**DC 29                                                 Historical Background**

“The Saints at Fayette were looking forward with anticipation to the conference that was to be held on the 26th of September, 1830. The first conference had been the occasion of a Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and there was every reason to believe that the second would be a similar spiritual feast. Some time before the September Conference this Revelation was given in the presence of six Elders.” (Smith and Sjodahl, *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*, p. 145.)

“The headnote in the Book of Commandments states that section 29 is, ‘a Revelation to the church of Christ, given in the presence of six elders, in Fayette, New York 1830.’ The minutes of the second conference of the Church (26 September 1830), found in the ‘Far West Record,’ list six elders present in addition to Joseph Smith: Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, John Whitmer, Peter Whitmer, Samuel H. Smith, and Thomas B. Marsh. These six men are undoubtedly the same six referred to in the headnote.” (Lyndon W. Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith: A Historical and Biographical Commentary of the Doctrine and Covenants* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 41.)

**Rudger Clawson**

This revelation was given to Joseph the Seer in the presence of six elders, in Fayette, Seneca County, New York, September, 1830. You know the prophet used to receive revelations, did upon many occasions, I presume, when he was by himself. But in this instance, there were six elders present, and that would be quite a testimony to the truth of the revelation, at least that there were six witnesses who knew and understood that the revelation was given to the Prophet Joseph Smith…These words are to be studied; they are to be reflected upon… (*Conference Report, October 1913*, Overflow Meeting. 53.)

**DC 29:3 your sins are forgiven you…but remember to sin no more**

**Malcolm S. Jeppsen**

There must be total abandonment of the sin. All too often I see those who have repented slip sometime later into their old sinful ways. When that happens, previously repented sins return to those who perhaps did not really repent after all. We read: “I, the Lord, will not lay any sin to your charge; go your ways and sin no more; but unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return, saith the Lord your God” (D&C 82:7). (“A Divine Prescription for Spiritual Healing,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 18)

**DC 29:5 I…am your advocate with the Father**

What will Jesus say to the Father? With what pleadings could He prevail on our behalf? How could the Father’s demand for justice be met? Listen to these words:

   “Listen to him who is the advocate with the Father, who is pleading your cause before him—

   Saying: Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified; Wherefore, Father, spare these my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life.” (DC 45:3-5)

Can you imagine what it would feel like to hear the Savior say these words on your behalf? Wouldn’t you feel as the Nephites did when Jesus prayed unto the Father as their advocate? Nephi recorded, “no one can conceive of the joy which filled our souls at the time we heard him pray for us unto the Father…so great was the joy of the multitude that they were overcome.” (3 Ne. 17:17-18)

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

Jesus Christ came upon the scene as the Mediator between man and God, and the Advocate for man with the Father. He pleads our cause. As our Mediator, through his ministry, he labors to reconcile us, to bring us into agreement with God his Father.

An advocate is one who defends or pleads for or in behalf of another. A mediator is one who reconciles or brings about agreement between parties.

That is part of his great mission. He stands between the Father and man. When he was upon earth, he prayed frequently for his disciples, pleading with his Father in their behalf, and he has been pleading ever since, and he stands between us and God our Father. (*Doctrines of Salvation,*3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 1: 26.)

**DC 29:6 ask in faith, being united in prayer**

“The purposes of group prayer…[is to unite] faith toward a particular end desired.

“…The prayer of a husband and wife together is a group prayer, as are those of the parents with the children. Missionary companions kneeling at the start and close of each day, prayers given in executive meetings, stake presidency meetings, quorum or Relief Society presidency meetings, sacrament meetings, Sunday School, even general conference sessions—all are group prayers and all have similarities. One person has the responsibility to speak for the group in thanking and asking the Lord’s blessing upon them all. This entails being sufficiently humble and in tune with the Spirit that one can receive, through the Holy Ghost, the knowledge of those blessings that would benefit the entire group. Others in the group also have a responsibility to mentally repeat each word and to unite their faith for the same blessings. If this were truly done in each group prayer, we would receive the marvelous promise of the Lord: ‘whatsoever ye shall ask in faith, being united in prayer according to my command, ye shall receive.’ (D&C 29:6.)

“Some of my choicest experiences have come about through prayer in groups.

“One such experience was in a meeting with the stake presidency and Elder James E. Faust, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, at a stake conference. In the middle of this meeting, word came that the stake Relief Society president and her unborn baby were in danger of losing their lives because of complications in childbirth. As soon as this news reached us, Elder Faust suggested that we kneel and pray, uniting our faith as the stake president prayed for the life of this sister and her child. It was a rich experience as the Spirit united us totally in the single purpose of supplicating the Lord for this family. Before our meeting was over, word had come that the mother and the prematurely born son were both doing fine.

“I recall another moving group prayer, this one at a testimony meeting at an MIA Girls Camp in the High Sierras. A young Mia Maid was becoming rebellious, and we had persuaded her to attend camp only after an all-out effort. The young lady who gave the opening prayer at the testimony meeting was inspired to ask ‘that those in the group who do not have a testimony can humble themselves so that they can be touched by the Holy Spirit and receive the witness that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith was His Prophet, that the president of the Church is a prophet, and that the gospel embodied in the Church is true.’ I’m sure I was only one of many mentally pleading with the Lord that this blessing might be given.

“Those testimonies under the stars against a backdrop of tall pines and Sequoias were really inspiring. Toward the end of the meeting, as each of us was spiritually filled and tears welled in our eyes, this young rebellious girl got to her feet and told of the spiritual awakening she had just had, that she had received a witness from the Holy Ghost that the Church was indeed true. She pledged to adhere to all of the guidelines of the Church and to live her life to be worthy of marriage in the temple. Years later as I attended her reception, following her temple marriage, I again offered a prayer of thanksgiving that we had been united in purpose and prayer to witness that great miracle in the High Sierras…It has been my experience that prayer in groups can be as uplifting and spiritually rewarding as any other experience one can have. (Gerald R. Schiefer, “Where Two or Three Are Gathered,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1976, 36-37)

**DC 29:7 ye are called bring to pass the gathering of mine elect**

**Orson Pratt**

The Saints are to be gathered, and they are to come not only by thousands, but tens of thousands, scores of thousands, and hundreds of thousands are to be assembled from among the nations. How is this to be brought about? Through the servants of the living God. This is what the Lord told us before one Saint was gathered. In a revelation, given in the presence of six Elders, in Sept, 1830, the Lord says, “Ye are called to bring to pass the gathering of mine elect, for mine elect hear my voice and harden not their hearts, therefore the decree hath gone forth from the Father, that they shall be gathered in unto one place upon the face of this land.”

That is the decree that has gone forth; it is ordained in the heavens, and it will come to pass. As the Saints have already been gathered here unto this territory, even so will it continue to be fulfilled until the last of the elect of God are assembled from the four corners of the earth. (*Journal of Discourses,*26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 2: 55.)

**DC 29:7 mine elect hear my voice and harden not their hearts**

**Spencer W. Kimball**

Our goal should be to identify as soon as possible which of our Father’s children are spiritually prepared to proceed all the way to baptism into the kingdom. One of the best ways to find out is to expose your friends, relatives, neighbors, and acquaintances to the full-time missionaries as soon as possible. Don’t wait for long fellowshipping nor for the precise, perfect moment. What you need to do is find out if they are the elect. “[My] elect hear my voice and harden not their hearts.” (D&C 29:7.) If they hear and have hearts open to the gospel, it will be evident immediately. If they won’t listen and their hearts are hardened with skepticism or negative comments, they are not ready. In this case, keep loving them and fellowshipping them and wait for the next opportunity to find out if they are ready. You will not lose their friendship. They will still respect you” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 553).

**DC 29:8 they shall be gathered in unto one place upon the face of this land**

Two incredibly important concepts are presented in this verse. One is that the gathering of the saints will be unto one place. Where is that place? Is it the Salt Lake valley? The early pioneers may have thought so, but of course, it is the New Jerusalem.

The second big concept is that this place of Zion—which still must be built—will be a protection to the saints against the day when the wicked are destroyed. In other words, Zion, the New Jerusalem has to be built before the Second Coming of the Lord.

“Israel is to be gathered in unto one place. (D&C 29:8; 45:64-71.) The eventual center place for the gathering of the elect of the Lord will be in the New Jerusalem, indicated by revelation as the western part of Missouri.

“In the meantime, there have been other gathering places where the Saints have been brought together to work out certain purposes of the Lord in these latter days. As already indicated by prophecy, that with the growth of the Church in the world, many places of gathering are appointed and may probably yet be appointed. This fact was revealed in a subsequent revelation, as follows:

   Zion [New Jerusalem] shall not be moved out of her place, not withstanding her children are scattered.

   They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion—

   And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled.

   And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed, for the work of the gathering of my saints—

   Until the day cometh when there is found no more room for them; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains or the strength of Zion.

   Behold, it is my will, that all they who call on my name, and worship me according to mine everlasting gospel, should gather together and stand in holy places;

   And prepare for the revelation which is to come, when the veil of the covering of my temple, in my tabernacle, which hideth the earth, shall be taken off, and all flesh shall see me together (D&C 101:17-23.)” (Roy W. Doxey, *The Doctrine and Covenants Speaks* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964], 1: 167.)

**DC 29:9 they that do wickedly shall be as stubble; and I will burn them up**

What would happen to the wicked if they were exposed to the Lord in all his power and glory? Could they withstand it? Moses said he would have withered and died in the presence of the Lord if he had not first been transfigured (Moses 1:11). Imagine then a wicked world exposed to the full power and overwhelming glory of the resurrected Jesus. What would happen to them? The Lord has declared, “I the Lord…will come down in heaven from the presence of my Father and consume the wicked with unquenchable fire.” (DC 63:34)

   “the veil of the covering of my temple, in my tabernacle, which hideth the earth, shall be taken off, and all flesh shall see me together.

   And every corruptible thing, both of man, or of the beasts of the field, or of the fowls of the heavens, or of the fish of the sea, that dwells upon all the face of the earth, shall be consumed;

   And also that of element shall melt with fervent heat; and all things shall become new, that my knowledge and glory may dwell upon all the earth.” (DC 101:23-25)

**A. Theodore Tuttle**

For those who say "We're not going to burn," it would be prudent to remember that it wasn't raining when Noah built the ark! (*Conference Report, April 1970*, Afternoon Meeting 86.)

**DC 29:11 I will…dwell in righteousness with men on earth a thousand years**

**Elray L. Christensen**

How will his coming affect the inhabitants of the earth?

The very thought of it thrills the human soul! We are told that his coming will be sublime and glorious; awesome and terrible—terrible to the unrepentant and ungodly, but glorious and delightful to those who are worthy of him and who are ready to meet him. (*Conference Report*, April 1966, Afternoon Meeting, p.36)

**Wilford Woodruff**

I do not know that any people on the earth, except the Latter-day Saints, are looking for this great event. There may be exceptions, there may be men who believe in the second coming of Christ. The people called Millerites, believe in the second coming of the Savior, and they have set a great many days when it should take place. But he did not come, and he never will come until the revelations of God are fulfilled and a people are prepared for his coming. He will never come until the Jews are gathered home and have rebuilt their temple and city, and the Gentiles, have gone up there to battle against them. He will never come until his Saints have built up Zion, and have fulfilled the revelations which have been spoken concerning it. He will never come until the Gentiles throughout the whole Christian world have been warned by the inspired elders of Israel. They are called to thrust in the sickle and reap, for the harvest is ripe and the time has come, which is referred to in this revelation, when the Lord commands the elders to go forth and warn the world for the last time, and call upon the inhabitants of the earth to repent.— (*The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff,*edited by G. Homer Durham [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969], 253.)

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

During this time of peace, when the righteous shall come forth from their graves, they shall mingle with mortal men on the earth and instruct them. The veil which separates the living from the dead will be withdrawn and mortal men and the ancient saints shall converse together. Moreover, in perfect harmony shall they labor for the salvation and exaltation of the worthy who have died without the privileges of the gospel.

The great work of the millennium shall be performed in the temples which shall cover all parts of the land and into which the children shall go to complete the work for their fathers, which they could not do when in this mortal life for themselves.

In this manner those who have passed through the resurrection, and who know all about people and conditions on the other side, will place in the hands of those who are in mortality, the necessary information by and through which the great work of salvation for every worthy soul shall be performed, and thus the purposes of the Lord, as determined before the foundation of the world, will be fully consummated. (*Doctrines of Salvation,*3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 2: 252.)

**DC 29:12-13 mine apostles shall stand at my right hand at the day of my coming**

Imagine all the paintings you have seen of the Second Coming. Do any of these representations show the apostles on the right hand of Christ? Do any of them have Christ appearing in a red robe? Do they show Christ coming to save Jerusalem or to rule in Zion?

While a picture can paint a thousand words, it can also leave a thousand false impressions. With all due respect to latter-day artists, the scriptures would paint a different picture of the Second Coming—one with Christ coming in all the power and glory of heaven, even “in a pillar of fire.” He will be “red in his apparel” signifying “the day of vengeance” (DC 133:48-51) The armies in heaven will follow “him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen” (Rev 19:14). Upon his head will be many crowns (Rev. 19:12). The apostles will also wear crowns and take their rightful place at his right hand. The saints will come up out of their graves and the living righteous will ascend to meet him in the air (1 Thess. 4:15-17). Then a great multitude “as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings” shall declare “Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come.” (Rev 19:6-7)

The event will be so grand, the imagery so beyond mortal comprehension, and the drama so overwhelming as to elude the most imaginative artists. Of the Second Coming we may certainly say, “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” (1 Cor 2:9)

**DC 29:14 the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall be turned into blood**

Of all the signs of the Second Coming of Christ, none takes preeminence over this one. The light of the sun will be withheld, the color of the moon will be blood red and the stars shall fall more impressively than any meteor shower any astronomer has ever seen.

Not uncommonly, someone will declare that this prophecy has already been fulfilled. They usually reference solar eclipses, lunar eclipses, and meteor showers. While this prophecy probably will have multiple fulfillments, we can’t help but think that a very dramatic and unequivocal sign still awaits us. Think of what happened in the New World at the Savior’s birth—36 hours of daylight. What happened at his death—three days of utter darkness. Should we think that the sign of his Second Coming would be any less dramatic?

The scriptures speak of many signs in the heaven and on the earth, but this particular sign is different. That the sun should be darkened, the moon turned to blood, and the stars fall from the heavens is a sign that is repeated over and over in the scriptures (see Ezek. 32:7, Joel 2:31; 3:15, Matt 24:29; Mark 13:24-25, Lu. 21:25, Acts 2:20, Rev. 6:12; 8:12, DC 29:14; 34:9; 45:42; 88:87; 133:49). How many other signs or doctrines are repeated in 14 different places? Certainly, the fulfillment of this scripture will be as dramatic as anything we have ever seen, for when it occurs, ‘the earth shall tremble and reel to and fro as a drunken man’ (DC 88:87).

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

“Eventually the sun is to be turned into darkness and the moon as blood and then shall come the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Some of these signs have been given; some are yet to come. The sun has not yet been darkened. We are informed that this will be one of the last acts just preceding the coming of the Lord.” (*Conference Report, April 1966*, First Day—Morning Meeting 13.)

**DC 29:16 a great hailstorm sent forth to destroy the crops of the earth**

How could a hailstorm destroy all the crops of the earth? Ask the ancient Egyptians. One of the plagues which Moses brought upon Egypt was a hailstorm which destroyed their crops, “the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation…And the flax and the barley were smitten” (Ex: 9:23-31). The great hailstorm which is yet to come will likely be associated with fire as in the days of Moses, for John describes this event as follows: “there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all the green grass was burnt up.” (Rev. 8:7) **Matthew Cowley** commented:

“What are you going to do when that happens? Ah, brothers and sisters… if you have your year's supply of food in your home, let the hails come, and the winds blow, and our storehouses in our homes, in our wards, and in our stakes will be full just as they were in the days of Joseph, and we will be preserved.” (*Matthew Cowley Speaks* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954], 172.)

Ezekiel also speaks of a great hailstorm which would come to destroy the armies assembled against the House of Israel, saying, “I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.” (Ezek. 38:22) John the Revelator described this hailstorm as follows: “there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, *every stone* about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.” (Rev. 16:21) Estimates have placed the weight of each hailstone at over 50 pounds. (Richard D. Draper, *Opening the Seven Seals: The Visions of John the Revelator* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991], 182.)

**DC 29:17 I will take vengeance upon the wicked**

**Marion G. Romney**

Although these scriptures, and numerous others to like effect, clearly and forcefully emphasize the message “repent or perish,” they are not unkind, harsh, nor flippant. Neither are they arbitrary. They express the logical and inevitable consequences of the violation of natural law—that law which was “decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated.” (D&C 130:20.)

These warnings have been declared to the world now for more than 140 years. The world is without excuse.

The signs of the times bear ominous testimony that for this generation the hour of reckoning approaches.

“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” (Matt. 11:15.) If we keep the foregoing scriptures in mind, they will help us understand the “signs” of our times.

As dark as the picture seems, however, there is a bright side to it. He who really listens will find that all the warnings, ancient and modern, have a silver lining that give cause for rejoicing. Both history and the scriptures are as replete with promises and proof that the repentant shall live, as they are with warnings that the unrepentant shall perish. (“Repent or Perish,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1975, 4–5)

**Ezra Taft Benson**

What, then, is the Lord's way to help us prepare for these calamities? The answer is also found in D&C 1 of the Doctrine and Covenants, wherein he says: “Wherefore, I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments; And also gave commandments to others. . . .” (D&C 1:17-18.) …Here then is the key—look to the prophets for the words of God, which will show us how to prepare for the calamities that are to come. (*God, Family, Country: Our Three Great Loyalties*[Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974], 266.)

**DC 29:17 my blood shall not cleanse them if they hear me not**

In verse 1, the Lord speaks of his “arm of mercy.” But the Lord has two arms. We might well imagine that his “arm of mercy” on the one hand is balanced by his “arm of justice” on the other. By his mighty arm of mercy, he can redeem us from death and hell through the atonement. By his mighty arm of justice, he can punish us for rebellion and disbelief, “for behold, my blood shall not cleanse them if they hear me not.” “For behold, justice exerciseth all his demands, and also mercy claimeth all which is her own; and thus, none but the truly penitent are saved” (Alma 42:24), “for the sword of his justice is in his right hand; and behold, at that day, if ye shall spurn at his doings he will cause that it shall soon overtake you.” (3 Ne. 29:4)

**Spencer W. Kimball**

If we do not repent, then the Lord clearly lets us know that there will be discipline and a denial of blessings and advancement. The Lord teaches that he cannot forgive people *in* their sins; he can only save them *from* their abandoned sins. The Lord clearly says, “My blood shall not cleanse them if they hear me not.” (D&C 29:17.) Hear in this instance means to accept and abide his teachings. (“The Gospel of Repentance,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1982, 5)

**DC 29:18 Plague of flies and maggots**

**Nephi L. Pratt**

The prophet of the Lord God has spoken by revelation, and declared that hailstorms will destroy the crops. Do you think the saints shall escape famine when that comes? And there will be the grim reaper, death, coming to all the nations, in various forms that have been foretold. It has been written that awful new diseases shall come, over which the physicians will have no power; that flies shall come upon the wicked and eat their flesh, and that maggots shall come upon them, and devour them. But the revelation (D&C 89:21) that was quoted in our hearing this morning holds out hope to us. When these awful conditions which are coming shall predominate, and the judgments of God be poured out without stint, in that day the man who has kept the Word of Wisdom can say to the Lord, Father, you did promise that if I kept this word, the destroyer should pass me by, and the Lord will hear. Now let us heed these things, individually. (*Conference Report*, October 1908, p.47)

**DC 29:19 flesh shall fall from off their bones, and their eyes from their sockets**

Whereas the preceding destructions probably are general plagues decreed to afflict all mankind, the next few verses deal with the destruction of the enemies of Israel prior to the Second Coming. Zechariah put this plague in context for us, “And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them.” (Zech. 14:12-13)

Usually students are quick to point out that a nuclear cataclysm could be described in the same language. Surely it could, but the language of this revelation suggests that this plague comes from the Lord, not the nuclear arsenal of the state of Israel. The Lord will fight this battle to protect Jerusalem from utter destruction. The enemy will be destroyed in a horrific manner.

**Bruce R. McConkie**

These things boggle the mind and dull our sensitivities. We can scarcely conceive the full horror of what is involved, and what we do envision shall be only the beginning of sorrows…Man and beast alike shall suffer and die, and the whole earth shall be one great Gehenna, where the worms and rats and creeping things feast on the carcasses of the slain. (*The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 466.)

**DC 29:20 the beasts of the forest and the fowls of the air shall devour them up**

When Gog gathers his armies for the battle of Armageddon, he will siege Jerusalem until the Lord comes with destruction in his hand. Speaking to Gog, the Lord said,

   “I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand.

   Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured…

   And, thou son of man (i.e. Ezekiel), thus saith the Lord GOD; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assembleyourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, *even* a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood.

   Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan.

   And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you.

   Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord GOD.” (Ezek. 39:3-4,17-20)

   “And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

   That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all *men, both* free and bond, both small and great.” (Rev. 19:17)

**DC 29:21 the whore of all the earth, shall be cast down by devouring fire**

**Bruce R. McConkie**

Ezekiel describes the wars, plagues and desolations which would cover the earth at the very hour of the Second Coming. He tells of nations combining to fight in the holy land; of pestilence, great hailstones, and of fire and brimstone being rained upon the earth; and of the beasts of the forest and the fowls of the air devouring the dead. Chapters 38 and 39 of his writings set forth many of the details. After confirming that these very desolations are to precede and attend his Second Coming, the Lord said: "And the great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall be cast down by devouring fire, according as it is spoken by the mouth of Ezekiel the prophet, who spoke of these things, which have not come to pass but surely must, as I live, for abominations shall not reign." (D. & C. 29:21.) That is, among other things, the kingdoms of this world are all included within the great Babylon whose destruction is both soon and certain. (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,*3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 3: 559.)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

In Ezekiel's account, great nations with their armies of mighty men and their trains of munitions come to do battle. They have their planes and ships and tanks and atomic bombs and are waging such warfare as has never been known before. Then comes the devouring fire from heaven that destroys the armies of Gog and Magog, which armies are identified as the great and abominable church. That is to say, the church of the devil is more than an ecclesiastical organization that teaches false doctrines so as to lead men carefully down to hell. It is more than priests and ministers and places of worship. It is also the political powers that hold in their hands the destinies of nations. It is the churches and their religious doctrines, and it is also the governments and their political philosophies. It is the political doctrines in which men believe and for which they die to satisfy their innate needs to worship. (*The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 63.)

**DC 29:22 when the thousand years are ended…then will I spare the earth but for a little season**

The chronology here is crucially important. After the Millenium, Satan will be loosed again. He will gather his forces and wickedness will gather its fury for yet another battle—yet another battle with Gog and Magog. Because the events which occur after the little season are so similar to the events which occur at the Second Coming, many get confused. For instance, many don’t understand that the Lord will gather his sheep on the right and goats on the left *only after* the little season. This event will not occur at the Second Coming. D&C 29 could not be clearer in describing these events as transpiring after the little season, see verses 24-28. When reading apocalyptic passages, the reader should always try to sort out whether the event occurs before or after the Millenium and the little season. Thereby one understands the difference between the end of the world and the end of the earth.

**DC 29:23 the end shall come, and the heaven and the earth shall be consumed and pass away**

An important and poorly appreciated doctrine is the difference between two scriptural concepts—the end of the world and the end of the earth. At first glance, they would seem to be equivalent ideas, but the scriptures speak of them differently, very differently. Section 29 helps us see the differences nicely.

Almost uniformly, the “end of the world” refers to the destruction of the wicked preceding and attending the Second Coming. In this context, *the world*refers to the wickedness of humanity not Mother Earth. Section 29 speaks of this idea in verses 8-21. The destruction of the wicked is necessary for this earth to make the transition from a telestial sphere to a terrestrial one. Those who cannot abide a terrestrial glory must of necessity be destroyed.

The “end of the earth” on the other hand, occurs after the Millenium and the little season. It describes the very literal death and resurrection of the earth itself. Not just the earth but the heaven also must be consumed and pass away. To “pass away” means to die. When we think of the earth as a living creation of the Lord we begin to see great symbolism and parallelism with the plan of salvation. Like each of us, the earth was created in innocence, it suffered a fall, it was baptized first by water then by fire at the Second Coming of Christ. But it could not fill the measure of its creation until it is made new by the Lord—a process akin to resurrection to celestial glory. **Joseph Fielding Smith** said, “The earth, as a living body, will have to die and be resurrected, for it, too, has been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ.” (*Doctrines of Salvation,*1: 74.) Once this great transition has occurred, the meek “shall inherit the earth.” (Matt. 5:5)

   “For the great Millenium, of which I have spoken by the mouth of my servants, shall come.

   For Satan shall be bound, and when he is loosed again he shall only reign for a little season, and *then cometh the end of the earth*.

   And he that liveth in righteousness shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and the earth shall pass away so as by fire.” (DC 43:30-32, italics added)

   “And again, verily I say unto you, the earth abideth the law of a celestial kingdom, for it filleth the measure of its creation, and transgresseth not the law—

   Wherefore, it shall be sanctified; yea, notwithstanding it shall die, it shall be quickened again, and shall abide the power by which it is quickened, and the righteous shall inherit it.” (DC 88:25-26)

**James E. Talmage**

According to the scriptures the earth has to undergo a change analogous to death, and is to be regenerated in a way comparable to a resurrection. References to the elements melting with heat, and to the earth being consumed and passing away, such as occur in many scriptures already cited, are suggestive of death; and the new earth, really the renewed or regenerated planet, may be likened to a resurrected organism. (*Articles of Faith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1981], 341.)

**Brigham Young**

This world, so benighted at present, and so lightly esteemed by infidels, ... when it becomes celestialized, it will be like the sun, and be prepared for the habitation of the Saints, and be brought back into the presence of the Father and the Son. It will not then be an opaque body as it now is, but it will be like the stars of the firmament, full of light and glory; it will be a body of light. John compared it, in its celestialized state, to a sea of glass. (Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Restoration of All Things* [Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1945], 298 - 299.)

**DC 29:24 all things shall become new…both men and beasts, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea**

This passage describes the creations which are to abide on the newly celestialized earth. It will be inhabited by resurrected men and women, beasts, fowls, and fishes.

“We learn from latter-day revelation that the resurrection pertains not only to the human family, but to all forms of life. (See D&C 29:23–25.)” (Robert J. Matthews, “Resurrection,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1991, 11)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

All forms of life shall then be immortal; all shall come forth from death and live in a resurrected state forever; the resurrection applies to men and animals and fowls and fishes and creeping things—all shall rise in immortality and live forever in their destined orders and spheres of existence. (*The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 695.)

**Joseph Smith**

Says one, “I cannot believe in the salvation of beasts.” Any man who would tell you that this could not be, would tell you that the revelations are not true. John heard the words of the beasts giving glory to God, and understood them. God who made the beasts could understand every language spoken by them. The four beasts (Rev. 5:13-14) were four of the most noble animals that had filled the measure of their creation, and had been saved from other worlds, because they were perfect: they were like angels in their sphere. We are not told where they came from, and I do not know; but they were seen and heard by John praising and glorifying God." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 291-292.)

**DC 29:26 Michael, mine archangel, shall sound his trump, and then shall all the dead awake**

**Bruce R. McConkie**

The holy priesthood will be used in eternity as well as in time. It is not only the power and authority to save men here and now; it is also the power by which the worlds were made and by which all things are. It also could well be that Adam, who brought mortality and death into the world, was also permitted to restore the power that brings immortality and life to his descendants. Christ, of course, in the ultimate sense holds the keys of the resurrection and of raising souls in immortality, but, as we also know, it is his practice to operate through his servants, and righteous persons will, in due course, participate in calling their loved ones forth in the resurrection. (Robert L. Millet, “The Man Adam,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1994, 15)

**DC 29:27 the wicked on my left hand will I be ashamed to own**

The wicked on the Lord’s left hand are the sons of perdition. They are all resurrected but are not worthy of a kingdom of glory. Therefore, they are not redeemed from the Fall. They suffer the second death, whereby they are cast out of God’s presence forever. “They are vessels of wrath, doomed to suffer the wrath of God, with the devil and his angels in eternity.” (DC 76:32-49)

**DC 29:30 remember that all my judgments are not given unto men**

The Lord makes reference to the punishment of the sons of perdition, “And the end thereof, neither the place thereof, nor their torment, no man knows; Neither was it revealed, neither is, neither will be revealed unto man, except to them who are made partakers thereof; Nevertheless, I, the Lord, show it by vision unto many, but straightway shut it up again; Wherefore, the end, the width, the height, the depth, and the misery thereof, they understand not, neither any man except those who are ordained unto this condemnation.” (DC 76:45-48) See also D&C 19:5-12)

**DC 29:32 First spiritual, secondly temporal, which is the beginning of my work**

The beginning of the Lord’s work refers to the first estate in which he created spirit children prior to mortality. He created all of us spiritually first, and temporally second. Unfortunately, only two thirds of the created spirits kept their first estate and received a mortal body.

The last phase of the Lord’s work is to take us from the temporal to the spiritual. The goal is to go from mortality to immortality—from the temporal to the spiritual. The resurrected state is considered a spiritual state. This is not to say that the resurrected body is intangible or equivalent to a spirit essence or spirit body. It means that the elements of mortality will no longer be present. Therefore we read, “For notwithstanding they die, they also shall rise again, a spiritual body.” (DC 88:27) Paul declared this when he said, “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.” (1 Cor. 15:41)

**Charles W. Penrose**

[The Lord] explains further, that to Him all these things are spiritual, because they are eternal. The elements are eternal, and therefore God calls them spiritual; for the things that are temporal are those that pass away, and the things that are spiritual are those that remain. So we will find by and by, when we understand things as God understands them, that they are all eternal in His sight; for His eyes penetrate to the essence of things, while we can only see things on the surface. The things that pass away from our gaze, caught up as it were in the air and passing out of sight, like the vapors of the sea drawn up by the sun—the elements of these things remain and abide, and cannot be annihilated. Not one particle of matter can be annihilated; not one particle of spirit can be annihilated; for they are eternal. They always were, in their essential particles, in their primary elements, and they always will abide, though their forms may be changed by the power of the great Creator. (*Conference Report, April 1905*, Outdoor Meeting. 97.)

**DC 29:33 my works have no end**

**Rudger Clawson**

Of course we get the impression from these words that God's work is everlasting, and with Him it is one eternal round. He uses the words “firstly” and “lastly," in order that we by our finite minds may be able to understand: but to Him there is no beginning of his works; there is no end to them. It is a beautiful thought, isn't it? It gives you the idea at once of eternal life, something that continues and never ends. It is a tremendous thought, and quite beyond our comprehension. There is no man in this room, there is no woman in this assembly, that can comprehend, can begin to grasp the idea of eternal life. We can feel it. We just feel it in our very bones. We feel that we are destined to live forever. We feel that, but we cannot explain it. (*Conference Report, October 1913*, Overflow Meeting. 53 - 54.)

**DC 29:34 all things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal**

**Joseph F. Smith**

We are engaged in a temporal as well as in a spiritual labor. You must continue to bear in mind that the temporal and the spiritual are blended. They are not separate. One cannot be carried on without the other, so long as we are here in mortality. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on the earth is a physical organization as well as a spiritual organization. We need practical faith—that is, we need to practice the principles of our faith. Without the practice of the principles of the Gospel we can never realize our hopes and expectations concerning the results of this great latter-day work.(*Conference Report, October 1900*, Third Day—Morning Session 46.)

**David O. McKay**

The development of our spiritual nature should concern us most. Spirituality is the highest acquisition of the soul, the divine in man; “the supreme, crowning gift that makes him king of all created things.” It is the consciousness of victory over self and of communion with the infinite. It is spirituality alone which really gives one the best in life.

It is something to supply clothing to the scantily clad, to furnish ample food to those whose table is thinly spread, to give activity to those who are fighting desperately the despair that comes from enforced idleness, but after all is said and done, the greatest blessings that will accrue from the Church Security Plan are spiritual. Outwardly, every act seems to be directed toward the physical: re-making of dresses and suits of clothes, canning fruits and vegetables, storing foodstuffs, choosing of fertile fields for settlement all seem strictly temporal, but permeating all these acts, inspiring and sanctifying them, is the element of spirituality. (*Conference Report, October 1936*, Church of the Air Broadcast 103.)

**DC 29:35 my commandments are spiritual; they are not natural nor temporal**

**Howard W. Hunter**

The Lord makes no distinction between temporal and spiritual commandments, for he has said that all of his commandments are spiritual. When we understand the plan of life and salvation, this becomes evident to us. Mortality is just one part of our eternal life. (*Conference Report, October 1961*, Third Day—Morning Meeting 109.)

**Theodore M. Burton**

As I begin to understand this scripture, my whole concept of physical existence and these physical bodies is changing.

Take the payment of tithes and offerings as an example. Is anything apparently more temporal than money, or any other offering that we can bring from the earth? Yet since that is a law of God, there must be a spiritual basis for it or eternal reason behind this payment of tithes and offerings. When God asked us to prove him to see if he will not open the windows of heaven to us (see Mal. 3:10), what was he referring to? Was he referring only to the blessings of this earth and the promises of temporal rewards which come to us if we keep this law? Or was he referring to something spiritual, of an eternal nature, which I believe is the revelation of truth and wisdom, which can come to us from that opened window whereby we can communicate with God and know all things?

In giving us the Word of Wisdom, was God referring only to the temporal blessings of health and endurance which come to us through obedience to that law? God referred also to the “hidden treasures” of knowledge (see D&C 89:19), which, in my opinion, constitute an eternal treasure, which if used will bring us back into the warmth and light of God. (“Light and Truth,” *Ensign*, May 1981, 30)

**DC 29:36 a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me because of their agency**

**L. Lionel Kendrick**

Angrily, Lucifer used his divine gift of agency to make a decision that would lead to his eternal damnation. In bold opposition, he rebelled against God and “kept not his first estate.” “A third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me [the Lord God] *because of their agency*.” Even with the possibility of their eternal damnation, Heavenly Father would not take their agency from them. To do so would be counter to eternal law. As a result of their rebelliousness, Lucifer and his followers were cast out of heaven and forfeited the blessings of eternal life. (“Our Moral Agency,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1996, 30–31)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

How ancient is this pattern of our choosing? It clearly existed in the first estate, where God obviously permitted us to choose. ‘For behold, the devil... rebelled against me, saying, Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me because of their agency’ (D&C 29:36).

God's commitment to our freedom is of greater length and depth than we ever have imagined. (*A Wonderful Flood of Light*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1990], 88)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

Lucifer was very angry then, and he is very angry still—striving to make “all men…miserable like unto himself” (2 Nephi 2:27). One-third deliberately chose not to undergo the mortal experience.

…The revealed record shows that Lucifer clearly chose to seek his personal preeminence, chose to be angry when he was rejected, chose to lead others astray, and chose misery, not joy. His “one-third” followers, in turn, chose to respond to his false allures. Incredibly, they turned their collective backs on the second estate, as he remains incurably and ironically intoxicated with his desire to control others! (*Moving in His Majesty & Power*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2004], 10-11)

**DC 29:39 if they never should have bitter they could not know the sweet**

**Thomas S. Monson**

Yes, each of us will walk the path of disappointment, perhaps due to an opportunity lost, a power misused, or a loved one not taught. The path of temptation, too, will be the path of each. “And it must needs be that the devil should tempt the children of men, or they could not be agents unto themselves.” (D&C 29:39.)

Likewise shall we walk the path of pain. We cannot go to heaven in a feather bed. The Savior of the world entered after great pain and suffering. We, as servants, can expect no more than the Master. Before Easter there must be a cross.

While we walk these paths which bring forth bitter sorrow, we can also walk those paths which yield eternal joy.

We, with Jesus, can walk the path of obedience. (“The Paths Jesus Walked,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1992, 4)

**DC 29:41 cast out from the Garden of Eden…because of his transgression**

“From **President Brigham Young** we learn: ‘Some may regret that our first parents sinned. This is nonsense. If we had been there, and they had not sinned, we should have sinned. I will not blame Adam or Eve. Why? Because it was necessary that sin should enter into the world; no man could ever understand the principle of exaltation without its opposite; no one could ever receive an exaltation without being acquainted with its opposite. How did Adam and Eve sin? Did they come out in direct opposition to God and to his government? No. But they transgressed a command of the Lord, and through that transgression sin came into the world. The Lord knew they would do this, and he had designed that they should. Then came the curse upon the fruit, upon the vegetables, and upon our mother earth; and it came upon the creeping things, upon the grain in the field, the fish in the sea, and upon all things pertaining to this earth, through man’s transgression.’

“The **Prophet Joseph Smith** referred to their choice to eat of the fruit as a ‘transgression,’ not a sin (A of F 1:2). Similarly, **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained: ‘It is proper and according to the scriptural pattern to speak of the transgression of Adam, but not the sin of Adam. (D. & C. 20:20; 29:40 [D&C 20:20; D&C 29:40]; Job 31:33; Rom. 5:14; 1 Tim. 2:14; Alma 12:31; Second Article of Faith.) Lehi says, for instance, `If Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen.` Then he explains that while in their state of innocence in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve `knew no sin.` (2 Ne. 2:22–23.) Knowledge of good and evil is an essential element in the commission of sin, and our first parents did not have this knowledge until after they had partaken of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.’

Thus, by being required to leave the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve caused the great plan of happiness to go forward. Mortality came to all living things; procreation began the process of bringing us, the sons and daughters of God, to earth as Adam and Eve’s posterity.” (Robert J. Woodford, “ ‘In the Beginning’: A Latter-day Perspective,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1998, 18–19)

**DC 29:41 he became spiritually dead**

**Bruce R. McConkie**

Spiritual death is to be cast out of the presence of the Lord, to die as to the things of righteousness, to die as to the things of the Spirit. Spirit beings as such never die in the sense of annihilation or in the sense that their spirit bodies are disorganized; rather, they continue to live to all eternity either as spirits or as resurrected personages. (*Mormon Doctrine,*2d ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], 756.)

**Boyd K. Packer**

With the Fall came the first spiritual penalty—spiritual death!

Death is a separation. The separation of Adam and of his posterity from the presence of God constituted spiritual death, for it separated them from all things spiritual.

There is another death, temporal death, which is the separation of the body from the spirit.

The penalty for transgression was that, with the Fall, Adam and his posterity became subject to both deaths.

The law had been broken and justice was upheld. But mercy would appeal. Mercy won a stay of temporal death, and a probation was granted to man. (D&C 29:42.) (*Our Father's Plan* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1984], 22.)

**DC 29:41 the last death, which is spiritual…shall be pronounced upon the wicked**

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

The second death is spiritual; it is banishment from the presence of the Lord. It is similar to the first spiritual death, which has passed upon all men who have remained unrepentant and who have not received the gospel. Those who have suffered the first spiritual death or departure, which is a shutting out from the presence of God, have the privilege of being redeemed from this death through obedience to the principles of the gospel. Through baptism and confirmation they are born again and thus come back into spiritual life, and through their continued obedience to the end, they shall be made partakers of the blessings of eternal life in the celestial kingdom of God.

Those who partake of the second death are those who have had the spiritual light and have rebelled against it. These remain in their sins in their banishment.

RESURRECTION WITHOUT REDEMPTION FOR SONS OF PERDITION. Alma in the Book of Mormon has clearly and forcefully depicted their status in the following words: "And now behold, I say unto you then cometh a death, even a second death, which is a spiritual death; then is a time that whosoever dieth in his sins, as to a temporal death, shall also die a spiritual death; yea, he shall die as to things pertaining unto righteousness.

"Then is the time when their torments shall be as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever; and then is the time that they shall be chained down to an everlasting destruction, according to the power and captivity of Satan, he having subjected them according to his will.

"Then, I say unto you, they shall be as though there had been no redemption made; for they cannot be redeemed according to God's justice; and they cannot die, seeing there is no more corruption.” (Alma 12:16-18)

From this we learn that the resurrection shall come unto all who have received tabernacles of flesh and this because they kept their first estate which entitled them to this mortal existence in the flesh. Since they are not to be punished for Adam's transgression, they will be entitled to the resurrection through the mercy and justice of God and the shedding of the blood and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, for they were not responsible for the temporal or mortal death.

However, because they have failed utterly to keep their second estate, when they are raised in the resurrection with their bodies and spirits inseparably connected, they still remain, as the prophets have said, as though there had been no redemption made for them, “Except it be the loosing of the bands of death,” that is the mortal death. Then shall the final sentence be passed upon them, and with Lucifer and those who served him in the beginning, shall they be cast out into outer darkness. (*Doctrines of Salvation,*3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 2: 224.)

**DC 29:43 thus did I, the Lord God, appoint unto man the days of his probation**

“Time is a gift from the Lord, Alma also recorded, wherein His children can learn to become more like Him. ‘And thus we see, that there was a time granted unto man to repent, yea, a probationary time, a time to repent and serve God.’ (Alma 42:4.)

“Too quickly, lives can pass away ‘like as it were unto us a dream...’ (Jacob 7:26.) Each spent minute is gone forever. It should be invested more carefully than gold, one philosopher said, because a fortune lost can be reclaimed, but time lost cannot.

“There are different demands on peoples’ time at various stages of life. ‘To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.’ (Ecc. 3:1.) But consistent throughout a person’s lifetime is the command: ‘Thou shalt not idle away thy time...’ (D&C 60:13.)” (*Church News*, 12/30/89)

**DC 29:46 little children are redeemed from the foundation of the world**

**Merlin R. Lybbert**

The Lord extends special protection to children and shares jurisdiction with earthly parents, even as we enjoy their presence. They cannot sin until they reach the age of accountability, which the Lord has declared to be eight years (see D&C 18:42; D&C 29:47). In fact, the power to even tempt them to commit sin has been taken from Satan. The prophet Mormon taught that “little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin. …

“Little children are alive in Christ, even from the foundation of the world; if not so, God is a partial God, and also a changeable God, and a respecter to persons; for how many little children have died without baptism!” (Moro. 8:8, 12.)

Because they cannot sin, they have no need of repentance, neither baptism. Adam’s original transgression has no claim as a result of the atonement of Jesus Christ. Mormon declared the practice of baptizing little children to be a “solemn mockery before God” (Moro. 8:9), for repentance and baptism apply to those who are “accountable and capable of committing sin” (Moro. 8:10).

Because all children who die before the age of accountability are pure, innocent, and wholly sin-free, they are saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven (see D&C 137:10; Mosiah 3:18). Understanding the special status of little children before God, because of their pure and innocent nature, brings understanding of the Lord’s commandment to “repent, and become as a little child, and be baptized in [His] name” (3 Ne. 11:37). The childlike qualities the Lord had reference to are developed by yielding to “the enticings of the Holy Spirit,” so as to become “submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.” Truly, such a person “becometh a saint” as spoken by Mosiah (Mosiah 3:19). (“The Special Status of Children,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 31)

**DC 29:47 power is not given unto Satan to tempt little children**

“Each family is given a ‘window of time’ in which to teach children correct principles. While parents often think in terms of 18 to 20 years to raise a child, those years are not of equal worth. Recognizing that children are more receptive in earlier years, the Lord commanded parents to teach their children the basic doctrines of the gospel by age eight (see D&C 68:25).

“Within this window of time, children are innocent and Satan cannot tempt them. ‘Wherefore, they cannot sin, for power is not given unto Satan to tempt little children, until they begin to be accountable’ (D&C 29:47). No wonder this is such a teachable time! During these early years, young children are without guile and hold a special love for us as parents. They love our stories and greatly benefit from family prayer and scripture study, and they generally are receptive to our teachings. This is our window of opportunity to establish a firm gospel foundation.” (John W. and Marjorie E. Hasler, “Train Up a Child,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1999, 50–51)

**DC 29:48 that great things may be required at the hand of their fathers**

**H. Verlan Andersen**

In Doctrine and Covenants section 29, the Lord states that “little children … cannot sin, for power is not given unto Satan to tempt little children, until they begin to become accountable before me; … that great things may be required at the hand of their fathers.” (D&C 29:46–48.) What are these “great things” required of fathers during the time when their children cannot be tempted?

Doctrine and Covenants section 68, suggests an answer: In that revelation the Lord specifically commands parents in Zion to teach their children to understand doctrine when eight years of age and states that if this is not done, “the sin be upon the heads of the parents.” (D&C 68:25.)

In another revelation given in May 1833, the Lord chastised each of the leading brethren of the Church for having failed to bring up their children in light and truth and otherwise set their homes in order. (See D&C 93:41–50.) Although no specific time period during which this should be done is mentioned, at the time the revelation was given, all four of the brethren reprimanded were relatively young fathers with small children in their homes.

In this revelation the Lord points out that children in their infant state are innocent before God but that Satan takes away light and truth from them because of disobedience and the tradition of their fathers. To prevent this, he commands parents to bring up their children in light and truth. (See D&C 93:38–40.) (“Bring Up Your Children in Light and Truth,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 81)