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The Blessings and Mission of the Seed of Abraham

One night in ancient times three horsemen were riding across a desert. As they crossed a dry riverbed, out of the darkness a voice called, “Halt!” They obeyed. The voice then told them to dismount, pick up handfuls of pebbles, put the pebbles in their pockets, and remount.

“If you have done as I commanded,” the voice then said, “tomorrow at sunup you will be both glad and sorry.”

The horsemen rode on. When the sun rose, they reached into their pockets and found that the pebbles had been transformed into diamonds and other precious stones. Just as they had been warned, they were glad they had taken some pebbles but were sorry they had not taken more.

In this tale, the quantity of pebbles is everything. But in real life, the quality of the pebbles we pick up on our journey is what’s most important. I pray that we may identify which pebbles are of greatest worth. When we understand who we are, identifying those pebbles becomes easier.

And when we know who we are, we are empowered to act in accordance with the potential within us and to avoid deception. The father of all lies—Lucifer, the great deceiver—would have you believe otherwise.

Rightful Heirs

To avoid being deceived, I have found great protection in personal revelation I received when I was only 17 years old. That personal revelation is called my patriarchal blessing. In that blessing I have found the answers to some of my most profound questions.

I would like to share one example. When faced with a choice, my blessing counsels me, I am to harmonize that choice with the teachings of my parents, leaders of the Church, and the scriptures. Otherwise, because the world’s temptations are both camouflaged and enticing, I could be deceived.

Another way my patriarchal blessing has helped me is by telling me who I am. I testify that you and I are the seed of Abraham and chosen

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members of the house of Israel. This great truth means we are rightful heirs of all that the Father has. It also means we are heirs of Abraham. In the book of Abraham, we get a glimpse of who Abraham was and therefore who we are.

“Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones;

“And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the



midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born” (Abraham 3:22–23).

Abraham was “chosen.” When the scriptures say that “many are called, but few are chosen” (D&C 121:40), I believe that obedience and faithfulness are what cause those who are “called” to become “chosen.” Many are called, but few are faithful and obedient. God says to Abraham that he was one of the great and noble ones because of his obedience before he was born (see Alma 13:3).

Not only do we see our father Abraham in the verses above, but we see ourselves as well. The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “Every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of the world was ordained to that very purpose in the Grand Council of heaven before this world was. I suppose that I was ordained to this very office in that Grand Council.”¹

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) said to young men: “You have been born at this time for a sacred

Because we know who we are, we must act accordingly. There are places we can never go. There are websites we can never visit. There are thoughts we can never entertain. There are impure practices we can never be part of.

and glorious purpose. It is not by chance that you have been reserved to come to earth in this last dispensation of the fulness of times. Your birth at this particular time was foreordained in the eternities.”²

Sisters, do not think you are any less exceptional. I testify that all of you were there in the Grand Council and that you are part of the great and noble ones we learn about in Abraham chapter 3.

Who is Abraham? He is an ancient prophet and the father of many nations. But he is much closer than that to me. He is my grandfather. I know that fact by reading my patriarchal blessing. Abraham is your grandfather too. If you read your patriarchal blessing, you will see that you too are of his lineage.

If you don't have a patriarchal blessing, prepare for it and get it. Our Heavenly Father has some amazing things He wants to share with you. One of the greatest things is the knowledge that you are the seed of Abraham.

Our Mission

Jesus Christ, Jehovah of the Old Testament, promised Father Abraham specific blessings.

“And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations.” Then follows the part that talks specifically about you and me and our mission: “And thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed [us] after thee, that in their hands [our hands] they [we] shall

bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations” (Abraham 2:9).

Why is it so important to our Father in Heaven and the Savior that we bear this priesthood unto all nations? Because “this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. . . .

“And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh” (D&C 84:19, 21).

Without the ordinances of the higher priesthood, received in the holy temples of God, we will never return home to Father. We do missionary work to take the priesthood and the temples to the world. When President Thomas S. Monson called for more missionaries during general conference in October 2010,³ he was echoing words the Savior uttered thousands of years ago to Abraham, our father:

“And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father;

“And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee

(that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal” (Abraham 2:10–11).

Blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant

The covenant God made with Abraham blesses us in at least four ways:

1. We are blessed through Jesus Christ, who came through the lineage of Abraham.
2. We are blessed through the priesthood conferred upon Abraham and his descendants.
3. We are blessed through the scattering of Israel, by which the blood of Israel was sprinkled among the nations. Thus, the nations partake of the leaven of righteousness on condition of repentance and are entitled to the promises made to the children of Abraham.
4. We are blessed “that after [Abraham's] time all who embraced the gospel should be called by his name, . . . should be numbered among his seed, and should receive the Holy Ghost.”⁴

Everyone who is a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a descendant of Israel either by bloodline or adoption. If you magnify your callings and receive



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kingdom, and the elect of God.

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

“For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me;

“And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father;

“And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father’s kingdom; therefore *all that my Father hath* shall be given unto him” (D&C 84:33–38; emphasis added).

This is the promised inheritance: “all that [the] Father hath,” the ability to be like Him. By making and keeping sacred covenants, we will receive all that God has, and He will allow us to return to live with Him the kind of life that He lives.

God has allowed us, through His love and grace, to enter into a sacred covenant with Him, the Abrahamic covenant, which includes the baptismal, priesthood, and temple covenants necessary for exaltation. These covenants and associated blessings flow today through the house of Israel.

We are the house of Israel. We are the seed of Abraham. We are the covenant people of God. Because we know who we are, we must act accordingly. There are places we can never go. There are websites we

all of the ordinances offered by our Father in the temple, you are entitled to all the promised blessings—the inheritance. What is promised to the faithful, obedient seed of Abraham, the inheritance received together by a worthy priesthood bearer who magnifies his calling and a worthy woman who magnifies her calling?

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

“They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and

can never visit. There are thoughts we can never entertain. There are impure practices we can never be part of. Those things are not worthy of who we are.

Precious Pebbles in Our Path

Sometimes as we move through our journey here on earth, we underestimate the value of the precious pebbles Heavenly Father places in our path. To help us know which pebbles are of most worth, He has given us fasting, prayer, and scripture study. He has placed living prophets on the earth to guide us. He has given us patriarchal blessings. He has sent His Only Begotten Son to pay the price we can't pay, to atone for what we can't atone for. He has provided the plan of happiness. He has told us who we are.

Sometimes the pebbles seem small and insignificant. When He says fill your pockets, we sometimes hear another voice say, "Don't worry. They are only pebbles. They will slow you down. They will be heavy and cumbersome to carry. They're not worth the hassle. Besides, if they are that important, your friends will have some extras."

Those who follow that other voice often wander in strange paths that promise excitement and thrills but

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always deliver hollow, cheap, and regretful consequences. Brothers and sisters, now is the time to prepare to meet God. Now is the time to act according to the knowledge He has given us.

Because of the goodness of God, the important things "are made known unto us in plain terms, that we may understand, that we cannot err; . . . therefore, we are thus highly favored, for we have these glad tidings declared unto us in all parts of our vineyard" (Alma 13:23).

As we wander in this wilderness below, the pebbles we gather will be transformed, and on that glorious,

light-filled morning when we see Him again, the precious gems we possess will give us rightful entry into His presence. May we be wise enough and diligent enough to accept, understand, and apply all that the Father has prepared for us. ■

From a devotional address, "Out of the Wilderness into the Light," given at Brigham Young University–Idaho on March 1, 2011.

For the full address, visit web.byui.edu/devotionalsandspeeches.

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 511.
2. Ezra Taft Benson, "To the 'Youth of the Noble Birthright,'" *Ensign*, May 1986, 43.
3. See Thomas S. Monson, "As We Meet Together Again," *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 5–6.
4. See Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. (1954–56), 3:246–47.

