

Chapter 2

Solving the Prophet Puzzle

*"The mystery of Mormonism cannot be solved
until we solve the mystery of Joseph Smith."*

A Stone of Stumbling

In the introduction to this book I spoke briefly about the loss of innocence and naiveté I experienced with regard to my perception about the current state of the modern restored church. This all took place as I traveled backwards in time, researching the history of the Mormon Church, trying to find out how and when the restored Church of Christ changed its trajectory and went into apostasy. Ultimately, I identified four or five general periods of apostasy that followed the initial establishment of the church and its first missionary effort. Interestingly, the restored church and its leaders was continually struggling and being chastened by the Lord from the day it was restored.

During my journey, it became apparent that the failure to sustain the practice of temporal communal consecration, as practiced by the New Testament Saints, was one of the pivotal events which resulted in the condemnation of the church. I also noticed the true spiritual gifts¹, including the gift of healing and other miracles, and the spirit of prophecy, which must always accompany the true Saints of God, were not on the earth for a very long period of time, during Joseph Smith's ministry. Most notably the baptism of fire, and the Holy Ghost, that needs to follow the baptism of water, were missing.

Another significant sign was how quickly the heavens closed once the Saints rejected the fullness of the Gospel. In future chapters, it will be shown that the fullness of the gospel was rejected by mid to late 1834, and in 1836 an ancient gospel dispensation was secretly ushered in. With that in mind, it is interesting to note that over 110 canonized revelations were given to Joseph Smith during the first half of his public ministry, yet only about ten canonized revelations were received during the second part of his ministry. Contained in those last ten

¹ Section 50 informs us that "there are many spirits which are false spirits, which have gone forth in the earth, deceiving the world.." which can produce counterfeit gifts of the spirit.

revelations were some very sobering warnings and rebukes². Revelation clearly began drying up once the fullness was rejected.

The rejection of the fullness of the priesthood culminated in the failure of the Saints to live the law of consecration, the loss of the Melchizedek priesthood that had been restored at the Morley Farm in 1831, and the name of Christ being taken out of the name of the Church. When Joseph Smith declared, in a special priesthood meeting in the temple on March 30th 1836 “would be a year of jubilee for the Saints”³, he was apparently making a cryptic observation that the sins of latter day Israel were being remitted by an atonement offering. He and the other leading officers of the Church had spent the previous day and evening in fasting and prayer, and petitions behind the veil.

Among those last ten revelations received during the last seven years, were numerous rebukes and ominous warnings from God, including the threat from an increasingly impatient God, in section 124, that they would be rejected as a church with their dead if they failed to build the Nauvoo Temple within a sufficient amount of time.

Perhaps one of the most disturbing observations I made as I studied LDS church history was the fact that Joseph Smith’s teachings and actions, during the early Kirtland era, completely contradicted his teachings and personal actions during the second half of his ministry. His last years in Kirtland, followed by the Far West, and Nauvoo eras completely contradicted his early life and teachings. As much as I love and revere the prophet Joseph Smith, I became troubled at the cognitive dissonance I suffered from when trying to reconcile the two very different Joseph's that I was seeing portrayed in LDS Church history.

² Including a warning in Section 112 that "vengeance" would someday begin "upon my house.. ..first among those among you saith the Lord who have professed to know my name and have not known me.." and an observation in Section that during the end times the "Zion" would need to put on the "authority of the priesthood .. which she has lost.. and that the "scattered remnants" of latter day Israel would need to "return to the Lord from whence they have fallen.." so that the Lord could once again "speak to them..". Lastly, Section 124 warns the saints that the "fulness of the priesthood" had been "lost unto" Joseph Smith and the Saints. The revelation goes on to warn that if the Saints don't heed the words of God's prophets and build the temple in the sufficient time allotted, they would be moved "out of their place" and "rejected as a church with their dead".

³ <https://byustudies.byu.edu/hc/2/32.html>

I finally became so burdened with the inconsistencies I saw in the later years of Joseph Smith's life that he became a huge stumbling block for me. The deeper I got into the history of the church during my journey, the more of a stumbling block he became to me. From what I could ascertain, I was not alone. He became one of the biggest stumbling blocks for many other Latter-day saints as well.

Just as Christ became a *stone of stumbling* to the Jews during his earthly ministry, because of his sinless nature and incomprehensible claim of Godhood, Joseph Smith became a *stone of stumbling* to both believing Latter-day Saint and skeptics. Skeptics rejected Joseph because of the inconsistencies they saw in his teachings and life. Believers wrested history and forced everything he did to be acceptable because they believed that a true prophet could not lead God's people astray.

Nevertheless, four generations after the martyrdom, Mormonism is taking it on the chin because the Internet is empowering people to access a mountain of disruptive information not previously available to some Latterday Saints.

Latter day missionary work is now stymied because of the contradictory doctrines Joseph taught and the transgressions that he unabashedly acted out . In the words of one of the revelations warning him about his future, temporary fall from grace, The Lord foretold that he would *fall* and loose his *awareness*:

"Behold, thou art Joseph, and thou wast chosen to do the work of the Lord, but because of transgression, if thou art not aware thou wilt fall."⁴

The prophet Joseph Smith is, perhaps, one of the most controversial religious personalities in the history of the world. His life provides a polarizing effect on many that seriously study it. It is my belief that most people who take the time to study his life and ministry in depth, end up at one of two ends of the spectrum, they either come to hate and despise him as a liar, deceiver, and charlatan, or they come to love him and revere him as God's anointed prophet, refusing to believe he was ever guilty of any malignant sins.

In my own personal situation, I could not gravitate to either end of the spectrum because, on the one hand, the countless keyword searches I conducted in the

⁴ D&C 3:9

scriptures revealed that the content in all four of the standard works is consistent and that Joseph Smith is the servant mentioned in Isaiah 49, the parable of the redemption of Zion in section 101, the allegory in the book of Jacob and countless other prophecies. I could not deny that the foundational restoration of Biblical Christianity that Joseph initially laid was inspired by the God of the New Testament and of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

On the other hand, I was having a difficult time reconciling many of the things Joseph taught and was involved in during the second half of his ministry, including, but not limited to the following:

- The failed Kirtland Safety Society
- The Danites
- Masonry
- The Spiritual wife form of Biblical polygamy
- The doctrine of exaltation as described in section 132
- The heretical doctrine about God being a mortal man, who is not from everlasting to everlasting, as taught in the King Follet Discourse, which is categorically contrary to the word of God.

Joseph Smith is Justifiably known for doing both Good and Evil

It occurred to me that, as prophesied by the angel Moroni, his name has become known for both good and evil because he, in fact, accomplished much good through the grace of God, but then did much evil.⁵

Prior to my journey and subsequent loss of naiveté, few people loved and revered the prophet Joseph Smith more than I did. I suspect I was guilty of participating in prophet worship. Nevertheless, the deeper I delved into the history of the church the more perplexed I became with his life and ministry.

His involvement in masonry, polygamy, and other things were very troubling to me and they seemed so inconsistent with the scriptures he brought forth. The Book of Mormon is not even subtle about its warnings against both polygamy and

⁵ “He called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people” JS History 1:23

secret societies that swear by their necks. Joseph's declaration in Nauvoo that God was once a man and that he was not from everlasting to everlasting, blatantly contradicted the Bible as well as the modern scripture he was an instrument in bringing forth. It also contradicted the magnificent teachings about God in the *Lectures on Faith*.⁶

One of the things that perplexed me was that I had discovered an amazing prophetic thread that weaves throughout the Old Testament, New Testament, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants about how Joseph Smith and others of the first laborers of the last kingdom would return from the dead to fulfill their missions during the Marvelous Work and a Wonder⁷. As amazing as this theology was to me, it was becoming increasingly more difficult for me to believe that God would call forth a servant from the dead, with such a disturbing history.

Even Sidney Rigdon and Brigham Young, two of Joseph's closest associates and admirers, had expressed personal opinions Joseph had lost the spirit and made poor decisions just before the martyrdom.

Rigdon was adamantly against the spiritual wife doctrine, and had been upset about Joseph's advances towards his daughter and no doubt felt that the practice of polygamy was a sign that Joseph had lost the spirit. During the succession crisis he proclaimed that

“he had known for some years that Joseph had not been led by the spirit of God [and gave this] as the reason why he did not attend with him as his counselor”

Brigham Young, on the other hand, apparently felt that Joseph's decision to return to Nauvoo and go to Carthage, which led to his death, was a sign that he had temporarily lost the spirit. Other comments he made indicated that when Joseph backed off of polygamy during the last months of his life, may have been an indication that he had lost the spirit.

If one has doubts about the character and eternal welfare of the prophet Joseph Smith, and wonders if perhaps he was a fallen prophet, it is very difficult to not

⁶ Few Latter-day Saints realize that the *Lectures on Faith* was once sustained as the word of God and was canonized. It was the "Doctrine" portion of the original "Doctrine and Covenants."

⁷ Which was still a future event at the time of the martyrdom.

have anything but doubts about his final ministry that he will preside over in the end times. Because of this I became conflicted by the apparent lack of congruency between my view of Joseph's unfulfilled mission and the apparent fulfillment of God's warning that Joseph would transgress and fall.

Because of the cognitive dissonance that I was experiencing, I was forced to dig much deeper into ancient prophecy to see if, in fact, there was additional, previously overlooked information about Joseph's prophetic calling. I needed to find answers that addressed his bizarre and contradictory teachings and actions that highlighted the later part of his ministry.

Joseph Smith saw himself as having a very unique calling; one that was mentioned in prophecy and one that is almost impossible to comprehend. Based on some of his comments, he did not consider himself just a prophet, he considered himself to be THE LAST AND GREATEST PROPHET⁸ spoken of in the scriptures.

He seemed to have some knowledge about himself which he needed to keep hidden within his breast yet, at times, he seemed to want to blurt it out to his followers. Here are a few remarkable statements he made during a time of incredible controversy in his life, as the time of his death was quickly approaching.

"You don't know me; you never knew my heart. No man knows my history. I cannot tell it: I shall never undertake it. I don't blame anyone for not believing my history. If I had not experienced what I have, I could not have believed it myself . . . When I am called by the trump of the archangel and weighed in the balance, you will all know me then."⁹

"If I revealed all that has been made known to me, scarcely a man on this stand would stay with me."

⁸ “..Brother Joseph Smith was chosen for the last dispensation or Seventh Dispensation The time the grand council Set in heaven to organise this world Joseph was chosen for the last & greatest Prophet to lay the foundation of gods work of the Seventh Dispensation..” Sermon delivered at Nauvoo temple grounds on Friday May 12, 1844 See <http://www.boap.org/LDS/Parallel/1844/12May44.html>

⁹ King Follet Discourse April 7, 1844 Documentary History of the Church, vol. 6, pages 302–17

"Brethren, if I were to tell you all I know of the kingdom of God, I do know that you would rise up and kill me."

"Would to God I could tell you what I know! But you would call it blasphemy, and there are men upon this stand who would want to take my life." ¹⁰

It was only a matter of time before several leaders of the church, probably some that were, indeed, sitting on the stand that day, did, in fact, play a part in his eventual demise!

The Prophet Puzzle

In her provocative 1974 essay, "The Prophet Puzzle," religious historian Jan Shippo states that:

"The mystery of Mormonism cannot be solved until we solve the mystery of Joseph Smith."

In that essay:

"Jan Shippo made mention of the anomalies in the historical record concerning Smith, noting that '[w]hat we have in Mormon historiography is two Josephs . . . "a man of God" and "a kind of fraud who exploited his followers for his own purposes." ¹¹

Shippo is a well respected historian and researcher who is not a Mormon. Some of her observations really resonated with me because I was caught in the middle of the two Joseph Smiths to which she referred. Was he a man of God? Was he a fraud? Both?

As I have already indicated, I had become aware of the third watch doctrine, which is discussed at length in this work. This doctrine answered many of the questions I have about the Latter-day apostasy and prophecy pertaining to the

¹⁰ (Joseph Smith, Jr., as quoted by Heber C. Kimball, Life of Heber C. Kimball, by Orson F. Whitney, pg. 322-323.)(capitals added for emphasis)

¹¹ "Prophet Puzzle" Revisited by Dan Vogel Mormon History Association Meeting, 18 May 1996, Snowbird, Utah

end times, particularly, about how the bridegroom that tarried would ultimately return and redeem his unfaithful bride.

Although that doctrine addressed many of my concerns and answered many of my questions about the Latter-day apostasy, and brought great peace and assurance to my soul, nevertheless, I was not at peace concerning Joseph Smith and I knew there were missing pieces to the “prophet puzzle” as Shipps so eloquently opined.

Despite the reassurance I had that the restored gospel was true and the Marvelous Work would yet take place in the future, I was, nevertheless, plagued with the dilemma of the inconsistencies in Joseph Smith’s life and ministry. I did not know how to reconcile these things with his prophesied return during the third watch to usher in the Marvelous Work.

The thought that he might be the lead servant when the first laborers of the last dispensation¹² return was a little unsettling to me, given the fact that many of his actions during the Far West and Nauvoo years did not appear to be congruent with the gospel and the scriptures he brought forth.

I needed answers to the *apparent discrepancies*, previously outlined. Perhaps most perplexing to me was Section 132 of the Doctrine and Covenants and the Spiritual Wife doctrine that presented polygamy as a higher law, necessary for exaltation.

I knew the gospel was true as contained in the book of Mormon and modern revelation. I knew this because the spirit had born witness to me of the

¹² The Lord refers to Joseph Smith and several of the leading elders of the Church as the "first laborers in this last kingdom" and foretells how these servants will return at a future time when "I shall send you again to magnify the calling whereunto I have called you, and the mission with which I have commissioned you.

Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor.

Therefore, they are left without excuse, and their sins are upon their own heads.

He that seeketh me early shall find me, and shall not be forsaken.

Therefore, tarry ye, and labor diligently, that you may be perfected in your ministry to go forth among the Gentiles for the last time, as many as the mouth of the Lord shall name, to bind up the law and seal up the testimony, and to prepare the saints for the hour of judgment which is to come . . ." (D&C 88:70-84)

truthfulness of the gospel, while doing thousands of key word searches and other types of prayerful gospel study. Nevertheless, I also knew there was a serious problem with the current church and the originating apostasy which appeared to take place in Kirtland, resulting in the defiling of the Kirtland Temple, the loss the fullness of the priesthood, the restoration of the preparatory gospel of Abraham and the expulsion of the Saints from every designated place of refuge and gathering.

During that point in my gospel study, having spent many years doing intense key word searches on countless topics, I was arrogant enough to think I was quite familiar with all four standard works and I felt as if I had a fairly good understanding of them. For that reason I didn't think the answer to my dilemma about Joseph Smith would be found in the scriptures. However, I was quite mistaken. I was about to have my eyes opened to a whole new level of scriptural understanding and gospel study.

I think I had to hit rock bottom regarding Joseph Smith before I was sufficiently prepared to actually identify and believe what some of the astounding prophecies in the Old Testament had to say about him. My quest to understand Joseph's full calling and why he did what he did took me through an amazing string of Old Testament prophecies, but it all began with a passage of scripture in the New Testament.

"Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"

One day I was reading the account in Acts 1 where the disciples asked Christ when he would restore the kingdom to Israel.

"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."

Realizing that the Jewish disciples who had descended from the *kingdom of Judah* knew that the keys of the kingdom would need to be restored to the *kingdom of Israel*,¹³ I was marveling how Peter, James, and John eventually were the ones that would deliver the keys of the kingdom to Joseph Smith at a later time, in

¹³ ie, Gentiles

answer to their question.

It occurred to me that Christ's disciples were obviously very familiar with the Old Testament prophecies and, thereby, probably knew about the necessity of the eventual transferring of the keys of the kingdom to someone in the last days who would be a descendent of King David from the second kingdom of Israel, when the kingdom of Judah became divided from the kingdom of Israel.

This motivated me to begin doing a keyword search in the Old Testament to see if I could locate the prophecies these disciples were alluding to about the establishment of the kingdom in the end times. By doing a keyword search on kingdom, I was eventually led to a prophecy in 2 Samuel 7 that blew my mind.

"I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever"

It is a prophecy given to King David from the Lord God of Israel as delivered through the prophet Nathan. In the following passages, taken from 2 Samuel 7:10-16,¹⁴ I found a seven point profile of the Latter-day Davidic Servant that initiated a huge paradigm shift in my thinking.

¹⁴ 10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them anymore, as beforetime,

11 And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house.

12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

One of the things that you may be thinking is that the transgression mentioned in the above passages is predicated as an **IF** rather than a **WHEN**. However, if you accept Gods own testimony of his own attributes you must surely agree that God knows all things, including the future and the past and that all time--past, present, and future--is continually before his eyes, which is what makes the spiritual gift of prophecy possible. That being the case, God obviously

Notice the seven point profile below.

1. **The Lord uses his Davidic Servant to Appoint the place and eventually plant Israel in it.** There is nothing in this passage that indicates the appointing of the place and the planting of the people are done at the same time, but the appointing of the place obviously appears to take place before the building of the temple. "Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more."
2. **The Lord's Davidic Servant will establish the Kingdom forever.** A descendent of David will establish the kingdom after his death. "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom . . . And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever."
3. **The Davidic Servant will build the House of the Lord.** After the death of David, someone from his posterity will build the House. "He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever . . . And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever."
4. **The Davidic Servant becomes of Son of God (sealed up to Eternal Life- (calling and election)**
"I will be his father, and he shall be my son."
5. **The Davidic Servant will commit iniquity.** AFTER appointing the Latter-day place of gathering, establishing the kingdom, and building the House of the

knew whether this last days descendent of David would transgress or not. Therefore, one needs to ask, If God knew the above servant would be valiant, why would he put doubt in the minds of people about that valiancy by throwing that contingency clause into the prophecy? More importantly, why would he continue a second level down in the story line by revealing that the Davidic Servant would be chastened by the rod of men because of his transgression and furthermore why would he provide a third level to the storyline by acknowledging that after transgressing, he would retain the mercy of God? I would submit to you that when read in the light of prophetic understanding, as well as in the context of the additional prophecies we will review, it is not just **IF** the servant transgresses, it is **WHEN** he transgresses.

Lord, the Davidic Servant will commit iniquity. "If [when] he commit iniquity . . ."

6. The Davidic King will be chastened by men for his Iniquity.

"I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men."

7. The Davidic King retains the Mercy of the Lord.

Unlike wicked King Saul, who will receive justice and judgment for his wicked acts, the mercy of the Lord will not depart from the Latter-day Davidic Servant, despite his iniquity. "But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee."

As I noted the above summary of events in the prophecy, I was dumbfounded. On the one hand the storyline seemed incomprehensible. Based on the teachings I had received in the Mormon Church, a true prophet NEVER speaks falsely, leads people astray, or commits "iniquity." It gave me great indigestion to think that God would call a true prophet and allow him to commit a serious transgression and then become chastened by the rod of men. On the other hand, it fit the historical profile of Joseph Smith to a "T."

As I began to think about all of the great reformers and high profile religious leaders who led religious movements or started a new church, it became obvious to me that Joseph Smith is the only high profile religious figure in the Latter-days that even comes close to fitting the profile contained above, and he fits it perfectly.

It was remarkable to see so many theological aspects of Joseph's teachings and related historical events in just seven passages of scripture.

- Through Joseph Smith, the city where the saints will be gathered was designated by the finger of the Lord.¹⁵
- The keys of the eventual gathering were given to Joseph Smith and many prophecies promise that the gathering will take place under his direction.

¹⁵ D&C 84:3

- The keys of the kingdom were given to Joseph Smith and the Lord promised they would remain with him in life and in death. He even claimed he would bring forth the kingdom of which Daniel spoke.
- The building of the House of the Lord in Kirtland, for the salvation of the church, was a paramount part of Joseph's calling.
- Becoming a Son of God and the doctrine of calling and election was another critical theology revealed through Joseph Smith.

While the incorporation of these theological elements into seven passages of ancient scripture were remarkable in that they highlighted key points of Joseph's teachings, the real jaw dropper was that the seven-part narrative mirrored the events of Joseph Smith's ministry. Even the chronology of events, as unlikely as they appear, is in the exact order in which they happened, when scrutinized and compared with the events of LDS church history. The fact that Joseph Smith eventually sinned against the very commandments he had been instrumental in bringing forth, is a matter of record.

The law of the Gospel contained in Section 42 along with Section 49 clearly commanded the saints to live the celestial law of *monogamy*. That is gospel law. The practice of polygamy was clearly forbidden, according to the Book of Mormon and modern revelation. Joseph eventually violated that commandment and contradicted many of the teachings he had been instrumental in bringing forth.

The transgression of practicing and secretly teaching the spiritual wife form of polygamy is probably the primary violation that brought the wrath of men inside and outside of the church upon him and caused him to be chastened by the rod of man.

Perhaps the most unfathomable part of the prophecy was that after committing iniquity, the mercy of the Lord, according to the prophecy, did not depart from him like it had from wicked King Saul. That intriguing little snippet revealed that there was a deeper storyline that needed to be uncovered.

Something was at play here that was not being addressed in the prophecy. I was determined to snake it out and find out what the story behind the story really was. While the prophecy appeared to identify Joseph Smith as a major last days prophet who would first do much good and then much evil, like Moroni had prophesied, it left me with more questions than answers.

- How could a prophet sin after becoming a Son of God and being sealed up to eternal life?
- How could such a prophet retain favor in the sight of God and not have the mercy of God depart from him after committing iniquity?
- If the prophet was on God's errand and thus within God's mercy, why would the Lord allow him to be chastened by the rod of man?

I had to ponder the prophecy over and over again and do some cross-referencing to verify I was reading it properly. I checked several commentaries and online articles because I was curious to see how sectarian prophecy scholars were interpreting the passages.

It became apparent that some scholars interpret these passages to be referring to Christ; however, I knew it could not be speaking about Christ as the literal fulfillment of the prophecy because he did not *build a temple* nor did he *commit iniquity*.

Other scholars interpret these passages to be referring to Solomon, David's Son, who DID build a temple and DID commit iniquity. For that reason, he offers a likely interpretation at face value. HOWEVER, Solomon also could not represent a *literal fulfillment* of the above passages because he did not *plant the children of Israel in the appointed land*, nor did he *establish the kingdom FOREVER*, as evidenced by the fact that he ultimately sinned worse than David and the Lord did rend the kingdom from him because of his idolatry.¹⁶

Furthermore, Solomon was not chastened by the rod of men. He reigned for 40 years and then rested with his fathers. The prophecy of Daniel reveals the final kingdom that was to break down all other kingdoms and be restored forever, is established in the last days, long after the time of Solomon or Christ.¹⁷ According to Peter, there would need to be a RESTITUTION of ALL THINGS in the Latter-days.¹⁸ The final kingdom obviously does not come forth until this time of

¹⁶ 1 Kings 11:1-77

¹⁷ Daniel 2:44-45

¹⁸ Acts 3:21

restitution. Joseph clearly perceived himself to be the one to help set up that kingdom.¹⁹

According to the exact details of the prophecy, the descendant of King David, would appoint the place of the Latter-day gathering of Israel, build the temple, establish the kingdom forever, become a Son of God, *and then commit iniquity!*

After committing iniquity, he would retain the mercy of God.

I knew this prophecy was one of the missing pieces of the prophet puzzle and my world was quickly being turned upside down because I was being introduced to raw, unsanitized Old Testament theological concepts that I had never been exposed to in Mormonism.

As I scrutinized the above passages, I was amazed at the exactness of how well the prophecy describes Joseph Smith's ministry. Although it was difficult and painful, at first, for me to change my paradigm of Joseph Smith and the role of prophets in general, I was also ecstatic. This is because this prophecy was providing an incredible testimony that Joseph Smith was who he claimed to be, namely, the last great prophet who restores all things. It even proves that the transgressions he committed were foretold by the Lord via the prophet Nathan!

This Biblical profile of the Davidic Servant significantly changes the complexion of the Joseph Smith dilemma. In light of the above passages, any iniquities committed by Joseph Smith provide additional testimony that he fits the prophetic profile in the Old Testament and he was exactly who he claimed to be: the last, great prophet. One who, according to the prophecy, appointed the place of gathering for Latter-day Israel, restored the law of God, built the temple, became a Son of God, *and then committed iniquity*. If the above interpretation is accurate, he is clearly the one that laid the foundation for the Marvelous Work and obtained his calling and election *before transgressing*.

It was very hard for me, being raised as a Mormon, to believe that prophets were “fallible” since I practically worshiped them much as the Catholic Church places

¹⁹ “I calculate to be one of the instruments of setting up the kingdom of Daniel by the word of the Lord, and I intend to lay a foundation that will revolutionize the whole world.” History of the Church, 6:364–65; from a discourse given by Joseph Smith on May 12, 1844, in Nauvoo, Illinois; reported by Thomas Bullock.

their popes on a pedestal as being infallible. I was perplexed because the modern church teaches that God never allows a prophet to sin and lead people astray. Although that heresy contradicts the word of God, I never really understood that because I had not searched it out.

Nevertheless, in my blissful years I did not believe that the Lord would ever allow a righteous prophet to commit iniquity. I had been taught the sanitized version of what a prophet should be instead of the scriptural version.

Although I could not deny the remarkable narrative in 2 Samuel 7 being miraculously applicable to Joseph Smith in every detail, it was simply too bizarre for me to be content with just one scriptural witness. I needed to find others to corroborate this interpretation of this strange prophecy.²⁰ I continued searching for additional scriptural witnesses to verify the accuracy of the passages and my interpretation of them.

I found the same prophecy with less detail in 1 Chronicles 17. What really perplexed me is how the seven point profile claimed that AFTER committing transgression, the Lord would allow the prophet to be chastened with the rod of men and, yet, the sinful prophet would still remain in the MERCY of God. That really seemed totally inconsistent with the Old Testament. It seemed to me that the sinful prophet should fall under the law of JUSTICE and JUDGEMENT not MERCY. Saul transgressed and did not retain the mercy of God.

One Like Moses

I looked to see if there was an example of a righteous Old Testament prophet who sinned and yet remained in the mercy of God. I was led to the account of Moses who sinned before God and was chastened severely. The consequences of his sin resulted in his death and even prevented him from crossing the Jordan to enter the promised land. Yet after the death of Moses the word of God continues to refer to Moses as a righteous prophet! He retained the mercy of God!

²⁰ In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. See Matt 18:16, 2 Corinthians 13:1, D&C 6:28, 128:3

I realized that the ministry of Moses very possibly provided a great key to unlocking this mystery, particularly since modern revelation identifies Joseph Smith as one like Moses.²¹

Digging a little deeper into the life of Moses, it appeared to me that Moses sinned after, and as a result of, taking the sins of Israel upon himself by offering himself as an atonement in their behalf. I was reminded of the prophecy by Peter in Acts 3 about a Latter-day servant that would be like Moses:

"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you . . ."

The above prophecy is paraphrasing a prophecy in Deuteronomy 18. Most scholars accept that prophecy as referring to Christ. Mormons also do because the Book of Mormon verifies that it is referring to Christ.²² However, in studying that prophecy I realized that it is actually speaking about *two separate servants who are like Moses*. Verses 15-17 are referring to Christ, but verses 18-22 are referring to the same Davidic Servant to which 2 Samuel 7 refers, even Joseph Smith.

15 "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him he shall hearken;

16 According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.

²¹ D&C 103:15-22, 2 Nephi 3, D&C 107:92, JST Genesis 50, etc.

²² "And the Lord will surely prepare a way for his people, unto the fulfilling of the words of Moses, which he spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that all those who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people. And now I, Nephi, declare unto you, that this prophet of whom Moses spake was the Holy One of Israel; wherefore, he shall execute judgment in righteousness." [1 Ne. 22: 20-21](#)

17 And the Lord said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken.

18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

19 And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require *it* of him.

20 But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.

21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken?

22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, *that is* the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, *but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.*"

Clearly, verse 15 is speaking of Christ. We are commanded to categorically hearken to Christ because he is infallible.

Those prophetic passages in verses 18-22 however, speak about another servant, like Moses, who speaks *presumptuously* after he delivers the true words that God puts in his mouth.

Notice how Christ was to be raised up from the midst of the children of Israel while Joseph Smith was to be raised up from among the children of Israel. While that nuanced distinction may not jump out at very many people, it is significant.

Deuteronomy 18:15	Deuteronomy 18:18
The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; <u>unto him</u>	I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and

<u>ye shall hearken;</u>	<u>he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.</u>
Among H7130	Among H7130
Someone who is in the midst, from among (of a number of persons)	Someone who is among the inner, inward part of the people in the physical sense

Although the Strong's concordance provides the exact same reference number in both instances, the translators could tell there was a difference in what was being conveyed between the two verses. It appears that the use of the word "midst" allows for Christ to have been distinctly physically different from, despite being among, the designated group of people.

The Book of Mormon, Bible, and D&C all declare that Jesus was God in the flesh; that, unlike other men, he was sinless. That he did not have mortal blood and therefore was not mortal. Hence, Jesus, was a GOD who was raised up IN THE MIDST of Israel, yet the second prophet spoken of, who I believe to be Joseph Smith, was raised up from AMONG Israel. He was mortal and from the same lineage of Abraham , Isaac, and Jacob. We have the Son of God who is a type of Moses, followed by a mortal man who would also be a type of Moses.

This narrative in Deuteronomy 18 is perfectly consistent with the narrative in 2 Samuel. The Davidic Servant begins doing good, but then he does evil and faces serious consequences. In the Deuteronomy 18:18-22 narrative, after the one like Moses faithfully delivers all of the words God puts in his mouth, he is required to bear the responsibility of those that do not hearken to the words he speaks. Following that, he speaks presumptuously and is put to death. Both of those prophecies support the angel Moroni's declaration that Joseph's name would be had for both good and evil:

"He called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people."²³

²³ JS History 1:33

The modern church spins the above prophecy by Moroni to imply that Joseph's name will justly be known for good, but unjustly known for evil. However, the prophetic narratives in 2 Samuel 7 and Deuteronomy 18 were suggesting that both would be justified.

Verse 18-20 in Deuteronomy 18 are obviously not referring to Christ as he always spoke the truth and never spoke presumptuously. A careful review of the above prophecies reveals that Moses was prophesying of two separate and distinct individuals who would be a shadow fulfillment of Moses, and who would come forth at future times.

The prophet spoken of in verse 15 is clearly speaking about Christ as clarified in the Book of Mormon. Hence the admonition to categorically obey everything he says,

“ . . . unto him ye shall hearken.”

Since Christ was perfect and never taught a false doctrine, the admonition from Moses was to hearken to his words. Period.

Verse 18 on the other hand is speaking about another one, who is like Moses, but that particular prophet, after speaking all the words that God puts in his mouth, **shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak.”**

The consequence?

“ . . . even that prophet shall die.”²⁴

Just as 2 Samuel prophesies that the Davidic Servant will transgress and, therefore, be chastised by the rod of man, Deuteronomy 18 confirms that as a result of speaking **presumptuously**, *he must die*.

²⁴ Those who are familiar with LDS Church History will recall that President William Law and others printed an expose of Joseph Smith's secret polygamy doctrine and how it led to the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Another thing we learn from these passages is that the prophet is held accountable when the people reject his words! **“Whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require *it* of him.”**
[Referring to the prophet!]

The prophecy in Deuteronomy 18 provides a second witness to the prophecy in 2 Samuel!

However, it provides five additional pieces of the prophet puzzle and helps to further complete the prophetic profile provided in the Old Testament. They are as follows:

- **RAISED FROM AMONG THY BRETHREN:** Deuteronomy 18 identifies two separate and distinct future types of Moses. It differentiates the Son of God as being raised up from the “midst,” while the mortal servant is raised up from “among.”
- **UNIQUE TYPE OF SCRIPTURE:** From Deuteronomy 18 we learn the scripture this second prophet, like Moses, brings forth is somewhat different from traditional scripture. The Bible and Book of Mormon contain historical narrative and inspired statements by mortal prophets mingled with “thus sayeth the Lord” declarations from God. Conversely, the revelations canonized by Joseph Smith in the Book of Commandments and Doctrine and Covenants typically provide the **EXACT WORDS OF CHRIST**, continuously--revelation after revelation. As stated in Deuteronomy 18, “I will . . . put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.”
- **INTERCESSORY ATONEMENT:** The one like Moses is acting as an intercessory servant and must have the sins of the people upon his garments: “Whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I WILL REQUIRE IT OF HIM.”
- **THE SERVANT MUST DIE:** Although 2 Samuel informs us the servant would be chastened by the rod of men, it was not clear if he was put to death. Deuteronomy 18 makes the clarification that he is put to death for his transgression: “. . . even that prophet shall die.”
- **CHASTENED FOR TEACHING FALSE DOCTRINE:** Additionally, 2 Samuel did not clarify what the transgression would be that would result in his death. This prophecy informs us that after delivering all of the words the Lord commanded him to deliver; he would then speak *presumptuously* and

teach something the Lord did not command him to teach. "The prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak . . . the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously."

The irony of verses 20 through 22 is that they are frequently interpreted as a law, condemning prophets the prophecy falsely. Because of this misinterpretation of scripture, critics of Joseph Smith use it to prove that Joseph Smith could not have been a true prophet because he spoke falsely, and uttered prophecies that did not come true.

Readers falsely assume those passages represent an Old Testament law that mandates the stoning of a prophet for uttering a false prophecy. However, no such law exists nor is there any evidence that such a law was enforced during Old Testament times.

Interestingly, those three verses are not providing a generic law stating that false prophets were required to be put to death when they prophesy falsely. A careful study of those passages reveals they actually represent a continuation of the prophecy contained in the previous five verses! They are simply foretelling the presumptuous teaching of a false doctrine will result in the death of the Latter-day prophet who is typological to Moses.

Those passages actually provide a compelling witness that Joseph Smith was who he claimed to be! They are referring to a specific Latter-day prophet who would first speak what the Lord commanded him to speak and then be put to death because he presumptuously speaks falsely in the name of the Lord!

Those passages are speaking of the same Latter-day prophet that 2 Samuel prophesies. . . they speak of a prophet that does a great work, but eventually sins by speaking presumptuously and, as a result, is put to death!

Not only do they provide a second witness of the prophecy in 2 Samuel, they also provide more clarification and more details for the prophetic profile provided in 2 Samuel! They inform us that the Latter-day prophet is LIKE Moses in that he will provide an intercessory atonement for a rebellious people.

They clarify that the *chastisement* by the *rod of men* spoken of in 2 Samuel, results in the prophets death. They inform us that, when the congregation rejects the words of the prophet, God requires it of the intercessory prophet! In other

words, the Latter-day prophet acts as an intercessory sin offering for an apostate people who reject the word of the Lord!

This explains why the mercy of God does not depart from this prophet despite the fact that he commits sin. It is because the transgression committed by the prophet was caused by the sins of Israel which are placed upon him from offering himself as an atonement offering in behalf of the people.

In order to really appreciate the dynamics of what is taking place in the narratives provided by 2 Samuel 7 and Deuteronomy 18, we need to evaluate some key points in the ministry of Moses that many Christians and Mormons overlook.

The Atonement of Moses

30 “And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, **Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.**

31 And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold.

32 Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.

33 And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.

34 Therefore now go, lead the people unto *the place* of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless in the day **when I visit I will visit their sin upon them.**

35 And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made.”²⁵

It is interesting that Moses offered to have his name blotted out of the book! The Lord did not accept that offer, but did apparently accept his intercessory atonement. It is later revealed that the penalty of death would be placed upon

²⁵ Exodus 32: 30-35

Moses' intercessory atonement offering. This intercession of Moses is observed in Psalms:

"Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy *them*."²⁶

Moses stood in the breach in behalf of ancient Israel and turned away the wrath of God. The intercessory role of Moses is also referenced along with the Samuel, who was also a great intercessor, in the book of Jeremiah when the Lord became angry with the Kingdom of Judah and cast them out of his sight:

"Then said the LORD unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, *yet* my mind *could* not *be* toward this people: cast *them* out of my sight, and let them go forth."²⁷

Very sobering is the fact that the atonement offering made by Moses was only a temporary temporal one that prevented the Children of Israel from being destroyed from off the face of the earth. Notice that the wrath of God was only delayed. It would be visited upon rebellious, unrepentent Israel when the LORD visits them at a future time!

The Sin of Moses

After realizing that Moses had to provide an atonement for rebellious Israel, I wanted to further understand exactly what the sin was that Moses committed.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.

And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together

²⁶ Psalms 106:23

²⁷ Jeremiah 15:1

before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?

And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts *also*.

And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify ME in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."²⁸

Moses Had to Die

From the above passages we learn that Moses disobeyed the commandment of the Lord and spoke directly to the people instead of looking at the rock. Additionally, he sinned by taking credit unto himself and his brother Aaron for the miracle, instead of sanctifying the Lord (giving credit to the Lord). That is the act of encouraging the children of Israel to put their trust in the arm of flesh which is IDOLOTRY. Interestingly, it is the same general sin the children of Israel had been guilty of when they were worshipping the golden calf!

By providing an atonement for the people, Moses and Aaron had taken the sins of the people upon themselves and therefore began acting out their sins. One of the consequences of those sins was “. . . **ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.**”

"Get thee up . . . and die in the mount . . . and be gathered unto thy people . . . because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh . . . because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel"²⁹

The Intercession of Moses

²⁸ Numbers 20: 7-12

²⁹ Deuteronomy 32:49-51

In Deuteronomy 4, Moses clarifies that the anger of the Lord was for the *sake of the people* because of the atonement offering and also that Moses, as a consequence of his sin, must die and not enter into Jordan.

“Furthermore the Lord was angry with me for your sakes, and swore that I should not go over Jordan, and that I should not go in unto that good land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance:

But I must die in this land, I must not go over Jordan: but ye shall go over, and possess that good land.”³⁰

In the book of Numbers we are given a second account of how Moses was allowed to climb a mountain and view the promised land, but he was prevented from entering therein and he was required to die and be gathered unto his people, just as Aaron had died, because of their rebellion against the Lords commandment.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.

And when thou hast seen it, **thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people**, as Aaron thy brother was gathered.

For ye rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes: that is the water of Meribah in Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.”³¹

The True Purpose of Prophets

If you are somewhat mortified by the storyline presented in the prophecies we have reviewed in 2 Samuel 7 and Deuteronomy 18, as I was, it is probably because you have been indoctrinated falsely about how God interrelates with his people. God primarily uses inspired messengers to deliver messages, not necessarily to

³⁰ Deuteronomy 4: 21

³¹ Numbers 27: 12-14

provide an example of human infallibility. The Bible never encourages people to put their trust in the arm of flesh.

God also, sometimes, uses prophets to test his people. Sometimes he uses prophets to give an idolatrous people what they want and to turn them over to animate and inanimate idols. Sometimes he uses prophets to see if they can seduce those claiming to be God's people into accepting another gospel. He also uses his prophets as intercessors and atonement offerings for the sins of his people.

The thought that the Lord might allow a true prophet to teach a false doctrine or teach something *presumptuously* that God did not reveal to him is a terrifying thought because it puts the responsibility of discerning truth and error back on to each of us instead of allowing us to bask in the false security of thinking we can blindly follow God's messenger without consulting the laws of God that have already been given seeking confirmation from the Holy Spirit.

This concept of revering and remaining true to God's commands without adding to them or diminishing from them, is found in one of the most solemn and sobering commandments that God has given to his people. It is contained in the closing passage in Deuteronomy, Chapter 12:

"What thing so ever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."³²

It is easy to become focused on the messenger instead of the message. God sometimes actually uses true prophets to reveal his true commandments and then he allows them to speak presumptuously and contradict his previous commandment. He does this to test whether his people will stay true and faithful to HIS WORD and HIS COMMAND that He has already given, or whether His people can be seduced into the idolatrous act of following the arm of flesh.

³² This commandment is essentially reiterated and paraphrased in Section 124, in 1841, warning the saints to not add or diminish from the scriptures that had been accepted by the church up to that time. "For that which is more or less than this cometh of evil and shall be attended with cursings and not blessings, saith the Lord your God. Even so. Amen." D&C 124:120

A great example of this is found during the ministry of Joseph Smith, who delivered the words that God put in his mouth, but eventually spoke presumptuously and contradicted the word of God. For instance, the law of the gospel which was revealed in 1831 in section 42 clearly states that men are to have ONE WIFE.

"Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else."³³

The law of having only one wife was reiterated again in section 49³⁴ as a second witness. It was eventually reiterated again in a section prepared by Oliver Cowdery, referred to as "The Article on Marriage."³⁵ Eventually the Article on Marriage was later replaced with Section 132, under the direction of Brigham Young, which contradicts the law of the Gospel.

If a multitude of LDS historians can be believed, during the later years of Joseph Smith's ministry in Nauvoo, he began secretly teaching a different marital law that requires multiple wives to inherit the highest glory in the celestial realm. It contradicted the celestial law of monogamy contained in the LAW laid out in Section 42. It was presented as a *higher law*.

When the contradictory doctrine began to be introduced, some people held firm and stayed true to the covenants they entered into in Kirtland when Section 42 was revealed. Others chose to "add thereto or diminish from" that which had previously been taught by the Lord God of Israel.

The commandment to add thereto, nor diminish from God's word in the end of the 12th chapter of Deuteronomy precedes the third ancient prophecy that

³³ D&C 42:22

³⁴ D&C 49:15-17 And again, verily I say unto you, that whoso forbiddeth to marry is not ordained of God, for marriage is ordained of God unto man. Wherefore, it is lawful that he should have one wife, and they twain shall be one flesh, and all this that the earth might answer the end of its creation; And that it might be filled with the measure of man, according to his creation before the world was made.

³⁵ The "Article on Marriage" which forbade the practice of plural marriage was initially accepted as scriptures by the Saints, according to the law of common consent. After being canonized for many decades, it was taken out of the Doctrine and Covenants and replaced with what is now known as Section 132 in 1876 by Brigham Young. Interestingly, there has never been, available to the public, an original copy of Section 132 used by Brigham Young.

provides a third witness to the prophecies in 2 Samuel 7 and Deuteronomy 18. Just like the prophecy in Deuteronomy 18, it is often not recognized by prophecy scholars as a prophecy. Rather, it is seen as a commandment and a warning.

The Lord Your God Proveth You

1 "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or wonder,

2 And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;

3 Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

4 Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.

5 And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the Lord thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee."³⁶

This is another passage of scripture that is often interpreted as a law, instead of a prophecy. The above prophecy and *warning* clearly teaches that God sometimes uses his prophets to try, and deceive, Israel. He sometimes uses prophets to see if we will be true to God and his commandments or to a contradictory commandment given by God's prophet. It also provides a third scenario that is completely congruent with the prophetic template we have identified in 2 Samuel 7 and Deuteronomy 18.

³⁶ Deuteronomy 13:5

It informs us that God uses this last great servant to TEST the Saints, to see if his servant can turn them away from the Lord God. He uses his servant to see if the saints will remain true and faithful to the true commandments and covenants contained in the word of God or if they will depart from them by putting their faith in the prophet. (arm of flesh)

The lesson we need to learn is that we are responsible to discern the MESSAGES that come from God through his messenger, we are NOT supposed to categorically and blindly worship and obey the MESSENGER!

"What thing so ever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."

The fullness of the Gospel, the New and Everlasting Covenant, and the LAW of the Gospel had all been given long before the Gentiles rejected the fullness of the Gospel in 1834. This rejection preceded the defilement of the Kirtland Temple in 1836. Yet, in 1842 Joseph Smith began teaching a secret doctrine about the need to have multiple wives, a doctrine that stated that instead of having only one wife, priesthood holders needed to be sealed to multiple wives in order to gain the highest salvation.

This strange new doctrine contradicted the previous revelations and doctrines contained in the revelations Joseph Smith had already given, as well as the rest of the four standard works. Section 132 is full of contradictions and falsehoods. It contradicts the law of the gospel that had been given in 1831 and it changes the definition of several gospel terms. It adds new doctrine and negates previous doctrine. Section 132 *adds thereto, and diminishes from, the holy and infallible word of God*. It resulted in *another* gospel being taught.

Paul warned us that another gospel would be introduced. He knew that "signs" would be produced and that the strength of the testimony of an angel would be used to persuade people to depart from the truth. The apostle Paul had prophetically warned:

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach

any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."³⁷

In the New Testament, Paul reveals that God will send a strong delusion upon those that believe not the truth but rather take pleasure in unrighteousness.

7 "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9 *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."³⁸

The God of the Bible uses Prophets to Test us

Perhaps one of the most poignant bible stories for illustrating the need for personal revelation, and the fact that God does allow prophets to lead people astray in order to test them, is found in 1 Kings 13.

In the story, a man of God who had received direct revelation from God had been commanded to NOT do something while on a journey. He was then approached

³⁷ Gal. 1: 8-9

³⁸ 2 Thes. 2: 7-12 Amazingly, the man of sin was revealed during Joseph's ministry. This will be covered in a later Chapter regarding the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood at the Morley Farm.

during his journey by another prophet who told him that he should in fact do it. When the first prophet declared that the Lord had commanded him not to do it, the second prophet assured him that the Lord had changed his mind and told him that an *angel of the Lord* had thus appeared and rescinded the commandment of the Lord.

At this, the first prophet accepted the invitation to do what the Lord had commanded him to NOT do. As a result, the Lord had a lion destroy the first prophet from off the face of the earth. These Biblical passages prove that God does allow prophets to lead others astray.³⁹

Succession

Those that dig deeply enough into church history realize that the succession issue was really not just about *priesthood right* or *seniority* or *office*, it was about the *spiritual wife doctrine* that had been introduced into the church.

People like Joseph's brother Samuel Smith, President William Marks, President William Law, President Sidney Rigdon, and some members of the high council were a threat to those other leading brethren, such as Brigham Young and many of the twelve apostles, who had embraced the heretical spiritual wife doctrine and refused to acknowledge their sin and repent.

If you are well acquainted with the life of Joseph Smith, you may be aware of the fact that his introduction of the spiritual wife doctrine contained in Section 132 is probably the primary issue that caused William Law and his associates to dissent and print their expose which, ultimately, caused Joseph Smith to be chastened by the rod of angry men and to be put to death by a secret combination of people from both within and outside of the church.

One of the amazing things we learn from the history of the church is that when people like Hyrum Smith and Mary Ann Lightner were initially skeptical about the doctrine and questioned Joseph about it, instead of proving it from the scriptures, Joseph would promise them a SIGN or a WONDER to prove it.

³⁹ The passage is slightly changed in the JST. It provides clarification as to why the Lord had the angel and the prophet tempt the first prophet.. "that I may prove him"]

With this in mind, let's review the warning in the first two verses of Deuteronomy 13 again:

"If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them. Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet"

A prophet can teach false doctrine and provide signs and wonders in an effort to seduce people to follow after false doctrines and false Gods.

The three Davidic Servant prophecies that we have chronologically covered and superimposed, one upon another provide an amazing biblical profile of the David Servant who was to be like Moses in the Latter-days. 2 Samuel 7, Deuteronomy 13, and Deuteronomy 18 are all prophesying about the same Davidic Prophet.

The Atonement Statute

Now we will review and superimpose a fourth prophecy from the Old Testament, which vividly supports this theme and prepares us for the final capstone prophecy. It is provided in the 16th chapter of Leviticus and it is called the *atonement statute*.

It is important to understand that every statute that God gave to the Children of Israel in the Old Testament, represented an enactment of a future prophetic event. The atonement statute is no different. It represents one of the greatest prophetic events to take place during the last days. It is in this amazing chapter that we are given a prophecy about how two prophets depicted as two goats, would provide an intercessory atonement offering in behalf of apostate Latter-day Israel, in the Latter-days. This offering would be presented for the same reason that Moses gave his atonement offering, anciently: to prevent the Latter-day Saints from being wiped off the face of the earth for committing the same idolatry as their forefathers.

As the reality of what Joseph Smith did unfolds to those to whom it is revealed, it becomes apparent that it is not just the veracity of Joseph Smith's ministry that is being judged. The tables are turned on each of us and all of the critics who are

passing judgment on the prophet Joseph Smith, because it is in this prophetic enactment, and other supporting prophecies, that we are informed the reason the Latter-day seer and his spokesman committed their transgression is because they had the sins of the rebellious, apostate Latter-day children of Israel placed upon them. The sins of idolatry from the Latter-day Saints were artificially placed on Joseph and Sidney.

Before we begin reviewing the atonement statute, let's review the Book of Mormon and JST version of Isaiah 29:10 which reveals the great secret of intercession.

"For behold, the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep. For behold, ye have closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; and your rulers, and the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity."⁴⁰

That remarkable passage reveals it was the iniquity of the Latter-day Saints, in rejecting the message of God's servants, that caused the seers eyes to be covered. This provides another witness that an intercessory act took place and it confirms that ominous declaration in Deuteronomy 18 pertaining to the prophet like Moses. If the people do not hearken to God's word that he declares, I WILL REQUIRE IT OF THAT PROPHET.

The whole idea of intercession is foreign to the carnal mind, yet this is how God used some of his prophets in the Old Testament times and it is typological to the infinite, eternal, and ineffable intercession and atonement that Christ made for each of us.

As you read selected passages from the atonement statute below, keep in mind that, just as traditional interpretations of 2 Samuel 7 and Deuteronomy 18 are erroneous, the same is true with Leviticus 16. It is scripturally and doctrinally illogical to identify the two goats in the Atonement Statute as depicting Christ and Christ, or as depicting Christ and Satan. Those appear to be the two best guesses that protestant and catholic Bible scholars can muster up.

⁴⁰ JST Isaiah 29:10 and 2nd Nephi 27:5 (the only difference between these two translations is that the Book of Mormon says "iniquity" singular while the JST say "iniquities" plural.

I am going to suggest that the Seer, Joseph Smith, and the Spokesman, Sidney Rigdon, represent the two goats that make a joint atonement offering. Other members of the First Presidency, i.e., Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, and Frederik G. Williams most likely represent some of the other animals mentioned in the narrative that have, and will play, prophetic roles in the fulfillment of the prophecy.

Selected Passages From Leviticus 16

1 " AND the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died;

2 And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.⁴¹

3 Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.

4 He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.

5 And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, (a joint sin offering!) and one ram for a burnt offering.⁴²

6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house.

⁴¹ Remarkably, the Lord did appear to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the holy place within the veil, above the mercy seat on April 3, 1836. More on this will be discussed in future chapters.

⁴² Note that two separate servants will jointly offer up a single offering. I believe this substantiates that both the scapegoat and the Blood offering goat take the sins of the people upon them. The role of Sidney Rigdon as the scapegoat offering will be addressed in the second volume of this work.

7 And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; (both goats were equally clean and acceptable) one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat.

9 And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering.

10 But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

11 And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself:

16 And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.⁴³ (section 110 reveals that God accepted the offering of the Seer and the Spokesman because of and despite the transgressions and sins of Latter-day Israel and in the midst of the uncleanness of the congregation.)

20 ¶ And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat:

21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of

⁴³ An atonement was made for both the Holy of Holies and the entire tabernacle which would eventually be defiled by the saints.

the goat⁴⁴, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:

22 And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.⁴⁵

33 And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.⁴⁶

34 And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.”

Most prophecy scholars try to force the above prophecy to fit the atonement of Christ. Some claim both goats represent Christ, which is inconsistent within the storyline enactment since they are both chosen at the same time to fill different

⁴⁴ The following pronouncement was given to Sidney Rigdon in a patriarchal blessing: “Thou shalt have power to call thousands into the kingdom, who will rejoice that such a man was born. Thou shall receive an ordination not many days hence which shall surpass all human understanding; for they Redeemer shall come down and stand before thee-thou shalt see his face and hear his voice and great shall be thy rejoicing. Thou shalt have power to call all thy ungodly relatives into the church; for the Lord surely will give thee great power in their presence, and they shall be constrained to acknowledge that his power is round about thee to keep thee.” It would appear as if this ordination by the Lord had to do with Sidney's calling as the scapegoat.

⁴⁵ It appears this was fulfilled during the LDS succession crisis when the Church chose Brigham Young instead of Sidney Rigdon. Brigham and his fellow conspirators excommunicated Sidney and turned him over to the buffetings of Satan.

⁴⁶ An atonement offering was made in behalf of the holy sanctuary (Holy of Holies), the tabernacle (temple), and the altar. It appears this took place during the secret vision behind the veil and is spoken of in the Book of Daniel prophecies about the vision and the prophecy that Joseph and Oliver had behind the veil in the most holy place and of the anointing of the most holy place that took place at that time: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." Dan 9:24. This will be discussed in a future chapter.

offerings. It is illogical and inconsistent to have two physical goats representing Christ, while simultaneously doing two different things. One requiring a blood sacrifice while the other requiring a living sacrifice.

Other interpretations suggest that the scapegoat represents Satan while the blood sacrifice goat represents Christ. The problems with that interpretation are even more problematic. Suffice it to say that Satan did not qualify as a perfect and acceptable offering, nor did he begin on equal footing with the Savior of the world as a perfect offering, nor could he have easily had his calling switched with that of Christ as that interpretation would have us believe!

Once I began to read each of the previously analyzed prophecies in context of the other three, other Old Testament prophecies began jumping out of the woodwork and the pieces of the prophet puzzle began to fall in place. It also became obvious that the atonement statute in Leviticus 16 was referring to the intercessory calling of the Davidic Servant, the Seer, Joseph Smith. His Spokesman Sidney Rigdon also plays an incredible role as the scapegoat offering.

I have Labored in Vain

An example of an obscure prophecy that jumped out at me as I was documenting the Biblical profile of Joseph Smith is the Davidic Lamentation contained in Isaiah 49. I had been pondering how 2 Samuel 7 foretells that the Davidic Servant will appoint the place and gather Israel, yet Joseph Smith's attempt to gather Israel after appointing the designated place, clearly failed.

Notice how the Davidic Lamentation has the servant crying out. "I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for naught, and in vain . . ." but then he prophetically proclaims "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength."

The Davidic Servant observes, in anguish, that his first attempt at gathering Israel failed and, yet, he will yet return and be successful through the grace of God and yet be glorious in the eyes of the Lord.

The Lord then interjects:

"It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give

thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth."

The Lord then reassures his servant that has become "despised" and "abhorred" in the eyes of the nations that He, the Lord, is faithful and will yet choose and preserve his fallen servant. In the day of salvation, will "give thee for a covenant of the people to establish the earth" which substantiates the intercessory role of the prophet depicted in the passages we have reviewed.

"Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, *and* his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, *and* the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages."

It is ultimately the Davidic Servant who comes forth, triumphant in the grace of God and who sets the prisoners free:

"That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that *are* in darkness, shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures *shall be* in all high places."

Another chapter of this book provides documentation regarding the return of Joseph Smith in his *second commission* and the doctrine of the three watches.

". . . each one stand for himself and depend on no man"

Before we evaluate the fifth major prophecy pertaining to Joseph Smith, I want to point out that Joseph Smith gave a sermon to the Relief Society in Nauvoo in May of 1842. His text was taken from Ezekiel 14.

The sermon was given during the time when, according to some historians, he was apparently secretly taking some of these sisters as plural wives while publicly preaching against the practice. This is interesting in view of the fact that he would suspend the Relief Society later that year because Emma was using it as a

platform for preaching against polygamy! Very little of what was taking place in Nauvoo makes any sense until the Biblical profile of Joseph Smith is considered.

Regarding the above mentioned sermon to the Relief Society, the history of the church records:

"Prest. Smith rose; read the 14th Chap. Of Ezekiel—Said the Lord had declared by the prophet that the people should each one stand for himself and depend on no man or men in that state of corruption of the Jewish Church—that righteous persons could only deliver their own souls—applied it to the present state of the church of Latter-day Saints."

How interesting that Joseph appeared to be warning the Relief Society about relying on human priesthood authority. He emphasized that each person must deliver their own souls as far as discerning truth!

A passage from the text of Ezekiel is worth reiterating to provide context to the prophets remarks and the four cornerstone prophesies we have reviewed:

"Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me. And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face; should I be inquired of at all by them?

Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the Lord will answer him that cometh, [thru that prophet] according to the multitude of his idols;

That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols. Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations."

The content of those passages is truly amazing. Again, we are faced with the raw, unsanitized Old Testament theology. If you inquire of a prophet with an impure and idolatrous heart, God will have the prophet answer you according to the desire of your sinful heart!⁴⁷ This of course is just the opposite of what modern Mormonism teaches. Mormons are expected to blindly follow the brethren and prophet of the Church and to never question authority.

This may seem like hard doctrine, but remember, the test is to see if we will follow God's words, not the contradictory words of a messenger that is being used to test the integrity of the petitioner.

Please review the prophetic revelation and stern warning below that was given in the book of commandments in 1829.

"And thus, if the people of this generation harden not their hearts, I will work a reformation among them, and I will put down all lyings, and deceivings, and priestcrafts, and envyings, and strifes, and idolatries, and sorceries, and all manner of iniquities, and I will establish my church, like unto the church which was taught by my disciples in the days of old.

And now if this generation do harden their hearts against my word, behold I will deliver them up unto Satan, for he reigneth and hath power at this time, for he hath got great hold upon the hearts of the people of this generation: and not far from the iniquities of Sodom and Gomorrah, do they come at this time: and behold the sword of justice hangeth over their heads, and if they persist in the hardness of their hearts, the time cometh that it must fall upon them.

Behold I tell you these things even as I also told the people of the

⁴⁷ Interestingly, one of the plural wives of Joseph Smith, while speaking on the subject in Utah, admitted that she had dreamed of being the wife of Joseph Smith and felt guilty of it, long before he proposed to her.

destruction of Jerusalem, and my word shall be verified at this time
as it hath hitherto been verified . . ."48

It is interesting that the Lord likens the above warning to the one he gave to the stiff-necked Jews in Jerusalem. In a later chapter we shall discuss in greater detail the intimate connection between the Latter-day Saints and the Jews. I would suggest that being delivered over to Satan is probably not as ominous, hopeless, and open ended as it sounds. There were also times during the Old Testament when God delivered his rebellious people over to the enemy for a season to be chastised. We have been assured that there will be a remnant of repentant Jews and Gentiles, that will yet be gathered and saved in the kingdom of God at the appointed time.

Before we review the final foundational prophesy I have used to scripturally identify and catalogue the prophetic profile of the Davidic servant, I want to point out that the profile we have been building has come primarily from ancient prophecies from the Old Testament. Obviously, a much greater profile could be provided if the New Testament, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants⁴⁹ were to be employed. I have intentionally limited this profile to the Bible because I want to demonstrate that Joseph Smith's ministry can be proven exclusively from the Old Testament. I do this to encourage Biblical Christians to reconsider the validity of Joseph Smith's ministry without being biased by the teachings and ordinances of the modern LDS Church, which has essentially become a cult in the eyes of many high profile Christian scholars. The truth is that just about any

⁴⁸ 1833 Book of Commandments Chapter 4 (these passages were removed from the text when the 1835 edition of the D&C was published because the prophecy had been fulfilled by that time.

⁴⁹ It is surprising how many times the Lord warns about, if not foretells about the eventual fall of Joseph Smith in modern revelation. It is a reoccurring theme. Here are a few examples: ". . . because of transgression, if thou art not aware thou wilt fall . . ." D&C 3:9 "There is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken, if he abide in me . . . for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead." D&C 43:3-4 " Nevertheless, through you shall the oracles be given to another, yea, even unto the church." D&C 90:4 "Let my servants Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon take their journey . . . and inasmuch as they are not faithful, they shall be cut off, even as I will . . ." D&C 52:6

Christian church in America today has a greater resemblance to the New Testament Church of Christ that Joseph Smith helped to restore to the earth, than the Mormon Church, which calls itself the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints⁵⁰. Modern Mormonism has deviated so far off the path that it bears very little resemblance to the Church of Christ that briefly came out of the wilderness over four generations ago.

One of the primary purposes of this book is to help prepare non-Mormons, who believe in Biblical Christianity, for the Marvelous Work and a Wonder that is about to be ushered in. This work will highlight many of the signs and events that will emerge in the near future, preparatory to the coming of Christ. I believe It is now time for the times of the Gentiles to come in.⁵¹ In another chapter it will be demonstrated that a secret ushering in of the ancient dispensation of the Gospel of Abraham in 1836 is what made it possible for the intercessory atonement ministry of Joseph Smith to take place, and also began the restoration of the Jews. Intercessory interventions like the ones Moses and Joseph Smith offered, are never necessary when the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is on the earth.

Once I had considered all four of the cornerstone prophecies itemized below and the related scriptures in the context they provided for each other, I was able to add more of the missing pieces to the prophet puzzle.

The Four Cornerstone Prophecies of Joseph Smith's Biblical Profile

⁵⁰ My contention is that the modern Mormon Church was never given that name by divine revelation. The name of Christ was taken out of the name of the church in 1834. Section 115 appears to be a prophecy of the future, declaring what the name of the church will be among the scattered saints once the final restoration has begun. Finally, Section 124 and the easily documented history associated with it verify that the latter day saints during the Nauvoo era were rejected with their dead as a "church". Hence, the modern corporate church has in essence, high-jacked the name "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints".

⁵¹ The term is a confusing one. In a sense, the times of the gentiles refers to the dominance of the gentiles nations from the taking of the gospel to the gentiles in New Testament times, to the present day. However, a secret dispensation was ushered in, in 1836 which enabled the ancient kingdom of the Jews to be re-established. When the light of the fulness of the Gospel emerges once again during the Marvelous Work, the gospel will be taken once again to the Gentiles.

- 2 Samuel 7,
- Deuteronomy 13
- Deuteronomy 18.
- Leviticus 16

We will now turn our attention to the fifth major prophecy having to do with the atonement statute and the return of God's Seer and Spokesman. It is, in my opinion, one of the greatest prophecies about how the Marvelous Work will begin. It is contained in Zachariah Chapters 3 and 6.

Joshua The High Priest and the Branch Prophet

The amazing prophecy in Zechariah 3 and 6 reveals that in the Latter-days a BRAND (servant) that has become filthy and been cast into the fire will be retrieved from the fire despite the resisting of Satan.

This BRAND prophet that had previously committed sin will have his filthy garments removed and be made clean and restored to his previous calling and position. At this time, the Lord announces that he will bring forth another servant called the BRANCH.

1 "And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

2 And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.

4 And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him, he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.

5 And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by.

6 And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying,

7 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.

8 Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they *are* men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH.

9 For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone *shall be* seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

10 In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree.” (Zechariah 3:1-10)

11 “Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set *them* upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest;

12 And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name *is* The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord:

13 Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

14 And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the Lord.

15 And they *that are* far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord, and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. And *this* shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God."⁵²

From the above passages in Chapters 3 and 6 of Zechariah, we learn that the two "goats" in the "atonement statute eventually come forth from the dead to finish their work.

One of these returning servants is called Joshua, The High Priest. Joshua means "Jehovah Saves." This servant is also referred to as a "BRAND" (or piece of wood and also genealogical term) *which is retrieved from the fire.*

The second servant, who is also brought forth from the dead, is called the "BRANCH." (Also a piece of wood and genealogical term.)

The Brand servant who had been the *scapegoat*, has his filthy garments replaced with clean garments and is crowned and set as a judge over the house of the Lord.

The Branch servant, who had been the *blood sacrifice goat*, will build the final temple of the Lord in Zion and shall bear the glory of the Lord and shall rule upon his throne.

Notice how Zechariah points out that the ". . . counsel of peace shall be between them BOTH", referring to both of these servants in the third watch"

This is consistent with the atonement statute that states that the two goats will offer a joint offering:

"And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, (a joint sin offering!) and one ram for a burnt offering."⁵³

It is also consistent with modern revelation, which speaks of a joint stewardship between the Seer and Spokesman, in Section 36 in the second watch:

⁵² (Zechariah 6:11-15)

⁵³ Lev 16:5

“And now this calling and commandment give I unto you concerning ALL MEN—That as many as shall come before MY SERVANTS SIDNEY RIGDON AND JOSEPH SMITH, JUN., embracing this calling and commandment, shall be ordained and sent forth to preach the everlasting gospel among the nations . . .”

My original seven point profile of the Davidic Servant had become significantly larger now that the four cornerstone prophecies had been combined with the final capstone prophecy, verifying that a scapegoat servant with filthy garments, will be returned to the earth and made clean and given the mandate to take his rightful position, followed by the return of the BRANCH servant who made the joint atonement with him.

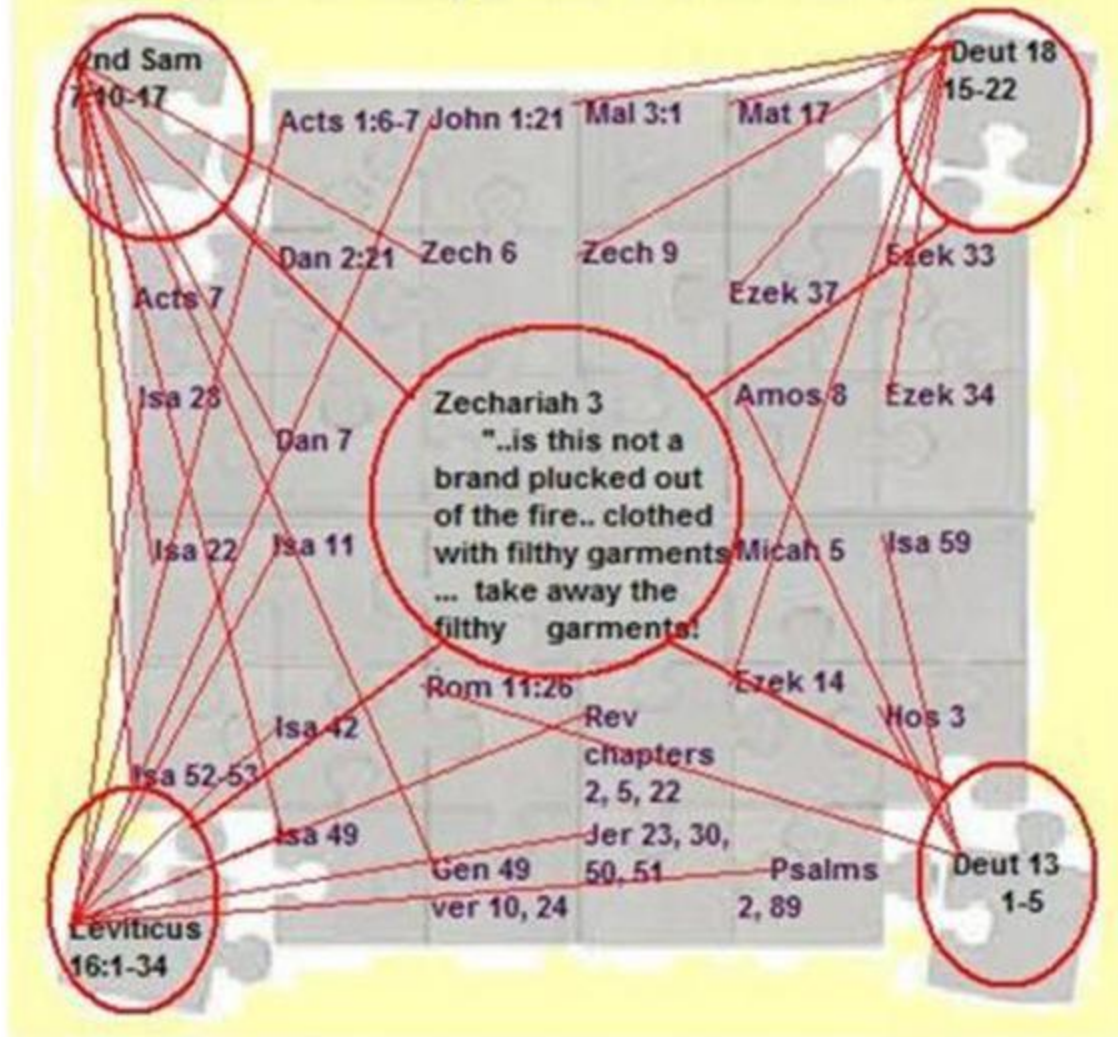
Below are some of the points of a more complete profile that takes all five of the prophecies we have discussed into consideration. The Davidic Servant will:

1. Appoint the Land of Israel and Eventually Plant Israel in it.
2. Establish the Kingdom Forever.
3. God puts his words in the mouth of the Servant creating a Unique Book of Scripture.
4. The Davidic Servant will build the House of the Lord.
5. The Davidic Servant will be sealed up to Eternal Life and thereby Become a Son of God. "
6. The Davidic Servant will provide an atonement for rebellious Latter-day Israel.
7. The Davidic Servant will Commit Iniquity because of the sins of Israel artificially placed upon him.
8. The Iniquity Committed will be a false teaching which is spoken presumptuously.

9. Because of the iniquity committed, the Davidic Servant will be Chastened and Killed by ther rod of Men.
10. The Davidic Servant retains the Mercy of the Lord Because of his intercessory atonement offering and the fact that his transgression was caused by the sins that were placed upon him artificially.
11. The Davidic Servant who is called the BRANCH PROPHET (Blood Sacrifice Goat- Seer) will be returned to the earth, be made clean, build the final temple, rule upon his throne, and will reign jointly with the BRAND PROPHET (Scapegoat- Spokesman).

The following diagram depicts the four cornerstone prophecies in conjunction with the capstone prophecy as the missing pieces of the Prophet Puzzle that enable all of the other pieces to fall into place.

Solving the Mystery of Joseph Smith & Finding the missing pieces of the Prophet Puzzle



The Five Primary Prophecies

As I studied the five primary prophecies that have been covered, along with the other secondary ones, eventually, over 50 Old and New Testament scriptures surfaced that provided supporting evidence that the Davidic Servant profile depicted in the four cornerstone prophecies were true. Some of them are depicted on the above picture.

They also added other aspects to the profile, explaining why the Davidic Servant committed iniquity, and why the mercy of the Lord did not part from him and why he is able to return and be made clean and to complete his calling and gather Israel.

I believe the Biblical profile of the two part ministry of the Latter-day servant singularly and expressly points to Joseph Smith. He is the only high profile religious leader of the last days that fits the profile. The evidence provided therein is beyond overwhelming!

We have now reviewed several ancient prophecies that provide an amazing profile of God's Latter-day servant that is typological to Moses. The similarities are striking. There are many others as well.

We have also reviewed from Deuteronomy 18 that a Latter-day prophet like Moses would first utter the true word of the Lord that the people are to receive and then he will prophesy falsely and die.

In extracting the Biblical profile of the latter day servant, we have reviewed prophecies in 2 Samuel and Deuteronomy 18, Deuteronomy 13, and the prophetic enactment in the atonement statute in Leviticus 16 and Zechariah 3 & 6.

I believe the cumulative narrative of these prophecies foretell the Latter-day Davidic Servant will do much good, followed by much evil. By drilling down deep into the prophecies, it becomes apparent that the evil which is done after doing much good, emerges because of the intercessory atonement offering that the Servant offers up. This intercession is typological to the atonement that Moses offered up during his ministry.

In hindsight, after documenting the plethora of prophecies having to do with the Biblical profile of Joseph Smith, I was able to also make note of several warnings and prophecies in the modern revelations that Joseph Smith brought forth pertaining to the fact that Joseph could and would temporarily "fall".

One is required to really drill down contextually to realize that the temporary fall is the result of his calling as an intercessory servant. Modern revelation actually speaks about the great intercessory atonement offering that was to be made by

Joseph Smith and it sheds light on Malachi chapter three which is a prophecy that has multiple fulfillments, including the ministry of Christ preceded by the ministry of John the Baptist during New Testament times. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the literal fulfillment of the prophetic narrative must take place in the end times as well. It provides a summary of what God's latter day servant would do.

The Possibility of a fall Documented in latter day Revelation

Section One

It is interesting that in section one of the D&C which God commanded to be the "preface" of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord acknowledges that Joseph Smith and his associates would "err" and that the error would eventually be made known.

This has become a reality.

Countless books and Internet blogs by Mormons and anti-Mormons alike are highlighting Joseph Smith's sins.

Notice how the narrative speaks about the everlasting covenant being re-established⁵⁴ and the fulness of the gospel being proclaimed by the "weak and simple" who "sin" and are "chastened". Eventually, they are to be made strong and blessed from on high:

22 That mine everlasting covenant might be established;

23 That the fulness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of the world, and before kings and rulers.

24 Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding.

25 And inasmuch as they erred it might be made known;

26 And inasmuch as they sought wisdom they might be instructed;

⁵⁴ Verses 11-17 appear to speak of how the everlasting covenant is first broken by the latter day Saints, reiterating the prophecy in Isa 24:5

27 And inasmuch as they sinned they might be chastened, that they might repent;

28 And inasmuch as they were humble they might be made strong, and blessed from on high, and receive knowledge from time to time.

The keywords in these modern passages amazingly link up to ancient prophecies. For instance, as just one example of many, note how the word "err" links up with the prophetic passages in Isaiah 28, that note how the prophet and the priest err in judgment:

Isaiah 28	D&C Section 1
<p><u>2</u> Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one..</p> <p><u>6</u> And for a spirit of judgment to him that <u>sitteth</u> in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.</p> <p><u>7</u> ¶ But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble <i>in</i> judgment.</p> <p><u>8</u> For all tables are full of vomit <i>and</i> filthiness, so that <i>there is no place clean</i>.</p>	<p><u>24</u> Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding.</p> <p><u>25</u> And inasmuch as they erred it might be made known;</p> <p><u>26</u> And inasmuch as they sought wisdom they might be instructed;</p> <p><u>27</u> And inasmuch as they sinned they might be chastened, that they might repent;</p> <p><u>28</u> And inasmuch as they were humble they might be made strong, and blessed from on high, and receive knowledge from time to time.</p>

Shortly after reviewing Section One, the reader of the Doctrine and Covenants encounters another early warning given to Joseph Smith which was actually given before Section One was given.

Section 3 seems to be foretelling that the work Joseph Smith was commissioned to do would initially be frustrated⁵⁵ even though, ultimately, God's work cannot

⁵⁵ This is consistent with the Davidic lamentation contained in Isaiah 49 wherein the Servant first fails in gathering Israel but is later promised by the Lord that he will yet be successful.

be frustrated. The following passages include the ominous chastisement, that Joseph had frequently "transgressed the commandments and the laws of God, and have gone on in the persuasions of men". It also includes the warning that if Joseph is not aware, he will fall, even though his past transgressions are forgiven and he is once again called to the work:

3 Remember, remember that it is not the work of God that is frustrated, but the work of men;

4 For although a man may have many revelations, and have power to do many mighty works, yet if he boasts in his own strength, and sets at naught the counsels of God, and follows after the dictates of his own will and carnal desires, he must fall and incur the vengeance of a just God upon him.

5 Behold, you have been entrusted with these things, but how strict were your commandments; and remember also the promises which were made to you, if you did not transgress them.

6 And behold, how oft you have transgressed the commandments and the laws of God, and have gone on in the persuasions of men.

7 For, behold, you should not have feared man more than God. Although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despise his words—

8 Yet you should have been faithful; and he would have extended his arm and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; and he would have been with you in every time of trouble.

9 Behold, thou art Joseph, and thou wast chosen to do the work of the Lord, but because of transgression, if thou art not aware thou wilt fall.

10 But remember, God is merciful; therefore, repent of that which thou hast done which is contrary to the commandment which I gave you, and thou art still chosen, and art again called to the work;

11 Except thou do this, thou shalt be delivered up and become as other men, and have no more gift.⁵⁶

The Lord is clearly explaining that his servants are not infallible-

⁵⁶ D&C 3:3-9

- **A prophet can have many revelations**
- **A prophet can do many mighty works**
- **Following the revelations and mighty works the prophet can begin boasting**
- **Following the revelations and mighty works the prophet can set at naught the counsels of God**
- **Following the revelations and mighty works the prophet can follow his own will and carnal desires**
- **Following the revelations and mighty works the prophet can FALL (and have no more gift of prophecy)**

Interestingly, Joseph would later comment to acquaintances, during the dark days of Nauvoo, that he has become like other men without the gift of prophecy and in fact, would publicly notify the church in a conference talk, that he would no longer be prophesying for the church and that they must rely on his brother Hyrum.

He would be accused during the Nauvoo era of having been a true prophet that had lost the gift of prophecy. This was his response:

“my apostate enemies say that I have been a true prophet—& I had rather be a fallen true prophet, than a false prophet⁵⁷

One of the next sections to address the issue of a potential transition from Joseph Smith to another, is Section 28. In it, Oliver Cowdery is told that he can write by way of commandment and wisdom but he was not to give commandments to Joseph who was the head of the church.

But thou shalt not write by way of commandment, but by wisdom;
And thou shalt not command him who is at thy head, and at the head of the church; For I have given him the keys of the mysteries, and the revelations which are sealed, until I shall appoint unto them another in his stead.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Discourse given May 12 1844

⁵⁸ D&C 28:5-7

Interestingly, the above passage indicates that there will be another who will be appointed in Joseph's stead. This becomes significant when we get to the prophecy on succession in Section 43.

Next up is Section 35 which warns that I Joseph does not abide in the Lord, another will be planted in his stead:

And I have sent forth the fulness of my gospel by the hand of my servant Joseph; and in weakness have I blessed him;

18 And I have given unto him the keys of the mystery of those things which have been sealed, even things which were from the foundation of the world, and the things which shall come from this time until the time of my coming, if he abide in me, and if not, another will I plant in his stead.⁵⁹

The Succession Prophecy

In Section 43 the Lord gave the church both a law and a prophecy regarding the doctrine of succession. Section 42 had been given as the "law of the gospel" and now the Lord wanted to make sure there was no confusion as to how the Lord would continue to give commandments and revelations that would be binding upon the church.

In Section 43:1-3 the Lord clearly declared that Joseph Smith had been chosen to receive commandments and revelations by which the church was to be governed.

O HEARKEN, ye elders of my church, and give ear to the words which I shall speak unto you.

For behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye have received a commandment for a law unto my church, through him whom I have appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations from my hand.

⁵⁹ D&C 35:17-18

And this ye shall know assuredly—that there is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken, if he abide in me.

Although the above passages provide some degree of assurance and protocol as to how the church had been and would continue to be governed, the next few passages reveal a prophetic caveat that can be a little unsettling:

4 But verily, verily, I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him; for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead.

5 And this shall be a law unto you, that ye receive not the teachings of any that shall come before you as revelations or commandments;

6 And this I give unto you that you may not be deceived, that you may know they are not of me.

7 For verily I say unto you, that he that is ordained of me shall come in at the gate and be ordained as I have told you before, to teach those revelations which you have received and shall receive through him whom I have appointed.

Again, we have another prophetic statement in modern revelation indicating that Joseph had not been given the stamp of infallibility. In fact, the prophetic implication is that Joseph may in fact have the gift of prophecy taken from him at some time in the future. This ominous possibility is being reiterated again in section 43, after having been brought up in Section 1 & 3.

Interestingly, the above passage gives a great prophetic key having to do with how succession would take place in the event that Joseph should lose the gift of prophecy.

Joseph's successor would be called by the Lord through Joseph.

If we fast forward to section 90:1-3, we get a prophetic verification that in fact, the Lord would be appointing someone else with the prophetic gift, through Joseph:

THUS saith the Lord, verily, verily I say unto you my son, thy sins are forgiven thee, according to thy petition, for thy prayers and the prayers of thy brethren have come up into my ears.
Therefore, thou art blessed from henceforth that bear the keys of the kingdom given unto you; which kingdom is coming forth for the last time.
Verily I say unto you, the keys of this kingdom shall never be taken from you, while thou art in the world, neither in the world to come;

After assuring Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams that the keys of the kingdom would never be taken from them in this world or the next, the Lord then verifies that the law of succession would in fact be enacted and that the oracles would be given to another:

"Nevertheless, through you shall the oracles be given to another, yea, even unto the church".

From the above passage and other presented, it becomes clear that the Lord would be calling another to take the place of Joseph at some time in the future.

In Section 52 Joseph and Sidney are both warned that they will be "cut off" if they are not faithful:

Wherefore, verily I say unto you, let my servants Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon take their journey as soon as preparations can be made to leave their homes, and journey to the land of Missouri.
And inasmuch as they are faithful unto me, it shall be made known unto them what they shall do;
And it shall also, inasmuch as they are faithful, be made known unto them the land of your inheritance.
And inasmuch as they are not faithful, they shall be cut off, even as I will, as seemeth me good.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ D&C 52:3-6

In Section 93 given on May 6 1833 The Lord declares, “And now, verily I say unto Joseph Smith, Jun.—You have not kept the commandments, and must needs stand rebuked before the Lord“

Notice the reoccurring theme of Joseph Smith being replaced and or cut off:

- And inasmuch as they erred it might be made known
- how oft you have transgressed the commandments and the laws of God
- until I shall appoint unto them another in his stead
- if he abide in me, and if not, another will I plant in his stead
- for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead.
- inasmuch as they are not faithful, they shall be cut off
- through you shall the oracles be given to another, yea, even unto the church"
- You have not kept the commandments, and must needs stand rebuked before the Lord
- Your family must needs repent and forsake some things, and give more earnest heed unto your sayings, or be removed out of their place

Although Joseph was apparently forgiven after being chastized in Section 93, history, as well as the ancient prophecies in the Old Testament verify that Joseph did in fact transgress and that the Lord called Hyrum to take his place. This took place within a matter of years after the succession prophecy was given in Section 43. Section 124 informs us that Hyrum was to take the office "priesthood and patriarch" and that he was to be given the spiritual gifts of being a prophet, seer and revelator unto the church, working in concert with Joseph Smith⁶¹.

⁶¹ D&C 124:91-96 [91](#) And again, verily I say unto you, let my servant William be appointed, ordained, and anointed, as counselor unto my servant Joseph, in the room of my servant Hyrum, that my servant Hyrum may take the office of Priesthood and Patriarch, which was appointed unto him by his father, by blessing and also by right;

[92](#) That from henceforth he shall hold the keys of the patriarchal blessings upon the heads of all my people,

Shortly after the Lord called Hyrum to work in concert with Joseph in giving revelations and commandments to the church through the gift of prophecy, Joseph publicly announced during a conference talk that he would no longer prophesy for the church⁶². This of course fulfilled the succession prophecy in section 43.

There are other indications in modern revelation that a prophet called of God, like Joseph could experience a temporary fall. One warning is given in Section 20

"..But there is a possibility that man may fall from grace and depart from the living God"⁶³

These examples given from Sections 1,3, 20, 43, and 90, etc., are given to simply show that the prophetic profile of Joseph Smith that is given in ancient scripture,

93 That whoever he blesses shall be blessed, and whoever he curses shall be cursed; that whatsoever he shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever he shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

94 And from this time forth I appoint unto him that he may be a prophet, and a seer, and a revelator unto my church, as well as my servant Joseph;

95 That he may act in concert also with my servant Joseph; and that he shall receive counsel from my servant Joseph, who shall show unto him the keys whereby he may ask and receive, and be crowned with the same blessing, and glory, and honor, and priesthood, and gifts of the priesthood, that once were put upon him that was my servant Oliver Cowdery;

96 That my servant Hyrum may bear record of the things which I shall show unto him, that his name may be had in honorable remembrance from generation to generation, forever and ever.

⁶² As documented in the diary of William Clayton, one of Joseph Smith's personal secretaries, on Sunday, July 16 1843, Joseph preached again, proposing a radical change in church organization- "He stated that Hyrum held the office of prophet to the church.."Hyrum is Called to Reform the Church. William Clayton also reveals that Joseph had acknowledged that Hyrum was to conduct a REFORMATION in the church- "...He [Hyrum] was going to have a reformation, and the Saints must regard Hyrum for he has authority." In a letter to Brigham Young, Apostle Willard Richards gave a similar report stating that Joseph "said he would not prophesy anymore- Hyrum should be the prophet" The following morning, a number of fretting Saints came to him protesting, "Brother Joseph, Hyrum is no prophet: he can't lead the church. On the following Sunday the 23rd Joseph once again took the pulpit and clarified himself, "It was not that I would renounce the *idea* of being a prophet, but that I would renounce the idea of proclaiming myself such." Joseph then, once again, reiterated that he was vacating the "office" of prophet (Words of Joseph Smith Pg 234

⁶³ D&C 20:32 another fascinating passage is found in Section 117:12-13 wherein Oliver Granger is admonished by the Lord to pray for the redemption of the First Presidency

which indicates a fall associated with transgression and with an intercession, is fully supported in modern revelation.

2nd Samuel 7 speaks of a latter day servant that commits iniquity:

“If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee.”⁶⁴

Modern revelation supports the possibility that 2nd Samuel 7 and other ancient prophecies bring up.

With the numerous warnings given in modern revelation that the Lord's servant can transgress and have his prophetic gift taken away for a season, it is truly mystifying that Latter day Saints have accepted the mantra that the prophet can never lead them astray.

Modern Revelation Fortells the Acceptable Offering.

Not only does Modern revelation indicate that God's Servant could temporarily fall, it also makes both blatant and subtle references to the intercessory atonement offering that Joseph Smith and his associates would offering in behalf of latter day Israel.

Perhaps one of the most significant references to the intercessory atonement offering that would be offered up in the last days is mentioned in section 13 of the D&C.

On May 15th 1829, John the Baptist, who Joseph Smith identified as the transmigration of Elijah the Tishbite, appeared to Joseph and Oliver and conferred the Keys of the Priesthood of Aaron. He prophesied that the time would come when the "Sons of Levi " would "offer again, an acceptable offering unto the Lord in righteousness".

⁶⁴ 2nd Samuel 7:15

UPON you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness.

Section 124 also makes reference to this amazing sacrifice by the sons of Levi:

“Your memorials for your sacrifices by the sons of Levi... are ordained by the ordinance of my holy house.”⁶⁵

That same section begins with the following passage that makes reference to an offering Joseph has made:

"VERILY, thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Joseph Smith, I am well pleased with your offering and acknowledgments, which you have made; for unto this end have I raised you up, that I might show forth my wisdom through the weak things of the earth. Your prayers are acceptable before me.."

Sadly, we are not given more details about the offering that is mentioned. It feels like we are not given the entire revelation and more specifically the petition that may have initiated the revelation.

Another interesting inuendo is found in section 84 wherein the Lord is telling about the oath and covenant of the priesthood and the calling and election that Joseph and some of his brethren have entered into.

"And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood.

Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved.

⁶⁵ D&C 124:39

But whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and altogether turneth therefrom, shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come.

And wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood which ye have received, which I now confirm upon you who are present this day, by mine own voice out of the heavens; and even I have given the heavenly hosts and mine angels charge concerning you.

And the Father teacheth.. of the covenant which he has renewed and confirmed upon you, which is confirmed upon you for your sakes, and not for your sakes only, but for the sake of the whole world.⁶⁶

The fact that the confirmation of the covenant upon Joseph and his brethren was done not just for their sakes but for the sake of the "whole world", should be a strong clue that some kind of Intercession was involved. earlier in that section the Lord proclaimed that the sons of Moses and Aaron would offer the acceptable offering spoken of by John the Baptist, in the house of the Lord that would be built and dedicated about four years later:

Therefore, as I said concerning the sons of Moses—for the sons of Moses and also the sons of Aaron shall offer an acceptable offering and sacrifice in the house of the Lord, which house shall be built unto the Lord in this generation, upon the consecrated spot as I have appointed—

32 And the sons of Moses and of Aaron shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, upon Mount Zion in the Lord's house, whose sons are ye; and also many whom I have called and sent forth to build up my church...⁶⁷

Malachi Summarizes the Major Events of the Joseph Smith's Preparatory Work

⁶⁶ D&C 84:39-48

⁶⁷ D&C 84:31-32

Obviously, the declaration about the sons of Levi by John the Baptist and in other sections of modern revelation was building upon and fulfilling the prophecies contained in Malachi.

One of the things that becomes apparent, in both ancient and modern revelation, is that the offering is a two part offering that has an interim period of four generations. The offering begins at the house of God in Kirtland and the culmination once again takes place four generations later in the same house of God with these same servants.

It was only after pondering the five primary prophecies listed in this chapter, for a number of years that the significance of Malachi chapter three emerged. It provides a fascinating summary of what took place in Kirtland with regard to the first part of the offering.

It begins with the declaration that God will send his messenger to prepare the way before him and that God will suddenly come to his temple:

"BEHOLD, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple.." ⁶⁸

We are then informed of a two part chronology that begins with the Lord's servant's, the son's of Levi, being purified in the refiners fire. Directly after that, they are "purged".

"But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he *is* like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

And he shall sit *as* a refiner and purifer of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness." ⁶⁹

First purified, them purged.

⁶⁸ Mal 3:1

⁶⁹ Mal 3:2-3

Note the definition of purged

"an abrupt or violent removal of a group of people from an organization or place"

In this case, they were purged from both, an *organization* and from a *place*. As previously documented, the Lord had declared that his servants had been sanctified and had received their calling and election by December of 1832. Following that, in 1834, the servants were dismissed from the restored church when a special conference was called to officially take the name of Christ out of the name of the church because the Saints had taken lightly the New Covenant and had failed to live consecration.

At that time, the name of the church was downgraded to the "Church of the Latter day Saints" as the Lord acknowledged their failure to consecrate and gave them a temporary reprieve from having to live the laws of Zion.⁷⁰ Within a matter of years after that, the Lord's servants were evicted from the Temple which had become defiled, and ultimately they were ejected from the land of Kirtland, where the initial gathering began. Joseph and Sidney had to flee under the cover of darkness at night following the Kirtland Banking disaster. The majority of the believing saints would also leave Kirtland, fulfilling the prophecy in Malachi that after the servant was purified, the saints would be purged.

During this amazing time of Joseph Smith's ministry, the Lord scolded and warned the Saints repeatedly, of a pending judgment, and witnessed against their transgressions, yet He promised that the Sons of Jacob would not be consumed at that time. This was all foretold in Malachi and documented in modern revelation and the history of the church.

"And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in *his* wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger *from his right*, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts. For

⁷⁰ See 104 & 105

I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."⁷¹

The Lord warned the Latter day Saints about adulterers in their midst:

"There were among you adulterers and adulteresses; some of whom have turned away from you, and others remain with you that hereafter shall be revealed"⁷².

Through Malachi the Lord chastises the Latter day Saints and notes that their propensity for departing from the ordinances has been ongoing from the time of their forefathers back in ancient Israel who also departed from God's ordinances. He then calls them to repent at the appointed time, and responds to their oblivion as to how they have sinned. They have sinned against the law of consecration:

"Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept *them*. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings".⁷³

The Cursing

The Lord declares that the latter day saints are cursed for not obeying the true law of consecration but he also promises to pour out a huge blessing upon repentance, with the command to bring all of the tithes into the storehouse. Virtually everywhere that the word tithing is used in scriptures, it is synonymous with the word consecration:

"Ye *are* cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, *even* this whole nation.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I

⁷¹ Malachi 3:5-6

⁷² D&C 63:14

⁷³ Ma; 3"7-8

will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.*⁷⁴

The Blessing follows the Cursing

The above passages speak of a cursing because of failure to consecrate, which is eventually followed by a blessing when repentance takes place. Elaborating on the meaning of Isaiah chapter 11, the prophet Joseph Smith spoke of the Lord's servant that holds the keys of the kingdom and will conduct the final gathering. He identified the Latter day Saints as the people who would have curses upon them before finally repenting and being returned to the priesthood they had lost when the final time of gathering takes place.

What is the root of Jesse spoken of in the 10th verse of the 11th chapter?

Behold, thus saith the Lord, it is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days.

Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?

He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power which she had lost.

What are we to understand by Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck; 2d verse?

We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. See the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses. The bands of her neck

⁷⁴ Mal 3:9-10

are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles.⁷⁵

Once the Saints repent and gather, the Lord will rebuke the devourer, heal the earth and restore the integrity of the vineyard, causing the nations to call the saints blessed.

"And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts".⁷⁶

Malachi appears to speak of those that grumbled about the law of consecration at the time it was being required. He identifies this as the time when those that work wickedness were "set up". (In other words a secret combination within the church was instrumental in preventing the successful implementation of the law). During this time, the wicked are delivered over to Satan by the Lord.

Nevertheless, the Lord acknowledges that there were wheat among the tares, and "They the feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD and thought upon his name"

He promises that "they shall be mine.. in the day when I make up my jewels..":

"Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken *so much* against thee?

Ye have said, It *is* vain to serve God: and what profit *is it* that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts?

And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, *they that* tempt God are even delivered.

⁷⁵ D&C 113:5-10

⁷⁶ Mal 3:11-12

Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not".⁷⁷

the great test that will take place when God's servants return, is to discern between the righteous and the wicked.

To sum things up; the ancient prophecies in the Old Testament about the Lord's Servant that provides an intercessory offering, are completely compatible with the many interrelated references intermingled throughout modern revelation.

Understanding the literal fulfillment of the atonement statute in Leviticus 16, as a prophetic enactment that began taking place at the time of the LDS restoration movement, provides the missing pieces of the prophet puzzle that have befuddle students of the life of the Prophet Joseph Smith. this information is critical in understand the many secret event that have taken place in the history of Mormonism.

⁷⁷ Mal 3:13-18