

The Law, Word, and Covenant
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The Law of Nature

We all understand that Sr. Isaac Newton's treatise of universal gravitation, terrestrial mechanics, and color explains why an apple or other fruits drop from a tree; why water from a high mountain stream flows, by river, down to the sea; why flowers blossom during spring and summer and in the fall their color will fade; why in the winter snow will come; and why the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. The law of nature, which Heavenly Father designed, has never changed in the past, and will never change in the future.

Obtain a Physical Body, Gain Earthly Experiences

Like the laws of nature, our Heavenly Father presented "the plan of holiness" in the great council of heaven to all of His children in the pre-earthly life. God, in this council, presented the law, the covenant, the ordinances, the principles, the rules, and His words and His will--called the divine plan of happiness. Heavenly Father placed His children here on earth so we, His children, could obtain a physical body and walk by "the shield of faith" to exercise our moral agency and gain earthly experiences. The Family: A Proclamation to the World solemnly states:

In the premortal realm, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshiped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize his or her divine destiny as an heir of eternal life. The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally.

From this, we learn the following profound doctrines:

1. God is our Eternal Father and we worshiped Him.
2. We lived in the premortal world.
3. We are His children--spirit sons and daughters.
4. In the premortal world we accepted the divine plan of happiness.
5. We are here to obtain a physical body.
6. We are here to gain earthly experience.
7. We are here upon this earth to progress towards perfection.
8. Our divine destiny is to be an heir of eternal life.
9. Family relationships can be perpetuated beyond this life
10. Sacred ordinances and covenants are available in the temple.
11. These ordinances and covenants make it possible for an individual to return to the

presence of God.

12. Families can be sealed eternally in the temple.

Heavenly Father's "great plan of our God" was expressed so beautifully by the Lord, and it says, "This is my work and my glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." "The Gods saw that . . . this plan was good." "This is the plan of salvation" of our Heavenly Father, designed for our everlasting joy and eternal happiness.

The Divine Plan of Happiness

We all accepted His "great plan of happiness" and "the plan of redemption," so that we could gain our physical bodies and gain the earthly mortal experiences to progress toward perfection and "ultimately realize [our] divine destiny as heirs of eternal life." "According to the great plan of the Eternal God, there must be an atonement" of the Lord Jesus Christ. His holy atonement for His children, "enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in the holy temple make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united for eternity.

When we partake of sacred covenants and ordinances in the holy and dedicated sanctuary--the temple of the Lord, our family relationships will "be perpetuated beyond the grave." When we receive the holy ordinances and covenants, and keep those covenants which we make in His holy house, then the promise of the Lord is that we will be able to return to His holy presence by His grace and mercy. Ultimately, our "family [may] be united for eternity."

To receive the above-mentioned sacred purposes, temple ordinances and finding our forefathers through FAMILY HISTORY WORK exists. Temple work and family history work are so important to provide the opportunity for our progenitors to also embrace "the divine plan of happiness."

While we are enjoying our physical body, we should walk with solid faith in the Lord. We should continue to keep and obey His commandments. Then the Lord will help us to achieve this most important goal to become like Him and to be with Him as His family. In order to inherit the heavenly heritage and to accomplish this sacred and eternal goal, God has designed and given the great institution of marriage between a man and woman. He has established the institution of the family for His children to obtain the utmost joy and everlasting happiness in this life and the life after death. This is the profound reason, God gave His children the solemn and sacred responsibility of MARRIAGE and establishing a FAMILY."

The first commandment that God gave to Adam and Eve pertained to their potential for parenthood as husband and wife.

Created Heavens and Earth

For this cause, "the great plan of salvation" was laid before the great council in heaven. Joseph Smith stated, "In the beginning, the head of the Gods called a council of the Gods; and they came together and concocted [prepared] a plan to create the world and people it." For this glorious reason, Heavenly Father created the vast heavens and the earth. The Lord said,

Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are.

And our Heavenly Father Himself testified,

. . . by the word of my power, have I created them, which is mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth.

And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them.

For behold, there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And there are many that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man; but all things are numbered unto me, for they are mine and I know them.

Through His Only Begotten Son, the Father created this earth and then extensive, innumerable, and unnumbered galaxies and universes.

And the Lord God spake unto Moses, saying: The heavens, they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man; but they are numbered unto me, for they are mine.

To provide a true happiness in this life, the life after death, and throughout eternity, we have to keep His words, His law, His covenant, His doctrine, His teachings, and His commandments. To have true and everlasting joy and happiness, the family should be united so that "family relationships may be perpetuated beyond the grave." This should include "every soul who belongs to the whole human family of Adam." This is the reason our sacred responsibility for family history work exists. As we organize our own eternal family, we will be blessed to return to the presence of our Heavenly Father to live with Him as the family of God. To receive the fulness of the Heavenly Father, God has commanded us to marry in His holy house, to keep His holy covenants, and organize our family in the Lord's way. To His children, God solemnly stated through the First Presidency and His apostles,

. . . marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and the family is central to the creator's plan.

Further they solemnly stated,

The FAMILY is ordained of God. MARRIAGE between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan.

The eternal and unchanging institutions of marriage and the family are vital and essential for His children. Therefore, we should organize our eternal family and help our progenitors receive the same blessings. For this purpose, we do family history work.

We Abide the Law

To the living, to the deceased, and to those who are yet to be born to this earth--to all His children, God commanded that they obey His commandments. However, He bestowed upon us the power of the moral agency to choose between right and wrong. He said,

Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye abide my law ye cannot attain to this glory.

The Lord clearly stated that we must abide His law in order to attain His glory. The Lord was referring to Joseph Smith when He said,

. . . I have endowed him with the keys of the power of this priesthood, if he do anything in my name, and according to my law and by my word.

The Lord said we must do all things in His holy name, by His law and by His word.

. . . after ye have received my new and everlasting covenant, saith the Lord God; and he that abideth not this law can in nowise enter into my glory.

The Lord has given us covenants and ordinances, so that we, His Children, can obey the LAW and His WORD. He repeatedly asks us to abide His law; otherwise we may not be able to receive His blessings.

. . . the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fulness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fulness thereof must and shall abide the law.

When we "abideth not this law," there is no promise and we cannot receive His everlasting blessing. No one can come unto the Father unless they abide His will, His word, the law, and His covenant.

. . . whatsoever they may be, that are not by me or by my word, saith the Lord, shall be thrown down, and shall not remain after men are dead, neither in nor after the resurrection.

I am the Lord thy God; and I give unto you this commandment--that no man shall come unto the Father but by me or by my word, which is my law. . .

To be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise for the living or the dead, we must totally abide the law of the Lord, the word of the Lord, and by our covenants. Otherwise, there is "no efficacy, virtue, or force" when we move onto the other side. This KEY and this POWER and this AUTHORITY were restored and given to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

And I will show unto my servant Joseph all things pertaining to this house, and the priesthood.

For this reason, we search out our forefathers to provide for them the sacred blessings pertaining to the ordinances of the holy temple.

Promises and Blessings

When we receive sacred ordinances and keep the Lord's covenants which we are honored to receive in the house of the Lord, our Heavenly Father makes a solemn oath.

He promises us our exaltation when we abide His will,

Abraham . . . he abode in my law; as Isaac also and Jacob . . . they have entered into their exaltation, according to the promises.

Heavenly Father will help us to progress toward exaltation when we follow Him. His promise is as follows:

. . . enter ye into my law and ye shall be saved.

By way of promised blessing He said,

. . . they should continue; both in the world and out of the world should they continue as innumerable as the stars; or, if ye were to count the sand upon the seashore ye could not number them.

Even if we use modern technology, we would not be able to account for all the "sand" on the seashores of this earth.

The Lord's blessings will be with us when we keep the Lord's WORDS and His LAW. This is what the Lord spoke to Joseph Smith:

. . . my servant Joseph, that whatsoever you give on earth, and to whomsoever you give any one on earth, by my word and according to my law, it shall be visited with blessings.

For each one of us--for our posterity and our progenitors--all must abide His word,

. . . if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise. . . Ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths--then shall it be written in the Lamb's Book of Life . . . and if ye abide in my covenant. . .to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever.

Then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them.

What a promise given by the Lord that our "glory shall be a fulness," our blessing will be "a continuation of the seeds forever and forever," and our blessings will be that we can live with our holy Father. There is "no end." We will be blessed to live with Him, "everlasting to everlasting." "All things are subject unto [us]" His children. We will be blessed to become gods and goddesses. What a glorious day to become so worthy as to inherit Heavenly Father's inheritance. This is only possible because our Father will bless us with His holy power to become like Him.

What a truth. What an insight . What a knowledge. What a revelation. What a blessing of the Father. For this reason, Father sent His Only Begotten Son. I testify that this is true. I know that Jesus Christ is our Savior of the world. His holy atonement makes it possible for us to be like Him and our Father.

The Lord said His way is the only way. He said, "strait is the gate" therefore, "receive me." We have to accept His law and His word and abide His covenant. Heavenly Father sent His gospel through His servants to teach all of His children since the days of Adam so that all the human family--Heavenly Father's children--may be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise.

How Many of His Children

How many times has the Lord tried to gather His sheep. When He was in Palestine, the Lord said:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, [thou] that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under [her] wings, and ye would not!

. . . how oft have I gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and have nourished you.

. . . how oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, yea, O ye people of the house of Israel, who have fallen; yea, . . . how oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not.

O ye house of Israel whom I have spared, how oft will I gather you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, if ye will repent and return unto me with full purpose of heart.

For, behold, I will gather them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, if they will not harden their hearts.

Let us consider another insight. Since the Adamic dispensation to this day, how many of Heavenly Father's children have left His holy presence to be born and come to various countries on this earth, die, and then moved to the spirit world? It could be as many as 80 billion people!

Let me give you another thought. Let us consider the gospel dispensation on this land of America. The Lord said,

Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ . . .

. . . this land is consecrated unto him whom he shall bring."

So anyone coming to this land--the land of promise--"shall serve him."

1. Adamic Dispensation. In the LDS Bible Dictionary, on page 659, it says that according to the teachings of Joseph Smith, the Garden of Eden was in North America until Noah built his ark.

2. Jaredite Dispensation. Then the Jaredites returned to this land. That civilization went down and was destroyed because of the wickedness of the people.

3. Nephite Dispensation. The Lord brought another group to South America, the land of promise which "is choice above all other lands." Led by Lehi, they were the Nephites who were descendants of Joseph who was sold into Egypt. Eventually, they colonized in South and North America which "the Lord hath covenanted" with Father Lehi.

Another Jewish group came led by Mulek, the son of King Zedekiah (B.C. 589) before Jerusalem was destroyed. Later these two civilizations (Nephite and Mulekite) merged. These God-believing people and their civilization went down hill because of their wickedness. These people are crying from the dust.

The Native American people, the people of Central and South America, and the Latinos are the descendants of Father Lehi, and are also part Jewish.

Pacific Islanders--Hawaiian, Samoan, Tongan, Maori, and Tahitian, and others--also are descendants of Father Lehi.

4. Dispensation of the Fulness of Times. Then God inspired European people to come to this "a holy land." Through a gentile, a descendant of Joseph of Egypt, God once again restored His gospel to its fulness--with power, authority, ordinances and covenants--through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Other Children of Heavenly Father are gathering to the Lord's land. This land would also be the inheritance of others who "should be led out of other countries by the hand of the

Lord." The Lord remembers us and Father Lehi prophesied, ". . . there shall none come into this land save they shall be brought by the hand of the Lord."

. . . the land of promise, which was choice above all other lands, which the Lord God had preserved for a righteous people.

. . . whoso should possess this land of promise, from that time henceforth and forever, should serve him, the true and only God.

. . . whatsoever nation shall possess it shall serve God.

. . . wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God.

Many times throughout the four standard works of the Church, the Lord talks about the scattering and gathering of Israel, not only on this continent, the land of promise, but also other areas of the world. Since the Restoration, the gathering has commenced. The Lord said,

. . . When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob.

Millions and Billions of People Converted

Beginning in the first gospel dispensation, there have been so many righteous people who have gone on to the spirit world. Additionally, in the last dispensation--Joseph Smith down to President Hinckley's day--many righteous elders of Israel have gone to the spirit world. There have been many missionaries who have served and moved on to the next world, plus many other worthy people who have received their sacred endowment since the Nauvoo Temple. They are all working in the spirit world preaching the gospel. The Lord organized His church in the spirit world, and sent His messengers to the prison.

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

There must be millions even billions of people converted unto the Lord by these righteous messengers. How vast are the innumerable people in the spirit world who are waiting for us to perform their temple work. President Woodruff once stated, "The eyes of these millions of people are watching over these Latter-day Saints. Have we any time to spend in trying to get rich and in neglecting our dead? I tell you no." How serious and grave a responsibility for Latter-day Saints to do temple work for these people. Can you see why our Prophet, President Gordon B. Hinckley, is building many temples?

The Dispensation of the Fulness of Times

God provided His children with the way and means to come back to His holy presence through the Atonement of the Lord, Jesus Christ, through the first principles of the gospel, ordination to the holy priesthood, receiving the endowment, and the blessing of sealing--husband to wife, children to their parents, and us to our forefathers.

Isaiah saw our day,

. . . take hold of my covenant;

. . . I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name,

. . . them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices [shall be] accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

Our Heavenly Father provides for us His holy ENDOWMENT.

Therefore, verily I say unto you, that your anointings, and your washings, and your baptisms for the dead, and your solemn assemblies, and your memorials for your sacrifices by the sons of Levi, and for your oracles in your most holy places wherein you receive conversations, and your statutes and judgments, for the beginning of the revelations and foundation of Zion, and for the glory, honor, and endowment of all her municipalities, are ordained by the ordinance of my holy house, which my people are always commanded to build unto my holy name.

Isaiah saw our day,

. . . to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

Isaiah saw temple worship in our day.

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.

Then when we are faithful and continue to wear the robes of righteousness and keep His covenants, then by the mercy of the Lord we may enter the holy presence of the Lord.

Bring Those Precious Names to the Temple

Family history work provides the greatest opportunity for us to trace our forefathers as far as we can, as wide as we can, and then bring those precious names to the temple to do the

work for them and to build a "welding link" or in other words, to make "a whole and complete and perfect union," with our progenitors and our posterity.

This is why the Lord once again restored His gospel, His truth, His Church, even His hidden knowledge back to the earth. Therefore, He said:

. . . let this house be built unto my name, that I may reveal mine ordinances therein unto my people;

For I deign to reveal unto my church things which have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world, things that pertain to the dispensation of the fulness of times.

We must understand the essential, fundamental, and basic purpose of family history and temple work.

. . . these are principles in relation to the dead and the living that cannot be lightly passed over, as pertaining to our salvation. For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, . . . they without us cannot be made perfect--neither can we without our dead be made perfect.

May we seriously engage in this most important and exalting work. Thus, as we search for our forefathers and bring their names to the holy temple to perform required ordinances for them, we may be able to hear the voices of ". . . glad tidings for the dead; a voice of gladness for the living and the dead; glad tidings of great joy." It is our responsibility to see that "the prisoners shall go free." These people are living, just like you and me. If you had died 150 years ago, can you imagine that you would have been waiting for 54,750 mornings. If you died 200 years ago, 73,000 mornings. How long will they have to wait for their turn to accept the sacred ordinances of the temple?

When the pioneers were stranded on the cold plains of Wyoming, Brigham Young sent a rescue group. President Gordon B. Hinckley likened that rescue group sent by Brigham Young to our rescuing those prisoners who are awaiting ordinances. We have to send might, steady, and constant rescue groups to these people to do the work for them in the temple. They are anxiously waiting. "The eyes of these millions of people are watching over these Latter-day Saints." We must therefore come to the temple often.

This [is] the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this [is] the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.