

A Mighty Change of Heart (<http://mightychangeofheart.com>)

"And now behold, I ask of you, my brethren of the church, have ye spiritually been born of God? Have ye received his image in your countenances? Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts?" Alma 5:14

Chapter 17 – The Promise

CHAPTER 17

THE PROMISE

*“Seek not for riches but for wisdom; and behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich. **Behold, he that hath ETERNAL LIFE is rich.**” (D&C 11:7)*

In the foregoing chapters we have discussed at great length one idea. That one idea was that it is possible for the Lord to make known to an individual that his sins are forgiven. In the chapter on “synonyms” we discovered that it is called by at least a dozen different names. Let’s refer to it as the “born again” experience. It represents the Lord accepting the baptismal ordinance unto an actual remission of sins. The person knows that his sins are forgiven for the Lord reveals it to him through the power of the Holy Ghost. Now there is one thing that we should understand. The Lord has the final say on all of the ordinances and all of the rest of the things that we do in life as to whether they are acceptable to Him or not. He is the final judge. He said it as follows:

And verily I say unto you, that the conditions of this law are these:

All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into and SEALED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by REVELATION and COMMANDMENT through the medium of mine anointed whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power are of no EFFICACY, VIRTUE OR FORCE in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all CONTRACTS that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead. (D&C 132:7)

What does it mean to be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise? It is really very simple. It is the promise of Eternal Life. It is recorded thus:

Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you who have assembled yourselves together to receive his will concerning you:

Behold, this is pleasing unto your Lord, and the angels rejoice over you; the alms of your prayers have come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and are recorded in the book of the names of the sanctified, even them of the celestial world.

Wherefore, I now send upon you another Comforter, even upon you my friends, that it may abide in your hearts, even the HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE; which other comforter is the same that I promised unto my disciples, as is recorded in the testimony of John.

This comforter IS THE PROMISE which I GIVE UNTO YOU OF ETERNAL LIFE, even the glory of the Celestial kingdom. (D&C 88:104)

It is apparent from the above revelation that for those who were assembled that day the promise of eternal life was given. Of all the goals that should fire the imagination of the Latter-Day Saints, this one should. Can you imagine the Lord saying to you? “I promise you eternal life.” That is exactly what he said to those that were assembled that day. Nephi gave us a strong indication of what we must do in order to receive this promise. He indicated that after a person had been baptized and forgiven of his sins by fire and the Holy Ghost that he was now on the straight and narrow path.

And then are ye in this straight and narrow path which leads to eternal life; yea, ye have entered in by the gate; ye have done according to the commandments of the Father and the Son; and ye have received the Holy Ghost, which witnesses of the Father and the Son, unto the fulfilling of the promise which he hath made, that IF ye entered in by the way ye should receive.

And now, my beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this straight and narrow path, I would ask if all is done? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; for ye have not come thus far save it were by the word of Christ with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save.

Wherefore, ye must PRESS FORWARD with a STEADFASTNESS IN CHRIST, having a perfect brightness of HOPE, and a LOVE OF GOD and of ALL MEN. Wherefore, IF ye shall press forward, FEASTING upon the WORD OF CHRIST, and ENDURE TO THE END, behold, thus saith the Father: YE SHALL HAVE ETERNAL LIFE. (II Nephi 31:18-20)

Joseph Smith said it this way:

After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of his sins and received the Holy Ghost, (by the laying on of hands), which is the first Comforter, then let him continue to HUMBLE himself before God, HUNGERING and THIRSTING after RIGHTEOUSNESS, and LIVING by every word of God, and the Lord will soon say unto him, Son, Thou SHALT BE EXALTED. (Teachings of PJS p 150)

There was a Patriarch that lived in Layton, Utah who lived over one hundred years. Three weeks prior to his death he was chatting with a good friend. He informed his friend that the Spirit of the Lord had spoken to him and told him “that his life had been accepted of the Lord, and that he would soon be called home.”

When Alma was in a state of fearing that he should do wrong in the sight of God and worrying about his errant son the Lord spoke to him and said:

And because thou hast inquired of me concerning the transgressor, (his own son) thou art blessed. Thou art my servant; and I covenant with thee that Thou SHALT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE: and thou shalt serve me and go forth in my name, and shalt gather together my sheep.

And he that will hear my voice shall be my sheep; and him shall ye receive into the church, and him will I also receive. (Mosiah 26:19-21)

The promise of eternal life was also given to the twelve that the Lord chose in the Americas. To nine of them the Lord said:

Blessed are ye because ye desired this thing of me; therefore, after that ye are seventy and two years old ye shall COME UNTO ME IN MY KINGDOM: AND WITH ME SHALL FIND REST. (III Nephi 28:3)

To the other three He promised:

Therefore, more blessed are ye, for ye shall never taste of death; but ye shall live to behold all the doings of the Father unto the children of men, even until all things shall be fulfilled according to the will of the Father, when I shall come in my glory with the powers of heaven. And ye shall never endure the pains of death; but when I shall come in my glory ye shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality; and THEN SHALL YE BE BLESSED IN THE KINGDOM OF MY FATHER. (III Nephi 28:7,8)

When Moroni was praying that the gentiles might have charity the Lord spake to him in this manner:

If they have not charity it mattereth not unto thee, thou has been faithful; wherefore, thy garments shall be made clean. And because thou hast seen thy weakness thou shalt be made strong, EVEN UNTO THE SITTING DOWN IN THE PLACE WHICH I HAVE PREPARED IN THE MANSIONS OF MY FATHER. (Ether 12:37)

The promise was given to Joseph the Prophet in this manner:.

For I am the Lord thy God and will be with thee even unto the end of the, world, and through all eternity; for verily I SEAL UPON YOU YOUR EXALTATION, and prepare with Abraham your father a throne for you in the kingdom of my Father, (D&C 132:49)

At this point you are probably getting pretty discouraged. You are probably wondering if the promise of eternal life is ever given to anyone besides prophets and apostles. That is a fair question. Yes, the Lord does give the promise to just common ordinary members of the church.

For almost twenty years it has been my privilege to be associated with a noble daughter of our Heavenly Father. Several years after the “born again” experience she longed in her heart to see the Lord. One day, as she was upstairs in her home praying, she saw a vision. The Lord was seated upon His throne in a room that seemed as large as eternity. She saw herself and her small children walk forward and kneel at the feet of the Master. He leaned forward, smiled and spoke to her. “Here you and your children will always be safe and you will always be given everything you ask for, because you will never ask for anything unrighteous.” Life has not been easy since the promise was given, but it has been an anchor to her soul when Satan would have her believe that all was lost.

Another dear lady that lives in the same ward had a very interesting dream when only sixteen years of age. She dreamed that she and her husband (whom she had never met) were walking on a straight and narrow path in a long valley. As they walked along she noticed that many strayed from the path and became lost, but that she and her husband endured to the end and were granted eternal life. She wrote the dream down, put it away and forgot it. One day she was going through some old papers and rediscovered the message. Forty years had passed. Can you imagine the joy that she must have felt when she rediscovered this heavenly promise?

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