

FIRESIDE

August 16, 2009

Given by John M. Pontius

Heritage School Auditorium, Provo Utah

Approximately 500 in attendance.

JOHN PONTIUS:

OK, this has gone from intimate to intimidating! I have to tell you that this scares me a whole lot. I love the gospel, and I love the Lord Jesus Christ, and I love sharing it; but this scares me.

Shawn's here. He'll beat you up if you are mean to me! And there're so many people that I love here. Look at you: Lori, Terri my wife, Stephen and Jason; Dan, Matt, Alicia, all of you, I just love you. I'm so grateful to be here. It is indeed a miracle that I am here. I was so incredibly close to death in March, and I knew over a year ago that I would be giving this fireside. I guess it shouldn't surprise me to see so many people here. But it does! And I ask for an interest in your prayers, because if anything good comes of this, it's going to be as big a miracle as dividing of the Red Sea.

I want to tell you how this book, The Triumph of Zion came about. I had been praying for many years for a particular blessing, and I thought that I was asking for the greatest thing that a mortal could ask for. After quite a bit of time asking for this, the Spirit overwhelmed me one day and said, "That is a righteous request, and I will surely grant it. But there is something more wonderful that you should be seeking after." And I thought, "What could be more wonderful?"

And so I thought, and I prayed, and I really studied and tried to figure out what would be more wonderful than that. I finally arrived at something I thought would be, and I did the same thing: I fasted, and I prayed, and the Spirit said the same thing. It said, "There is something more important that you should ask for." And this basically went on for fifteen years. And some time ago, about two years ago, I had arrived at what I thought was again the greatest blessing that a mortal could ask for. I am kinda audacious, you see, and I figured that if there's a brass ring, I'm going to go for it. I don't see any reason not to! I don't see any place in the scriptures that says that would discourage me from seeking the greatest things that have been offered.

And so I knelt down and I said, "Father, this is the thing that I really want, for which I will dedicate my life and do anything you ask me to do." And the Spirit said back to me, "That is the greatest thing that you can ask for." And what I was asking for was to be able to enter into his presence in this life, and to ask for the privilege of being a part of the latter-day Zion. I wanted to be there when he came again. I wanted to be a part of the 144,000 who went out and gleaned the earth, to have the power of the priesthood in its fullest aspect; I wanted to see those atomic bombs trying to blow up Zion, and raise my hand to the square and turn them back, and say, "Yea, Lord", you know? And like I said, I'm a fairly audacious person. I just figured it could be done.

And so after the Lord said, “Yes, that is a righteous request,” then immediately I thought, “Well, I’m not exactly sure what Zion is going to be like.” I just asked for it, but I wasn’t exactly sure what I had asked for. And so I started studying everything I could find. And in the process of that, I concluded that the Zion that we are going to build in Jackson County, Missouri was going to be a translated city, like Enoch’s was. But I couldn’t find anything that just authoritatively said that.

In the meantime, I had made a friend of Joshua Mariano. Where is Joshua? Is he here? Joshua, stand up so everybody can see you. He had become an acquaintance of mine, matter of fact I met him for the first time tonight. I asked him in an e-mail if he would do some research for me. He’s a fantastic researcher, and has an amazing library, and those of you who are familiar with his work, he’s stunning! He cranks out more research than anybody that I’ve ever even heard of. And I asked him if he would look in his library, and see if he could find any authoritative statements that could link our latter-day Zion and the principle of translation. And he says, “I’ve never heard that; I doubt if there is anything, but I’ll look.”

And so he wrote me back about a month later and said, “I’m finding a few things, and I’ll let you know.” I think it was probably three or four months after that that he sent me a 254-page document—two hundred and fifty-four pages of authoritative quotes and scriptures and statements by Brigham Young, and John Taylor, and Joseph Smith the prophet, Orson Pratt, and it literally stunned me. I read through that, and it was such an overwhelming amount of information, and it all corroborated the original premise: That *our* Zion was to be a translated society.

And it stunned me, and the reason was that I am a student of the gospel. I am not a scholar of the gospel, but I am a student of it. And I had never read that; I had never latched onto that concept in an authoritative statement. And so the fact that there could be 254 pages of information to establish that principle was electrifying to me. Matter of fact, I sent the thing back to Joshua and said, “Joshua, would you please organize this by subject?” There was so much information that I had trouble categorizing it. And he was very kind, and he basically organized it, you know: Translation; translation of Zion and the Holy Priesthood of Zion; and he just laid out this amazing document.

And as I prayed and thought about it, the Spirit just worked on me and said, “You’ve got to write this into a book.” And so, I took an entire month off from work, and I started the work on this, and then basically worked on it for two years, to put this information that Joshua had found, into a book that could be read and understood, and something that could build your faith—my faith, I don’t mean to say it that way—that would make it so that *I* could understand what he had found; so that it would be a joy to read, and it would be a joy to grab hold of; and it wouldn’t be overwhelming, and it wouldn’t say to you, “Oh yeah, *somebody* will be translated but probably not you. Because as I read it and as I studied, the joy of it changed my world view. And it was so empowering to my soul, and so celestially enlightening to my view of the future, that I yearned and prayed and fasted, and was blessed to pen The Triumph of Zion.

It was originally called The Call of Zion. And the reason that I called it that was because of my sister-in-law. I was minding my own business one evening, and my wife Terri handed me the phone and said, “This is Faith. Tell her what you told me about Zion.” And so I said, “Hi, Faith!” and spent about ten minutes telling her what I just told you.” And she basically said, “Oh, that’s interesting. Let me talk to my sister again.” (laugh). And so I handed her the phone back and went back to what I was doing. The next morning the phone rang and it was Faith. She said, “John, I didn’t believe a word that you said last night. But I thought it was only fair, since it was a gospel subject, to pray about it. So I sat down and said, “Heavenly Father, I know that John is barking up the wrong tree – *but* just in case it’s true, I need to know.” And she said, “The Lord sent the Spirit to me and said, ‘Yes, it’s true, and you and your husband *must* make this pursuit!’” And she said, “I guess I have heard the Call of Zion!” (laugh) And I thought, “Oh, there’s a good name for that book!”

Then my publisher, who I’m sure is all-knowing . . . I wasn’t meaning that sarcastically! My publisher, who has done a great service to me for many years, thought that “The Call of Zion” could be misinterpreted to meaning me calling somebody to do something, and he wanted to avoid that concept. And so I changed it to “The Triumph of Zion, which actually better illustrates the message of the book. Because the Triumph of Zion is much different than what I thought it would be. As I went through Joshua’s research and as it springboarded me into other lines of thinking, I was impressed with the fact that not only is Zion to be a triumph in our day, but it is a possible triumph, that is something that is well within our grasp. It is something that is already here, already available, already lying before us. We’ve had the capability of doing this for one-hundred-seventy-something years, and that was what was in Joshua’s research was this huge body of information about not only what Zion is, but how to do it. And it was electrifying to me to realize what that message was inside there.

Now, one of the things that is kind of interesting about the true gospel of Jesus Christ is that it’s possible to have a tremendous body of truth and have big chunks of it sitting about, that we know and believe and love, and yet not have the chunks arranged properly. Does that make sense to you? I wish this were a more intimate group, and I could be down there, and you could say, “Yeah, yeah!” So, if you agree, nod OK? Thank you! And if you don’t have Zion, if you don’t have the lens of Zion to look through, it isn’t possible to entirely see the connection between those principles.

For example, if you want to turn with me to the 88th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants, verse 68; pardon me, let’s start at Section 50 verse 26. “He that is ordained of God and sent forth, the same is appointed to be the greatest, notwithstanding he is the least and the servant of all. Wherefore, he is possessor of all things, for all things are subject unto him, both in heaven and the earth. The life and the light, the spirit and the power sent forth by the will of the Father through Jesus Christ, His Son. But no man is possessor of all things except he is purified and cleansed from all sin. And if you are purified and cleansed from all sin, ye shall ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus, and it shall be done.”

OK, if I were to ask for a show of hands, I would guess that every single person in this room would raise their hand and say, “Yes, I believe that that is true.” If I ask for a show of hands and ask how many of you know how to pull that off, I included would leave my hand down—until a few months ago. This is because the promises there are so astronomical, and so beautiful and fantastic that it almost requires faith beyond human ability to understand how *I* could be the possessor of all things, and have all things subject to my priesthood power; to be able to go forth and be the servant of all. How could that happen? And yet it’s true—I know it’s true.

But if you have the lens of Zion to look through, and you understand that this society of people has that power and that priesthood inherent within them, if you are able to see that Enoch and his people had the ability to move mountains and to work miracles, and to defend their city by the power of God, and cause rivers to flow in the opposite direction, and all of the miracles that they performed, then they were a fulfillment of this scripture. And they had the same priesthood that we have! And so with the lens of Zion, we can look at these true principles and place them into their correct order.

And so, the concept of Zion is what I call “The Unified Gospel Theory.” Remember Einstein was trying to find the unified field theory? What that was, was a search for a single idea or single principle that, if you could understand and define it, would explain everything: It would explain time, it would explain gravity, it would explain electricity, it would explain the creation of the earth, it would explain how everything interacts; and not only explain how it interacts, but give us the ability to control it. And so, he was looking for this one principle that would give him a unified understanding: In other words, would take all the scattered understandings of science and unify them into a single concept. He never accomplished it. It still, even today, is an allusive thought.

But, the concept of Zion, is, in fact, the unifying principle of the gospel. It’s the thing, if you could hold it up and use it as a microscope and view these vast and glorious promises that the gospel is laying before us, that it makes those principles drop into their proper place in the mosaic of the gospel.

This is a little quote from the book: “When these glorious promises are viewed through the lens of Zion and translation, they fit with perfect alignment into the context of their own claims; which is to say that with Zion view, the language used in these scriptures can be interpreted literally, without pushing the promises into some post-mortal fulfillment. The language clearly promises these blessings to living mortals, and when we realize that these blessings have been repeatedly enjoyed by Zion-dwellers—a society of translated people—then these claims are literally true in the context of their own claims. Without an understanding of Zion, the promised glories are just too vast to fit into our commonly-held paradigm of the gospel as we know it. If the idea of Zion and the blessings it promises are not immediately in our thinking, we might incorrectly push the fulfillment of these promises into the Celestial Kingdom, because their vastness seems to fit better there than here.”

President Howard W. Hunter made this observation: “With God our Heavenly Father, all truth—whether profound or however apprehended—is circumscribed into one great whole.” How many have heard that term, “Circumscribed into one great whole”? If you have been to the temple you’ve heard it a lot. So what does it mean? See, this is the problem with me being up here and you being down there. There’s too much of a disconnect. What does it mean? Somebody shout it out. “All truth can be circumscribed into one great whole.” OK, say it again! It means we can obtain that glory now – true. There’s only one thing; it all fits into one great whole, and we, because we’re mortal (I think what you’re saying) breaking them out into a sequential event or into pieces of a puzzle like a mosaic, but they really belong into one great whole.

Another way to say this, another logical offshoot, is that God has done the same thing over and over again. When he created Zion in the past, he drew from this one great body of truth to create *that* Zion. He didn’t invent new things for Enoch’s Zion. He just simply drew from the gospel of Jesus Christ, and Enoch took those principles and that priesthood, and he created his Zion, using the principles that have always existed. When Melchizedek built his great city he used the same set of principles; it wasn’t something that was unique to Melchizedek. When the Nephite society built their Zion that lasted for 200 years, they used the same principles, the same gospel of Jesus Christ, the same priesthood that belonged to Melchizedek, and he drew from that great whole. In other words, there’s only one gospel of Jesus Christ. It doesn’t get reinvented for each dispensation. And the value of that realization, for me at least, is that we can go back and look at Enoch’s Zion, and we can say, “When we build *our* Zion, it’s going to be like that.” Does that make sense to you?

Elder Orson Pratt said, “The latter-day Zion will resemble, in most particulars, the Zion of Enoch. It will be established upon the same Celestial laws, will be built upon the same gospel, and be guided by continuing revelation. Its inhabitants, like those of the antediluvian Zion will be the righteous gathered out from all nations. The glory of God will be seen upon it, and his power will be manifest there, even as in the Zion of old. All of the blessings and grand characteristics exhibited in ancient Zion will be shown forth in the latter-day Zion.”

So there you have it. And that was the value of Joshua’s work. Because these guys understood this. They just said it over and over and over—hundreds of pages of it. And I have to say, I only used 10 percent of the quotes he gave me. There was so much of it that that book would be 500 pages long if I would have used everything he put in there.

So, another way to say it is that the Lord’s course is one eternal round. Have you heard that? What does that mean—that the Lord operates as one eternal round? I know it’s intimidating, but I have to promise you, I’m more intimidated than you are! (laugh) Yes, He’s the same yesterday, today and forever. And what He did with Enoch He did with another planet somewhere else. And what he’s doing with our latter-day Zion He did with Enoch. In other words, he’s just doing the same thing over and over and over. Why? Because, if something is true, it can’t get true-er. If it’s Celestial it can’t get

Celestial-er. If it's Zion, it can't get Zion-er. This is the only way it can work. It's the *best* way it can work. It's inspired, it's genius, and it's the workmanship of God.

So if it will work for Enoch, that's the way it will work for us. So if you want to know what *our* Zion is going to be like, read Third Nephi and read what they did; and that's what our Zion will be. Read Genesis Chapter 14 in the Joseph Smith translation, and that will tell you what Enoch's Zion was like. And the Book of Moses, and all those places where a Zion is talked about, and the characteristics are laid forth: They are not only talking about what they did with Enoch, they are talking about what *will* happen for us.

So, why are we concerned about this? What difference does it make anyway? It's actually a good question. Yes? Yes, excellent, you get a gold star. Would the ushers bring this lady a gold star? Oh I'm sorry, I must have left them home. She said that because this all must happen before Christ must come again. Yes Shawn? Yes, if it doesn't happen, the earth will be utterly wasted at his coming. Remember that? Front row please? I love that. How many of you feel the same way? He says the reason it's so important is because there's something missing in his heart. And there isn't anything wrong with you; this is the human condition. It is the condition of a righteous soul. Because you know—this is the reason I was searching for this, because I *knew*—the Spirit had whispered to me, “If Moroni can do it, you can, too.” And I know that is audacious, but it says, “Go boldly unto the throne of grace.” Right? And if the Brother of Jared had an experience—if I approached it in the same inspired way that the Brother of Jared did, then I could have those same blessings.

Matter of fact, Ether Chapter 4 says that, doesn't it? It says, If the latter-day gentiles will acquire the same righteousness that the Brother of Jared had, that I will show unto them all the things that I showed unto the Brother of Jared. And believe me, it's not just a matter of looking, because he stood face-to-face with the living Christ, and saw a vision of all things, which he penned into the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon. And if *you* stand there, you're going to have not only just the information that the Brother of Jared had, but you will have the privileges and the priesthood and the power and the revelation and the glory that he had. It isn't possible to be any other way. And so if it was possible for him—and the scriptures attest that it was—it is possible for us. And we *must* do it, as this sister says, *before* the Lord can come again.

My thought is, why haven't we? Well, the reason, in my opinion, is because we don't actually believe it's possible. Nobody shakes their head at that? There's a lot of people that what? Exactly that? OK, this brother says it's new and different, and nobody has really thought of this. And that's exactly right! And so my statement just got backed up by that. How can you believe something you have no idea exists? You can't. But the fact is that – who was counting these people for me? How many are there? There's 300 people here tonight! I was expecting 50. Well, his 50 and my 10—that's 60. And Ranelle warned me there was going to be a lot of people here, I was just expecting 50. And to be quite honest with you—to be bluntly honest with you—I have known these things for a number of years. And the Lord has *not* let me talk about them. And that is the hardest and the loneliest thing that I've ever experienced.

I talked to my wife, Terri about it. And she believed with me. OK, sorry, I obviously love my wife. She is my fellow dreamer, and my fellow Zion seeker-for-er. My fellow pilgrim. And she and I have acquired a unity in this belief, that there is a pathway. And the thing that I hope to do tonight is to open enough of a light so that you can look and say, “I know where my pathway to Zion is. I—fill in your name now—know where my pathway to Zion is.” That’s my goal. And so what I’m doing now is I’m trying to open the paradigm of Zion so you can say, “Yeah, I can see that might work, but how do I do it?” That’s what I’m hoping to do.

She says it seems to her that there has to be a *time* for Zion, that it isn’t a principle that is always available to all people. And this is true. But which dispensation are we in? We are in the dispensation of the *fullness of times*. We are in the “latter days”. We are the people who will be there when Christ comes again. Whose job is it to build Zion? Is it “time”? It is—for you personally—if the Spirit tells you that. It may not be. Your pathway may lead you somewhere else, and God bless you, and I’ll see you in the Celestial Kingdom. My purpose isn’t to say that every one of you must do this. That’s between you and your Savior. What I’m saying is that there *is* a pathway to Zion, that Zion must be built, that we are the people who will build it, and blessed are you if your inspired path leads you to Zion. And blessed are you if it doesn’t! Matter of fact, I think more blessed maybe, because you just go and watch from the sidelines. Maybe not! Maybe you will be out there wielding the mighty sword as a translated person, I don’t know. But at any rate, not everyone will walk this path, but the path *must be walked*.

OK, we got somewhere stuck on Zion must be built before . . . sorry! This is Moses Chapter 7 verse 62. “And righteousness will I send out of heaven, and truth will I send forth out of the earth . . .” --does this sound familiar? “. . . to bear testimony of my only begotten, His resurrection from the dead, yea, and also the resurrection of all mankind. And righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four corners of the earth unto a place where I shall prepare a holy city, that mine people may gird up their loins and be looking forth for the time of my coming, for *there* shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a new Jerusalem.”

So, here’s the order: Righteousness and truth will sweep the earth as with a flood. Can you see that happening? Can you see how many people are in this room? Matter of fact you resemble a flood, the way you go up like that. {laugh} “The elect will be gathered from the four corners of the earth.” Front row: (comment from audience) It’s two pendulums: The pendulum of righteousness is swinging this way, and the law of opposition says that the further it goes out, the pendulum of wickedness must go out the same distance. And so when Zion finally is established, wickedness will be at its all-time high. So what is he saying? He’s saying we’re over here. He just referred to it by talking about the other side of the equation. If A equals B, and he’s talking about A, then we understand that B is over here.

Don’t confuse me Shawn!

So then after the elect are gathered out of the four corners of the earth, and I guess I don't have time to talk about all this stuff—I know that I don't. Read the book when it comes out. I apologize that it won't come out until March. And I'm not here to promote this book. I'm here to glory in my Christ, and to tell you what he has done for you, and shout his name in praise.

And so the elect will be gathered out of the four corners of the earth, and a holy city—a new Jerusalem—will be built by the elect. The elect may “gird up their loins”, which means what? There's a metaphor in “girding up your loins”. There's two possible things. In the old times they wore a kind of wrap-around skirt, and if you're going to work in the fields or walk in the water to gather your nets, you take the back side of your skirt and pull it up in front, and tuck it in front: Gird up your loins so your clothes weren't dragging in the water. So the other thing is that it refers to taking courage; gird up your loins, take courage in Zion. And so we're going to work ourselves out in the service of God, with courage and dedication to do the works of the latter days. And then finally, according to Moses 7, the second coming will occur. So that's the order. And we can see it taking place.

Joseph Smith said this: “Zion and Jerusalem must be built up before the coming of Christ.” OK, that was the Prophet Joseph. Orson Pratt says, “The Christians of all denominations expect that he will appear in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. The Latter-day Saints expect this in common with all other Christians, but before he appears in his glory, he is going to build up Zion, and that is, Zion must be built up on the earth. And if there is not a Zion built up upon the earth before he comes, or in other words, if there never is to be another Zion built up on the earth, then he never will come.”

Did you hear that? If there never is a Zion built up, then he will never come. Why? There's no point! There's no point for two reasons. One is because the whole earth will be utterly wasted. And the other point is, he must come to Zion when he comes. That's what the prophesies say.

Well, of course! Exactly right! Until we are prepared . . . Yes, he can't come and institute a law that we aren't prepared to live. I'm not paraphrasing you exactly, but that's right. Elder McConkie said this, thank you: “Though the day of the Second Coming is fixed, the day for the redemption of Zion depends upon us. After we as a people live the law of the Celestial Kingdom; after we gain the needed experience and learn our duties; after we become—by faith and obedience, as were our fellow saints in the days of Enoch—after we are worthy to be translated, if the purposes of the Lord should call for such a course in this day, then Zion will be redeemed, and not before.”

Does that electrify you? He says, “. . . *after we are worthy to be translated*, then Zion will be redeemed.”

This gentlemen is saying there's a perception that we're afraid to covet “calling and election made sure”, that we're not supposed to do any of that, that we accept authority

and never look beyond that. Well, I'm not one that can judge what other people do. But I did that. And the fact of the matter is that the promises of the scripture are all personal. There isn't any promise relative to the Church that I know of—the Church is doing *exactly* what it supposed to do, exactly how it's supposed to do it, exactly on time—there isn't *anything* that you can find fault with in what the Latter-day Church is doing. Because it *is* Christ's true church, it *is* run by a living prophet, and it's doing exactly what it's supposed to do. So then why aren't we building Zion? Well then, that's because *we* as a people have not perceived that we're supposed to be. It's like the brother said in the back, how can you do something that you don't see.

This sister says, it doesn't stop us from individually seeking—that's correct. When you as an individual perceive a pathway to a greater blessing, then it would be your obligation to seek that. And what I am hoping to do is to put a bright light upon that path. And when you see that—if you see it, if you choose to see it, if it is your inspired destination for your life—then it will become a thrill to you. It will change your world view. It will change everything you thought you knew about yourself, your relationship to Jesus Christ, and to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It will change it! It will modify it to something that is so profound and so beautiful that it will stun you. It will change you from this moment until the day that you enter the presence of Christ. That's how empowering this concept of Zion is.

As I sat and wept and read what Joshua had produced, and did my own research, and marveled at what the gospel was offering me, and connected the dots of what the temple was saying—the promises of the priesthood, the promises of the endowment, the promises of the marriage sealing ceremony—and you take all of those words, and you tie them all together, it creates a mosaic tapestry of exquisite beauty, that you can't see unless you're shining the light of Zion on the piece.

The Prophet Joseph Smith said this: “Every saint has an equal interest in building up of Zion of our God, for it is after the Lord has built up Zion that he will appear in his glory. We all look for the appearing of our great God, and our Savior Jesus Christ, but we shall look in vain until Zion is built, for Zion is to be the dwelling place of our God when he comes. How then is the Lord to dwell in Zion if Zion is not built up? This question we leave to the Saints to answer. The salvation of the Saints, one and all, depends on the building up of Zion, for without this there is no salvation. For deliverance in the last days is in Zion, and in Jerusalem.”

Did you know that statement was ever made? I didn't, but there it is.

I'm going to – who said that? Back row . . . red dress. You know, I'm not going to be able to get into this discussion of Alma 13 tonight, which is about the greater and the lesser portion of the gospel. There is a lesser portion of the gospel, but it is the gospel, and it is true. And it is glorious, and it is saving, and it is everything that you hope it is, and it will get you to the Celestial Kingdom. But there is also a “greater portion of the word.” And that greater portion, you have to look at it with inspired vision. You have to specifically open your eyes to it. But it isn't meant to be invisible; it isn't meant to be a

mystery that remains mysterious. It is simply meant for those people who have eyes to see and ears to hear. And in I Corinthians it says, I actually have that quote in here somewhere; well, I'll just wait until I get to it rather than confusing myself.

And so, here's a statement by the Prophet Joseph: "Now the doctrine of translation is a power which belongs to this priesthood." I read that and I wept. There isn't anything else you can say about it. Is it possible, in this day, with the priesthood that we have? Do we have to wait for the prophet to say something else? Yes—if we are going to go back to Jackson County, Missouri and as the Church, or as a people build the city. The prophet is the only one who can declare that time. But can *you* pursue it? Yes. Because the triumph of Zion is a personal triumph—and that's what the burden of this book is. It isn't something that you have to wait for the prophet to tell you to do. Why? Because it's 254 pages of having already been told! It's because the doctrine of the priesthood *must* distill upon our souls; and when it distills upon your soul it's going to take you to the same place that it took Enoch. Why? Because there's only one gospel! Because there's *only one God*, and his course is unchanging, and it is one eternal round. Because he's going to do the same thing for you as he's done for any other person who's ever approached him. Is that thrilling to you? This is the part where you go like this – thank you. Sorry, I need a little feedback, otherwise all I can see is you frowning down there.

(Audience question). What about not being commanded in all things? Good point! He says, we're not commanded, we shouldn't be commanded in all things; and we *are* following the prophet in everything he tells us to do. However, when the Holy Ghost opens to our view an inspired pathway, which means that that if you can see it, by the light of revelation, it is appropriate for *you*. Do you understand that? Because, according to I Nephi 3:7, the Lord will not put you upon a path that he hasn't opened the way for you to obtain. "I know that the Lord will make *no commandment* unto the children of men, except he shall prepare a way for them, that they may accomplish the thing that he commandeth them." So, if you can see Zion, if the Holy Ghost, who is a member of the Godhead, opens your eyes to that, by divine law there must be a way for you to obtain it. Does that scare you? It should! Because if you can see it tonight, then I'll see you in Zion. You don't have a choice now—I'm sorry! I should have told you that before you walked in and sat down.

Brother in white shirt here . . . OK, let me restate this, because I doubt if this microphone picked you up. Boyd K. Packer came to a 12-Stake priesthood meeting, and said that the whole church basically was in trouble because we weren't following the prophet, and he didn't know how we were going to escape the judgments of God, that we had to jettison Babylon, and seek after the greater blessings in obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ. OK, so how do we do that? I mean, how many of you are *not* doing everything that you think you can do? How many are not working your assignments with all your might, mind and strength? How many of you are not holding family prayers? I mean, I assume that since you are sitting here tells me that you are the wise virgins; you are the purest of the pure and the greatest of the great. You are the righteous of the righteous. You are the tithe of the tithe of the people of the Lord. So, what aren't you doing? You have yet, perhaps—I don't mean to be judgmental—but if you are like me, you have yet to see

where all of this gospel of Jesus Christ is taking you. It's almost impossible—it *is* impossible, without specific revelation to you—to an individual—to understand that this gospel that you love and you live, is taking you to Zion.

Let me keep going. Elder McConkie made this statement: Now, think about this: “Raphael, whom we assume to have been Enoch, or someone from his dispensation, came and committed such keys as appertained to that day, meaning Enoch’s day. No doubt those included the power to use the priesthood to translate men, as will be the state of all those who abide the day of the Second Coming.”

(Read again) Bruce R. McConkie, The Millennial Messiah, page 119.

Is that thrilling to you?

This is John Taylor: “And then when the time comes that these calamities shall overtake the earth, those that are prepared will have the power of translation as they had in former times, and a city will be translated.”

Are you getting the picture? Did the brethren – *DO* the brethren understand about translation? Yes! Can they tell us that we have to go out and get it? *No*, they’re too busy telling us to not beat our wives! You laugh, but you know it’s true! Isn’t it? What are they telling us? “Don’t do pornography, it will hurt you. Don’t beat your wives, don’t abuse your children. Read the scriptures, hold Family Home Evening.”

Who said that? Talk real loud . . . louder. Yeah, in six talks in the last conference, she says, they told us to go to the temple more often. And there’s a very specific reason for that. It’s not only to do work for the dead; very important labor, but it’s in the temple that we learn our most precious and immediate truths, make the most pertinent covenants relating to Zion. I can’t call on you all – I apologize; we’ll be here all night, and I want to proceed, if you’ll forgive me.

This is still President Taylor: “If there was anything associated with the Melchizedek Priesthood, in all its forms, powers, privileges and blessings, at any time or in any part of the earth, it would be restored in the last days. For this is the dispensation of the fullness of times, embracing all other times, all principles, all powers, all manifestations, all priesthoods and powers thereof that have existed in any age, in any part of the world.”

OK, can I skip that now? Isn’t that an amazing thing? I need to quit saying that, I guess.

A Personal Triumph

Now let’s go onto the idea that Zion is a personal triumph. For the first part, let me just say this, that Zion will be the personal residence of Jesus Christ when he comes. He says, “I will come to Zion.” That means he will *be there*. That means that people who live in Zion must be changed and be worthy to live in the presence of Christ. Which means that there’s a fairly strict standard of conduct, right? What is it they do to you at BYU as a

student? What do they call those standards? Honor Code, OK? There's a pretty stiff honor code for Zion, right? Sorry, I'm going to run out of voice before this is over. I only have one kid left at home, so my shouting skills are way down. (She knows it's true.)

“The Lord once offered his people the chance to build that Zion from which the law shall go forth into all the world. They failed. Why? Because they were unprepared and unworthy, as it is the case with those of us who now comprise the kingdom of God. When we as a people are prepared and worthy the Lord will again command us, and the work will go forward, on schedule, before the Second Coming, and at the direction of the President of the Church. Until then, *none* of us need take any personal steps toward gathering to Missouri, to prepare for a landed inheritance there. Let us rather learn the great concepts involved and make ourselves worthy for any work the Lord may lay upon us in our day and time.”

That's Bruce R. McConkie, New Witness for the Articles of Faith, page 586. Isn't that cool? Zion is a personal pursuit.

This is Elder Penrose: “The time will come when the saints of the living God will purify themselves before him, until they will be fit to receive these blessings.” He was speaking of Enoch. “When the holy temple is built in Zion, God will take away the veil from the eyes of his servants, and the day is yet to be dawned when the sons of Moses and Aaron, having become sanctified to the renewing of their bodies, will administer in that holy house.”

I don't have time to go through the logical sequence of why that term “renewed in their bodies” refers to translation, but can you see that it has to be? This whole process is bringing us towards a great promise that has to do with a change in our physical bodies. Isn't that what translation is? Now, those of you who have been to the temple, I can't say any more about this, but just think of what you say at the veil. What's it about?

And now, let's go back. There's only one gospel, right? Let's go back to the Three Nephites. At what point in time did they request to be translated? Where were they? Who were they speaking to? They were talking to Jesus Christ. OK, if there's only one gospel, if there's only one way, if God never changes, if his course is one eternal round, and the Three Nephites made that request of Jesus Christ, then *that* is the way that it works. And it never works any other way. John the Beloved, who we know is translated, made the same request – of whom? Jesus Christ. That's the way that it works. And of all those people that we can go through scripture and find out that they were translated, they made the request personally of Christ. So why does the temple teach us to walk up to the veil and have an interview with Jesus Christ? Because, that's the process that brings us to Zion. Because you must part the veil and talk to him and personally ask him for a place within the latter-day Zion.

So what is the temple teaching us about? How to approach the veil and make a very specific request that we're taught about at the veil – make that request of the Lord. Now,

if you can connect those two dots, you will suddenly understand what the temple is about--what the endowment is about.

It's actually stunning when you think about it. And when you can connect those two dots, then you start working backwards, and you go, "OK, since that's my doorway to Zion—talking to the Savior, and asking him personally—then the temple is giving me very specific steps: From obedience--which we understand is the most basic law of the gospel, right—through a number of priesthoods, a number of endowments, a number of ordinations and covenants, and then finally a trip to the veil.

So, what is the temple about? Among many other things, the temple is about putting ourselves in a position where we can request, if it is our inspired and correct path—and it may not be! Nine of the twelve did not request translation. And we know that many people . . . what did Solomon ask for? It wasn't translation. What did the Brother of Jared ask for? He asked for sixteen stones to be lit up. What did Lehi ask for? Did you know that Lehi had a veil experience? Have you read I Nephi? I think it's the most-read book in the world, right? First Nephi, chapter 1? OK, where we get stuck on is, "I Nephi, having been born of goodly parents," and that's like, OK, good parents, love the parents. What is the message of I Nephi Chapter 1? "My father saw God sitting upon his throne. He came back to his bed and was overwhelmed. He told me about it, and I saw it myself, and then I had this vision, and it was of the Tree of Life . . ." Do you understand? This is what the Book of Mormon is about! And when Lehi was in the presence of Christ, what did he ask for? It wasn't translation. It was to have his family spared the destruction of Jerusalem.

So what I'm saying is, the temple isn't specifically teaching that we *must* ask for translation; it's specifically teaching us that we must get to the veil and *ask to be endowed* by something that is the proper and appropriate request for you when you get there. And if it worked this way for *every single prophet* of every book of scripture that we have, then this is the pattern of the gospel. This is the one eternal round. And if you follow the same inspired path that they followed, if you dedicate the same strength and dedication and willingness to sacrifice that they gave, and if we are willing to pay the price—and there is a price—you will go there. You will! And the law of God, the law of celestial everything says that if it worked for Enoch, it must work for you. It can't take you somewhere else. You can't obey the same laws that Enoch obeyed and the same gospel that Enoch loved, and the same Savior that Enoch worshipped, and have it take you into the presence of Buddha. It does not work that way. It will take you the same place that it took Enoch. You understand that? I'm sorry, the Spirit beat me up when I said that. But nevertheless, it's true. It can't take you somewhere else than where it took him.

OK, so here's a little cut from my book: "If any person comes to recognize Zion as a true principle, then that truth has distilled upon their soul by the power of the Holy Ghost. All truth comes from God. The mere fact that it *is* true, and that the Holy Ghost has borne witness to you, is *prima facie* evidence that the *time of Zion has come for you personally*;

because divine law stipulates that the Holy Ghost cannot set you on a path that is unobtainable.”

Would it be right of God to open your eyes to the Celestial Kingdom if it was not possible for you to go there? No. Of course, it requires the entire gospel course. It requires repentance, baptism, laying on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and it goes on and on and on down the very path that you have been on *your entire life*. But what may not have occurred to you until this moment is that there was never a statement that said you can only go to Point X—and that is eternal marriage or some imaginary stopping point. What it says, if you read the scriptures with an eye of faith, it says that you can go all the way to the same distance of every prophet of any dispensation has gone to! You can! The message of the temple is this; You can talk with angels. You can have visions, you can have miracles, you can have revelation, you *can* go to the veil, you *can* talk with Christ. You *can* part the veil and he’ll say, “What do you want?” and you’ll say, “I want *that*”, and he’ll say, “Come on in! I’ve been waiting for you!”

I have a statement in this book by Bruce R. McConkie that says, “The Lord delights in our importuning pleas to part the veil.” He *delights* in our heartfelt desire to part the veil. He stands ready at the other side of the veil to part it, when we simply turn the keys that we already possess, and the door that’s already before us, to claim the promises that we *already* possess. Is that thrilling to you? It stuns me. It stuns me. It’s the Aladdin’s lamp of mortality. It’s a sandbox full of diamonds that we sit and push our toy trucks around in, and think it’s just sparkly sand. It’s the Aladdin’s lamp that we just don’t rub, because we don’t value it enough to clean it up. And yet, when we rub it, the genie of Zion and translation, and speaking with the Lord through the veil, will open before you as surely as God exists. Because He can’t lie. He can’t set you upon a course that’s difference from anyone else in the entire body of his *whole creation* – not just this earth, but worlds without number.

“What can be more fantastic than this? There is, in fact, one truth that transcends even the glorious possibilities of Zion. And brief it is this: That it is within our capacity to establish Zion in our lifetime. Everything we need, every doctrine, every priesthood ordinance, every truth and power and principle that is required of a mortal to personally qualify for and enter Zion, exists today within the latter-day Church. Nothing is missing. Nothing remains to be revealed. No statement or proclamation of a living prophet needs to be made. It is all present now, in its complexity and its completeness. All we must do is see what we already possess with an eye of faith, believe that it is ours to claim, and then be willing to pay the price to do so.”

Then I go back into “The living prophet is the only one to tell us to build a city, but we can build Zion *in our own life*.” Do you believe that? This is the part where you go like t his {nod}. Yes, you need to do that. You need to acknowledge to your own soul that you believe it.

Let me ask you a question. I intended to talk for an hour-and-a-half. We're thirty minutes late getting started. Do you want to go on for thirty minutes, or do you want to stop now? OK. If you have an obligation that's going to take you out, bio con dios, and thank you.

Let's look at the 76th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants, verse 50. "And again, we bear record, for we saw and heard, and this is the testimony of the gospel of Christ concerning them who *shall* come forth in the resurrection of the just." OK now, this "them"—what period of time are we talking about? "Who shall come forth in the resurrection of the just?" We're talking about pre-millennial individuals. Do you buy that? Good.

"The timeline of our present consideration is thus before the resurrection of the just, because we are speaking of those who *shall* participate in that mighty event."

Going onto verse 51: "They are they who receive the testimony of Jesus, and believe on his name, and were baptized after the manner of his burial, being buried under the water in his name, and this according to the commandment. . ." OK, who are we talking about? They'd been baptized. Who are we talking about? The latter-day saints! Got that? OK, what are we talking about? We're talking about people who are in this Church, who are pre-millennial Latter-day Saints. OK?

Verse 52: "That my keeping the commandments, they might be washed and cleansed from all their sins, and receive the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands, of him who is ordained and sealed unto this power." OK, who are they? They've had all their sins washed away. What does that imply? We're back to the standard of conduct—what did you call that? The honor code! This is the honor code. It's a high degree of obedience and righteousness. Can we do it? Do you understand that the requirements for Zion are *less* than the requirements for entering the Celestial Kingdom?

That was thunder telling you . . .

It is! The requirement for Zion is less! Why? Because resurrection {exaltation} is a greater blessing; therefore, the requirements for resurrection {exaltation} are greater than that of Zion. It follows they're sequential. So, is it possible for you to require the worthiness to be translated? Well, if you have any inclination to believe that you can enter the Celestial Kingdom, you have to say, "Yes, it is!" Because you will pass through that requirement set, that standard of worthiness, somewhere on your way to the Celestial Kingdom. You may do that after this life. But it is also possible, and required, that *somebody*, some lots of somebodies, do it prior to their dying. They have to be mortals. Can you do it? *Yes!* It is not possible for the Lord to put you on a path that you cannot walk!

Verse 53: "And who overcome by faith, and are sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise." The brother in front here mentioned having calling and election made sure. Read Bruce R. McConkie, who talked extensively about the fact that being sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise is having your calling and election made sure. Which is simply this: That

when you acquire the degree of righteousness necessary for these blessings of which we are speaking, in a time previous to their possible fulfillment, the voice of God will come into your soul and say something as simple as, "You shall be exalted", to possibly visions, miracles, manifestations and angels singing glories in your bedroom—somewhere between there in that range of event, you will know that when you die, no matter what happens, you will be exalted. It's also called "The more sure word of prophesy." I can't go into it any more than that, but I'm sure you understand it.

So, we are talking about people who have been sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. Does it happen in this life? Yes! Absolutely. I bear testimony to you that hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saints have their calling and election made sure. They just don't say anything about it. They can't. The Holy Spirit restrains them. And most likely, I would guess that every third person sitting in this building has had an event that gives them that assurance. Is it possible? Yes. Does it happen? Yes. Can you obtain it? Yes.

OK. Section 88 – no I'm going to skip that . . . time constraints. Verse 54. We're still talking about these people: "They are they who are the Church of the Firstborn." A whole chapter in this book is talking about what is the Church of the Firstborn. And basically it is this: When a person has the privilege of speaking to Jesus Christ in this life, they become a member of the Church of the Firstborn. It's a society of people who speak with the Savior face-to-face. Is it possible? Yes. I bear testimony to you that it does happen in this life. I bear testimony to you that hundreds of thousands of people have had that event. And this is the group of people we're talking about. Can you do it? Yes. It is not possible for the Lord to put you on a pathway that is impossible for you to obtain.

"They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things." Now, we read Section 50, Verse 26—remember that? "He that is ordained and sent forth, the same is appointed to be the greatest, notwithstanding he is the least, and the servant of all. Wherefore he is possessor of all things, for all things are subject unto him." We are talking about people who have been in the presence of Christ, who have there requested the privilege of being a Zion-dweller, and as a result of that, were given Enoch-like powers: The translated gifts, the power to divide-- Did you know that Moses was translated? How did he get translated? What did he do at the burning bush? Who did he talk to? And on Mount Sinai? He was speaking with the Lord. At some point in that interview—we aren't told, but he probably said, "Lord, I'm an old man. I probably won't live long enough to see the Children of Israel to the Promised Land." And the Lord said, "Don't worry about it, Moses, my buddy. I'm going to change you so that you cannot die." And Moses was translated. So when he divided the Red Sea he wasn't doing it as a normal person; he was doing it as a translated person. And there is a whole set of gifts that follow translated people, that don't follow the typical priesthood-holder.

Verse 56 now: They are they who *are* priests and kings, who have received of his fullness and of his glory." OK, now the way to receive of the fullness of Christ—and once again I talk about this extensively in this book—is that is referring to the fact that we have been in the presence of God. And we've received of his fullness. In other

words, there's no veil parting us, separating us. So we have received of his fullness, we have embraced him, we have wept at his feet, he has shown us the vision of all, and we have made our request of him—whether it is translation or something else, doesn't matter—but we at that point have received of his fullness and of his glory.

“And are priests of the Most High, after the order of Melchizedek, which is after the order of Enoch” – does that ring a bell? – which is after the order of the *** Son.

So, who are we talking about? We are talking about here people who have walked the path to Zion. Does it sound astronomical to you? Does your belief light—you know the red warning light on your dash “Danger, add more belief! Danger, add more belief!” *** Is that light flashing before you? It did for me. And here's what will turn that light off. Here's the oil that will make that engine not seize, and that is the fact that *God will not put you on a path that is impossible for you to achieve!* Have you written that down yet?

I'm sorry, say it louder. Then do it! Is that a problem? Good for you, sister. You're on your way. Good job. One other comment, I saw a hand. Anyone?

Thank you, brother. And go back and read Ether Chapter 4. What does he say? He says, “When the gentiles cast off that veil of unbelief which has kept them in darkness, *then* will I show unto them all the things that I've shown unto the Brother of Jared.” See, the problem is not that we don't have the faith to do it, because we do. Every one of you believes that Enoch did what he did, that the Three Nephites did what they did. What you don't believe, maybe, is that it will happen to *you*. It's the “veil of unbelief”, it isn't a lack of faith. And what has been a struggle for me is to take my faith that these things are true, and overlay it with the belief that it applies to *me*. And when you do that, when you get your faith and your belief in perfect alignment, then you will march right up boldly to the throne of grace, and you will make this request of the Lord, and he will part the veil and say, “Well done! Enter into my rest.”

Do you feel the burn? Do you feel that?

{audience comment} He says, without faith it is impossible to please God. He is a rewarder of diligence to them who diligently seek him. And what it is to diligently seek God? Answer that yourself. The temple tells us. We make five covenants, and if you fulfill those five covenants you will diligently seek Him. But, here's the caveat to all that: If you're seeking Him in the Celestial Kingdom, that's where you'll receive Him. If you're seeking Him in this life—I'm going to start crying here—do you understand that? If you seek him in this life, if that's where your belief is motivating your faith, empowering your faith, then that's where you will receive him. You can't jump over a river that's wider than you can see the other ground. If the other ground for you is “this life”, then you can easily leap over that. If you think it's the next life, then you're seeking something that's so far beyond us, that your faith really can't lay hold of that. It isn't conceivable to me.

Besides that, I think that when we did there's kinda like some software in the eternal computer that says, “OK, he's dead, draw him ***, show him this experience, stand him

here, sit him down, introduce him to friends, give him a new job, and shove you outside the other side of the mill, and you go. And the software that operates the eternal computer of mortality, that engages the gear of divine law, says that if we seek Christ in *this life*, as the temple tells us we can, then we will obtain Him in this life.

We're really getting low on time. {Audience comment}: Is sanctification the end of the gospel unified theory? Yes. Sanctification is one of those words that can be applied to about ten different concepts. The furthest application of the principle of sanctification in this life is, as the temple teaches us, to request a parting of the veil and entering into the presence of God; and then once you're there--if it's your inspired purpose--to request a place in Zion.

We're almost out of time. I want to talk about the mystery of Godliness. Verse 58: "Wherefore, as it is written, they are gods" – small g – ". . . even the sons of God." And I might add, this is a personal insertion, *daughters* of God. How do we know that? The temple teaches us that there isn't anything that happens to a man that does not also happen to a righteous woman. The whole process is the same. And where there is a difference, the women have the better deal. Do you understand that?

OK, so when you follow this pathway, which the temple teaches, which this scripture is teaching, which we've been talking about all night, and you have this experience with Christ and become a Zion-ite, then you are a god (with a small g). Why is that? It's because we have been in the presence of God, we are worthy to stand in his presence, and we have received of his fullness. We have the fullness of the priesthood, which is mentioned several times in the temple, right, remember that? You'll be called back to get the fullness? And therefore, we then become god-ly. We don't become gods, because that's somewhere down the line. N

Now here is a statement by Orson Pratt. "Speaking of the 144 thousand which will begin from Zion and go out from there" – so they're going to be us. We will be the 144 thousand. "They", the 144 thousand, ". . . had a particular inscription in their foreheads. What was it? It was the Father's name. What is the Father's name? It is God," – with a capital G – ". . . the being we worship. If, then, the 144 thousand are to have the name 'God' inscribed in their foreheads, will it simply be a plaything or something that has no meaning, or will it mean that which the inscription specifies. They are indeed, gods."

Why is it, then, that verse 27 says, "Wherefore he is possessor of all things, and all things are subject unto him?" Because they are g-o-d-s.

Yes, hand? Orson Pratt, journal of discourses, volume 18, page 243.

OK, John Taylor said this, quoting John the Beloved: "And I looked, and lo and a Lamb stood on Mount Zion with the 144 thousand, having the Father's name written in their foreheads. Their Father's name – bless me! That is God! Well done for Mormonism! 144,000 gods!" That's John Taylor.

Now going onto Verse 56 in Section 76, “Wherefore all things are their’s, whether life or death, or things present or things to come, all are t heir’s, and they are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” Now here is an interesting question: Can a resurrected person die? This is the part where you go like this . . . No! A resurrected person cannot die. Therefore this cannot be talking about resurrected people. Because a resurrected person does not have the option to die. And these people, “All things are theirs, whether life or death.” That means that a translated person can fulfill their assignment and go, “I am done, Lord, I’m ready to go on with my life, I’m done being translated, and they die. They’re changed, their body does whatever does for a translated person, and they go on.

So these are not resurrected people. “All things are their’s, whether life or death, or things present or things to come. *** Think back to the temple. What’s the first thing that happens that happens in that long temple thing? We see a movie about what? Why does it show us the creation over and over. We get it – six creative periods, one period of rest, why do we have to see it over and over again? It’s because when we enter into the presence of Christ, according to the pattern. This is what has always happened! Read the accounts that we have in detail of God appearing to somebody, and He shows them a vision of all things from the beginning of time to the end of what He chooses to show them. This is the reason Moses wrote Genesis. This is the reason I Nephi includes all of the stuff it does in the 11th, 12th, and 13th chapters of I Nephi. This is the reason that Mahonrimoriancomer, the Brother of Jared, wrote the greatest vision that has ever been recorded and put to paper – gold plates in his case – because he *saw it*. Moroni saw our time. The Brother of Jared saw it. All these people saw this vision. And if it happened to them, it will happen to us, because God’s process is one eternal round.

So, why does the endowment – *the endowment*, think about it – start with a movie of the creation? It’s because when you walk into the presence of Christ, you’re *endowment* will begin with a vision of the creation of the earth, and go on from there. Do you see the beauty of this thing? When you start to connect, when you look through the lens of Zion, all these drop into place. It’s an amazing thing.

So, going on with Verse 60: “And they *shall* overcome all things.” OK, we’ve got g-o-d-s who are yet going to overcome all things. Now how is that possible? It’s because they are translated, and a translated person has not overcome death. They are still mortal. So they haven’t overcome all things. They *shall* overcome all things. So who are we talking about here? Translated people. But you can’t see that without looking through the lens of Zion.

Verse 61: “Wherefore, let no man glory in man, but rather let him glory in God.” Now, why would he say that? Isn’t that an interesting statement? Here we have gods who shall overcome all things, and he says, “Let no man glory in man”, because these people are men. They’re mortals. “Let no man glory in their translated state, but rather let him glory in God, who *shall* subdue all enemies under his feet.” Because this is still pre-millennial.

Now we're going to go to the future here. "They *shall* dwell in the presence of God and His Christ forever and ever." So it's pre-Celestial Kingdom, it's pre-millennial, it's pre-resurrection, it's pre-Second Coming. And yet we have g-o-d-s who are going to do these amazing things. We have the 144 thousand. Are you getting the picture? Pre-millennial. "They *shall* dwell in the presence of God and His Christ forever and ever. They are they who He *shall* bring with Him when He shall come in the clouds of heaven to reign upon the earth" – so we're still pre-Second Coming-- ". . . These are they who *shall* have part in the First Resurrection" – pre-First Resurrection ". . . and who *shall* come forth in the resurrection of the just."

Now we return to the "are's" – to the present time. "These are they who *are* come unto Mount Zion." Do you need any explanation about that? Does that thrill you? Who are we talking about? See, the 76th Section is largely billed as a vision of the Celestial Kingdom, and it is! But it also is a vision of Zion.

{Audience comment} The 144 thousand will be 12 thousand from every tribe, which means that some of the tribes will necessarily come from Enoch and his Zion. They will be joined together and form that combined body. 144,000 *translated people* will leave the city of New Jerusalem to go out and gather the people out from among the war-torn and battling nations of the earth. And the reason they must be translated—it's all in the book—will be because they will not be able to survive the horror and the destruction and the onslaught and the bombs and the guns and the open warfare against Zion that they will have to survive, in order to gather these people home. They will go by the power of God, which means they will take one step in Zion, and the next one will be in Africa, and they will go to the people they are assigned to. They will teach them, prepare them for the ordinances, take them by the arm, as the scriptures says, one of a city *** two of a family, and they'll return without even taking off their shoes—without haste—to Zion. Because they'll take one step in Africa, and one step in the New Jerusalem. They'll take them to the Holy City and introduce them to Christ, and then they will be translated, they will become part of the 144 thousand, they will be sent out perhaps within a day or so to go and do that work. So these people will be gleaning the earth and gathering to Zion the final gathering!

What a day that will be! Can you imagine doing that? Jesus Christ will come up to you and say, "Brother John! I have some people in the darkest part of the Congo, who love me. Go and bring them home. And me and my wife will lock arms, and we'll take one step from the presence of Christ and we'll be in the Congo. And we'll gather those people home, and we'll work miracles, and we'll command the waters to part and the fires to cease, and we'll raise the dead and heal them, and teach them with the open arm of God, and we'll bring them home to Zion rejoicing. That's the 144,000!

Do you want to be there? I do. Do you understand why, after fifteen years of searching, this was the thing that I was taught was the most glorious thing that a person could request in mortality? Do you understand that? What a thrilling thing that is. How I rejoice in that! How I rejoice in my Savior, and this great plan, this gospel that is so vast that babes can understand it, and geniuses can barely see it! That we can sit here and talk

about and rejoice and rejoice and rejoice in, what the possibilities are endless for us! How glorious this is! And how grateful I am – OK, that did it. Now I can't even see my paper.

{Audience question} Absolutely. I just said I'm going to lock my arm with my wife and we're going to go to the Congo. I was kinda hoping for Paris, but wherever He sends us.

“These are they who are come unto Mount Zion and unto the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Place, the holiest of all.” In the midst of this war-torn world of atom bombs and death and a third part of the planet being destroyed, and a third part of all the seas being destroyed, a third part of all the animals dead, a third part of all mankind dead, with stars falling from heaven, and all the things that the Book of Revelation teaches us will happen, we will be in Mount Zion, the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Place, the Holiest of All!

Ya comin'? {Audience} I like that! That was better than a nod!

“These are they who have come unto an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of Enoch, and of the Firstborn.”

We're out of time. Brothers and sisters, thank you so much for allowing me this opportunity. Thank you, Father in Heaven, for allowing me to live long enough to give this message. It almost didn't happen. And He told me almost a year-and-a-half ago that I would have the privilege of this day. And it's so wonderful. I was expecting 50 to 100 people! And here we are almost 300 of you.

I love you. Thank you so much for your faith. Thank you for your belief. Thank you for allowing me to share this part of the gospel with I you. And, you always had it. I haven't said anything you didn't already know. Did you realize that? I haven't told you anything you didn't already know. All I did was taken what you already knew and rearranged it, connected it.

I want to bear you my testimony that Jesus lives. I love Him. I know that he is my – *my* – Savior. And He has delivered me, both from the grasp of the grave, and from the pains of the things that I have done wrong in my life. He has saved my soul. He has redeemed me and brought me back into the presence. And I love Him, and I am so grateful for this gospel of Jesus Christ. I know that it is true. I know that this is the true Church. But much more importantly than anything that implies, I know that it is within *my* power to seek and obtain Zion. And I hope that now, you have that same testimony: That it is within *your* power to seek and obtain Zion. Accept no substitutes. Don't go for the store brand. Don't believe anything less. Don't bargain-shop God. Don't get the Brand X. Don't believe that you are limited somehow to living out your life as just a 100 percent tithe-payer. As wonderful as that is, there's a lot more. I bear my testimony that these things are true, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

RANELLE WALLACE:

I want to thank you all for sacrificing your time and coming out here tonight. I want to thank the Heritage Schools for providing this facility, for letting such a huge crowd come out of the chapel into a very large auditorium. I will not be surprised if we do not see this work roll even faster in the next 30 days. Please let's get active. Faith is about action, not just believing. Thank you, John, for believing. Thank you, Josh, for all the research that you've done. The many dedicated hours to begin the process of the New Jerusalem. So much work is happening that very few of you are aware of. And so what we'd like do is close with a closing prayer.

John . . .

JOHN PONTIUS:

Thank you, Ranelle. I think it's really important to add a P.S. to the P.S. I do *not* invite you to follow me. I'm not the leader; President Monson is. I want to keep in touch, and I think Ranelle's idea is great, but I'm not the source. I'm not the light. I'm not the guru, I'm not anything. I'm a dumb guy who stumbled into some amazing principles, and who share with you this great hope. But follow the prophet. And follow your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I'm not anywhere in that line. So, I appreciate you, and I thank you Ranelle, and I know she entirely agrees with what I am saying. And if I can help or, you know, anything that I do, then my life is Christ's and I'm one with you in that. But please, don't go home and say, "Oh my gosh you need to see what . . ." because Brother Pontius is not doing anything. Brother Pontius is pursuing Christ, and that's what you should do, too. So, thank you very much.

Closing prayer: