

BEING BORN AGAIN AND THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST

There is nothing of more serious consequence, with such irreversible effect upon the eternal soul of man than unknowingly believing a half truth, thereby feeling secure in a false belief that you are filling the measure of your creation or doing the will of God and fulfilling the requirements of righteousness when, in fact, you are falling short. Because, after you have left this life and have occasion to eventually find out the whole truth, you may have already lost your crown. You may even find yourself excluded from God's presence and direct association.

The half-truth is the most effective tool the devil has at his disposal in his arsenal of tricks. He takes advantage of the weakness of mortal understanding and plays to our feelings of compassion and longing for well-being and comfort. We are given the gospel and doctrine of Jesus Christ, which is a set of requirements or laws adapted to the capacity of mortal human beings who wish to know the truth, and then live to return to the presence of our Father and God and dwell with Him in the eternities. The Gospel is simple, but it is not vague nor sloppy and imprecise. To the contrary, it is exacting in application of the laws and ordinances it contains. The devil is very willing to have us understand that we all must be "born again", but strives very hard to convince us that it is something less than what it really is. Hence this becomes the half-truth that will keep many from ever complying with the requirements completely and being truly born again.

Some would have you believe that to be born again, all you must do is confess or accept Jesus Christ as your savior and mentally place all your sins on His shoulders and be a believer, and you will then be a changed person and born again. Some say a baptism of water is also necessary and some do not. Others say that when you have done some kind of baptism then you are saved and a recipient of the grace of God when you die unto eternal salvation. It is believed by some that this grace is always yours from then on; others believe it can be lost and won back any number of times, and the important thing is to have it in effect when you die. Also, that this is the ultimate goal that we are all seeking. This simple deception in concept may prove to cause countless of God's children to fall short of the blessings and glory that could have been theirs, if they had only known the whole truth of the matter.

There is only one reason to be born again and that is to enter the Celestial Kingdom after resurrection and dwell with God there and ultimately to be a heavenly parent over a family also. It is not necessary for entry into any lower kingdom. To enter the realm of God you must be born again, and this must be done before you leave this life in almost every case. By it comes salvation, because only through it does one avail oneself of the atonement of Christ for their sins. All beings will be resurrected but, only those who comply with these requirements can be washed clean by the blood of Christ, because only they will have met the

criteria imposed by the Savior, which allows Him and them that right. The agreement has always been that if we would keep His commandments, He would give Himself as a sacrifice for us by taking upon Him our sins, so we could reenter the kingdom or presence of God. His commandments are his doctrine. If we do not keep his commandments we have no promise. Being born again is a process. All the elements of the process must be completed or the process as a whole is of no effect and useless, and will not bring about the desired result. The process put directly and simply is being taught the gospel of Jesus Christ by a member of His priesthood, having faith in Christ and repenting of wrong doings and sins, then being baptized of the water by immersion, by specific ordinance and specific format by one having the authority or priesthood of God. Thereafter, having the promise of the baptism of fire or Spirit and Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, by one with the authority or priesthood to perform that ordinance. And finally, the receiving of the Gift of the Holy Ghost for the remission of sins, and to be your constant companion, guide, teacher, and revelator. This is the entry by the strait gate. This is being born again and nothing short will do!

This paper is intended for the instruction and use of professing Mormons. It is not an exhaustive treatment of the subject including all the many references occurring in scripture, but is indicative of the scripture that exists on the topic. So, without referring to a large body of scripture in the bible as background information, this will begin with what Joseph Smith has said on the subject. In the Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, (TPJS) page 11, and originally published in the Evening and Morning Star of August 1832, he says:

"Every man lives for himself. Adam was made to open the way of the world, and for dressing the garden. Noah was born to save seed of everything, when the earth was washed of its wickedness by the flood; and the Son of God came into the world to redeem it from the fall. But except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. This eternal truth settles the question of all men's religion. A man may be saved after the judgment, in the terrestrial kingdom, or in the telestial kingdom, but he can never see the celestial kingdom of God, without being born of water and the Spirit. He may receive a glory like unto the moon, or a star, but he can never come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and the Church of the Firstborn, which are written in the heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, unless he becomes as a little child, and is taught by the Spirit of God."

There are many important points contained in Joseph's comments but the most obvious ones are, first, that one must be born again, and second, that being born again is being born of water and of the Spirit. He is talking about the baptism of water and the baptism of fire, or spirit; meaning the Spirit of God. He also made it exceptionally clear that if this last step was not accomplished, there is no entry into the celestial kingdom.

"So far we are agreed with other Christian denominations. They all preach faith and repentance. The gospel requires baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, which is the meaning of the word in the original language - namely, to bury or immerse.

We ask the sects, do you believe this? They answer, no. I believe in being converted. I believe in this tenaciously. So did the Apostle Peter and the disciples of Jesus. But I further believe in the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. Evidence by Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:38. You might as well baptize a bag of sand as a man, if not done in view of the remission of sins and getting of the Holy Ghost. Baptism by water is but half a baptism, and is good for nothing without the other half - that is the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

The savior says, "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 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" According to Galatians 1:8

It is understood, but to make it clear beyond misunderstanding, this must be accomplished in one's mortal life while on the earth during this probationary state. In a discourse called the King Follett Discourse, delivered April 7, 1844 and published in the Times and Seasons August 15, 1844 and also found in the TPJS page 360, Joseph Smith taught this;

"The baptism of water, without the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost attending it, is of no use; they are necessarily and inseparably connected. An individual must be born of water and of the Spirit in order to get into the kingdom of God. In the German, the text bears me out the same as the revelations, which I have given and taught for the last fourteen years on the subject. I have the testimony to put in their teeth. My testimony has been true all the time. You will find it in the declaration of John the Baptist. John says, "I baptize you with water, but when Jesus comes; who has the power (or keys) he shall administer the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost." Where is now all the sectarian World? And if this testimony is true, they are all damned as clearly as anathema can do it. I know the text is true. I call upon all you Germans who know that it is true to say, Aye.

Alexander Campbell, how are you going to save people with water alone? For John said his baptism was good for nothing without the baptism of Jesus Christ. 'Therefore, not leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying

on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment: And this will we do if God permit. (Heb. 6: 1-3, Joseph Smith Translation).

Joseph tells us that being born again is being born of water and of the Spirit and that both are mandatory for it to be efficacious. John the Baptist said he baptized with water. We know the procedure for doing that. He also said that Jesus would administer the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost. How is that done? By the laying on of hands by one with the power, the keys, the authority, the Melchizedek priesthood, for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the subsequent receiving of the Holy Ghost. Joseph reinforces and amplifies what he is saying and meaning by quoting the apostle Paul address to the Hebrews. Paul specifically mentions the fundamental principles of the gospel, faith, repentance, baptism, laying on of hands, resurrection, and judgment. We see a demonstration of this principle in the days of the apostles written in the book of Acts 19:1-6.

And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,
2 He said unto them, have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.
3 And he said unto them, unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, unto John's baptism.
4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is on Christ Jesus.
5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.
6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

It is unclear whether Paul accepted the baptism of water that had been previously performed on these disciples, or whether it was done again. It was evident to Paul they had not been taught the full meaning of the ordinance, so he taught them the correct doctrine. They accepted it and had hands laid upon them to complete the ordinance and did receive the gift of the Holy Ghost as is evidenced by the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit. A similar occurrence is found in the Doctrine and Covenants section 22:1-4. The history behind this section is not included here and is found in the History of the Church vol. 1, pp.79-80.

Behold, I say unto you that all old covenants have I caused to be done away in this thing; and this is a new and an everlasting covenant, even that which was from the beginning.
2 Wherefore, although a man should be baptized an hundred times it availeth him nothing, for you cannot enter in at the strait gate by the Law of Moses, neither by your dead works.
3 For it is because of your dead works that I have cause this last covenant and this church to be built up unto

me, even as in the days of old.

4 Wherefore, enter ye in at the gate, as I have commanded, and seek not to counsel your God. Amen.

The Lord says you cannot enter in at the strait gate by the Law of Moses. The reason for this saying is that the Law of Moses contained only the Aaronic priesthood. It contained the baptism of water, but not the baptism of fire and the Gift of the Holy Ghost through the Melchizedek Priesthood and so by definition, it is not entry by the strait gate, as we will see shortly. Dead works are works done before birth, which makes one spiritually alive, or rebirth, in this case.

In an effort not to overlook an integral member of the process under consideration, even though it should be understood without mention, it is absolutely essential that someone perform these ordinances with the priesthood and authority to do them. Otherwise, they are void and of no effect, even if performed in the right way or method. This is a major dividing point between the beliefs of Mormonism and other Christian religions. Regarding this issue we have the words of the Lord directly. In the book of John chapter 15, verse 16 the Lord says:

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

There are two predominant points here. The first is that the Lord chose his disciples; they didn't just decide to join the ministry on their own. This has always been the case. There are no legitimate prophets that chose the ministry. One cannot appoint himself to perform ordinances and presume authority when it has not been given. The Lord's administrators will be chosen and called by Him or His existing and authoritative representatives who can demonstrate a clear line of authority and whom He will sustain and reveal as His administrators by revelation. The other point is that he ordained them, or gave them the authority and priesthood by the laying on of hands to accomplish the task He had given them, which is to bring forth fruit, which are righteous works, conversions, and ordinances. He states even more clearly in the Book of Mormon the bestowal of authority to perform these ordinances in His ministry here upon this continent as He established His church among the Nephites. In 3 Ne. 12:1 He says:

And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words unto Nephi, and to those who had been called, (now the number of them who had been called and received power and authority to baptize, was twelve and behold, stretched forth his hand unto the multitude, and cried unto them, saying: Blessed are ye if ye shall give heed unto the words of these twelve whom I have chosen from among you to minister unto you, and to be your servants; and unto them I have given power that they may baptize you with water; and after that ye are baptized with water, behold, **I** will baptize you with fire and with the Holy Ghost; therefore blessed are ye if ye shall believe in me and be baptized, after that ye have seen me and know that I am.

Once again we see that the ministering servants of the Lord must be called and chosen by Him and then they are given specific authority to perform the saving ordinances, one of which is a full baptism.

There are other excerpts from the teachings of Joseph Smith that amplify the points that are important to a clear understanding, and they follow, TPJS pp. 198-199, given in sermon March 20, 1842, D.H.C. 4:553-557.

"Baptism is a sign to God, to angels, and to heaven that we do the will of God, and there is no other way beneath the heavens whereby God hath ordained for man to come to Him to be saved, and enter into the Kingdom of God, except faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins, and any other course is in vain; then you have the promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost.

What is the sign of the healing of the sick? The laying on of hands is the sign or way marked out by James, and the custom of ancient Saints as ordered by the Lord, and we cannot obtain the blessings by pursuing any other course except the way marked out by the Lord. What if we should attempt to get the gift of the Holy Ghost through any other means except the signs or way which God hath appointed - would we obtain it? Certainty not: all other means would fail. The Lord says do so and so and I will bless you. There are certain key words and signs belonging to the priesthood, which must be observed in order to obtain the blessing. The sign of Peter was to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, with the promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost; and in no other way is the gift of the Holy Ghost obtained:

There is a difference between the Holy Ghost and the Gift of the Holy Ghost. Cornelius received the Holy Ghost before he was baptized, which was the convincing power of God unto him of the truth of the Gospel, but he could not receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost until after he was baptized. Had he not taken this sign or ordinance upon him, the Holy Ghost, which convinced him of the truth of God, would have left him. Until he obeyed these ordinances and received the Gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands, according to the order of God, he could not have healed the sick or commanded an evil spirit to come out of a man, and it obey him; for the spirits might say unto him, as they did to the sons of sceva: 'Paul we know and Jesus we know, but who are ye?' It mattereth not whether we live long or short on the earth after we come to a knowledge of these principles and obey them unto the end. I know that all men will be damned if they do not come in the way, which He hath opened, and this is the way marked out by the word of the Lord."

As Joseph points out, there is a big difference between the occasional

influence of the Holy Ghost to inspire, guide, protect, and reassure God's children in a time of need, distress, or searching, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost. Anyone who is trying to please the Lord in their life has the right to receive the influence of the Holy Ghost from time to time as the Lord sees fit. This is in no way the Gift of the Holy Ghost. A good example of this is the promise found in the Book of Mormon, wherein the reader is promised that if they will go to the Lord in solemn and sincere prayer after reading the book, asking if the book be true, they will receive the burning in the bosom or heart in affirmation. In most cases, the one inquiring will not have had the primary ordinances, but can qualify for a specific witness for a specific reason from the Holy Ghost. This also gives them an example of the witness for them to remember and keep for future reference so they will be able to recognize the witness of the Holy Ghost if they ever have the occasion to receive it again.

What then is the Gift of the Holy Ghost? As Joseph indicated, it is the Power from the heavens given to one holding the Priesthood in the administrations of that Priesthood when properly exercised. It is also the right for anyone to have the Holy Ghost as your constant companion to guide, teach, and witness to you of the truth of all things. It is the right to receive revelation from God concerning all things for which you are responsible. It is the power of the gifts of the Spirit that you may receive. It is the witness from God the Father of Jesus the Christ and the witness and personal knowledge that God and Christ live. It is the right to the spiritual light that bursts forth from heaven and the throne of God, like how the light shines forth upon the earth from the sun. This is the testimony that is preached. The testimony that is essential for everyone to receive and maintain through their life. It is by this that you know right from wrong in the most critical circumstances, the discerning spirit that will keep you from being deceived in doctrine and authority. This is the testimony that you are told you must receive, and what is meant is that you must receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost, or the Holy Ghost as your constant companion. This is what the prophet Joseph Smith was talking about when he appeared to Brigham Young and told him to tell the people to "get the Spirit of God and keep it". This is the doctrine of Christ Jesus and the salvation of thy soul. There is nothing in this world of experience more important to obtain than this gift, for all righteousness will be had by and through it. It is the beginning of your exaltation and that cannot be accomplished except by the strict obedience to the laws and ordinances that comprise it.

TPJS P. 328.

"The first principles of the Gospel, as I believe, are, faith, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, with the promise of the Holy Ghost."

Joseph Smith states the relationship of the ordinances precisely and accurately in his statements on the subject. He says in some places the Gift of the Holy Ghost is bestowed by the laying on of hands and in other places it is the promise of the Holy Ghost that is bestowed. Both are correct, depending on the spiritual condition of the recipient of the ordinances. If a person is not prepared to receive the Holy Ghost at the time of these ordinances, the laying on of hands is the promise of the Gift of the Holy Ghost and the Holy Ghost resting upon or abiding with them will be accomplished at some later time when they have complied with the

requirements for that communion, even if it is years later. The Gift of the Holy Ghost is never forced on anyone who is not ready for it. The intent, sincerity, and heart of the person to receive it must be right first, and the Lord knows the difference if it is not. In proper order, the person approaching the ordinances should be taught enough to understand their responsibilities; also the conditions and requirements of these ordinances beforehand, so they may fulfill them and be ready to receive them and be fully prepared. Then all may be completed when the ordinances are administered.

Joseph Smith said it all in one sentence in an address to the twelve and others, recorded in the D.H.C. 3: 383-392, and p. 162, TPJS. He said:

"Being born again, comes by the Spirit of God through ordinances."

Once someone has been taught the gospel enough to understand that they must comply with its required signs and ordinances and is baptized, having faith in Christ and repenting of their sins, and having hands laid upon them to be baptized with fire and the Holy Ghost afterward, what then must they do to receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost? What are the requirements that must be met? The Lord expressed it plainly to the Nephites when He visited them after His crucifixion and established His gospel and church on this continent. As a voice out of heaven He says in 3 Ne. 9:18-22;

18 I am the light and the life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the End.
19 And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings.
20 And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not.
21 Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin. 22 Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive for of such is the kingdom of God. Behold, for such I have laid down my life, and have taken it up again; therefore repent and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved.

Immediately after Jesus appeared, descending out of heaven, among the people of Nephi, He begins teaching and commanding them more and says the following in 3 Ne. 11:32-38;

32 And this is my doctrine, and it is the doctrine which the Father hath given unto me; and I bear record of the Father, and the Father beareth record of me, and the Holy Ghost beareth record of the Father and me; and I bear record that the Father commandeth all men,

everywhere, to repent and believe in me.

33 And whoso believeth in me, and is baptized, the same shall be saved; and they are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God.

34 And whoso believeth not in me, and is not baptized, shall be damned.

35 Verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my doctrine, and I bear record of it from the Father; and whoso believeth in me believeth in the Father also; and unto him will the Father bear record of me, for He will visit him with fire and the Holy Ghost.

36 And thus will the Father bear record of me, and the Holy Ghost will bear record unto him of the Father and me; for the Father, and I, and the Holy Ghost are one. 37 And again I say unto you, ye must repent, and become as a little child, and be baptized in my name, or ye can in nowise receive these things.

38 And again I say unto you, ye must repent, and be baptized in my name and become as a little child, or ye can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God.

The answer is clear and plain to understand. The Lord says we must have a broken heart and contrite spirit. This means simply, but graphically to be humble and sincere. He also says we must be as a little child. This means to be without vanity and the pride that prevents us from admitting we are wrong and quickly and easily deciding to do what we should. Also, that we are willing to submit to the will of He who is placed over us the way a parent is placed above and has dominion over his children. If we are not willing to do these things, we can never complete the process and inherit the kingdom of God. The Lord goes on to say that it is for those who will become as this little child that He made the atonement. Who are these children? Those who comply and fulfill the law, or the requirements, that's who He will receive. Not anyone else. For they are the only ones that have done His will and kept His commandments as specified by His gospel.

There are specific steps and guideposts to receiving the Gift of the Holy Ghost once the outward ordinances have been accomplished. These include; truly and sincerely wanting to know the truth regardless of whether it conforms to what you think it should be, or not. Trying to live the gospel and keep the commandments that you already know to the best of your ability. Repenting of the things you know are in need of being resolved and asking the Lord, in prayer, to reveal anything else you must repent of, to remove them from hanging over your head. (As things you've done wrong come into your mind and linger there, they are to be taken care of) Then make restitution for all that can be resolved in that manner. In doing this, the most important thing is making restitution and an acceptable offering to the Lord, not the pride you may have to swallow, or the embarrassment you may have to face. Study the Gospel out of the scriptures alone. You can be as objective as you wish, only study, and do it with the prime objective of finding the truth. You are not expected to swallow fables and believe them as truth. Pray often. Pray before and after studying the scriptures and during your day as possible. Do as many good deeds as you can find and think of to do. Open your heart to your fellow man. Let the feelings of compassion and love flow out from you to bless all those around you, especially those who are truly in need of assistance and comfort. Don't be afraid to part with some of

your belongings and money if they are needed. Humble yourself before the Lord and He will have respect toward your offering and when you have proved you are sincere and determined to find Him, He then will grant the first great gift and comforter.

The Lord speaks of baptism in the singular, but as He speaks, he specifically mentions both the baptism of water and the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost, as though they were all one baptism, which they are. He is unequivocal in His statement concerning those who will not abide by the rules and be baptized in the way He has prescribed. They are damned. He finally states the process in an abbreviated form, so we would be sure to understand and pay attention, stating it again and this time more precisely correct and in exact order. The Lord then continues with His sermon to the Nephites and rehearses to them the sermon He gave on the mount in the Holy Land and gives them the beatitudes. At the conclusion of this, He reiterates this prime teaching in slightly different terms, but He is still talking of the same baptismal process. This is just before He ascends back into heaven, His parting message, the teaching which will be freshest in the minds of His disciples is this: In 3Ne. 27:33, He says:

33 And it came to pass that when Jesus had ended these sayings he said unto his disciples: Enter ye in at the strait gate; for strait is the gate, and narrow the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it; but wide is the gate, and broad the way which leads to death, and many there be that travel therein, until the night cometh, wherein no man can work.

The word strait refers to a narrow passage between two large landmasses, which must obviously be navigated with certain precision. It also means strict or rigid. The meaning here is clear that this gate He is referring to is narrow, precise, and strict. What then is this gate? It is once again the process of baptism and rebirth. The Lord also adds another point when he talks about the night that comes for those who do not enter in at the strait gate. We will see that this is the night of the unrighteous after our physical death on this earth. We find this teaching throughout the scriptures. In Matt. 7:13-14, the Lord says,

13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:
14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

It is interesting the way this reference is worded. Here He is saying that many will go in at the broad gate because, the strait gate is just that, strait, or difficult to find and harder to negotiate than the other. This situation is compounded by the presence of false prophets and teachers. The Lord goes on in verse 21 to say:

21 Not everyone that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.
22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you:
depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

The Lord says here in plain language that you cannot merely call His name and confess Him before the world that He is your savior and gain entrance into the kingdom of heaven. You must do the will of the Father, which are the commandments spelled out by the gospel and its ordinances. Furthermore, those who have assumed they had the right to teach and lead God's children without proper authority and ordinance, and those who may have been given the priesthood, but have misused it and taught false doctrine and the philosophies and precepts of men for doctrine, will find themselves denied by the savior and commanded to depart. These will lead away many for their own benefit, enrichment, and amusement. These will not gain entrance into the kingdom of God regardless of the miracles they may have performed, or the number of wives they think they can claim. The Lord will say depart from me ye workers of iniquity and also the same to their followers who will not accept the truth and repent and meet the requirements of the law.

The prophet Jacob tells of this same gate in the teaching of his contemporaries. He approaches it from a slightly different prospective and in doing so, gives us a clearer understanding and imagery of what is going on in the process. It also brings us to an understanding of who it is we are dealing with and a sense of the importance and seriousness of this rebirth. It is found in 2 Ne. 9: 41-42. He tells us this:

41 O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteous. Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for He cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name.

42 And whoso knocketh, to him will he open; and the wise, and the learned, and they that are rich, who are puffed up because of their learning, and their wisdom, and their riches - yea, they are they whom he despiseth, and save they shall cast these things away, and consider themselves fools before God, and come down in the depths of humility: he will not open unto them.

So, once a person has performed all the outward ordinances and fulfilled and met all the requirements that are manifested among men, such as being baptized in water and having hands laid upon them, they must then fulfill the inward requirements of attitude and true belief and understanding and be recognized by the Lord personally. But, be of good cheer, He is no respecter of persons, if you are humble and sincere and honest in your heart, He will open unto you, and give you the Holy Ghost as your comforter and constant companion, and you may enter in at the strait gate, no matter who you are.

One of the clearest explanations of the course of the Gospel is supplied us by Nephi in the Book of Mormon. In 2nd Nephi 31:17 - 2Ne.32: 9, he gives us a wonderfully expressive literary pictorial. He says:

"17 Wherefore do the things which I have told you I have seen that your Lord and Redeemer should do; for, for

this cause have they been shown unto me, that ye might know the gate by which ye should enter. For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water, and then cometh a remission of sins by fire and by the Holy Ghost.

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

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

20 Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the words of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: ye shall have eternal life.

21 And now, behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. And now, behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end. Amen.

1 And now, behold, my beloved brethren, I suppose that ye ponder somewhat in your hearts concerning that which ye should do after ye have entered in by the way. But, behold, why do ye ponder these things in your hearts?

2 Do ye not remember that I said unto you that after ye had received the Holy Ghost ye could speak with the tongue of angels? And now, how could ye speak with the tongue of angels save it were by the Holy Ghost?

3 Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ, for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.

4 Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye cannot understand them it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark.

5 For behold, again I say unto you that if ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do. 6 Behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and there will be no more doctrine given until after he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh. And when he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh, the things which

he shall say unto you shall ye observe to do.

7 And now I, Nephi, cannot say more; the Spirit stoppeth mine utterance, and I am left to mourn because of the unbelief, and the wickedness, and the ignorance, and the stiffneckedness of men; for they will not search knowledge, nor understand great knowledge, when it is given unto them in plainness, even as plain as Word can be.

8 And now, my beloved brethren, I perceive that ye ponder still in your hearts; and it grieveth me that I must speak concerning this thing. For if ye would hearken unto the Spirit that teacheth a man to pray ye would know that ye must pray; for the evil spirit teacheth not a man to pray, but teacheth him that he must not pray.

9 But behold, I say unto you that ye must pray always, and not faint; that ye must not perform anything unto the Lord save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul.

Here we have an explicit definition of the gate. Once again, it is defined by the fundamental principles of the gospel, and once again it includes repentance, baptism by water, the baptism by fire or Spirit, and the receiving of the Holy Ghost, which only after the baptism of fire or spirit brings the remission of sins. Once again we have the very same process explained. It is clarified that to get into this gate you must have met the requirements and must have received the Holy Ghost. That final step is never left out, because that is the real purpose of the process anyway, the receiving of the Gift of the Holy Ghost. By this are you accepted by the Lord, by this only are you made partakers of the atonement and the remission of your sins, by this do you receive the comforter to be with you, by this do you receive the gifts of the Spirit that you will possess and are expected to use for the edifying of the whole body, and by this you will receive the revelations of heaven for your life and those under your care and responsibility. Evidently, in that day they had many of the ideas being expressed that we have today, namely that if and when you reach this status of being baptized you have arrived at your goal and destination. And that you now have the grace of God and you have won the prize. But, what does Nephi say? Nay. Because his hearers did not understand what he was talking about, he had to explain what to do next. You must continue to feast upon the words of Christ and commune with the Holy Ghost and they (the words of Christ and the Holy Ghost) will tell you and show you all things what you should know and do.

Obviously, there are more ordinances after these in the fullness of the Fathers gospel on the road to exaltation but it is between you and the Lord to accomplish them beyond the gospel of repentance. Nephi then finds himself having to backtrack even further and he must explain the most simple and basic of all principles. The way to maintain contact with the heavens and the Lord is through prayer, no other way. Why did this grieve Nephi to have to speak of this? Because this should be taught and understood by infants and babes, he is speaking to adults in the gospel and the work, holding the priesthood, married and with children to raise and teach. But if you will pray and draw near to the Lord, then through the Gift of the Holy Ghost you may magnify your gifts and receive daily revelation as you feast upon the words of Christ. Joseph Smith taught these

principles in his day, trying to bring the early members of the church to this same understanding. In TPJS pp. 243-247 We find these teachings by Joseph Smith.

We believe in the gift of the Holy Ghost being enjoyed now, as much as it was in the Apostles' days; we believe that it is necessary to make and to organize the Priesthood, that no man can be called to fill any office in the ministry without it; we also believe in prophecy, in tongues, in visions, and in revelations, in gifts, and in healings, and that these things cannot be enjoyed without the Gift of the Holy Ghost. We believe that the holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and that holy men in these days speak by the same principle; we believe in its being a comforter and witness bearer, that it brings things past to our remembrance, leads us into all truth, and shows us of things to come; we believe that 'no man can know that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Ghost.' We believe in it in all its fullness, and power, and greatness, and glory; but whilst we do this, we believe in it rationally, consistently, and scripturally, and not according to the wild vagaries, foolish notions and traditions of men.

We believe that the Holy Ghost is imparted by the laying on of hands of those in authority, and that the gift of tongues, and also the gift of prophecy are gifts of the Spirit, and are obtained through that medium; but then to say that men always prophesied and spoke in tongues when they had the imposition of hands, would be to state that which is untrue, contrary to the practice of the Apostles, and at variance with holy writ; for Paul says, 'To one is given the gift of tongues, to another the gift of prophecy, and to another the gift of healing;' and again: 'Do all prophesy? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?' evidently showing that all did not possess these several gifts, but that one received one gift, and another received another gift - all did not prophesy, all did not speak in tongues, all did not work miracles, but all did receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost; sometimes they spake in tongues and prophesied in the Apostles' days, and sometimes they did not. The same is the case with us also in our administrations, while more frequently there is no manifestation at all, that is visible to the surrounding multitude...

The Lord cannot always be known by the thunder of His voice, by the display of His glory or by the manifestation of His power, and those that are the most anxious to see these things, are the least prepared to meet them, and were the Lord to manifest His powers as He did to the children of Israel, such characters would be the first to say, 'Let not the Lord speak any more, lest we His people die.'

We would say to the brethren, seek to know God in your closets, call upon him in the fields. Follow the

directions of the Book of Mormon, and pray over, and for your families, your cattle, your flocks, your herds, your corn, and all things that you possess: ask the blessings of God upon all your labors, and everything you engage in. Be virtuous and pure; be men of integrity and truth; keep the commandments of God; and then you will be able more perfectly to understand the difference between right and wrong - between the things of God and the things of men; and your path will be like that of the just, which shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

It is interesting to note that it is by the laying on of hands and the receiving of the Holy Ghost that the gifts of the Spirit are received. The gifts of the Spirit may not however, always be manifest and must be exercised, magnified, and developed. Is there one gift of the Spirit that all receive when they receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? Yes, in fact there is and it is the primary functional reason for receiving this gift of the Holy Ghost. In fact, you cannot have one without the other. It is the gift of revelation. Once you have received the gift of the Holy Ghost, you are entitled to personal revelation for the welfare of thy soul and for administering to the needs and wants of all things under your control and responsibility. Furthermore, it is essential for the ability to live your life in compliance with the will of the Lord and obtain the highest blessings and glories available to man, in short, exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom of God. This is how the Holy Ghost will guide and teach you, through revelation. Joseph Smith said these things this way:

TPJS p.328

It is one thing to see the kingdom of God, and another thing to enter into it. We must have a change of heart to see the kingdom of God, and subscribe the articles of adoption to enter therein.

No man can receive the Holy Ghost without receiving revelations. The Holy Ghost is a revelator.

How is revelation sought and received? What can one expect the form of the answers to be in when they are given? The Holy Ghost has many specific functions, to witness of the Father and the Son, to witness of all truth, to instruct, teach, and enlighten, to manifest power and glory both spiritually and physically, to enforce all the eternal laws in the temporal and spiritual realms, and others. We receive the witness of the Holy Ghost, which is the burning of the bosom or the burning of the heart. We receive instruction and guidance by the still small voice that we understand in our minds and in our heart or direct communication to our spirit. We may receive dreams, voices, visitations, and other manifestations, but these are exceptional and must be scrutinized with care and understanding and verified by those holding priesthood keys and authority. The Lord tells us what to expect and how to use this gift of the Holy Ghost in revelations to Oliver Cowdery in D&C sections 8:1-3, 9:8-9.

Oliver Cowdery, verily, verily, I say unto you, that assuredly as the Lord liveth, who is your God and your Redeemer, even so surely shall you receive a knowledge of whatsoever things you shall ask in faith, with an

honest heart, believing that you shall receive a knowledge concerning the engravings of old records, which are ancient, which contain those parts of my scripture of which has been spoken by the manifestation of my Spirit.

2 Yea, behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come to you and which shall dwell in your heart. 3 Now, behold, this is the spirit of revelation; behold, this the spirit by which Moses brought the children of Israel through the Red Sea on dry ground.

Section 9

8 But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right, I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore; you shall feel that it is right.

9 But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong; therefore, you cannot write that which is sacred save it be given you from me.

So, we are given the keys to understanding. When we receive instruction and enlightenment from the Holy Ghost, we will be told in our mind and in our heart. This inspiration comes when we are in need, or as Nephi put it, feasting upon the words of Christ or truth. We can do this by pondering them in our minds and thinking and reviewing them. It occurs more easily when we are reading the scriptures and sincerely looking for guidance, truth and enlightenment. While engaged in scripture reading, the Holy Ghost can bring scripture references to your mind and lead you through a topic, teaching and giving knowledge and understanding as you go. At any time we can ask for a witness concerning something we think is proper gospel doctrine and principle and expect an answer, providing, we have first studied it sufficiently to have not overlooked the answer in already published works. This economizes the work and reduces redundancy placed upon the Holy Ghost and makes for a more conscientious people. This is the understanding and knowledge given by the Holy Ghost and how it is generally received. It is sometimes called inspiration, although all inspirations are not of God through the Holy Ghost. To verify inspiration received, the Lord must be sought in prayer for a witness. A witness of the truth or rightness of something is the burning of the bosom or heart. This "burning" or quickening cannot be avoided. It must be experienced before one receives the Gift of the Holy Ghost and is absolutely necessary afterwards. No one can have the Spirit of God to any degree without it. If you have experienced it, you will know that you have felt it and what it was. If not, you must seek it and press after it until you discover it and enter that strait gate because, if it is lacking, you have not yet entered in by the way. This does not mean that the correct process hasn't been initiated or begun; only that it hasn't been completed. Furthermore, you cannot rely on a stupor of thought as a witness of something being wrong. That is not the witness of the Holy Ghost. The witness of the Holy Ghost is the burning of the heart in affirmation of truth. The stupor of thought is the way the

Lord prevents sacred and holy writings from being misrepresented by those he has given the authority to translate scripture. Unless you are doing that, the invocation of the stupor of thought is not a sign to be relied on. If you stop to think about it, it's not good reasoning to look for a "no" answer and, failing to receive that, taking the lack of it as a sign or a "yes" answer. That approach will probably lead you wrong as often as right, or more so.

Because we all are under the darkness of the veil of forgetfulness here in mortality, we must do all that we can to avoid being deceived. We must approach the heavens and seek our answers with all prudence and diligence. Every good feeling is not guidance from the Holy Ghost, every flash of supposed insight or inspiration is not of God, nor is every dream an instruction from the heavens. There are counterfeits to everything and we are not equipped to easily detect them. We are also subject to our own emotions and desires. Therefore, a process or cautious approach must be employed when seeking the guidance of the Holy Ghost in answers to questions and for guidance in one's life concerning decisions of eternal significance. There is not a well-defined method spelled out for the novice to follow. The Holy Ghost endeavors to instruct if we will listen, which we are not naturally accomplished at doing, or so it seems. There are some basic guidelines, however, that can be used to increase our chances of successfully following the proper spirit and achieving the proper results. In essence, it is a check and balance system that should be used as completely as circumstances allow in each case.

To begin with, prayers should be offered in the attitude of prayer, on one's knees, if possible. Prayers to the Father for specific answers to questions, expecting to receive the witness of the Holy Ghost in response, should be asked silently in your mind. The reason for this is found in the Doctrine and Covenants 6:16,

Yea, I tell thee, that thou mayest know that there is none else save God that knowest thy thoughts and the intents of thy heart.

The spirit world is closer than we think. We are surrounded by beings, both good and evil, all the time. We are presently in the lowest state of being, consequently, we are unaware of the others, but some are aware of us. They can see and hear us and in a limited capacity influence us, but are controlled by strict laws imposed by God. When we speak, we divulge our thoughts and if we ask vocally, and it is deemed important to try to deceive us, those against us will try to invoke a counterfeit response and lead us astray or confuse us. Not praying vocally is not a barrier to the Holy Ghost; it is however, a barrier to the adversary. Prayers of praise and thanksgiving, ordinance, blessing, and repentance should be vocal.

Don't ask about things that are not your business to know. You have a right to receive revelation about anything concerning the gospel, or your own personal life, or the life and well being of what is under your dominion. You do not have the right to inquire of the Lord concerning the affairs of those placed over you, except to verify what they may have said of concern to you or asked you to do. Trying to use the Holy Spirit to meddle in the affairs of others, or be informed of things that are not your stewardship, or your responsibility, will place you at the mercy of Satan, because the Spirit of God will withdraw, and any revelation you receive after that will surely be from the wrong

source. The Lord says it this way:

D.&C. 88:64-65.

64 Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name it shall be given unto you, that is expedient for you;
65 And if ye ask anything that is not expedient for you, it shall turn unto your condemnation.

Questions that are asked for immediate answer should be phrased for a "yes" or "no" answer. The question may be rephrased and asked again differently to verify or clarify your understanding. The affirmative answer, as explained before is the burning in the heart. It is not a burning like heat. It is actually a quickening, or enlivening. The Holy Ghost is the agent of life, the very force of life, the spirit or fire that makes all things alive. When you receive the witness of the Holy Ghost, it is a quickening by that spirit that you feel in your heart. It is the feeling of the fire of life, described best as something akin to a burning. There is a negative, or "no" answer, best described as a withdrawal of that spirit, that likewise can be felt in the bosom. It is an empty feeling, not despair, just a withdrawal of the quickening, which leaves a feeling of emptiness. These feelings occur only in the heart, not in the abdomen or any other part of the body. It is not a rushing sensation throughout the body, unless the Holy Ghost overcomes you, and that occurs seldom and not usually when you are alone and not when performing ordinances. They are certainly not "gut" feelings. The gut is the domain of the emotions. There is also no answer at all. The Spirit is not obliged to answer foolish or improper questions. If the answer is not clearly "yes" or "no", you may receive a weak answer accompanied by understanding in explanation or you may receive nothing at all. An improperly phrased question will not be answered. The Holy Ghost will not assume you mean something different than what you ask. You will be taken quite literally. You are not however, barred from rephrasing your question and asking it again. You will not offend the Lord or the Spirit by trying to do His will and fulfill righteousness and understand His will, even if you have to ask a question more than once or in more than one way. If your heart is right before the Lord and you are not insincere or trying to deceive, He will patiently listen and answer. Always keep in mind whose attention you are occupying and try not to abuse this privilege, for if you do, His attention may be short lived. This is as explicit a teaching of these things as can be done by written word. These are sacred and not usually conveyed in this manner, but we should not be ignorant of these things.

Any answers you receive must be consistent with established doctrine. If they are truly from the Holy Ghost they will not contradict the scriptures or the prophets or the truth. They must square with the gospel.

If your answers directly affect other people, or include other people, then those people should be able to receive the same answer, if they receive any answer at all. Any difference in answers brings all answers into question. The Holy Ghost will not tell you one thing and someone else a different thing as touching the same issue. One or both answers are not from God if contradiction exists. Don't be afraid to reassess yourself and the possibility of being mistaken. Strive to know the truth.

Verify your important answers with your priesthood head if possible. He should be able to go to the Lord and receive a verification of your answer. If the answer He receives is different, go to the Lord again and strive until the Lord reveals the truth unto you.

The more verification and certainty of revelations that can be had in trying to be guided by the Holy Ghost, the better. We see through a glass darkly and we are always liable to err. We must live our lives by the testimonies we receive, believing we are doing right, but the only time you will be positively sure without any doubt is when the Lord looks you in the eye and says so. This life is a probationary realm after all.

The receiving of the Gift of the Holy Ghost is being born again. With it we have access to the grandest blessings possible. With it also comes the jeopardy of committing the sin that is unpardonable. It is felt by many that only those entrusted with keys of priesthood are capable of committing this sin. That is not so. Once the Holy Ghost is bestowed upon you and you see the light from heaven, you are capable of denying that light. Once you have been made a partaker to the atoning blood of Jesus Christ through the rebirth and remission of sins by the power of the Holy Ghost and you deliberately deny that power and atonement, you crucify the Lord afresh in your heart and place yourself beyond the very atonement you deny. Hence, that sin is then unpardonable. It is a lie to the face of God for it was He who gave that gift to you and He knows you have received it. This is the reason that when one takes on the responsibility to teach others it must be done by the power and under the influence of the Holy Ghost, lest false doctrine is taught denying the atonement of Christ and leading the children of God astray. If one has had the priesthood bestowed and the Holy Ghost received and preaches against the truth and denies the atonement by misconstruing it, and thereby damning those that believe them, that person is flirting with the same outcome as Sherem. His story is told in the Book of Jacob chapter 7. It far wiser, if one is not positive that what they are teaching is the truth, to remain silent than to risk all for a moment of admiration from others. Speaking of the unpardonable sin, Alma says this to Corianton, his son.

Alma 39:6

For behold, if ye deny the Holy Ghost when it once has had place in you, and ye know that ye deny it, behold, this is a sin which is unpardonable.

Despite the danger of falling, true baptism is the only pathway back to the presence of God our Father. To get back we must negotiate the hazards of this life. There is risk involved. That is likely why some deferred in the pre-existence and came under a curse, and others chose what seemed a safer way and fell from heaven. But there is success, and a glorious tomorrow for those willing to try, and keep trying and endure to the end. The Prophet Joseph Smith tells the whole story and gives us hope of the highest blessings that can be achieved in his words concerning the Second Comforter. It is found in the D.H.C. 3:379-381 and the TPJS pp. 150-151.

The other comforter spoken of is a subject of great interest, and perhaps understood by few of this generation. After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of his sins and receives the Holy Ghost, (by the laying on of hands), which is the first comforter, then let him continue to humble himself before God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and living by every word of God, and the Lord will soon say unto him, Son, thou

shalt be exalted. When the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve Him at all hazards, then the man will find his calling and election made sure, then it will be his privilege to receive the other Comforter, which the Lord hath promised the Saints, as is recorded in the testimony of St. John, in the 14th chapter, from the 12th to the 27th verses.

Note: the 16, 17, 18, 21, 23 verses.

16 And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; 17 Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

23 If a man love me, he will keep my word: and the Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Now what is this other Comforter? It is no more or less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and this is the sum and substance of the whole matter; that when any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; and this is the state and place the ancient Saints arrived at when they had such glorious visions - Isaiah, Ezekiel, John upon the Isle of Patmos, St. Paul in the three heavens, and all the Saints who held communion with the general assembly and the Church of the Firstborn.

This is our goal. This is what we are about, and what we are working for, and it is attainable. This is what the devil would keep hidden from the children of God. If the adversary can prevent people from knowing the whole truth by telling them only part and getting them to believe it and stop seeking the rest of it, he has won in part, the war he is waging. And as we foolishly pervert the true gospel of Jesus Christ, we help the devil in his work, and become an enemy to God.

False doctrine and errors in doctrine must be challenged whenever they are encountered. Diligence is required to guard against the corrupting of the gospel and how it is passed on to our children and our children's children.

We are in much the same situation today as in the Prophet Joseph Smith's day. Nephi's vision of the last days includes us. Here is what the Lord has to say about our modern sectarian religions and the priests and those that subscribe to those teachings, as well as the half-truths and deceits of the devil.

2 Ne. 28:7-28

7 Yea, and there shall be many, which will say: Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us.

8 And there shall also be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry: nevertheless, fear God, he will justify in committing a little sin; yea lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this; and do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God.

9 Yea, and there shall be many which shall teach after this manner, false and vain and foolish doctrines, and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark.

10 And the blood of the saints shall cry from the ground against them.

11 Yea, they have all gone out of the way; they have become corrupted.

12 Because of pride, and because of false teachers, and false doctrine, their churches have become corrupted, and their churches are lifted up; because of pride they are puffed up.

13 They rob the poor because of their fine sanctuaries; they rob the poor because of their fine clothing; and they persecute the meek and the poor in heart, because in their pride they are puffed up.

14 They wear stiff necks and high heads; yea, and because of pride, and wickedness, and abominations, and whoredoms, they have all gone astray save it be a few, who are the humble followers of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err because they are taught by the precepts of men.

15 O the wise, and the learned, and the rich, that are puffed up in the pride of their hearts: and all those that preach false doctrines, and all those who commit whoredoms, and pervert the right way of the Lord, wo; wo, wo, be unto them, saith the Lord God Almighty, for they "shall be thrust down to hell. Wo unto them that turn aside the just for a thing of naught and revile against that which is good, and say that it is of no worth! For the day shall come that the Lord God will speedily visit the inhabitants of the earth: and in that day that they are fully ripe in iniquity they shall perish.

17 But behold, if the inhabitants of the earth shall repent of their wickedness and abominations they shall not be destroyed, saith the Lord of Hosts.

18 But behold, that great and abominable church, the whore of all the earth, must tumble to the earth, and great must be the fall thereof.

19 For the kingdom of the devil must shake, and they which belong to it must needs be stirred up unto repentance, or the devil will grasp them with his everlasting chains, and they be stirred up to anger, and perish;

20 For behold, at that day shall he rage in the hearts of the children of men, and stir them up to anger against that which is good.

21 And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth all is well - and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell.

22 And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell, and he saith unto them: I am no devil, for there is none and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, from whence there is no deliverance.

23 Yea, they are grasped with death, and hell; and death, and hell, and the devil, and all that have been seized therewith must stand before the throne of God, and be judged according to their works, from whence they must go into the place prepared for them, even a lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment.

24 Therefore, wo be unto him that is at ease in Zion!

25 Wo be unto him that crieth: All is well!

26 Yea, wo be unto him that hearkeneth unto the precepts of men, and denieth the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost!

27 Yea, wo be unto him that saith: We have received, and we need no more!

28 And in fine, wo unto all those who tremble, and are angry because of the truth of God! For behold, he that is built upon the rock receiveth it with gladness; and he that is built upon sandy foundation trembleth lest he shall fall.