

## The Arizona Temple

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April 16, 1975  
7th Session

We are assembled in a session where the Spirit of the Lord is present. We are not alone here. If we are in tune with what is going on, our hearts are rejoicing abundantly at the manifold blessings that the Lord has poured out upon us as a people.

If I may have the guidance of that Holy Spirit I shall now say some things about the promises made to the ancient prophets which have now been planted in our hearts. I have planted in my heart what I consider to be the choicest and most precious promise that has been given in any age. This promise was given to Abraham, renewed to Isaac, and then given again to Jacob. It is the promise of eternal life that grows out of Celestial marriage.

Celestial marriage is the gate to heaven. Celestial marriage is the door to eternal life in our Father's kingdom. Eternal life is exaltation. It is glory and honor and dominion forever in the realms ahead. It consists of the continuation of the family unit.

Now this promise was made first, as far as our immediate concerns are involved, to Abraham; it was renewed to Isaac, and then it was renewed again to Jacob. In our dispensation, as part of the restoration of all things, the Lord sent a holy angel from Abraham's dispensation to confer upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple the same thing that the ancient prophets and the ancient patriarch had. This holy being told these brethren that in them and in their seed all generations after them would be blessed, which is the same promise given to the ancient patriarchs. Those of us who are familiar and acquainted with the ordinance of celestial marriage, either having participated in or heard the ordinance given, are aware that the blessings of these ancient brethren, the promises given to them, are renewed to each of us at altars in the house of the Lord. In my judgment, this is the supreme and crowning purpose of a house of the Lord.

I have in my possession a very choice record that tells some of the dealings of the Lord with some of my ancestors; I have here a conversation that some of my progenitors had on the subject of celestial marriage. It says:

And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what 'good shall my life do me? (Genesis 27:46.)

This is a conversation about celestial marriage. Heth was the son of Canaan, who was the son of Ham. Here is a problem of whom Jacob shall marry.

And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban, thy mother's brother.

And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham. (Genesis 28:1-4.)

In our day the Lord said this to Joseph Smith:

Abraham received all things, whatsoever he received, by revelation and commandment, by my word, saith the Lord, and hath entered into his exaltation and sitteth upon his throne.

Abraham received promises concerning his seed, and of the fruit of his loins—from whose loins ye are, namely, my servant Joseph—which were to continue so long as they were in the world.” Here is the glorious promise to all of Abraham's seed: “And as touching Abraham and his seed, out of the world they should continue; both in the world and out of the world should they continue as innumerable as the stars; or, if you were to count the sand upon the seashore ye could not number them. (D&C 132:29-30.)

Now, we are the descendants of Abraham; we are the children in whose hearts the promises made to him have been planted. We have a revelation which says: “... I will reveal unto you the priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet,... And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers... (D&C 2:1-2.) These promises have been planted in our hearts.

This promise is yours also, because ye are of Abraham, and the promise was made unto Abraham; and by this law is the continuation of the works of my father, wherein he glorifieth himself. [And then the great exhortation:] Go ye, therefore, and do the works of Abraham; enter ye into my law and ye shall be saved. (D&C 132:31-32.)

We are the children of the prophets. We have all of the blessings that God offered or gave to the prophets, and these blessings center in temples. We build temples so that we can enter into the ordinance of celestial marriage. We build temples so that by the goodness and grace and love of God we can extend our arms out and put them around our ancestors, who also are of the house of Abraham, and offer to them the blessings of the gospel on a vicarious basis.

The promises are planted in our hearts. That which is planted has to grow, and mature, and bear fruit; and the fruit is eternal life. The planting in our hearts is the beginning, and then if we go forward and do the works of Abraham, the tree grows, the seed takes root,

fruit grows on the tree, and the fruit is white above all that is white and precious above all that is precious.

This is a family church. Families are the most important thing in the world. The glory and wonder of all this is that it is true. There is nothing quite like the fact that this work is true. Because it is true, it works, and because it is true we can inherit the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob which may God grant. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.