

# The Renewal of the Earth to Paradisiacal Glory

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The Saints have a work they must perform in order to prepare for the coming of Christ, who will renew the earth to a state of paradisiacal glory. In a very real sense, we are co-workers with the 'Lord in making the necessary preparations to usher in the millennium.

God's design, the prophet Joseph Smith wrote, is "to bring about the millennial glory." When the Lord's purposes are accomplished, the earth will "yield its increase, resume its paradisaean glory, and become as the garden of the Lord." (*Documentary History of the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 61.) But if this work is not done, the earth will be "utterly wasted" at Christ's coming. (D&C 2:3.)

To prepare for Christ's coming, the Saints need to establish the kingdom of God on earth, a kingdom patriarchal in nature. Wives and husbands need to be sealed to each other, children to parents, and generation to generation. Having established this divine society among the living, the sealing line will need to eventually extend back to Adam.<sup>1</sup>

The divine family order had its origin in heaven before the time of Adam. Abraham wrote: "... it came down from the fathers, from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundations of the earth...." Eventually, when this order is built up among the faithful, some of the glory of the celestial family to be experienced throughout eternity will be reflected in the patriarchal order on earth. Israel will have been gathered and Zion will have been established according to the pattern of the divine patriarchal order, and the earth will then be "renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory." (Article of Faith 10.)

The fact that the earth will be renewed to a paradisiacal state of glory implies that it was once in such a state. In order to understand this renewal, we must understand that before the fall, Adam lived in the presence of God with no veil between him and his maker. All things were in a state quite different from our present order of life. And except for the fall of Adam, "all things" that were created would have remained forever in the same state in which they were after the creation. (See 2 Ne. 2:22)

But all this was changed by the fall. God's glory was withdrawn, and life was reorganized on a temporal plane. (See D&C 29:31-32; 77:6.)

Joseph Smith stressed, however, that Adam's "transgression did not deprive him of the previous knowledge with which he was endowed relative to

the existence and glory of his Creator...." ( *Lectures on Faith*, 2:19.)

Think for a moment what this means. Even though he fell, Adam remembered life in his former paradisiacal state. What, then, did it mean to Adam when the Lord said: "... as thou hast fallen thou mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will"? (Moses 5:9.) What was redemption if not to be brought back, eventually, to a state of glory similar to that from which Adam fell?

After the fall, Adam desired to regain the presence of God with his posterity who would obey the gospel, and to see the earth redeemed to a state of glory. But to achieve these objectives, he and his righteous children had to be organized into a divine family order patterned after celestial society. He therefore called the patriarchs who had been ordained among his descendants, with his righteous posterity, to the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman. Presumably, Adam was concerned at this time with the organization of his righteous children into the divine patriarchal order. He also blessed them, Joseph Smith explained, because "he wanted to bring them into the presence of God." (*DHC*, Vol. 3, p. 388. )

This desire was shared by other great patriarchs and prophets. "In the first ages of the world . . . there were Eliases raised up who tried to restore the very glories," the Prophet Joseph declared, "but did not obtain them." Later, Moses "sought to bring the children of Israel into the presence of God, through the power of the Priesthood, but he could not." (*Ibid.* In regard to the effort of Moses, see D&C 84:19-24.)

Though these ancient patriarchs and prophets failed to realize their desire, the Prophet Joseph Smith explained that; "they prophesied of a day when this glory would be revealed," and he indicated that it would be in "the dispensation of the fullness of times, when God would gather together all things in one." (*DHC*, Vol. 3, p. 388.) This gathering includes the gathering of the Saints into the divine patriarchal order. When this is done, Adam's desire will be realized. Christ will come, and the earth will be renewed to a paradisiacal state of glory.

Joseph Smith, in speaking of the obligation that the Saints have of building the divine patriarchal order, said of our righteous dead: "We cannot be made perfect without them, nor they without us." (*Ibid.*, p. 389.) Again he explained: "It is necessary that those who are going before and those who come after us should have salvation in common with us; and thus hath God made it obligatory upon man." (*DHC*, Vol. 6. p. 313.)

The Prophet taught that the final judgments incident to Christ's coming will not be poured out upon the wicked until the divine patriarchal order is established. Before that time the Saints will receive the sealing ordinances in the

house of the Lord, "thereby making their calling and election sure."<sup>2</sup> (DHC, Vol. 5, p. 539.) The spirit of Elijah will be manifested to build up the (divine patriarchal) kingdom and place "the seals of the Melchizedek Priesthood upon the house of Israel." In this way all things we to be made ready. Then," he concluded, "Messiah comes to His Temple, which is Last of all." (DHC, Vol. 6, p. 254. This will be a preliminary appearance of Christ among the Saints before he comes in glory in the clouds of heaven.)

When Jesus comes, it will be to reign on earth as King of kings and Lord of lords through the instrumentality of the divine patriarchal order. "... we calculate to give the Elders of Israel their washings and anointings, and attend to those last and more impressive ordinances, without which we cannot obtain celestial thrones," Joseph Smith stressed. He therefore urged the Saints to build the Nauvoo Temple so that righteous men could "receive their endowments and be made kings and priests unto the Most High God." (DHC, Vol. 6, p. 319.)

But this is not all. By establishing the divine patriarchal order, the Saints will prepare for Christ's coming to renew the earth to a paradisiacal state similar to that which prevailed before Adam's fall. "When these things are done," Joseph Smith stressed, as he spoke of the work to be accomplished, "the Son of Man will descend." Speaking of the millennial conditions that will then prevail, he added: "We may [then] come to an innumerable company of angels, have communion with and receive instruction from them." (DHC, Vol. 3, p. 389.)

The Lord has revealed some of the transformations that will take place when the patriarchal order is established and Jesus comes in glory. The power of Christ's glory will consume the wicked and make all things that remain new. (See D&C 101:23-25) The earth will be transfigured according to the pattern that was shown to Peter, James, and John upon the Mount of Transfiguration.<sup>3</sup> God's "knowledge and glory" will "dwell upon all the earth." (D&C 101:25.) Revelations state that the earth will be "clothed with the glory of her God," and that Christ's glory will be upon his people. (See D&C 45:59; 84:101.) The enmity of man and of all flesh will cease. Because the fruits of the Holy Spirit--such as love, peace, and joy--are so abundantly manifested, peace and tranquility will abound. (D&C 101:26; Isa. 11:6-9.) The spiritual union between man and God will be perfected to the point that whatsoever any man shall ask, it shall be given ... him." (D&C 101:27.) Even before man calls, God will answer; and as man is speaking, God will hear. (Isa. 65:24.)

Several factors will make it so that Satan will not have power to tempt any man. For instance, all "corruptible things" will be consumed. The truth and light of Christ's glory will be manifested and spread abroad. Faith will increase, and righteousness will be established. Because of these and other reasons, the Lord will bind Satan during the thousand years.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, the faithful Saints will

receive the renewed earth for an inheritance. They will "multiply and wax strong," and their children will grow up without sin unto salvation. (D&C 45:58.) Since the corruptible things that cause man's physical body to deteriorate will have been largely destroyed, there will be no death, except that there will be a rapid change from the millennial state to that of the resurrection. (See D&C 101:24-25, 30-31.)

Finally, great knowledge will be revealed concerning the creation of the earth and the purposes of the creation, the history of all nations and peoples, laws, revolutions, and glories of the several spheres in the universe. But more important, the earth will "be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."<sup>5</sup>

From the indication of the scriptures, the millennium will be a glorious age in which great blessings of both spiritual and temporal nature will be given to man. The work of preparing for that great day, the Prophet Joseph Smith declared, is "a work that God and angels have contemplated with delight for generations past; that fired the souls of the ancient patriarchs and prophets." It is a work that "is destined to bring about the destruction of the powers of darkness, the renovation of the earth, the glory of God, and the salvation of the human family." (*DHC*, Vol. 4, p. 610.) This is the work that the Saints are engaged in as they strive faithfully to build up the divine patriarchal order on earth and to sanctify themselves in preparation for the coming of the Lord.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Smith taught that Adam cannot receive a fullness of glory until this family order is perfected and presented to Christ, who will present the kingdom to the Far, which shall be at the end of the last dispensation." (*DHC*, Vol. 4, p. 209.)

<sup>2</sup> In speaking of the doctrine of election in the flesh, Paul wrote that Israel has a legal claim to "the glory" of God. (see Rom. 9:4; also *DHC*, Vol. 4, pp. 359-360, where Joseph Smith discusses this passage.) That is, when Israel is organized according to the law of God, she has a claim to the glory of the celestial family, being an extension of that family to the earth. In accordance with this promise, Zion will be endowed in some measure with the glory of God before Christ comes in the clouds of heaven to consume the wicked and renew the earth. (See Isa. 4:5; 3 Ne. 20:22 and 21:25; D&C 45:67.)

<sup>3</sup> See D&C 63:20-21. The earth will still be a temporal sphere (D&C 77:6), but it will be transfigured by the glory that will be revealed, somewhat as Moses was transfigured, as recorded in Moses 1:11.

<sup>4</sup> See D&C 101:23-28; 1 Ne. 22:26; Rev. 20:1-3. Satan entices man through the corruption in the flesh. See 2 Ne. 2:28-29.

<sup>5</sup> See D&C 84:98; 101:32-35; 121:28-30; 2 Ne. 30:16-18; Isa. 11:9.