61:2b).

This second verse is the one that was paraphrased by the Savior in the Beatitudes. The Isaiah version, which is still speaking of the spirits of the dead, reads, “to comfort all that mourn.” The Savior said, “Blessed are all they that mourn, for they shall be comforted” (3 Nephi 12:4, Matthew 5:4). There, as in the 23rd Psalm, comfort means to bring about the cessation of sorrow. In this context, to comfort does not mean to give someone an aspirin, a hug, and a warm blanket. It means to empower, and the empowerment causes one to be able to transcend suffering and sorrow.⁸⁸⁴

From President Smith, we learn that they, the spirits of the dead, mourned because they “looked upon the long absence of their spirits from their bodies as a bondage” (D&C 138:50). And from Isaiah we learn that empowerment is accomplished by the ancient royal coronation rites. The third verse of Isaiah 61 reads:

To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion [to make the dead a part of Zion], to

⁸⁸² Thus, the Lord instructed Sidney Rigdon, who had been a preacher and had baptized people before he joined the church, to go tell those people that the ordinance could now be done properly and with the proper authority. He said:

51 Now, I say unto you, my friends, let my servant Sidney Rigdon go on his journey, and make haste, and also proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the gospel of salvation, as I shall give him utterance; and by your prayer of faith with one consent I will uphold him (D&C 39:51).

⁸⁸³ The Tanakh reads, “And a day of vindication by our God.”

⁸⁸⁴ For a discussion of the meaning of “comfort,” see the chapter, “The Coronation Ceremony in Isaiah 61.”

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give unto them beauty for ashes [a ceremonial washing to remove the ashes], the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called [new name] trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified (Isaiah 61:3).⁸⁸⁵

This new name represents two important ideas. The first is the Tree of Life, and second is the principle of eternal family. Trees make fruit, fruit make seeds, seeds make trees, *ad infinitum*. Thus, it continues forever. The symbolic eternal repetition of this process is what Isaiah calls “the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.” The new name given to those who are “comforted” contains the blessings of eternal family, but this new name is not the only part of Isaiah’s prophecy that conveys that promise.

The symbolism in the next six verses of Isaiah chapter 61 describes the relationship between the dead and those who will do genealogical and temple work, sealing families together.

Then the last two verses of the chapter bring us back to the coronation scene. It is a sacred marriage ceremony. From the relationship between Isaiah 61 and D&C 138, we know that this wedding is also part of the temple work for the dead. In Isaiah, the bride and groom sing a hymn of thanksgiving:

10 I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels (Isaiah 61:10).

The last part of their wedding hymn is a testimony of the promised resurrection.

11 For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations (Isaiah 61:11).

The Book of Mormon lays specific emphasis on the fact that in this Beatitude the Savior is quoting Isaiah 61, for as it is given in 3 Nephi, it is a more exact quote of Isaiah

⁸⁸⁵ For a discussion of the coronation ceremony, see the chapter, “The Coronation Ceremony in Isaiah 61.”

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than the way it is recorded in Matthew (Isaiah 61:3 and Nephi 12:4 each have the word “all,” but Matthew 5:4 does not). Thus it is apparent that the Savior’s intent when he said, “Blessed are all they that mourn, for they shall be comforted” is that those few words were an encapsulation of the ordinances and blessing associated with salvation for the dead and the promise to them of the blessings of eternal family relationships.

**5 And blessed [enjoying “the state of the gods”]
are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth (3 Nephi 12:5).**

The Savior’s words “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” are lifted almost verbatim from the psalms. He is quoting Psalm 37:11, “The meek shall inherit the earth: and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” That principle is greatly amplified in the 25th Psalm, where one finds the most complete discussion of covenant-related meaning of meekness.

Psalm 25 also expands the blessings of meekness—and therefore of the Savior’s Beatitude—to the promise of an eternal family. It promises that not just the meek, but also the children of the meek, will inherit the earth. As we discussed earlier, it is in this psalm that we learn that the meek are those who keep their eternal covenants and are therefore meek before God. Here is a quick review of those parts of the psalm:

- 9 The meek will he guide in judgment
[the quality of priesthood and sacral kingship]:
and the meek will he teach his way.
[“way” is a code word that indicates how one climbs the “mountain”
and how one lives the covenants made there]
- 10 All the paths [same code word as “way”] of the Lord are mercy and truth
unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.
- 11 For thy name’s sake [covenant’s sake], O Lord,
pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.
- 12 What man is he that feareth the Lord?
him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.
- 13 His soul shall dwell at ease;
and his seed shall inherit the earth [eternal increase].

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14 The secret [*sode*] of the Lord is with them that fear him;
and he will shew them his covenant [that is, the *sode* covenant, the one made at
the Council in Heaven] (Psalm 25:9-14).⁸⁸⁶

In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord explained that the earth was created so “the poor and the meek of the earth shall inherit it” in its glorified, celestial state:

17 And the redemption of the soul is through him that quickeneth all things, in
whose bosom it is decreed that the poor and the meek of the earth shall inherit it.
18 Therefore, it must needs be sanctified from all unrighteousness, that it may be
prepared for the celestial glory.
19 For after it hath filled the measure of its creation, it shall be crowned with
glory, even with the presence of God the Father;
20 That bodies who are of the celestial kingdom may possess it forever and ever;
for, for this intent was it made and created, and for this intent are they sanctified
(D&C 88:17-20).

Thus, the words “meek” and “poor” identify those who will inherit the celestial glory. That use of “poor” is consistent with the Savior’s words, “Yea, blessed are the poor in spirit who come unto me, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” That use of “meek” is also consistent with the way the word is used elsewhere in the scriptures, as in Isaiah 61 where the prophet wrote that the Lord was anointed “to preach good tidings to the meek.” Joseph F. Smith quoted that verse, and added that among those to whom the Lord preached were “the noble and great ones who were chosen in the beginning to be rulers in the Church of God” (D&C 138:42, 55).

Meekness is not timidity; it is power. It is the power to do or say what the Lord tells one to do or say, without fear, boastfulness, belligerence, or contention but with humility, kindness, charity, and resolve. One of the best examples of meekness in the Book of Mormon is Abinadi, standing defiantly before King Noah while delivering the Lord’s message to him and his priests. In this case “meekness” is descriptive of the prophet’s attitude toward God (and probably toward Alma), but not of his attitude toward King Noah and his priests when he defies them to touch him until he has delivered his message.

⁸⁸⁶ For a discussion of Psalm 25, see the chapter called “Act 2, Scene 10: The King at the Veil.”

**6 And blessed [enjoying “the state of the gods”]
are all they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness,
for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost (3 Nephi 12:6).**

To “hunger and thirst after righteousness [*zedek*]” is the chief characteristic of the meek—those who remember (or are re-taught by the Spirit) to keep the covenants they made at the Council in Heaven.

In Hebrew tradition, as Adam and Eve left their Garden home, Satan and his henchmen began to bring their plan into play. They planned to “cast men into great distractions and pains in life, so that their men should be preoccupied with life, and not have time to attend on the Holy Spirit.”⁸⁸⁷ But the Lord sent angels to teach Adam about sacrifice and the Savior’s Atonement so that Adam and Eve would know how to come home again. Thereafter, the great desire of the righteous was to find the way to “return to the Garden” where they could regain their garments of light, again enjoy the company of God, and where they could eat freely of the fruit of the tree of life and drink of the waters of life.

That also became the ultimate promise to the faithful Saints in New Testament times. John the Beloved concludes his Revelation with this vision of the celestial world:

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ...

6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. ...

1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and

⁸⁸⁷ *Hypostasis of the Archons*, trans. Bullard, 29, lines 7-11.

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the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. ...

13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. ...

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely (Revelation 21:1-2, 6-7; 22:1-4, 13-14, 16-17).

Alma understood that the fruit of the tree of life and the waters of life were both the blessing to the righteous and the product of their own righteousness. He said:

40 And thus, if ye will not nourish the word, looking forward with an eye of faith to the fruit thereof, ye can never pluck of the fruit of the tree of life.

41 But if ye will nourish the word, yea, nourish the tree as it beginneth to grow, by your faith with great diligence, and with patience, looking forward to the fruit thereof, it shall take root; and behold it shall be a tree springing up unto everlasting life.

42 And because of your diligence and your faith and your patience with the word in nourishing it, that it may take root in you, behold, by and by ye shall pluck the fruit thereof, which is most precious, which is sweet above all that is sweet, and which is white above all that is white, yea, and pure above all that is pure; and ye shall feast upon this fruit even until ye are filled, that ye hunger not, neither shall ye thirst.

43 Then, my brethren, ye shall reap the rewards of your faith, and your diligence, and patience, and long-suffering, waiting for the tree to bring forth fruit unto you (Alma 32:40-43).

The Savior explained how that is so. He first taught it to the people in Jerusalem:

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53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever (John 6:53-58).⁸⁸⁸

And he taught it more fully to the Saints in America:

3 And it came to pass that he brake bread again and blessed it, and gave to the disciples to eat.

4 And when they had eaten he commanded them that they should break bread, and give unto the multitude.

5 And when they had given unto the multitude he also gave them wine to drink, and commanded them that they should give unto the multitude.

6 Now, there had been no bread, neither wine, brought by the disciples, neither by the multitude;

7 But he truly gave unto them bread to eat, and also wine to drink.

8 And he said unto them: He that eateth this bread eateth of my body to his soul; and he that drinketh of this wine drinketh of my blood to his soul; and his soul shall never hunger nor thirst, but shall be filled (3 Nephi 20:3-8).⁸⁸⁹

⁸⁸⁸ See Matthew 26:26-28. Mark 14:22-24, 1 Corinthians 11:24-25, Moroni 4-5, 3 Nephi 18:1-11. It is interesting that Mormon does not mention that Jesus also ate and drank with his disciples. His apparently not doing so may reflect what he told his apostles in Jerusalem: “Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God” (Mark 14:25).

⁸⁸⁹ According to a number of sources, some early Christians thought of the cross as a tree of life, and that the Savior’s body was the fruit of that tree, and his blood was the waters of life. See Griggs, “Tree of Life,” 29. The *Gospel of Philip* says the cross was made of olive wood, in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, ed. James M. Robinson, 153.

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This doctrine was not unknown to ancient Israel. It is not expressed that explicitly in the psalms we now have, but the understanding is there. Psalm 143 is a prayer. Ancient Israelites prayed with their hands lifted toward heaven (“I stretch forth my hands unto thee”). Recalling the peace of the Council in Heaven (“I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works”), its author longs to be there again:

- 1 Hear my prayer, O Lord, give ear to my supplications:
in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.
- 2 And enter not into judgment with thy servant:
for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.
- 3 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul;
he hath smitten my life down to the ground;
he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.
- 4 Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me;
my heart within me is desolate.
- 5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works;
I muse on the work of thy hands.
- 6 I stretch forth my hands unto thee:
my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land.
- 7 Hear me speedily, O Lord: my spirit faileth:
hide not thy face from me,
lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.
- 8 Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust:
cause me to know the way wherein I should walk;
for I lift up my soul unto thee.
- 9 Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies:
I flee unto thee to hide me.
- 10 Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God:
thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.
- 11 Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake:
for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.
- 12 And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies,
and destroy all them that afflict my soul:
for I am thy servant (Psalm 143:1-12).

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The 63rd Psalm is also a prayer—one that is simply running over with ancient temple imagery:

- 1 O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee:
 my soul thirsteth for thee,
 my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;
- 2 To see thy power and thy glory,
 so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.
- 3 Because thy lovingkindness is better than life,
 my lips shall praise thee.
- 4 Thus will I bless thee while I live:
 I will lift up my hands in thy name.
- 5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness;
 and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips:
- 6 When I remember thee upon my bed,
 and meditate on thee in the night watches.
- 7 Because thou hast been my help,
 therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.
- 8 My soul followeth hard after thee:
 thy right hand upholdeth me.
- 9 But those that seek my soul, to destroy it,
 shall go into the lower parts of the earth.
- 10 They shall fall by the sword:
 they shall be a portion for foxes.
- 11 But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory:
 but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped (Psalm 63:1-11).

The blessing promised in the Beatitudes to “all they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness” is that “they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost.”

The classic—and probably the best known—LDS statement about the gift of the Holy Ghost was written by one of the Church’s foremost early poets, Parley P. Pratt:

The gift of the Holy Spirit adapts itself to all these organs or attributes. It quickens all the intellectual faculties, increases, enlarges, expands and purifies all the natural passions and affections; and adapts them, by the gift of wisdom, to

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their lawful use. It inspires, develops, cultivates and matures all the fine-toned sympathies, joys, tastes, kindred feelings and affections of our nature. It inspires virtue, kindness, goodness, tenderness, gentleness and charity. It develops beauty of person, form and features. It tends to health, vigor, animation and social feeling. It develops and invigorates all the faculties of the physical and intellectual man. It strengthens, invigorates, and gives tone to the nerves. In short, it is, as it were, marrow to the bone, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, music to the ears, and life to the whole being.

In the presence of such persons, one feels to enjoy the light of their countenances, as the genial rays of a sunbeam. Their very atmosphere diffuses a thrill, a warm glow of pure gladness and sympathy, to the heart and nerves of others who have kindred feelings, or sympathy of spirit. No matter if the parties are strangers, entirely unknown to each other in person or character; no matter if they have never spoken to each other, each will be apt to remark in his own mind, and perhaps exclaim, when referring to the interview—"O what an atmosphere encircles that stranger! How my heart thrilled with pure and holy feelings in his presence! What confidence and sympathy he inspired! His countenance and spirit gave me more assurance, than a thousand written recommendations, or introductory letters." Such is the gift of the Holy Spirit, and such are its operations, when received through the lawful channel – the divine, eternal Priesthood.⁸⁹⁰

In the ancient Temple, hungering and thirsting after *zedek* ultimately focused on the coronation ordinances of sonship. As the Holy Ghost comforts,⁸⁹¹ teaches, cleanses (Moroni 6:4), sanctifies (3 Nephi 27:20), and empowers us to transcend the sorrows of this world, its empowerment may imply a restoration and maturation of the garment of light. That seems consistent with the Lord's words to the Prophet Joseph.

33 For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing

⁸⁹⁰ Parley P. Pratt, *Key to the Science of Theology* (Liverpool, F.D. Richards & London, L.D.S. Book Depot, 1855), 98-99.

⁸⁹¹ For a discussion of two Comforters, see Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet*, 149.

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of their bodies.

34 They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.

35 And also all they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord;

36 For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me;

37 And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father;

38 And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him.

39 And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood.

40 Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved (D&C 84:33-40).

To “be filled with the Holy Ghost” is ultimately to fulfill the command to “receive the Holy Ghost.” It is the necessary prerequisite to accomplishing the next step in the Savior’s outline in the Beatitudes.

**7 And blessed [enjoying “the state of the gods”]
are the merciful,
for they shall obtain mercy (3 Nephi 12:7).**

The focal point of Moses’s Tabernacle was the Mercy Seat, the throne of God that sat upon the lid of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies. It is significant that the word that is translated “mercyseat” in the New Testament is the same word which is translated “atone” elsewhere, so the name of the Lord’s throne might also be the “seat of Atonement.”⁸⁹² That is consistent with Enoch exclamation, “naught but peace, justice, and truth is the habitation of thy throne” (Moses 7:31). To be merciful is a primary characteristic of one who exercises in righteousness the judgment responsibilities of priesthood and sacral kingship. As the pattern for that, Psalm 98 is a celebration of God’s judgment in righteousness:

1 O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things:

⁸⁹² Hebrews 9:5. Strong, “mercyseat”, 2435.

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- his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.
- 2 The Lord hath made known his salvation:
his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.
- 3 He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel:
all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
- 4 Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth:
make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.
- 5 Sing unto the Lord with the harp;
with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.
- 6 With trumpets and sound of cornet
make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King.
- 7 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof;
the world, and they that dwell therein.
- 8 Let the floods clap their hands:
let the hills be joyful together
- 9 Before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth:
with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity
- 10 Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth:
the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved:
he shall judge the people righteously.
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.
- 12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein:
then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice
- 13 Before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth:
he shall judge the world with righteousness,
and the people with his truth (Psalm 98:1-13).

The responsibility and power that are implicit in the titles of priest and sacral king are to judge righteously.⁸⁹³ As in English, the Hebrew word for judge means one is empowered to condemn, absolve, or to choose. It can also mean to establish a standard of excellence by which one may conduct one's Self and to help one adhere to that standard.

⁸⁹³ For a discussion of the foreordained responsibilities of the king and queen, see the chapters beginning, "Act 1, Scene 2: The Royal Wedding in Psalm 45."

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Thus, in anticipation of learning how to do that, the psalmist sang:

7 I will praise thee with uprightness of heart,
when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments (Psalm 119:7).

In his letter from Liberty jail, the Prophet Joseph echoed that sentiment. He urged the Saints:

45 Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.

46 The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever (D&C 121:45-46).

And in section 88, the Lord explained why that must be so:

40 For intelligence cleaveth unto intelligence; wisdom receiveth wisdom; truth embraceth truth; virtue loveth virtue; light cleaveth unto light; mercy hath compassion on mercy and claimeth her own; justice continueth its course and claimeth its own; judgment goeth before the face of him who sitteth upon the throne and governeth and executeth all things (D&C 88:40).

Mercy is a necessary attribute of both priests and sacral kings. In the Beatitudes, the Savior has brought his audience to the place in the festival temple drama where the king has also shown that he—in the depths of this world’s experiences, the worst environment and the closest to hell that his eternal odyssey has brought him—here he has again shown himself to be worthy of his crown.

It is apparent that the Beatitudes are not just a list of desirable attributes and blessings. They are tied together as a chain with the conjunction “and,” making them a sequence of ideas that build upon each other. In that sequence, learning to judge with mercy is the crowning characteristic of the meek, just as it is prerequisite to what follows.

In the festival drama, this is where the people sing the 24th Psalm. Jehovah has

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conquered death and hell, but in a less powerful way, the king has also. They come in triumph together to the new kingdom where there is a new Jerusalem, a new temple, and the people are Zion. In the 3 Nephi chronology, it is when the Savior comes to his temple, commends Nephi for his steadfastness, and gives him the authority of priest and king. To all the others who had gathered at the temple, it is the time when the Savior celebrates their integrity, and acknowledges them as priests and sacral kings. In his short recounting of the sequence of the festival's temple drama, the Savior reminds them of all of that when he says:

**8 And blessed [enjoying “the state of the gods”]
are all the pure in heart,
for they shall see God (3 Nephi 12:8).**

The 24th Psalm, which the Savior references in this Beatitude, celebrates the moment of their triumphal entry into the city and the temple. The Psalm reads:

- 1 The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;
the world, and they that dwell therein.
- 2 For he hath founded it upon the seas,
and established it upon the floods.
- 3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?
or who shall stand in his holy place?
- 4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;
who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.
- 5 He shall receive the blessing from the Lord,
and righteousness from the God of his salvation.
- 6 This is the generation of them that seek him,
that seek thy face, O Jacob.
- 7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up,
ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.
- 8 Who is this King of glory?
The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.
- 9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

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10 Who is this King of glory?

The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory (Psalm 24:1-10).

The ultimate sacrifice that is the entrance key to the celestial world is “a broken heart and contrite spirit.” In verse 3 of the Beatitudes the Savior had focused on the “poor in spirit,” now his emphasis is the “pure in heart.”⁸⁹⁴ To the ancients, the heart was the cosmic center of the human body and soul. It is therefore the seat of our emotions as well as our intellect. Luz explained:

“Pure in heart” or a “pure heart” is a Jewish expression which comes from Old Testament psalm piety. This means undivided obedience toward God without sin. “Heart” designates in Jewish usage not an internal area of the human being but the center of human wanting, thinking, and feeling. ...The reference to Psalm 24:4, i.e.,⁸⁹⁵ that psalm which is sung at the entrance in the *temple*, also points to the inner unity of the concept of purity, not to polemic against the cult.⁸⁹⁶

As we observed earlier, to have a broken heart is to shatter our prejudices and preconceptions so we may revisit our thoughts and feelings and set them aright. When they are perfectly aligned with eternal truth and full of light, one becomes “holy, without spot,” (Moroni 10:33) Or, as Paul more fully explained:

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love (Ephesians 1:3-4).

The Savior’s reference in this Beatitude to the 24th Psalm not only identifies where, in the festival’s temple drama, he has brought his audience, it also shows that his intent in

⁸⁹⁴ For a discussion of “pure in heart,” see the chapter about “Blessed are the Poor in Spirit.”

⁸⁹⁵ The text reads, “Psalm. 23:4,” but, given the description of the psalm in question, “23” is an obvious typographical error.

⁸⁹⁶ Luz, *Matthew 1-7: A Commentary*, 238-39.

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bringing them there is the same as in the Feast of Tabernacles temple drama. He mentions only the attribute of being pure in heart, but, as the psalm says, another necessary prerequisite to seeing God is having clean hands. In ancient Israel, and early Christianity, when one prayed, one lifted one's hands and spread them toward heaven, as a gesture of supplication, of praise, and with the palms open and upward to show that the hands were clean. If the hands were clean, the heart could also be pure. Psalm 24 is, as Nibley observed, "an ancient temple recommend." He explained:

When you turn to other places where we might also find these kinds of virtues mentioned, you also run into ritual or mystery religion contexts. Take the phrase *pure in heart*. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Both of those phrases—*pure in heart* and seeing God—are loaded with temple symbolism and meaning. The *pure in heart* phrase comes out of twenty-fourth psalm—a psalm that is very well described as an ancient temple recommend. "Who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord?" That, of course, is to the temple. Who is worthy to enter the temple? Those who have clean hands and a pure heart. And what will they see when they enter the temple? The Doctrine and Covenants tells us those who enter the temple in Kirtland (this is D&C 97:16) will see God. These phrases are referring to temple-type experiences. Such is not completely lost, even on our Gentile scholars. You can find, for example, Hans D. Betz speculating about what on earth these Beatitudes should be understood to mean. His conclusion: The Beatitudes are the entrance requirements for the kingdom of heaven—his way of saying "temple recommend questions" perhaps. Georg Strecker concludes that the Beatitudes are "the conditions that must be fulfilled in order to gain entrance into the Holy of Holies." You need to do a little research into why they are saying these kinds of things, but they see this list of Beatitudes in a very sacred context.⁸⁹⁷

The Lord explained to the Prophet Joseph how important that is:

74 And I give unto you, who are the first laborers in this last kingdom, a commandment that you assemble yourselves together, and organize yourselves, and prepare yourselves, and sanctify yourselves; yea, purify your hearts, and

⁸⁹⁷ Nibley, *Teachings of the Book of Mormon, Semester 1*, 136-37.

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cleanse your hands and your feet before me, that I may make you clean;
75 That I may testify unto your Father, and your God, and my God, that you are clean from the blood of this wicked generation; that I may fulfil this promise, this great and last promise, which I have made unto you, when I will (D&C 88:74-75).

To his audience at the temple in Bountiful, the Savior explained that more fully when he said:

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
22 The light of the body is the eye; if, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.
23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!
24 No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon (3 Nephi 13:21-24).

In the gospel of Luke, he added this observation:

36 If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light (Luke 11:36).

To be pure in heart is to be holy—wholly one’s Self—in this earthly environment, it is to be again what one was at the Council in Heaven. From the time we first become cognizant in this world, we find that everything about it is designed to challenge what we truly are and to teach us to reject the law of our own being and become compatible with worldly darkness and sin. In contrast, to be pure in heart is to throw off all those parts of our acquired self that are not our true Self, so that what is left is only the person whom we really are. If, through the power of the Atonement, we can achieve that kind of perfection in this worldly environment, then we become “pure,” “holy without spot.” In the *Gospel of Thomas*, the Savior taught his apostles what they must do to achieve that wholeness. Jesus said:

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“When you come to know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize that it is you who are the sons of the living Father. But if you will not know yourselves, you dwell in poverty and it is you who are that poverty.”⁸⁹⁸

And in another place:

Jesus said: He who knows the all but fails to know himself, misses everything.⁸⁹⁹

Moroni's last words were devoted to teaching us that principle:

32 Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God.

33 And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot (Moroni 10:32-33).

Then, perhaps to show us that it is possible, Moroni added:

34 And now I bid unto all, farewell. I soon go to rest in the paradise of God, until my spirit and body shall again reunite, and I am brought forth triumphant through the air, to meet you before the pleasing bar of the great Jehovah, the Eternal Judge of both quick and dead. Amen (Moroni 10:34).

When one's heart is pure, the light it accepts—and the light it reflects—is the light of Christ. When it is only that, one can be where the Savior is. Such people are called Zion.

From the beginning of this world, people have been instructed to build temples so they and God could come and meet together. The Savior's instructions to the Prophet

⁸⁹⁸ *Gospel of Thomas, Nag Hammadi Library*, 126 3.

⁸⁹⁹ *The Coptic Gospel of Thomas, New Testament Apocrypha, Revised Edition*, 1:126, 67.

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Joseph to build a temple in Zion is a shining example of this principle:

15 And inasmuch as my people build a house unto me in the name of the Lord, and do not suffer any unclean thing to come into it, that it be not defiled, my glory shall rest upon it;

16 Yea, and my presence shall be there, for I will come into it, and all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God.

17 But if it be defiled I will not come into it, and my glory shall not be there; for I will not come into unholy temples.

18 And, now, behold, if Zion do these things she shall prosper, and spread herself and become very glorious, very great, and very terrible.

19 And the nations of the earth shall honor her, and shall say: Surely Zion is the city of our God, and surely Zion cannot fall, neither be moved out of her place, for God is there, and the hand of the Lord is there;

20 And he hath sworn by the power of his might to be her salvation and her high tower.

21 Therefore, verily, thus saith the Lord, let Zion rejoice, for this is Zion—THE PURE IN HEART; therefore, let Zion rejoice, while all the wicked shall mourn (D&C 97:15-21).

In a personal letter to his daughter, Professor James Cannon wrote about the pure in heart in a most meaningful way:

In the Doctrine and Covenants and in the Pearl of Great Price, there is some very curious type-setting whose purpose I do not know. For example, in Doctrine and Covenants, Section 97, verse 21, it says, “let Zion rejoice, for this is Zion— THE PURE IN HEART,” and the pure in heart is set in small capital letters. I like to think that this is more than just a description of the people who shall dwell in Zion. I like to think of this as a title, as a name, as a name for those who are pure in heart because they have promised to be so, because they have covenanted to be pure in heart. I like to think that we will be in Zion if we care so much about Zion that we promise ourselves and God that we will be pure in heart, that we are pure in heart by covenant. “Behold,” says the Lord, “if Zion do these things she shall prosper, and spread herself and become very glorious, very great, and very terrible. And the nations of the earth shall honor her place, for God is there, and

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the hand of the Lord is there.” Only the pure in heart will be there, because the Lord reigns there, and only the pure in heart can dwell in the presence of God. Zion will be very great and very terrible because only the pure in heart will feel comfortable there.

I want “Pure in Heart” to be part of my very long name. I want “Kind” to be part of my long name. I want “loving” to be part of my long name. I want “Hard Working” and “Responsible” to be part of my long name. I hope that we will make it very apparent to the people that we live around that we have very long names which describe who we really are and that those names will remind us how to behave from day to day. We want as part of our name that covenant which says that we are preparing to go to the temple to be sealed forever with someone else who has a very long and righteous name, in the presence of God, who has the longest and most righteous name of all, that God who has promised us all that is his if we but keep his commandments. We dare not let anything tear us from these sacred promises, these wonderful names that describe who we really are.

Each week we renew our covenant to take upon us the name of Christ. “Jesus, name of wondrous love, name all other names above.”⁹⁰⁰

In the Book of Mormon one learns that if one is to “be found spotless,” it is because he has been “cleansed by the blood of the Lamb,” “for there can no man be saved except his garments are washed white; yea, his garments must be purified until they are cleansed from all stain, through the blood of him of whom it has been spoken by our fathers, who should come to redeem his people from their sins.” (Mormon 9:6, Alma 5:21, 1 Nephi 12:10-12, Alma 5:27, Alma 34:36, 3 Nephi 27:19)

This law is eternal; no unclean thing can enter into the temple’s Holy of Holies and be in the presence of God. But notwithstanding the surety of the conditions, the promise is as universal as the invitation is all inclusive. The Beatitude says “all” the pure in heart shall see God. Section 93 spells that out very clearly:

1 Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am (D&C 93:1).

⁹⁰⁰ James W. Cannon, Orson Pratt Professor of Mathematics at Brigham Young University, in a letter to his daughter, Adria, May 22, 2002.

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In section 88 the Lord further explained:

67 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.

68 Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, 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 88:67-68).

At the beginning of that section the Lord affirmed that this is not a theoretical, nebulous promise, but for some a reality. In the introduction to that revelation the Lord addressed those persons who were present when the revelation was given with these words:

1 Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you who have assembled yourselves together to receive his will concerning you:

2 Behold, this is pleasing unto your Lord, and the angels rejoice over you; the alms of your prayers have come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and are recorded in the book of the names of the sanctified, even them of the celestial world.

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.

4 This Comforter is the promise which I give unto you of eternal life, even the glory of the celestial kingdom (D&C 88:1-4).

This promise, as is shown in the sequence of the Beatitudes, is designed to bring peace. When the Prophet Joseph sent a manuscript copy of section 88 to his friends in Missouri, he called it “the olive leaf which we have plucked from the Tree of Paradise, the Lord’s message of peace to us.”⁹⁰¹ The promises that Zion, the pure in heart, will see God and be endowed with peace are real and powerful promises.

⁹⁰¹ Joseph Smith to W. W. Phelps, January 14, 1833. See the introduction to section 88.

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In this Beatitude, as in the Feast of Tabernacles temple drama, one who is pure in heart is brought within the ancient Temple, where he passes through the veil to enter the Holy of Holies to be where God's throne is. In the Inspired Translation of the Bible, the Prophet Joseph altered Psalm 42 so that it reads:

- 1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
so panteth my soul after thee; O God.
- 2 My soul thirsteth for to see God, for to see the living God;
when shall I come and appear before thee, O God? (JST Psalm 42:1-2).⁹⁰²

When the Lord elaborated on this promise, he did so in terms that have universal application. The Lord does not put restrictions on our blessings—only we can do that:

- 1 Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am;
- 2 And that I am the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world (D&C 93:1-2).

All of this was explained by the Savior:

- 23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.
- 24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.
- 25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.
- 26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

⁹⁰² The King James Version reads:

- 1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
so panteth my soul after thee, O God.
- 2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God:
when shall I come and appear before God? (Psalm 42:2).

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27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid (John 14:22-27).

The peace the Savior gives is not a peace that the world understands. It is an empowerment.

**Calling and Election Made Sure,
Explained
in the Epistles of Peter**

As though to explain to Jim and others like him how this can be accomplished, the Apostle Peter testified that Christ is the Lamb whose sacrificial blood purifies, makes clean, and prepares one to come into the presence of his Father. Peter explained:

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren,

see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever (1 Peter 1:18-23).

In another place, Peter explained how it is done:

1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have