

Atonement, LeGrand Baker

The following short discussion of the atonement will not be about the Saviour's sacrifices in Gethsemane and on Calvary even though, taken together, they constitute the single most important event in the history of our spiritual and physical universe. That superlative is easy to justify because the universe could never have come into existence without the Saviour's atoning sacrifice that was accomplished on our earth. Even though I will not examine those events, their reality is the premise upon which I build everything else. This discussion will be limited almost entirely to events that preceded the Saviour's mortal life. It will focus on only two facets of the significance of the atonement: 1) to seek to describe its infinite and eternal scope, and 2) to suggest why only the Saviour had the necessary relationship with all created things, so that only he could atone for all created things.

If I had to choose only three scriptures to describe the Saviour's atoning sacrifice, they would be:

1) the explanation of why the atonement was necessary:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.(John 3:16.)

2) The Saviour's own description of his experience:

18 Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—

19 Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men. (D&C 19:18-19)

3) The prayer of the atonement:

3 Listen to him who is the advocate with the Father, who is pleading your cause before him -

4 Saying: Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified;

5 Wherefore, Father, spare these my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life. (D&C 45:3-6)

One of the most explicit, and therefore one of the most important statements about the overreaching power of the atonement was written by the Prophet Joseph in the winter of 1843.

In a poem called "A Vision" the Prophet summarizes what he had learned about the eternal nature of mankind. A precursory reading shows the poem to be simply another version of Section 76. However on closer examination, one discovers it is much more expansive than that. The first difference one notices is that Section 76 is written in first person plural. "We saw..." Philo Dibble, who was present when the latter part of the vision was received, describes why that is so. Dibble had gone to Hiram, Ohio, where Joseph and some friends were gathered at the Johnson farm. When Dibble arrived at the farm, the revelation was already in process. He recalls,

Joseph would, at intervals, say: "What do I see?" as one might say while looking out the window and beholding what all in the room could not see. Then he would relate what he had seen or what he was looking at. Then Sidney replied, "I see the same."

Presently Sidney would say, "What do I see?" and would repeat what he had seen or was seeing, and Joseph would reply, "I see the same."

This manner of conversation was repeated for short intervals to the end of the vision. And during the whole time not a word was spoken by any other person not a sound or motion made by anyone but Sidney, and it seemed to me that they never moved a joint or limb during the time I was there, which I think was over an hour, and to the end of the vision.

Joseph sat firmly and calmly all the time, in the midst of a magnificent glory, but Sidney sat limp and pale, apparently as limp as a rag. Observing such at the close of the vision, Joseph remarked smilingly "Sidney is not used to it as I am." (*Instructor*, vol. 27, p. 303)

and in another place Dibble added more detail,

Joseph wore black clothes, but at this time seemed to be dressed in an element of glorious white, and his face shone as if it were transparent, but I did not see the same glory attending Sidney. Joseph appeared as strong as a lion, but Sidney seemed as weak as water, and Joseph, noticing his condition smiled and said, "Brother Sidney is not as used to it as I am." (recollection of Philo Dibble in *Early Scenes in Church History: Faith-Promoting Series*, no. 8 [Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1881], p. 81)

What Joseph dictated at that time has become Section 76 of the Doctrine and Covenants. It is an immediately contemporary account of a single vision seen by both Joseph and Sidney.

In contrast, the poem, written ten years later, is in first person singular - "I saw..." rather than "we saw." It contains so much more detail than the 1833 revelation that it causes me to believe the poem is Joseph's composite description of multiple revelations. It was published in the *Times and Seasons*, February 1, 1843, and republished in the *Millennial Star* in August of that same year. The lines I wish to call attention to are these:

Hosanna, for ever! They open'd anon,
And the glory of God shone around where I was;
And there was the Son at the Father's right hand,

In a fulness of glory and holy applause.

I beheld round the throne holy angels and hosts,
And sanctified beings from worlds that have been,
In holiness worshiping God and the Lamb,
For ever and ever. Amen and amen.

And now after all of the proofs made of him,
By witnesses truly, by whom he was known,
This is mine, last of all, that he lives; yea, he lives!
And sits at the right hand of God on his throne.

And I heard a great voice bearing record from heav'n,
He's the Saviour and only begotten of God;
By him, of him, and through him, the worlds were all made,
Even all that career in the heavens so broad.

Whose inhabitants, too, from the first to the last,
Are sav'd by the very same Saviour of ours;
And, of course, are begotten God's daughters and sons
By the very same truths and the very same powers.

One of the remarkable ideas expressed there has to do with the all-encompassing effects of the atonement:

I beheld round the throne holy angels and hosts,
And sanctified beings from worlds that have been,

The implication is that our earth was not the first of the physical world created, and that the beings who lived on other worlds before us were sanctified by the same atoning sacrifice that was performed by the Saviour on our earth. President John Taylor understood that principle. In the editorial he wrote in 1857 while living in New York, he addresses an unnamed lady, and asked,

Knowest thou not that eternities ago, thy spirit, pure and holy, dwelt in thy Heavenly Father's bosom, and in his presence, and with thy mother, one of the Queens of heaven, surrounded by thy brother and sister spirits in the spirit world, among the Gods. That as thy spirit beheld the scenes transpiring there, and thou growing in intelligence, thou sawest worlds upon worlds organized and peopled with thy kindred spirits, took upon them tabernacles, died, were resurrected, and received their exaltation on the redeemed worlds they once dwelt upon. Thou being willing and anxious to imitate them, waiting and desirous to obtain a body, a resurrection and exaltation also....] (John Taylor, editor, *The Mormon*, New York City, August 29, 1857)

From these two statements it is apparent to me that the power of the atonement accomplished by the Saviour on our earth was retroactive to the full reaches of the physical universe in both

time and space. That is, that people who lived on physical worlds created before our own earth “were resurrected, and received their exaltation on the redeemed worlds they once dwelt upon.” - -

Whose inhabitants, too, from the first to the last,
Are sav'd by the very same Saviour of ours;
And, of course, are begotten God's daughters and sons
By the very same truths and the very same powers.

John the Beloved taught the same thing:

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.(John 1:1-2)

The Saviour introduced himself that same way when he came to America.

15 Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning. I am in the Father, and the Father in me; and in me hath the Father glorified his name.

....

18 I am the light and the life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. (3 Nephi 9: 15 - 18)

Section 93 is even more explicit.

7 And he [John] bore record, saying: I saw his glory, that he was in the beginning, before the world was;

8 Therefore, in the beginning the Word was, for he was the Word, even the messenger of salvation——

9 The light and the Redeemer of the world; the Spirit of truth, who came into the world, because the world was made by him, and in him was the life of men and the light of men.

10 The worlds were made by him; men were made by him; all things were made by him, and through him, and of him.

Their testimony is that all things, and all people - everything and everyone in the full expanse of the universe - "all things were made by him, and through him, and of him."

That the worlds and their inhabitants were made "by him," is easy enough to understand; that they were made "through him," seems to be a reference to his authority, under which the members of the Council operated during the creation process, But the assertion that they and we were made "of him" seems to require some explanation, even though it means exactly what it says.

It is an axiom of today's scientific thinking that matter is organized energy. The present theory is that the fundamental building blocks from which all things are made are little "strings" of pulsating energy. No one is sure what that energy is, just as no one is sure what light is, but energy and light seem to be so closely related that they are simply different expressions of the same thing. Thus it is correct to say that our physical bodies are made of light. The Prophet explained,

There is no such thing as immaterial matter. All spirit is matter, but it is more fine or pure, and can only be discerned by purer eyes; (D&C 131: 7)

So if our physical bodies are made of light, it is pretty obvious that our spirit bodies are made of light also. Indeed, all things, whether of spiritual or physical element are made of different qualities of the same light. The light is the light of Christ. My understanding is that the light of which all things are made is part of the huge aura that surrounds the Saviour and is an extension of his person. Thus all things are made of the light that is an extension of his person. All living things have such an aura { President David O. McKay. "Radiation of the Individual," The Instructor, October, 1964, p. 373-374. }- but the Saviour's is simply bigger than all the others put together. (Abraham 3: 19-20) The scriptures give considerable detail about that. The most explicit is in Section 88.

6 He that ascended up on high, as also he descended below all things, in that he comprehended all things, that he might be in all and through all things, the light of truth;

7 Which truth shineth. This is the light of Christ. As also he is in the sun, and the light of the sun, and the power thereof by which it was made.

8 As also he is in the moon, and is the light of the moon, and the power thereof by which it was made;

9 As also the light of the stars, and the power thereof by which they were made;

10 And the earth also, and the power thereof, even the earth upon which you stand.

11 And the light which shineth, which giveth you light, is through him who enlighteneth your eyes, which is the same light that quickeneth your understandings;

12 Which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space

13 The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things. (D&C 88: 6-13)

There is an intriguing account in the Book of the Secrets of Enoch, that describes how that was so.

22: 1 On the tenth Heaven, Aravoth, I saw the appearance of the Lord's face, like iron made to glow in fire, and brought out, emitting sparks, and it burns. Thus I saw the Lord's face, but the Lord's face is ineffable, marvelous and very awful, and very, very terrible.

2 And who am I to tell of the Lord's unspeakable being, and of his very wonderful face? and I cannot tell the quantity of his many instructions, and various voices, the Lord's throne very great and not made with hands, nor the quantity of those standing round him, troops of cherubim and

3 seraphim, nor their incessant singing, of his immutable beauty, and who shall tell of the ineffable greatness of his glory?

4 And I fell prone and bowed down to the Lord,

5 and the Lord with his lips said to me: 'Have courage, Enoch, do not fear, arise and stand before my face into eternity.'

6 And the archistratege Michael lifted me up, and led me to before the Lord's face.

7 And the Lord said to his servants tempting them: 'Let Enoch stand before my face into eternity,' and the glorious ones bowed down to the Lord, and said: 'Let Enoch go according to Thy word.'

8 And the Lord said to Michael: 'Go and take Enoch from out his earthly garments, and anoint him with my sweet ointment, [Charles' footnote reads: "oil"] and put him into the garments of My glory.'

9 And Michael did thus, as the Lord told him. He anointed me, and dressed me, and the appearance of that ointment is more than the great light, and his ointment is like sweet dew, and its'

10 smell mild, shining like the sun's ray, and I looked at myself, and was like one of his glorious ones.

11 And the Lord summoned one of his archangels by name Pravuil, whose knowledge was quicker in wisdom than the other archangels, who wrote all the deeds of the Lord ; and the

12 Lord said to Pravuil: 'Bring out the books from my store-houses, and a reed of quick-writing, and give it to Enoch, and deliver to him the choice and comforting books out of thy hand.'

Of Enoch's writing, how he wrote his wonderful journeyings and the heavenly apparitions and himself wrote three hundred and sixty six books.

23: 1 And he was telling me all the works of heaven, earth and sea, and all the elements, their passages and goings, and the thunderings of the thunders, the sun and moon, the goings and changes of the stars, the seasons, years, days, and hours, the risings of the wind, the

numbers of the angels,

2 and the formation of their songs, and all human things, the tongue of every human song and life, the commandments, instructions, and sweet voiced singings, and all things that it is fitting to learn. And Pravuil told me: 'All the things

[3-]4 that I have told thee, we have written. Sit and write all the souls of mankind, however many of them are born, and the places prepared for them

5 to eternity ; for all souls are prepared to eternity, before the formation of the world.'

And all

6 double thirty days and thirty nights, and I wrote out all things exactly, and wrote three hundred and sixty-six books.

Of the great secrets of God, which God revealed and told to Enoch, and spoke with him face to face.

24: 1 And the Lord summoned me, and said to me: Enoch, sit down on my left with Gabriel.' And I bowed down to the Lord, and the Lord spoke

2 to me: Enoch, beloved, all thou seest, all things that are standing finished I tell to thee even before the very beginning, all that I created from non-being, and visible things from invisible.

3 Hear, Enoch, and take in these my words, for not to My angels have I told my secret, and I have not told them their rise, nor my endless realm, nor have they understood my creating,

4 which I tell thee to-day. For before all things were visible, I alone used to go about in the invisible things, like the sun from east to west, and west to east. But even the sun has peace in itself, while I found no peace, because I "as creating all things, and I conceived the thought of placing foundations, and of creating visible creation.

God relates to Enoch, how out of the very lowest darkness comes down the visible and invisible.

25: 1 I commanded in the very lowest parts, that visible things should come down from invisible, and Adoil [Charles' footnote says the name "Adoil" is from a Hebrew root meaning "the hand of God."] came down very great, and I beheld

2 him, and lo! he had a belly of great light. And I said to him: 'Become undone, Adoil, and let

3 the visible come out of thee.' And he came undone, and a great light came out. And I was in the midst of the great light, and as there is born light from light, there came forth a great age, and showed all creation, which I had thought to

4 create. And I saw that it was good. And I placed for myself a throne, and took my seat on it, and said to the light: 'Go thou up higher and fix thyself high above the throne, and be

5 a foundation to the highest things.' And above the light there is nothing else, and then I bent up and looked up from my throne. ("The Book of the Secrets of Enoch," 21-25, in R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, vol. II, [Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1976], 2:442-445.)

I have a strong personal liking for the books of Enoch. There was a time when the Jews accepted Enoch as scripture. The early Christians did also, as is attested in the New Testament

where Jude quotes it as scripture (Jude 1:14-16 is Enoch 1: 9). But one must point out that Jude was quoting First Enoch, not the Secrets of Enoch, so his quote cannot be used to show that the Secrets of Enoch was considered to be a part of the early Christian canon. That's OK in my thinking - I like it anyway. Enoch's description of Adoil sounds enough like Revelation 12: 1-9 that they probably represent visions of the same events. There are also details in Lehi's vision described in 1 Nephi 1: 8-12, that suggest Lehi saw the same thing.

The phrase in Section 88, that the Saviour is "the light and the life of the world" obviously has a greater meaning than just the light and the life of *this* world. Rather, it clearly stretches to all ends of creation.

To the Prophet Joseph the Saviour said,

"And now, remember the words of him who is the life and light of the world, your Redeemer, your Lord and your God." (D&C 10: 70)

Then, through Moroni we find the idea expanded, so that it includes the creation from before the beginning. Moroni quotes the Saviour as saying,

"For behold, I am the Father, I am the light, and the life, and the truth of the world."
(Ether 4:12)

The most complete explanation of that idea I know is also in D&C 88 where the Saviour said:

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.

41 He comprehendeth all things, and all things are before him, and all things are round about him; and he is above all things, and in all things, and is through all things, and is round about all things; and all things are by him, and of him, even God, forever and ever.

42 And again, verily I say unto you, he hath given a law unto all things, by which they move in their times and their seasons;

43 And their courses are fixed, even the courses of the heavens and the earth, which comprehend the earth and all the planets.

44 And they give light to each other in their times and in their seasons, in their minutes, in their hours, in their days, in their weeks, in their months, in their years—all these are one year with God, but not with man.

45 The earth rolls upon her wings, and the sun giveth his light by day, and the moon

giveth her light by night, and the stars also give their light, as they roll upon their wings in their glory, in the midst of the power of God.

46 Unto what shall I liken these kingdoms, that ye may understand?

47 Behold, all these are kingdoms, and any man who hath seen any or the least of these hath seen God moving in his majesty and power.

48 I say unto you, he hath seen him; nevertheless, he who came unto his own was not comprehended.

49 The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not; nevertheless, the day shall come when you shall comprehend even God, being quickened in him and by him.

50 Then shall ye know that ye have seen me, that I am, and that I am the true light that is in you, and that you are in me; otherwise ye could not abound. (D&C 88:40-50)

Thus from “before the beginning,” to the very edges of this eternity - Christ is the origin, the light, the life and the truth of everything created in this “system.” Not only everything created physically, but everything created spiritually as well, are made of the light that is the aura that expands from his person.

Not only are our spiritual and physical bodies made of his light, but throughout all of our history we each were, are, and will ever be sustained by his light. As Paul observed,

22 [The Father] hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.(Ephesians 1:22-23.)

That statement probably ought to be understood more literally than we tend to think. If it is, it is because we are a part of him that he can heal us, and we can be clean.

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(Doctrine and Covenants 93:21-38.)

21 And now, verily I say unto you, I was in the beginning with the Father, and am the Firstborn;

22 And all those who are begotten through me are partakers of the glory of the same, and are the church of the Firstborn.

23 Ye were also in the beginning with the Father; that which is Spirit, even the Spirit of truth;

24 And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come;

25 And whatsoever is more or less than this is the spirit of that wicked one who was a liar from the beginning.

26 The Spirit of truth is of God. I am the Spirit of truth, and John bore record of me, saying: He received a fulness of truth, yea, even of all truth;

27 And no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments.

28 He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things.

29 Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.

30 All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence.

31 Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man; because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not the light.

32 And every man whose spirit receiveth not the light is under condemnation.

33 For man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy;

34 And when separated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy.

35 The elements are the tabernacle of God; yea, man is the tabernacle of God, even temples; and whatsoever temple is defiled, God shall destroy that temple.

36 The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth.

37 Light and truth forsake that evil one.

38 Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning; and God having redeemed man from the fall, men became again, in their infant state, innocent before God.

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(Abraham 1:1-5.)

CHAPTER 1

1 In the land of the Chaldeans, at the residence of my fathers, I, Abraham, saw that it was needful for me to obtain another place of residence;

2 And, finding there was greater happiness and peace and rest for me, 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.

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, 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.

4 I sought for mine appointment unto the Priesthood according to the appointment of God unto the fathers concerning the seed.

5 My fathers having turned from their righteousness, and from the holy commandments which the Lord their God had given unto them, unto the worshiping of the

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(Alma 12:1-37.)

CHAPTER 12

1 Now Alma, seeing that the words of Amulek had silenced Zeezrom, for he beheld that Amulek had caught him in his lying and deceiving to destroy him, and seeing that he began to tremble under a consciousness of his guilt, he opened his mouth and began to speak unto him, and to establish the words of Amulek, and to explain things beyond, or to unfold the scriptures beyond that which Amulek had done.

2 Now the words that Alma spake unto Zeezrom were heard by the people round about; for the multitude was great, and he spake on this wise:

3 Now Zeezrom, seeing that thou hast been taken in thy lying and craftiness, for thou hast not lied unto men only but thou hast lied unto God; for behold, he knows all thy thoughts, and thou seest that thy thoughts are made known unto us by his Spirit;

4 And thou seest that we know that thy plan was a very subtle plan, as to the subtlety of the devil, for to lie and to deceive this people that thou mightest set them against us, to revile us and to cast us out—

5 Now this was a plan of thine adversary, and he hath exercised his power in thee. Now I would that ye should remember that what I say unto thee I say unto all.

6 And behold I say unto you all that this was a snare of the adversary, which he has laid to catch this people, that he might bring you into subjection unto him, that he might encircle you about with his chains, that he might chain you down to everlasting destruction, according to the power of his captivity.

7 Now when Alma had spoken these words, Zeezrom began to tremble more exceedingly, for he was convinced more and more of the power of God; and he was also convinced that Alma and Amulek had a knowledge of him, for he was convinced that they knew the thoughts and intents of his heart; for power was given unto them that they might know of these things according to the spirit of prophecy.

8 And Zeezrom began to inquire of them diligently, that he might know more concerning the kingdom of God. And he said unto Alma: What does this mean which Amulek hath spoken concerning the resurrection of the dead, that all shall rise from the dead, both the just and the unjust, and are brought to stand before God to be judged according to their works?

9 And now Alma began to expound these things unto him, saying: It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him.

10 And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full.

11 And they that will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction. Now this is what is meant by the chains of hell.

12 And Amulek hath spoken plainly concerning death, and being raised from this mortality to a state of immortality, and being brought before the bar of God, to be judged according to our works.

13 Then if our hearts have been hardened, yea, if we have hardened our hearts against the word, insomuch that it has not been found in us, then will our state be awful, for then we shall be condemned.

14 For our words will condemn us, yea, all our works will condemn us; we shall not be found spotless; and our thoughts will also condemn us; and in this awful state we shall not dare to look up to our God; and we would fain be glad if we could command the rocks and the mountains to fall upon us to hide us from his presence.

15 But this cannot be; we must come forth and stand before him in his glory, and in his power,

and in his might, majesty, and dominion, and acknowledge to our everlasting shame that all his judgments are just; that he is just in all his works, and that he is merciful unto the children of men, and that he has all power to save every man that believeth on his name and bringeth forth fruit meet for repentance.

16 And now behold, I say unto you then cometh a death, even a second death, which is a spiritual death; then is a time that whosoever dieth in his sins, as to a temporal death, shall also die a spiritual death; yea, he shall die as to things pertaining unto righteousness.

17 Then is the time when their torments shall be as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever; and then is the time that they shall be chained down to an everlasting destruction, according to the power and captivity of Satan, he having subjected them according to his will.

18 Then, I say unto you, they shall be as though there had been no redemption made; for they cannot be redeemed according to God's justice; and they cannot die, seeing there is no more corruption.

19 Now it came to pass that when Alma had made an end of speaking these words, the people began to be more astonished;

20 But there was one Antionah, who was a chief ruler among them, came forth and said unto him: What is this that thou hast said, that man should rise from the dead and be changed from this mortal to an immortal state that the soul can never die?

21 What does the scripture mean, which saith that God placed cherubim and a flaming sword on the east of the garden of Eden, lest our first parents should enter and partake of the fruit of the tree of life, and live forever? And thus we see that there was no possible chance that they should live forever.

22 Now Alma said unto him: This is the thing which I was about to explain. Now we see that Adam did fall by the partaking of the forbidden fruit, according to the word of God; and thus we see, that by his fall, all mankind became a lost and fallen people.

23 And now behold, I say unto you that if it had been possible for Adam to have partaken of the fruit of the tree of life at that time, there would have been no death, and the word would have been void, making God a liar, for he said: If thou eat thou shalt surely die.

24 And we see that death comes upon mankind, yea, the death which has been spoken of by Amulek, which is the temporal death; nevertheless there was a space granted unto man in which he might repent; therefore this life became a probationary state; a time to prepare to meet God; a time to prepare for that endless state which has been spoken of by us, which is after the resurrection of the dead.

25 Now, if it had not been for the plan of redemption, which was laid from the foundation of the world, there could have been no resurrection of the dead; but there was a plan of

redemption laid, which shall bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, of which has been spoken.

26 And now behold, if it were possible that our first parents could have gone forth and partaken of the tree of life they would have been forever miserable, having no preparatory state; and thus the plan of redemption would have been frustrated, and the word of God would have been void, taking none effect.

27 But behold, it was not so; but it was appointed unto men that they must die; and after death, they must come to judgment, even that same judgment of which we have spoken, which is the end.

28 And after God had appointed that these things should come unto man, behold, then he saw that it was expedient that man should know concerning the things whereof he had appointed unto them;

29 Therefore he sent angels to converse with them, who caused men to behold of his glory.

30 And they began from that time forth to call on his name; therefore God conversed with men, and made known unto them the plan of redemption, which had been prepared from the foundation of the world; and this he made known unto them according to their faith and repentance and their holy works.

31 Wherefore, he gave commandments unto men, they having first transgressed the first commandments as to things which were temporal, and becoming as Gods, knowing good from evil, placing themselves in a state to act, or being placed in a state to act according to their wills and pleasures, whether to do evil or to do good—

32 Therefore God gave unto them commandments, after having made known unto them the plan of redemption, that they should not do evil, the penalty thereof being a second death, which was an everlasting death as to things pertaining unto righteousness; for on such the plan of redemption could have no power, for the works of justice could not be destroyed, according to the supreme goodness of God.

33 But God did call on men, in the name of his Son, (this being the plan of redemption which was laid) saying: If ye will repent and harden not your hearts, then will I have mercy upon you, through mine Only Begotten Son;

34 Therefore, whosoever repenteth, and hardeneth not his heart, he shall have claim on mercy through mine Only Begotten Son, unto a remission of his sins; and these shall enter into my rest.

35 And whosoever will harden his heart and will do iniquity, behold, I swear in my wrath that he shall not enter into my rest.

36 And now, my brethren, behold I say unto you, that if ye will harden your hearts ye shall not

enter into the rest of the Lord; therefore your iniquity provoketh him that he sendeth down his wrath upon you as in the first provocation, yea, according to his word in the last provocation as well as the first, to the everlasting destruction of your souls; therefore, according to his word, unto the last death, as well as the first.

37 And now, my brethren, seeing we know these things, and they are true, let us repent, and harden not our hearts, that we provoke not the Lord our God to pull down his wrath upon us in these his second commandments which he has given unto us; but let us enter into the rest of God, which is prepared according to his word.

(Alma 13:1-31.)

CHAPTER 13

1 And again, my brethren, I would cite your minds forward to the time when the Lord God gave these commandments unto his children; and I would that ye should remember that the Lord God ordained priests, after his holy order, which was after the order of his Son, to teach these things unto the people.

2 And those priests were ordained after the order of his Son, in a manner that thereby the people might know in what manner to look forward to his Son for redemption.

3 And this is the manner after which they were ordained—being called and prepared from the foundation of the world according to the foreknowledge of God, on account of their exceeding faith and good works; in the first place being left to choose good or evil; therefore they having chosen good, and exercising exceedingly great faith, are called with a holy calling, yea, with that holy calling which was prepared with, and according to, a preparatory redemption for such.

4 And thus they have been called to this holy calling on account of their faith, while others would reject the Spirit of God on account of the hardness of their hearts and blindness of their minds, while, if it had not been for this they might have had as great privilege as their brethren.

5 Or in fine, in the first place they were on the same standing with their brethren; thus this holy calling being prepared from the foundation of the world for such as would not harden their hearts, being in and through the atonement of the Only Begotten Son, who was prepared—

6 And thus being called by this holy calling, and ordained unto the high priesthood of the holy order of God, to teach his commandments unto the children of men, that they also might enter into his rest—

7 This high priesthood being after the order of his Son, which order was from the foundation of the world; or in other words, being without beginning of days or end of years, being prepared from eternity to all eternity, according to his foreknowledge of all things—

8 Now they were ordained after this manner—being called with a holy calling, and ordained

with a holy ordinance, and taking upon them the high priesthood of the holy order, which calling, and ordinance, and high priesthood, is without beginning or end—

9 Thus they become high priests forever, after the order of the Son, the Only Begotten of the Father, who is without beginning of days or end of years, who is full of grace, equity, and truth. And thus it is. Amen.

10 Now, as I said concerning the holy order, or this high priesthood, there were many who were ordained and became high priests of God; and it was on account of their exceeding faith and repentance, and their righteousness before God, they choosing to repent and work righteousness rather than to perish;

11 Therefore they were called after this holy order, and were sanctified, and their garments were washed white through the blood of the Lamb.

12 Now they, after being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, having their garments made white, being pure and spotless before God, could not look upon sin save it were with abhorrence; and there were many, exceedingly great many, who were made pure and entered into the rest of the Lord their God.

13 And now, my brethren, I would that ye should humble yourselves before God, and bring forth fruit meet for repentance, that ye may also enter into that rest.

14 Yea, humble yourselves even as the people in the days of Melchizedek, who was also a high priest after this same order which I have spoken, who also took upon him the high priesthood forever.

15 And it was this same Melchizedek to whom Abraham paid tithes; yea, even our father Abraham paid tithes of one-tenth part of all he possessed.

16 Now these ordinances were given after this manner, that thereby the people might look forward on the Son of God, it being a type of his order, or it being his order, and this that they might look forward to him for a remission of their sins, that they might enter into the rest of the Lord.

17 Now this Melchizedek was a king over the land of Salem; and his people had waxed strong in iniquity and abomination; yea, they had all gone astray; they were full of all manner of wickedness;

18 But Melchizedek having exercised mighty faith, and received the office of the high priesthood according to the holy order of God, did preach repentance unto his people. And behold, they did repent; and Melchizedek did establish peace in the land in his days; therefore he was called the prince of peace, for he was the king of Salem; and he did reign under his father.

19 Now, there were many before him, and also there were many afterwards, but none were

greater; therefore, of him they have more particularly made mention.

20 Now I need not rehearse the matter; what I have said may suffice. Behold, the scriptures are before you; if ye will wrest them it shall be to your own destruction.

21 And now it came to pass that when Alma had said these words unto them, he stretched forth his hand unto them and cried with a mighty voice, saying: Now is the time to repent, for the day of salvation draweth nigh;

22 Yea, and the voice of the Lord, by the mouth of angels, doth declare it unto all nations; yea, doth declare it, that they may have glad tidings of great joy; yea, and he doth sound these glad tidings among all his people, yea, even to them that are scattered abroad upon the face of the earth; wherefore they have come unto us.

23 And they are made known unto us in plain terms, that we may understand, that we cannot err; and this because of our being wanderers in a strange land; therefore, we are thus highly favored, for we have these glad tidings declared unto us in all parts of our vineyard.

24 For behold, angels are declaring it unto many at this time in our land; and this is for the purpose of preparing the hearts of the children of men to receive his word at the time of his coming in his glory.

25 And now we only wait to hear the joyful news declared unto us by the mouth of angels, of his coming; for the time cometh, we know not how soon. Would to God that it might be in my day; but let it be sooner or later, in it I will rejoice.

26 And it shall be made known unto just and holy men, by the mouth of angels, at the time of his coming, that the words of our fathers may be fulfilled, according to that which they have spoken concerning him, which was according to the spirit of prophecy which was in them.

27 And now, my brethren, I wish from the inmost part of my heart, yea, with great anxiety even unto pain, that ye would hearken unto my words, and cast off your sins, and not procrastinate the day of your repentance;

28 But that ye would humble yourselves before the Lord, and call on his holy name, and watch and pray continually, that ye may not be tempted above that which ye can bear, and thus be led by the Holy Spirit, becoming humble, meek, submissive, patient, full of love and all long-suffering;

29 Having faith on the Lord; having a hope that ye shall receive eternal life; having the love of God always in your hearts, that ye may be lifted up at the last day and enter into his rest.

30 And may the Lord grant unto you repentance, that ye may not bring down his wrath upon you, that ye may not be bound down by the chains of hell, that ye may not suffer the second death.

31 And Alma spake many more words unto the people, which are not written in this book.