

## Disciplinary Council Defense

Disciplinary Council held for Nelson and Lacey Whiting on November 5<sup>th</sup> 2017, for apostasy.

Stake President Monte Marshall of the Canyon Ridge Stake to preside. Aspen Heights Ward Spanish Fork UT.

### Concerning the accusation:

We have been accused of apostasy because supposedly we “have acted in clear, open, and deliberate public opposition to the Church or its leaders.” We see the scriptures commanding all to repent, lay member and leader alike. We are not opposing that command, therefore we are not opposing the Church or its leaders simply by repeating the Lord’s command that we all need to repent. Is that not the most repeated universal command in the scriptures that we all need to repent? Or do you actually think we don’t all have need of repentance? The fact that leaders are included in our call to repentance seems to be the reason for this counsel. But do they not also need to repent? The Apostle Paul certainly says so in Romans 3:23.

In an earlier meeting with President Marshall on Sunday October 8<sup>th</sup>, he stated (and I’m paraphrasing from memory) that he agreed with my statement that there is a difference between the church and the gospel, but most members don’t understand that and it causes them to think they are saved when they still have not connected with God. He stated that he admitted there “is a problem in the Church, but most members are not at a level where they can handle it.” Lacey and I agree with him. There is already a clear and open problem, yet we are disciplined if we talk about it clearly and openly, which the Lord requested we do in publishing the book.

If people do not understand the problem, they will not have a desire to understand and apply the solution. That’s what the book is for, and rather than share several of our personal revelations on the subject, we chose to keep it limited, as much as possible, to our canon of scripture. With barely 100 pages to the book, we included over 340 scripture references, and

many quotes from Joseph and other authorities to support our position. It is not our argument, it is theirs and we've simply chosen to believe it.

In our October 29<sup>th</sup> meeting with President Marshal we were told that a portion of his allegation against us was our statement in a letter we delivered to our ward in which we wrote: "We simply believe the Lord has great desires to remove our condemnation as members of the Church, which we fail to enjoy because of what is currently taught and practiced." He said the first part of that sentence is true, the Lord does wish to remove our condemnation; but the second part of the statement where we say that such condemnation is due to what is currently taught and practiced in the Church was worthy of discipline. How can the Lord desire to remove our condemnation yet somehow that condemnation is due to something other than what we currently teach and practice in the Church? Don't we only truly try to teach and practice in the Church that which we actually believe? And if so, how can we be under condemnation for something other than what we believe, teach and practice in the Church?

He further stated that his final decision for the outcome of this council was already decided. This violates not only the handbook's requirements that the stake president be impartial on the matter, but it nullifies any reason to hold a council in the first place. What is the purpose of this council if the one man at the head of it has already decided the outcome? What fairness, equity, and justice are the council members to uphold if their voice is already meaningless? President Marshall stated there were allegations he would bring forward in this council, but we would not know them specifically beforehand. He not only failed to tell us where and how we are wrong in order to correct our actions, but has failed to outline specifically in detail what we are doing wrong and why it is wrong.

He stated that our re-baptism, a thoroughly scriptural and historical LDS practice, is another reason for him to confirm the allegation that we have indulged in misconduct worthy of discipline. When I made it clear that we were re-baptized independent of one Denver Snuffer's teachings on the subject, and indeed by revelation from the Lord, President Marshall's only explanation was that re-baptism is simply not church practice. I asked him to share with

me where he finds that as an official church stance worthy of discipline, which he admitted he had only heard as counsel to him in private leadership trainings.

How are members supposed to know what is allowed or not allowed if the only place it is stated is in private leadership councils or a handbook that the lay membership is not privy to? And if it has truly been taught in private council or correlated handbook, why can it not be supported using scripture or modern revelation? The correlated handbooks we use to guide this Church, which I've been told by one involved in the correlation department are not necessarily official church stance, state that baptism requires keyholder authorization, namely the Bishop. But that is not what Joseph Smith taught. Where is the revelation changing what Joseph Smith taught? This is a good example of Mormon's prophecy that we would transfigure the holy word of God. Ultimately, we are being asked to adhere to something that contradicts prior revelation, we have no access to, is denied us upon request, and which cannot be cited as a revelation or teaching from any source that is publically available to the Church membership. I wrote about this in our book. Why can you not present evidence clearly, to any degree, to prove we are worthy of discipline for misconduct? Why do you demand blind obedience?

Accusations such as yours against us should abide Joseph's counsel to make sure "truth is clearly demonstrated to our minds, and we have the highest degree of evidence of the same" rather than limit and prohibit us by the "creeds or superstitious notions of men" or by "the dominations of another" (Letter from Joseph Smith to Isaac Galland, Mar. 22, 1839, Liberty Jail, Liberty, Missouri, published in Times and Seasons, Feb. 1840, pp. 53–54; spelling and grammar modernized.)

### **Defense:**

We wrote a book that outlined our understanding of how we in the LDS Church have fulfilled scriptural prophecy in rejecting the Gospel and subsequently fallen under condemnation. Prophecy is given so we can avoid judgment by being prepared for it, and recognizing it so as not to be alarmed or lose faith because of it.

In order to understand to whom the prophecies apply, we need to understand our identity as a chosen people. We LDS stewards of the gospel in the latter-days are *the* prophesied Gentiles spoken of in the Book of Mormon, as indicated in D&C 109:60, the Kirtland dedicatory prayer that was received by revelation, which stated the members of the church are “us, who are identified with the Gentiles.” The Book of Mormon title page confirms that the book would come “by way of the Gentile - the interpretation thereof by the gift of God.” In spite of Joseph Smith’s Patriarchal Blessing pronouncing him a pure blooded Ephraimite, he is identified in scripture as a Gentile, and the Lord by revelation put the Church in that Gentile category. Even Bruce R. McConkie stated that, “the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, who have the gospel and who are of Israel by blood descent, are the Gentiles who carry salvation to the Lamanites and to the Jews” (Millennial Messiah, p. 233). Accurately identifying us members of the LDS Church as the Gentiles spoken of in the Book of Mormon is the only way to understand the prophecies that say we as a Church would fall into apostasy after Joseph Smith’s restoration.

When the scriptures speak of the Gentiles in the latter days it is speaking to those with the stewardship of the gospel who use the Book of Mormon as their voice of warning. We are the only people that fit that category. Christ taught a parable retelling the corruption of the Jewish church, and that the stewardship would eventually pass to the Gentiles. All six verses explaining the parable were added by the prophet Joseph Smith to emphasize attention to the prophecies concerning these latter-day Gentiles, because they are us. Christ said:

“Verily, I say unto you, I am the stone, and those wicked ones reject me. I am the head of the corner. These Jews shall fall upon me, and shall be broken. And the kingdom of God shall be taken from them, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof; (meaning the Gentiles.) Wherefore, on whomsoever this stone shall fall, it shall grind him to powder. And when the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, he will destroy those miserable, wicked men, and will let again his vineyard unto other husbandmen, even in the last days, who shall render him the fruits in their seasons. And then understood they the parable which he spake unto them, that the Gentiles should be destroyed also, when the Lord should descend out of heaven to reign in his vineyard, which is the earth and the inhabitants thereof” (JST Matt 21:51-56).

Christ quoted Isaiah when giving reasons for why the Church in His day would fall in Mark 7:6-9:

“...Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men [...] And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.”

This hypocrisy is why judgment is so severe upon people who claim to be godly. The Pharisees were confronted with someone who went about violating the rituals and practices of the religious hierarchy at the time, but not fighting against the true gospel. We should study that pattern and see that we Gentiles were prophesied to likewise become bad husbandmen and lose our stewardship to another people, just as the Jews did, and for similar reasons.

The new husbandmen to whom the gospel stewardship will go from the Gentiles are the “remnant” spoken of in the Book of Mormon, the descendants of the party of Lehi in the latter days. The Book of Mormon and our founding prophet are clear on this point, yet the next in line to the Presidency, Russell M. Nelson, has re-defined that term “remnant” to mean us, the Latter-Day Saints, as if redefining it will remove the prophetic threat posed to the Gentiles (see *Children of the Covenant* May, 1995, Ensign, General Conference talk by Russell M. Nelson; especially footnote 15). The Book of Mormon, as the keystone of our religion, prophesies that *we* would fail. Mormon commanded Moroni to write a prophetic warning to the LDS gentile stewards of the gospel in the last days. Even modern authorities such as L. Tom Perry, Hugh Nibley, and H. Verlan Anderson all admitted this text applied to us:

Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be churches built up that shall say: Come unto me, and for your money you shall be forgiven of your sins. O ye wicked and perverse and stiffnecked people, why have ye built up churches unto yourselves to get gain? Why have ye transfigured the holy word of God, that ye might bring damnation upon your souls? Behold, look ye unto the revelations of God; for behold, the time cometh at that day when all these things must be fulfilled. Behold, the Lord hath shown unto me great and marvelous things concerning that which must shortly come, at that day when these things shall come forth among you. Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing. And I know that ye do walk in the pride of your hearts; and there are

none save a few only who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities; and your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the pride of your hearts. For behold, ye do love money, and your substance, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted. O ye pollutions, ye hypocrites, ye teachers, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, why have ye polluted the holy church of God? Why are ye ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness than that misery which never dies—because of the praise of the world? Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not? Yea, why do ye build up your secret abominations to get gain, and cause that widows should mourn before the Lord, and also orphans to mourn before the Lord, and also the blood of their fathers and their husbands to cry unto the Lord from the ground, for vengeance upon your heads? Behold, the sword of vengeance hangeth over you; and the time soon cometh that he avengeth the blood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any longer.

It hurts deeply that this applies to us. We should be convicted sharply by these prophecies. Our Lord Himself in 3 Nephi 16:10-13 and 21:20-23 also prophesied that we Gentiles would reject the fullness of the gospel and it would go to a different people who would be successful in building a city unto Him. If we Gentiles repent, we would be permitted to assist in that effort. We know these Gentiles are us merely by the fact that we are the only latter-day Gentiles who were once in possession of the fullness of the gospel, as it came to us through Joseph Smith, and according to D&C 124:28 we have lost. Christ said:

And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them. And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them. And I will show unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you; but I will remember my covenant unto you, O house of Israel, and ye shall come unto the

knowledge of the fulness of my gospel. But if the Gentiles will repent and return unto me, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel [... ]For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel; And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard. But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance; And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem (3 Nephi 16:10-13; 3 Nephi 21:20-23).

It is apparent that those prophecies in the Book of Mormon apply to us, and are fulfilled by us already as stated in the Lord's lament and chastising revelation through Joseph Smith to the Church in D&C 84:54-57:

“...your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation. And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all. And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written—.”

I'm sure you're all very familiar with this revelation. President Benson, and more recently Elder Oaks and even President Marshall last Sunday, have admitted that such a condemnation continues upon us. It continues because we refuse to remember the Book of Mormon, and as individuals and as a Church to take responsibility for our own salvation and building Zion. Joseph Smith identified the exact problem that lay at the heart of the matter, saying:

“...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 [1842] of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — said if the people departed from the Lord, they must fall — that

they were depending on the Prophet, hence were darkened in their minds, in consequence of neglecting the duties devolving upon themselves..." (TPJS p. 238).

Why would Joseph say the saints of his day could yet fall, if that truly was the last dispensation, the fullness of times, the church that could not be led astray, that could never fall? Joseph didn't say that because Joseph knew better. Nobody, and certainly no organization, is immune to failure, excepting the Lord Himself.

It is ultimately the scriptures that have authority by which all are to measure our current condition and even our personal revelations. It was Joseph Smith, our one president and prophet that claimed to stand in the presence of the Father and Son, who said:

"[i]f any man writes to you, or preaches to you, doctrines contrary to the Bible, the Book of Mormon, or the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, set him down as an imposter." (Joseph Smith, Times & Seasons, Apr. 1, 1844)."

Further, while bearing testimony about last-days prophecies, Joseph also stated the he hoped all his listeners would "search the Scriptures to see whether these things are not also consistent with those things which the ancient Prophets and Apostles have written" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 29). The scriptures are the measuring stick. We've been accused many times of simply misinterpreting scripture in all these things we've discovered. Yet it was Joseph Smith who was asked how to interpret the scriptures and he said the rule of interpretation was that there was none at all, just "understand it precisely as it reads" (ibid, p. 276). He said the scriptures "say what they mean and mean what they say" (ibid, p. 264) So let's not get hung up on thinking this is some disputation over interpretation when the scriptures are plain as word can be on these points.

When Christ came to the Nephites he deferred almost exclusively to dead prophets and required those present to update their scriptures so they were accurate and complete. Christ urged them and us to study the words of Isaiah, Malachi, Samuel the Lamanite, and the remainder of the Nephites' ancient record for a very specific purpose: because it allowed them, and likewise us, to judge our situation in the present and learn how to come to, and be approved of by, God.



The wicked Lamanites were able to identify the abominable traditions of their fathers because they took as their authority: “the holy scriptures, yea the prophecies of the holy prophets, which are written, which leadeth them to faith on the Lord, and unto repentance, which faith and repentance bringeth a change of heart” (Helaman 15:7). They were firm and steadfast in the faith because they believed, knew, and understood the written scriptural prophecies, in order that they might correct their own false traditions.

It is holy scripture, not Lacey and I, which says we gentiles would fail in the latter days and lose our stewardship of the gospel to another people even if we repent, just as I read to you in Matthew 21 and 3 Nephi.

It is holy scripture, and even some of those leaders you take as authoritative, not Lacey and I, which says we LDS gentiles would transfigure the holy word of God, just as I read to you in Mormon 8. In the same breath the scripture exhorts us to “look ye unto the revelations of God,” meaning that what we in present day may consider to be the holy word of God, in the form of “continuing revelation,” is in many cases in direct contradiction to the revealed word of God that has gone before.

It is holy scripture, not Lacey and I, that says we LDS gentiles would fall into the category of the churches built up in the last days that would say: “Come unto me, and for your money you shall be forgiven of your sins” (Mormon 8:32). When the Lord first told us to pay our tithing directly to the poor, which is the primary purpose for tithing according to the scriptures, we had our temple recommends taken away. If the Church doesn’t consider us worthy of a temple recommend, can it consider us worthy of our sins to be forgiven? By the Church’s standards, if we don’t give our money to the church, but to the poor directly, then it seems we cannot be saved. By failing to give money directly to the church, many who desire to follow Christ according to the scriptures are even kept from baptism, thereby barring them from salvation in every sense of the word. This is part of the Church’s failing. This is a problem that has been both inherited and perpetuated by those currently in leadership. It is priestcraft, because it does not seek Zion (Mormon 8:36-39).

It is holy scripture, and leaders such as President Benson and Elder Oaks, not Lacey and I, that state that we have fulfilled the scriptural prophecy of being less than worthy of Zion due to our failure to remove our condemnation *as a church body* not just a few individual believers.

If we simply restate these publically available scriptural and modern prophetic teachings, we are considered to be acting in clear, open, and deliberate public opposition to the Church or its leaders. It is not us that are in clear, open, and deliberate opposition (if that is what you want to call it) to the Church or its leaders, it is God; and that opposition is proven and prophesied in the revelations of God. Joseph Smith stated that a person can know there is deception occurring when someone claims a revelation that contradicts a prior revelation (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith pp. 214-215). This is why looking to prior revelation in the scriptures and the words of dead prophets, allows us to accurately judge our modern revelations and condition in the present day. Yet when someone, like us, does exactly that to attempt to judge our condition, and we are called by the Lord to attempt to fix the problem, we are accused of apostasy.

Fixing the problem is not as hard as we tend to make it. We must shift from faith in men and institution, to faith in Christ alone, for there is “no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ,” and “cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the holy ghost” (Mosiah 3:17; 2 Nephi 28:31). The inner man must change. Paul told the Corinthians that “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17). That is where we begin. We must once again become as a little child; teachable, willing to accept that we don’t know everything and that we must know more than we now know if we are going to build Zion, for as Joseph said, we are saved as fast as we gain knowledge. Knowledge saves a man. This is why true repentance requires not shame, but turning to God, submission, learning and becoming.

It’s as easy as accepting that God told us to remember the new covenant by remembering the Book of Mormon. It’s as easy as accepting Joseph’s words at face value that the Book of Mormon is the most correct book on earth and would get us closer to God than any

other book if we would just read it and internalize it. If we would read it with the objective of getting closer to God, and stop using it as a proof-text, we might just discover that it outlines a pattern and path back to God's presence while in this life, for those who seek that. It outlines efforts to build Zion. It teaches us how to become prophets. It teaches us how to be humble, learn the mysteries, receive and develop gifts, entertain angels, and ultimately how to see God face to face.

Yes, it prophesies how we would fail, but it also tells us how to succeed. It agrees with Isaiah 1, Jeremiah 23, and Ezekiel 33 and 34 that we would become latter-day apostates as members of this "holy church of God" and that it is primarily the fault of those in positions of leadership to whom the people look as their watchmen on the tower (Mormon 8). But it also tells us how to judge righteously, avoid deception, receive direction, revelation, the spirit of prophecy, and real power to act in the presence of God. It's not a bunch of nice bed-time stories. It's a manual on coming to God by showing us our fallen condition and how to get out of it! Christ's gospel and law is in that book. If we will remember that and learn to do, not just to say, then we will succeed.

In the Church we are efficient at pumping out baptisms, but we are not so great at pumping out powerful converts who know how to receive revelation and have received the baptism of fire together with that water baptism. Joseph said the receipt of this first comforter is what completes the process of entering in the path that leads to Christ. It's not the end, it's the front gate. If we can receive that gift, then it will teach us how to pray and how to arrive at the presence of the Son. We are to be proven at all hazards and as Joseph said, "never cease struggling until you get this evidence" of your calling and election made sure, or the promise of eternal life by the voice of Jesus Christ Himself with no intermediary (The Words of Joseph Smith p. 208). With that blessing we can be visited by the last comforter, even Jesus Christ. The process is tried and true. All it takes is diligence by a true disciplined follower of Jesus Christ seeking to free himself from Babylon. Joseph Smith sustained the following text as scripture and part of the leading items of our faith, saying:

“It is vain for persons to fancy to themselves that they are heirs with those, or can be heirs with them, who have offered their all in sacrifice, and by this means obtain faith in God and favor with him so as to obtain eternal life, unless they, in like manner, offer unto him the same sacrifice, and through that offering obtain the knowledge that they are accepted of Him” (Lectures on Faith, 6:8).

That sacrifice begins with a broken heart and contrite spirit, which necessarily brings the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost. But “Baptism of Fire,” “calling and election,” and receiving Christ in the form of the “last comforter” as topics in our churchwide manuals and classes has been completely removed. Just ask a returned missionary what calling and election is and the vast majority will be at a complete loss. Yet these are the key experiences we need to have in order to be found worthy at the last day, but the Church no longer teaches them openly as Christ and our founding prophet did!

We desire to uphold the true doctrine of Jesus Christ as found in 3 Nephi 11, and promote faith in Him through His words. The last thing we want to do is damage someone’s faith in God as the sole source of salvation. Our book was written for our family, but ultimately by request of the Lord in an attempt to do as Joseph said:

“... waste and wear out our lives in bringing to light all the hidden things of darkness, wherein we know them; and they are truly manifest from heaven—These should then be attended to with great earnestness” (D&C 123:13-14).

We simply want our fellow believers in Christ to assume their personal responsibility for their own salvation, make it sure, and not fall into the trap Joseph Smith said many will fall into. He said:

“It is the constitutional disposition of mankind to set up stakes and set bounds to the works and ways of the Almighty. But I will give you a more painful thought. Suppose you have an idea of a resurrection, etc., and yet know nothing at all of the Gospel, nor comprehend one principle of the order of heaven, but find yourselves disappointed—yes, at last find yourselves disappointed in every hope or anticipation, when the decision goes forth from the lips of the Almighty. Would not this be a greater disappointment—a more painful thought than annihilation? Had I inspiration, revelation, and lungs to communicate what my soul has contemplated in times past, there is not a soul in this congregation but would go to their homes and shut their

mouths in everlasting silence on religion till they had learned something. Why be so certain that you comprehend the things of God, when all things with you are so uncertain” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith p. 320)?

Joseph further said that:

“Reading the experience of others, or the revelations given to them, can never give us a comprehensive view of our condition and true relation to God. Knowledge of these things, can only be obtained by experience in these things, through the ordinance of God set forth for that purpose. [Joseph] remarked that the disappointment of hopes and expectations at the resurrection would be indescribably dreadful” (The Words of Joseph Smith, p. 253).

This disappointment in the minds of those who think they are saved when they are not is what we seek to help people avoid, by truly comprehending the things of God. Jeremiah lamented that in the latter days many of the chosen people would have cause to confess that “the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved” (Jeremiah 8:20). I shared *Lectures on Faith* with a very dedicated LDS friend who read it twice in one day and visited me very humbled and penitent saying he realized he wasn’t saved. Joseph Smith taught him that. This friend believes the Church had lead him to believe otherwise, that he was saved even though Christ had not told him so.

This is what we want others to realize. Is that apostate? If the Church is truly under condemnation, a curse, rejection, and an unsaved condition as the scriptures describe, as a body of believers should we not waste and wear out our lives to help each other correct the error? Should not that failure be identified and pulled into the light for all to see so we can correct it? Or do we have something better to do? Do we think we can hide our failures from the Lord? If we as a church are so unworthy of Zion because of these failures, should we not cast off the time we waste in checking the proverbial church boxes, feigning righteousness, and faking our way into heaven, and rather do as the Lord commands and:

“let the cry go forth among all people: Awake and arise and go forth to meet the Bridegroom; behold and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Prepare yourselves for the great day of the Lord” (D&C 133:10).

If you think to excommunicate us based on our belief in the words of one Denver Snuffer, we would tell you to be careful. We believe he is a servant teaching the light of the everlasting gospel from the scriptures to help some few repent. Keep in mind that if there is one thing the scriptures say about rejecting true prophets, it is clear that rejecting them keeps you from meeting the cutoff level from physical destruction and abiding the day when Christ comes. So consideration, at the very least, should be given to someone claiming such a message as Denver Snuffer.

Even if you choose not to believe such a man, in this day of institutional and individual apostasy restoration by way of a new dispensation head is required; someone willing to preserve and continue the restoration of all things. An Elias will come to prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. As Joseph Smith and Matthew taught: "As in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the son of man" (JS-M 1:41). There must be a Noah. I encourage you to sincerely and prayerfully ask the Lord what He is doing with this body of LDS believers that struggle in an unsaved condition, outside of Zion. Study these scriptural prophecies and ask Him if they apply to us. Ask Him what you should do about it. Ask Him if He intends to follow His scriptural pattern and call a new prophet after a period of apostasy, and if so, who that is. Who is the Noah for our day? Do you believe He will answer these all-important questions by direct revelation to you? Are we doing the will of the Lord? Are we supposed to continue building up churches and temples, priding ourselves on that which we believe is the Lord's will when it is not? About this, Joseph said:

"Let us ask what advantage would it have been in the days of Noah to have gone throughout the land and built up churches? the answer is, it would have, (if the people thus built up believed that they had embraced the religion of heaven,) effectually secured them in blindness until the day of their destruction! *There was but one way for them to escape, and that was, to hear the preaching of Noah, and be gathered* as God might have directed him. "And so shall it be at the coming of the Son of man:" (Evening and Morning Star, Vol. 2 Number 22).

The meridian-day Elias, John the Baptist, wrested the keys from a church Christ was raised in; that he lived by, accepted, and tried to correct. The Lord admitted the temple was His father's house, in spite of its corruption by the Jewish church of which he was a member. Still,

the keys and authority were wrested by an outsider no-name prophet who was to restore and preserve true faith and prepare the way for Christ's important work. Only those in the Jewish church who chose to repent at this new juncture were then considered the covenant people. The rest were quickly swept off. The Nephites repeated the same pattern. Ask yourselves why the Lord revealed to Joseph in D&C 112 that terrible destructions would start off the latter day winding down scene, and that it would happen first in the midst of the Lord's house, "first among you who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house." It sounds painfully similar to what happened to the Jews and yet it is prophesied to happen again, to us. What are we doing about that?

These overall patterns of apostasy and restoration we believe as LDS members are true, but we refuse to see the apostasy happening before our eyes, and the need for a serious solution. Our desire and sincere plea is for all of the LDS Gentiles to awake and arise, repent, remember and take responsibility for their own salvation between them and Christ. Then move on to creating family Zion-like relationships based on *that* foundation, not on a weak and tattered ruin of a Church that has no apparent immediate goals to build a city of righteousness for our Lord and Savior. Wake up to your awful situation and cast off the vanity, unbelief, and condemnation you are under. Teach others to do the same.

The Lord has taught Lacey and I so much more than we previously believed was possible for us. We feel His guiding hand more fully in our lives. He is real. He cares. We love Him. The gifts of the Spirit, to those that believe, to a degree for us are enjoyed just as the Lord said they would be: tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healings, interpretation of tongues, and so forth. The fruits are there. We know He lives! I have seen Him and He has ministered to me just as He did to the Nephites at Bountiful. I have felt the scars in His body and embraced Him and He has held me in the robes of His matchless love. I am a witness of His resurrection. He is not trifling with you or me, but closely involved with those who care to do His will. He desires so much more for this people.

As I told President Marshall, if you excommunicate us for apostasy you are excommunicating people who have a testimony of this restored gospel and free from any

grievous sin. We love Jesus Christ. We love His restored gospel. We love the Book of Mormon. We love and appreciate all the truth we've received from the Church, and the sacrifices many have made to convey that truth to us. But if you choose to excommunicate us, we ask that you make it abundantly clear that it was for apostasy against the Church, not against God. And if this truly be the case, we ask you to reconsider excommunication at all, for if we are not fighting against God, do you really want to excommunicate us? Just as President Marshall shared with us, the church and the gospel are not one and the same. The church can bear great truths, and programs to apply those truths; and it does. But unless those truths and programs are founded upon the Gospel they cannot save. It is through the gospel of Jesus Christ we are saved, not through the church.

I know God, and not from a distance. He is not pleased with and will hold all accountable who unrighteously use His name and supposed authority to exercise control in casting out true believers in Christ who are striving with all their hearts to build Zion. We all have great need to repent, from the head to the feet. Many here present will feel the church-wide damning effects of that lack of repentance. If we don't repent I testify we will be cast off and left desolate in a coming day.

The Lord is still working with this people. He sent us to declare what we declared both in the book we wrote and in this council. The Lord's hand is stretched out still, and therefore there is still time to repent. Whatever your decision today, fulfill your obligation as leaders and please teach this people that redemption comes through Christ the Lord, who is the very Eternal Father. Amen.