

Aug 12-18
Romans 7-16
“Overcome Evil with Good”

OVERVIEW:

Only a few of the gospel principles in Romans 7–16 are included in this outline, so don’t limit yourself to what is addressed here. Pay attention to the inspiration you receive as you study.

Record your impressions:

SCRIPTURES:

Romans 7

Law of Moses is fulfilled in Christ—Paul delights in the law of God after the inward man. (“Gross misunderstanding is frequently the result of reading Romans 7 without the invaluable assistance of the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible...It is to the modern seer, Joseph Smith, that we turn for profound insights—the restoration of plain and precious truths, either of content or of intent. **The Joseph Smith Translation stresses man's inability to effect righteousness without Christ.**” (Robert L. Millet, ed., *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 6: Acts to Revelation* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 50.))

1 KNOW ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the ^alaw hath dominion over a man **(only)** as long as he liveth? (The Law of Moses is like a deceased husband. Just as a woman is not being unfaithful to a deceased husband by remarrying, neither is modern Israel unfaithful to the law of Moses by transferring allegiance to the Savior.)

2 For the ^awoman which hath an ^bhusband is bound by the law to *her* husband ~~æ~~ **(only as)** long as he liveth; ~~but~~ **(for)** if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband.

3 So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. (“Paul was an absolute genius at devising illustrations to drive home his gospel teachings. Here he compares Israel's allegiance to the law of Moses with that of a wife to her husband. As long as her husband lives, a wife is bound to him, must obey his laws, and if she be with another, she is an adulteress. But when the husband dies, he can no longer direct her actions, and she is free to marry another; she can no longer be subject to him that is dead. “So with Israel and the law. As long as the law lived, and was therefore in force, Israel was married to it and required to obey its provisions. If she went after other gods, or followed other religions, it was as adultery. But now the law is fulfilled; it no longer lives; it has become dead in Christ; and Israel is married to another, even to Christ, whose gospel law must now be obeyed.” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 2: 253.))

4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become ^adead to the ^blaw **(The law of Moses was fulfilled in Christ.)** by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

5 ^aFor when we were in the flesh, the ^bmotions **(sufferings, afflictions)** of sins, which were ~~by~~ **(not according to)** the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto ^cdeath.

6 But now we are ^adelivered **(released, freed from)** from the law, ~~that being~~ ^bdead wherein we were

held(, being dead to the law,) that we should serve in newness of ^cspirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

7 What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? ^aGod forbid (may it not be). Nay, I had not known sin, but by the ^blaw: for I had not known ^clust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not ^dcovet. (lust for, set the heart upon)

8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. (In theology, **concupiscence** refers to the orientation, inclination or innate tendency of human beings to do evil.) For without the ^alaw sin *was* dead.

9 For (once) I was alive without (transgression of) the law ~~en~~: but when the commandment (of Christ) came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And (when I believed not) the commandment (of Christ which came), which *was ordained* to life, I found ~~to be~~ (it condemned me) unto ^adeath.

11 For sin, ^ataking occasion (having taken opportunity) by (, denied) the commandment, (and) deceived me, and by it ~~slew me~~ (I was slain).

12 ~~Wherefore~~ (Nevertheless, I found) the law ~~is~~ (to be) holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? ^aGod forbid (may it not be). But sin, that it might appear sin, ~~working death in me~~ by that which is good (working death in me); that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

14 For we know that the ^alaw (commandment) is spiritual: but (when I was under the law,) I ~~am~~ (was yet) ^bcarnal, ^csold (devoted to, a slave to) under sin.

15 (But now I am spiritual) for ^athat which I (am commanded to do, I) do (what I produce, achieve); (and that which I am commanded not to allow,) I ^ballow (know, understand) not: for what I ^cwould (know is not right), ~~that do I not~~ (I would not do); ~~but what~~ (for that which is sin,) I hate, that do I.

16 If then I do (not) that which I ^awould not (allow) (choose, intend, design), I consent unto the law that *it is* good; (and I am not condemned).

17 Now then it is no more I that ^ado (produce, work) ~~it~~ (sin), but (I seek to subdue that) sin ~~that~~ (which) dwelleth in me.

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my ^aflesh,) ^bdwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but ~~how~~ to ^cperform that which is good I find not(, only in Christ). (We can be righteous only with Jesus' help.)

19 For the ^agood that I ^bwould (intend, choose) (have done when under the law, I find not to be good; therefore,) I do (it) not: but the evil which I would not (do under the law, I find to be good), that I do.

20 Now if I do ^athat (through the assistance of Christ,) I would not (do under the law, I am not under the law, and) it is no more I that (I seek to) do ~~it~~ (wrong), but (to subdue) sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a (that under the) law, that, when I would do good, evil ~~is~~ (was) ^apresent with me.

22 For I ^adelight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 (And now) ~~But~~ I see another law(, even the commandment of Christ, and it is imprinted in my mind. But) ~~in~~ my members, (are) ^awarring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into ^bcaptivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (Brigham Young said: "When we receive the Gospel, a warfare commences immediately; Paul says, 'for I delight in the law of God, after the inward man: but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.' We have to fight continually, as it were, sword in hand to make the spirit master of the tabernacle, or the flesh subject to the law of the spirit. If this warfare is not diligently prosecuted, then the law of sin prevails, and in consequence of this some apostatize from the truth when crossing the plains, learn to swear instead of to pray, become high-minded and high tempered instead of learning to be patient and humble, and when they arrive in these valleys they feel so self-sufficient that they consider themselves the only ones that are really right; they are filled with darkness, the authority of the Spirit is not listened to, and the law of sin and death is the ruling power in their tabernacles. They

could once testify, by the revelations of Jesus Christ to them that Mormonism, or the Gospel is true; then the Spirit triumphed over the flesh, they walked in the light of God, and great was their joy, and brilliant their hope of immortality and eternal life. The rule of the flesh brings darkness and death, while, on the other hand, the rule of the Spirit brings light and life. When through the Gospel, the Spirit in man has so subdued the flesh that he can live without willful transgression, the Spirit of God unites with his spirit, they become congenial companions, and the mind and will of the Creator is thus transmitted to the creature.” (*Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 9: 288.)

24 (And if I subdue not the sin which is in me, but with the flesh serve the law of sin;) (Alexander B. Morrison said: “The cultivation of Christlike qualities is a lifelong struggle, demanding and relentless in calling forth the very best in us, stretching our souls. ‘Who has a harder battle than he who strives to conquer himself? And this must be our endeavour, in a word, to subdue ourselves, day by day to gain the mastery of self and make progress towards something better.’ (Thomas Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, translated by E. M. Blaiklock [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1979], p. 26.) The struggle for self-mastery is not a battle we fight only once. In one form or another, we must strive every day of our lives if we are to toil the pilgrim's path to perfection. Thorns, briars, and noxious weeds abound along the path. Yet He who stands with beckoning arms at the end of our journey gives us daily strength as we look to Him for guidance.” (*Feed My Sheep: Leadership Ideas for Latter-day Shepherds* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1992], 142-143.) O ^awretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? (Paul’s lament over the natural man in Romans 7 was a reflection of his life under the law of Moses before he became converted to Christianity (see JST Romans 7). The law of Moses gave Paul no power to control the natural man. But when he accepted the atonement of Jesus Christ, he was enabled to fight the natural man in ways he had never experienced before. Bruce Satterfield, lesson 36. Elder McConkie noted: “The fact is that the philosophical problems facing his Roman readers were wholly different from those with which we wrestle today. We do not have the Mosaic background, and are not concerned with how the law of Moses died in Christ; we are not confronted with the problem of rationalizing away those performances which had been drilled into Israel for fifteen hundred years; we are not faced with the problem of showing that the gospel grew out of the Mosaic order... Nonetheless, Paul's argument, given of old, does have worth and merit for us; it enables us to get an overall view of God's dealings with men; it helps us understand better what we do have in the revealed religion which has come to us. In effect Paul is saying that the law of Moses was good in its day, that God gave it for a purpose, but that now it is dead, and in place thereof God has given a higher law to which all men must now turn for salvation.” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 2: 257.) Jeffrey R. Holland said: “Too often we are also in servitude to our own bodies. Paul said, ‘I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity.’ (Romans 7:22-23.) I don't mean just the dramatic sins—the anger that leads to murder, or the passion that leads to sexual transgression, or the lust that leads to theft. There are more common kinds of bondage than these. The war in the body of someone who is a little overweight that makes him huff and puff by the time he gets to the top of the stairs, the war of the mattress on his back that he somehow cannot shake in the morning so he misses those precious and most inspirational hours of the day, the war of grooming and personal hygiene that could do much for us—all these are restrictive to our freedom if we don't control them.” (*However Long and Hard the Road* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 58.))

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord(, then). So ~~then~~ (That so) with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Romans 8

Law of Christ brings life and peace—Those adopted as sons of God become joint-heirs with Christ—God's elect are foreordained to eternal life—Christ makes intercession for man.

1 THERE is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who ^awalk not after the ^bflesh, but after the ^cSpirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me ^afree from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was ^aweak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful ^bflesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the ^aSpirit.

5 For they that are after the flesh do ^amind (watch, guard) the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. (Neal A. Maxwell said: "If one 'mind[s] the things of the flesh' (Rom. 8:5), he cannot 'have the mind of Christ' (1 Cor. 2:16) because his thought patterns are 'far from' Jesus, as are the desires or the 'intents of his heart' (Mosiah 5:13). Ironically, if the Master is a stranger to us, then we will merely end up serving other masters. The sovereignty of these other masters is real, even if it sometimes is subtle, for they do call their cadence. Actually, 'we are all enlisted' (Hymns, 1985, no. 250), if only in the ranks of the indifferent." ("Swallowed Up in the Will of the Father," Ensign, Nov. 1995, 22))

6 For to be ^acarnally minded *is* ^bdeath; but to be ^cspiritually minded *is* life and ^dpeace. (The Greek translated as "carnally minded" literally reads "the mind of the flesh.")

7 Because the ^acarnal mind *is* ^benmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. ('For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, 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.' (Mosiah 3:19))

8 So then they that are ^ain (after) the flesh cannot please God.

9 ^aBut ye are not ^bin (after) the flesh, but ^cin (after) the Spirit, if so be that the ^dSpirit of God ^edwell in you.

Now if any man have not the ^dSpirit of Christ, he is none of his. (Bruce R. McConkie said: "**In the full and eternal sense, even in the true church, only those saints who enjoy the companionship of the Spirit belong to the Lord; they are the only ones who are the Lord's people in the sense of gaining salvation.**" (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 286.)

Joseph Smith said: "...if any man has not the testimony of Jesus or the Spirit of God, 'he is none of his' [Rom. 8:9], namely Christ's. And if not his, he must be damned." (Kent P. Jackson, comp. and ed., *Joseph Smith's Commentary on the Bible* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1994], 227.))

10 And if ^aChrist *be* in you, (though) ^bthe body *is* ~~dead~~ (shall die) because of sin; ~~but~~ (yet) the Spirit *is* life because of ^crighteousness.

11 ~~But~~ (And) if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also ^aquicken (make alive) your ^bmortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

13 For if ye live after the flesh, (unto sin,) ye ^ashall die (are at the point of withering, dying): but if ye through the Spirit do ^bmortify (put to dead, subdue) the deeds of the body, ye shall live (unto Christ).

("Mortify" is a simple Greek word meaning 'put to death,' so Paul is asking the Roman saints to destroy their evil works as a condition of living in God's kingdom." (Richard L. Anderson, *Understanding Paul* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983], 187 - 188.))

14 For as many as are ^aled by the ^bSpirit of God, they are the ^csons of God. ("In one sense, the sons of

God are the spirit offspring of the Father, the ones who ‘shouted for joy’ when ‘the foundations of the earth’ were laid. (Job 38:1-7.) But in a more particular and express sense, they are the ones who accept Christ and his laws and press forward in devotion to truth and righteousness, living ‘by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God’ (D. & C. 84:44), until they become new creatures of the Holy Ghost and are thus spiritually begotten of God. They become by adoption ‘the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters’ (Mosiah 5:7), and also, through him, they are begotten sons and daughters unto his Father. (D. & C. 76:22-24.) “Those who receive the gospel and join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have power given them to become the sons of God. (D. & C. 11:30; 35:2; 39:1-6; 45:8; John 1:12.) Sonship does not come from church membership alone, but admission into the Church opens the door to such high status, if it is followed by continued faith and devotion. (Rom. 8:14-18; Gal. 3:26-29; 4:1-7.)” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], 745.))

15 For ye have not received the spirit of ^abondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of ^badoption, whereby we cry, Abba, (**Poppa, Daddy**) Father. (The adopted sons [and daughters] in the family of the Eternal Father are privileged to address him who is the Ruler of the universe in this intimate way. DNTC, 2:261)

16 The Spirit itself beareth ^awitness with our ^bspirit, that we are the ^cchildren of God:

17 And if children, then heirs; ^aheirs of God, and joint-heirs (Bruce R. McConkie: A joint-heir is one who inherits equally with all other heirs including the Chief Heir who is the Son. Each joint-heir has an equal and an undivided portion of the whole of everything. If one knows all things, so do all others. If one has all power, so do all those who inherit jointly with him. If the universe belongs to one, so it does equally to the total of all upon whom the joint inheritances are bestowed. MD, 395.) with Christ; if so be that we ^bsuffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. (We can become equals with Christ.

Joseph Smith taught that this requires the full ordinances of the gospel: “All men who become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ will have to receive the fulness of the ordinances of his kingdom; and those who will not receive all the ordinances will come short of the fullness of that glory, if they do not lose the whole.” Teachings, p. 309. Joseph Smith also taught that to be an heir is to become as God: “but they shall be heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. What is it? To inherit the same power, the same glory and the same exaltation, until you arrive at the station of a God, and ascend the throne of eternal power, the same as those who have gone before.” Teachings, p. 347. This adoption ought to be looked for with great anticipation by every one of God’s children for all have lost their heirship. But through the atonement of Jesus Christ all may be heirs again. When fully understood, one would suffer much to receive heirship with God. D&C 76: These are they who are the sons of God. D&C 84:33-40 33

For whoso is ^afaithful unto the obtaining these two ^bpriesthoods of which I have spoken, and the ^cmagnifying their calling, are ^dsanctified by the Spirit unto the ^erenewing of their bodies. 34 They become the ^asons of Moses and of Aaron and the ^bseed of ^cAbraham, and the church and kingdom, and the ^delect of God. 35 And also all they who receive this priesthood ^areceive me, saith the Lord; 36 For he that receiveth my servants ^areceiveth me; 37 And he that ^areceiveth me receiveth my Father; 38 And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father’s ^akingdom; therefore ^ball that my Father hath shall be given unto him. 39 And this is according to the ^aoath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood. 40 Therefore, all those who receive the ^apriesthood, receive this ^boath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved. Latter-day Saints regard Jesus Christ as the firstborn spirit child of God the Father and the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. Because of this priority, he is the natural heir of the Father. Through strict obedience to the Father’s will, progressing from grace to grace by obeying the gospel and its ordinances and making the infinite Atonement, Jesus became the Savior of all mankind and also heir to all that the Father has. Those who accept Jesus Christ as their redeemer, repent of their sins, obey the ordinances of the gospel, and live in willing obedience with the Holy Spirit as their guide, can also become heirs of God and join-heirs with Jesus Christ. In the eternities, they can inherit the same truth, power, wisdom, glory, and exaltation possessed by God the Father and by the Son. Encyclopedia of Mormonism, 2:583)

18 For I reckon that the ^asufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* (named) with the ^bglory which shall be revealed ^cin us (to us). (Our suffering is nothing compared to the reward.)

19 For the ^aearnest expectation (eager hope) of the ^bcreature (creation, material universe) waiteth for the ^cmanifestation (revelation) of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to ^avanity (tribulation), not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* (it) in hope,

21 Because the ^acreature (creation, material universe) itself also shall be ^bdelivered from the bondage of ^ccorruption into the glorious ^dliberty of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation ^agroaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, ^awhich (who) have the ^bfirstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the ^cadoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

24 For we are saved by ^ahope: but hope that is ^bseen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? (This adoption applies to all mankind, not just to the Jews. Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained: "By the law of adoption those who receive the gospel and obey its laws, no matter what their literal blood lineage may have been, are adopted into the lineage of Abraham. (Abra. 2: 9-11) "The effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile," the Prophet says, "is to purge out the old blood, and make him actually of the seed of Abraham." Such a person has "a new creation by the Holy Ghost." (*Teachings*, pp. 149-150.) Those who magnify their callings in the Melchizedek priesthood are promised that they will be "sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies. They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham." (D. & C. 84:33-34) Indeed, the faithful are adopted to the family of Christ; they become "the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters"; they are "spiritually begotten," for their "hearts are changed through faith on his name," thus being "born of him," becoming "his sons and his daughters." (Mosiah 5:7.) Paul explained the doctrine of adoption by saying, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," because they receive "the Spirit of adoption," being or becoming Israelites, "to whom pertaineth the adoption." (Rom. 8:14-24; 9:4; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5.)" MD, p. 9)

25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then do we* with patience (we do) wait for *it*.

26 Likewise the Spirit also ^ahelpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should ^bpray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh ^cintercession for us with ^dgroanings (sighings) which cannot be uttered. (Gene R. Cook said: "When you are attempting to obtain answers to your prayers and to be directed by the Lord, you need to learn to follow the promptings of the Spirit. Those promptings will help you know what the Lord requires of you as you seek the blessing. They will help you know what to pray for and where to go from there. The Spirit's promptings will also tell you as you go along how much more faith you may need to exercise in order to accomplish your desire. You may have promptings telling you what you need to repent of, how to draw closer to the Lord, specific steps toward the blessing, and so forth. In sum, the Lord will guide you through the experience if you will seek to follow the promptings he gives you." (*Receiving Answers to Our Prayers* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1996], 70.))

27 And he that ^asearcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh ^bintercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.

28 And we know that all things work together for ^agood to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his purpose*. (Neal A. Maxwell said: "The more we contemplate God's character, the more we understand that the God who watches over Israel does not sleep, nor does he slumber (see Psalm 121:4). If there are what appear to us to be ambiguities and perplexities, God has, long beforehand, taken all these into account. He has made 'ample provision' for His purposes to be achieved fully. We will not be exempted from these uncertainties, however, nor will we always see the end from the beginning. But knowing adequately of the divine character and plans, we can proceed anyway, for 'we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose' (Romans 8:28).") (*Lord, Increase Our Faith* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1994],

20.))

29 ^aFor (him) whom he did ^bforeknow, he also ^cdid predestinate (appointed beforehand, foreordained) ^dto be conformed to (to have the same form as) the (his own) ^eimage of his Son, that he might be the ^ffirstborn among many brethren. (“It is true that the words predestinate and predestinated are found in the King James translation of some of Paul’s writings (Rom. 8:29-30; Eph. 1:5, 11), but Biblical revisions use the words foreordain and foreordained, which more accurately convey Paul’s views. However, even as the King James Version renders the passages, there is no intimation of any compulsion or denial of free agency, for one of the dictionary definitions of foreordination is predestination, meaning the prior appointment (in pre-existence) of particular persons to perform designated labors or gain particular rewards.” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed., pp. 588-589.))

30 Moreover (him) whom he ^adid predestinate (appointed beforehand, foreordained), ~~them~~ (him) he also called: and (him) whom he called, ~~them~~ (him) he also justified (sanctified): and (him) whom he justified (sanctified), ~~them~~ (him) he also glorified. (“...about this matter of foreordination. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that ‘every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of the world was ordained to that very purpose in the Grand Council of heaven before this world was’ (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1938], p. 365). So likewise declared the Apostle Paul, ‘For whom he did foreknow them he also called’ (Romans 8:29-30). But do not misunderstand that such a calling and such foreordination pre-determine what you must do. A prophet on this western continent has spoken plainly on this subject, ‘Being called and prepared from the foundation of the world according to the foreknowledge of God, on account of their exceeding faith and good works; in the first place being left to choose good or evil’ (Alma 13:3). This last passage makes the others preceding more understandable. God may have called and chosen men in the spirit world or in their first estate to do a certain work, but whether they will accept that calling here and magnify it by faithful service and good works while in mortality is a matter in which it is their right and privilege to exercise their free agency to choose good or evil.” (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, edited by Clyde J. Williams [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 31.))

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can* ^a*be* (prevail) against us? (Jeffrey R. Holland said: “Christ and His angels and His prophets forever labor to buoy up our spirits, steady our nerves, calm our hearts, send us forth with renewed strength and resolute hope. They wish all to know that ‘if God be for us, who can be against us?’ In the world we shall have tribulation, but we are to be of good cheer. Christ has overcome the world.” (“The Peaceable Things of the Kingdom,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 83))

32 He that spared not his own ^aSon, but ^bdelivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us ^call things?

33 Who shall ^alay any thing to the charge of God’s elect (accuse God’s elect)? *It is* God that justifieth.

34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh ^aintercession for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the ^alove of Christ? *shall* ^btribulation, or distress, or ^cpersecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are ^akilled all the day long; we are accounted as ^bsheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are ^amore (abundantly, victorious) than ^bconquerors through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to ^aseparate us from the ^blove of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 9

(Bruce R. McConkie: The greatest and most important talent or capacity that any of the spirit children of the Father could gain is the talent of spirituality. Most of those who gained this talent were chosen, before they were born, to come to earth as members of the house of Israel. They were foreordained to receive the blessings that the Lord promised to Abraham and to his seed in all their generations. This foreordination is an election... Though all mankind may be saved by obedience, some find it easier to believe and obey than others. Hence the concept, taught by Jesus, that his sheep know his voice and will not follow the dissident voices of the world. A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, 512-13)

How the law of election (foreordination) operates—Israel chosen (foreordained) to receive the adoption, the covenants, the promises, and the blessings of the gospel; yet they are not all Israel, which are of Israel—They must seek their blessings by faith—The Gentiles also attain to righteousness and salvation by faith. (Bruce R. McConkie said: “Paul here begins to comment about foreordination or predestination... Paul simply comments about matters already known to and understood by his readers. He does not define or explain the doctrines in any detail. Unfortunately his comments have given rise to major misconceptions in the minds of sectarians who do not have the doctrinal and spiritual background to know what the Apostle means in the brief allusions he makes to the great gospel truths involved. Since the true doctrines of the gospel have been revealed anew in this day, the Latter-day Saints find themselves in a position comparable to that of the Roman Saints; they can understand Paul's teachings because they already know the doctrinal concepts to which he is alluding.” (Bruce R. McConkie, Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 2: 267) Joseph Smith said: **“The whole of the chapter (Rom. 9) had reference to the Priesthood and the house of Israel; and unconditional election of individuals to eternal life was not taught by the Apostles. God did elect or predestinate, that all those who would be saved, should be saved in Christ Jesus, and through obedience to the Gospel; but He passes over no man’s sins, but visits them with correction, and if His children will not repent of their sins He will discard them.”** (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 189))

1 I SAY the truth in Christ, I ^alie not, my ^bconscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

3 (^aFor (once) I could wish (have wished) that myself were ^baccursed from Christ) for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

4 Who are Israelites; ~~to~~ (of) whom *pertaineth* (are) the ^aadoption, and the glory, and the ^bcovenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises (which are made unto the fathers); (“Israel the chosen seed; Israel the Lord's people; Israel the only nation since Abraham that had worshipped Jehovah; Israel the children of the prophets; Israel who had been cursed and scattered for her sins; Israel in whose veins believing blood flows—the Israel of God shall be gathered, and fed, and nurtured, and saved, in the last days! Let there be no misunderstanding about this; salvation is of the Jews, and if there are believing Gentiles, they will be adopted into the believing family and inherit with the chosen seed. ‘And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.’ (Rom. 11:26-27.) But sadly: ‘They are not all Israel, which are of Israel’ (Rom. 9:6), and only those who turn to their God and accept him as the Promised Messiah shall inherit with the chosen seed either in time or in eternity.” (*The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979-1981], 4: 332.))

5 ~~Whose are the fathers~~, and of whom as concerning the ^aflesh Christ *came* (was), who is (God) over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

6 Not as though the word of God ^ahath taken none effect (has been fruitless, ineffectual). For they are

not all Israel, which are of ^bIsrael:

7 ^aNeither, because they are ~~the seed~~ (all children) of Abraham, *are they all children* (the seed): but, In ^bIsaac shall thy seed be called.

8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the ^achildren of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. (The righteous are counted as the seed of Abraham.)

9 For this *is* the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara(h) shall have a ^ason.

10 And not only ~~this~~ (Sarah); but when ^aRebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac;

11 (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to ^aelection might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) (“**This election to a chosen lineage is based on pre-existent worthiness and is thus made 'according to the foreknowledge of God.'** (1 Pet. 1:2.) Those so grouped together during their mortal probation have more abundant opportunities to make and keep the covenants of salvation, a right which they earned by pre-existent devotion to the cause of righteousness. As part of this election, Abraham and others of the noble and great spirits were chosen before they were born for the particular missions assigned them in this life. (Abra. 3:22-24; Rom. 9.)” (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 2: 274.) Harold B. Lee: Those born to the lineage of Jacob, who was later to be called Israel, and his posterity, who were known as the children of Israel, were born into the most illustrious lineage of any of those who came upon the earth as mortal beings. All these rewards were seemingly promised, or foreordained, before the world was. Surely these matters must have been determined by the kind of lives we had lived in that premortal spirit world. Some may question these assumptions, but at the same time they will accept without any question the belief that each one of us will be judged when we leave this earth according to his or her deeds during our lives here in mortality. Isn't it just as reasonable to believe that what we have received here in this earth life was given to each of us according to the merits of our conduct before we came here?)

12 It was said unto her, The ^aelder shall serve the younger.

13 As it is written, Jacob have I ^aloved, but Esau have I hated. (In Malachi 1:3 where Paul is quoting from, the Hebrew word translated to hate carried many shades of meaning including rejection, strong displeasure, or very commonly loving less than. The important point in Paul's discussion is that this acceptance of Jacob and rejection of Esau was on the basis of personal righteousness, not on some arbitrary judgment. God chose Jacob over Esau while the two were yet in Rebecca's womb and before either, as far as the works of this life are concerned, had earned any preferential status. Why? It is a pure matter of pre-existence. Jacob was coming into the world with greater spiritual capacity than Esau; he was foreordained to a special work; he was elected to serve in a chosen capacity. Then through the lineage of Jacob, God sent those valiant spirits, those noble and great ones, who in his infinite wisdom and foreknowledge he knew would be inclined to serve him. Through Esau came those spirits of lesser valiance and devotion. Hence, in the very nature of things, many of Jacob's seed were righteous in this life, and many of Esau's were wicked, causing Malachi to say in the Lord's name, some fifteen hundred years later, that God loved the house of Jacob and hated the house of Esau. DNTC, 2:277)

14 What shall we say then? *Is there* ^aunrighteousness with God? (Is foreordination unfair?) ^bGod forbid (may it not be).

15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have ^acompassion on whom I will have compassion.

16 So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth ^amercy.

17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same ^apurpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

18 Therefore hath he ^amercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he ^bhardeneth. (leaves to stubbornness, hardness)

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that ^areplieth against (contradictest, disputest) God? Shall the thing

formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou ^bmade me thus?

21 Hath not the ^apotter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

22 *What* if God, willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to ^adestruction:

23 And that he might make known the ^ariches of his ^bglory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? (Bruce R. McConkie said: “He says also of members of the Church that God ‘hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love,’ and that we were foreordained to become the children of Jesus Christ by adoption, thus gaining a ‘forgiveness of sins’ in this life and an inheritance of eternal glory in the life to come. (Eph. 1:7.)” (“God Foreordains His Prophets and His People,” *Ensign*, May 1974, 73))

25 As he saith also in ^aOsee, (Hosea) I will call them my people, which were not my ^bpeople; and her beloved, which was not beloved.

26 And it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye *are* not my people; there shall they be called the ^achildren (sons) of the living God.

27 ^aEsaias (Isaiah) also crieth concerning Israel, Though the ^bnumber of the children of ^cIsrael be as the sand of the sea, a ^dremnant shall be saved:

28 For he will finish the work, and cut *it* short in ^arighteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.

29 And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of ^aSabaoth (Hosts) had left us a ^bseed, (posterity) we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. (Paul is teaching the Jews that being a Jew is not enough to receive exaltation (i.e. the promises of Abraham). He has to prove to them two things: 1) that the Gentiles can be saved, and 2) that not all the Jews will be saved. He does this using three scriptural passages: 1) Hosea taught that the Gentiles (those ‘which were not my people’) will ‘be called the children of the living God’ (v. 25-26). 2) Isaiah taught that only a ‘remnant [of Israel] shall be saved’—not all of them (v. 27). 3) Again, Isaiah taught that most of Israel was as wicked as Sodom and Gomorrah, but the Lord had preserved a small portion of Israel who were worthy of the blessings as the seed of Abraham (v. 29).)

30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the ^arighteousness which is of faith.

31 But ^aIsrael, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

32 ^aWherefore (Why)? ~~Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they~~ ^bstumbled at that stumblingstone(, not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law);

33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a ^astumblingstone and ^brock of ^coffence: (The Jews believed that only a person cursed of God would be crucified. They did not believe that their Messiah would be crucified.) and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Romans 10

Salvation comes through righteousness to those who believe in Christ—Faith comes by hearing the gospel taught by legal administrators sent of God.

1 BRETHREN, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be ^asaved.

2 For I bear them record that they have a ^azeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For they being ignorant of God’s ^arighteousness, and ^bgoing (desiring, endeavoring) about to establish their own righteousness, have not ^csubmitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ *is* the ^aend of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

6 But the ^arighteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*.)

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (Joseph Fielding Smith said: “There are throughout the Christian world various opinions regarding what is necessary to bring about the salvation of men. Some there are who have accepted very literally, but without comprehending the meaning of it, the expression that was uttered by Paul to the Ephesians: ‘For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.’ “Those who accept that view as literally as it is recorded, without any reference to the context, disregard or reject the epistle of James which, apparently to them teaches a very different doctrine, for James says this: ‘Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?’ “And so the controversy has been going on since the days of the Reformation, if not before, in regard to these scriptures. Some men contending for the doctrine of James and some for the doctrine of Paul, both misunderstanding what Paul has written and what James has written, for in reality there is no conflict. “The world is full of good, honest people who believe that all that is necessary for one to do in order to be saved is to confess the name of Jesus Christ with their lips. A professed minister of the gospel once told me that if the entire Bible were lost with the exception of one passage, that one verse would be enough to save the world. It is as follows: ‘If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.’ “Now, of course, this is a very extreme view. It would not be enough to save the world for the very good reason that the Lord has said unto us that we are to live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God, and we are, as I have read to you, under the necessity of keeping his commandments. “I desire to point out wherein there is no conflict whatever in the teachings of these two apostles of old; that Paul taught the doctrine that was taught by James; and James was in full accord with the doctrine that was taught by Paul—the fact being that thy were approaching the subject from different angles. “Paul was dealing with the class of people who believed that a man could not be saved unless he subscribed to the law of Moses, that a man was under the necessity more or less of saving himself, and who denied the full power of the atonement of Jesus Christ. “James on the other hand was defending the necessity of works, counteracting the idea which prevailed among others, who professed faith in Christ, that if they had faith it was all-sufficient. Therefore they approached this subject from different viewpoints, and each of them taught the truth.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 2: 306.)

10 For with the ^aheart man ^bbelieveth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto ^csalvation. (Charles W. Penrose said: “This is the key to the whole matter. The faith that saves is the faith that leads to obedience, which is ‘better than sacrifice;’ that obedience must be given to ‘every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’ Belief, prayer, devotional exercises, of themselves, will not prepare man for the presence and society of his Maker. To dwell with him, man must be assimilated to his likeness. This can be effected only by compliance with his commands.” (*Rays of Living Light from the Doctrines of Christ* [Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1954], 109.)

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12 For there is no ^adifference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is ^brich unto all

that ^ccall upon him.

13 For whosoever shall ^acall upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Bruce R. McConkie said: “Prayer is the way ordained of God whereby mortal men can converse, by the power of the Spirit, with their Immortal Father. As a heaven-sent boon, it is offered to all without money and without price. It is a free gift. Those who receive the gift, who learn thereby how to communicate with their Maker, and who conform in full to the true law of prayer are on the path leading to the celestial kingdom of heaven. ‘For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ (Romans 10:13.) They are the ones for whom prayer becomes in the full and true sense a gift of the Spirit because they learn to pray by the power of the Spirit.” (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 378.))

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not ^abelieved? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a ^bpreacher?

15 And how shall they ^apreach, except they be ^bsent? as it is written, How beautiful are the ^cfeet of them that preach the ^dgospel of ^epeace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

16 But they have not all ^aobeyed the gospel. For Esaias (Isaiah) saith, Lord, who hath ^bbelieved our report?

17 So then ^afaith cometh by ^bhearing, and hearing by the word of God. (“President Spencer W. Kimball once pled: ‘Stake presidents, bishops, and branch presidents, please take a particular interest in improving the quality of teaching in the Church. ... I fear,’ he said, ‘that all too often many of our members come to church, sit through a class or a meeting, and ... then return home having been largely [uninspired]. It is especially unfortunate when this happens at a time ... of stress, temptation, or crisis [in their life]. We all need to be touched and nurtured by the Spirit,’ he said, ‘and effective teaching is one of the most important ways this can happen. We often do vigorous work,’ President Kimball concluded, ‘to get members to come to Church but then do not adequately watch over what they receive when they do come.’ On this subject President Hinckley himself has said, ‘Effective teaching is the very essence of leadership in the Church.’ May I repeat that. ‘Effective teaching is the very essence of leadership in the Church. Eternal life,’ President Hinckley continued, ‘will come only as men and women are taught with such effectiveness that they change and discipline their lives. They cannot be coerced into righteousness or into heaven. They must be led, and that means teaching.’” (“A Teacher Come from God,” Ensign, May 1998, 25-26))

18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their ^awords unto the ends of the ^bworld.

19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First (Now) Moses saith, I will provoke you to ^ajealousy by *them that are* no people, *and* by a foolish nation I will anger you.

20 But ^aEsaias (Isaiah) is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that ^bsought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

21 But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a ^adisobedient and ^bgainsaying (contradicting, opposing) people.

Romans 11

(Richard G. Scott: Keeping the covenants is not hard when you do it willingly with a “broken heart and a contrite spirit.” When obeyed, those covenants bring happiness and joy. They give purpose to life. Difficulty comes when agency is used to make choices that are inconsistent with those covenants. Study the things you do in your discretionary time, that time you are free to control. Do you find that it is centered in those things that are of highest priority and of greatest importance? Or do you unconsciously, consistently fill it with trivia and activities that are not of enduring value nor help you accomplish the purpose for which you came to earth? Think of the long view of life, not just what’s

going to happen today or tomorrow. *Don't give up what you most want in life for something you think you want now.* CR Apr 1997, 78-79)

Israel was chosen (foreordained) according to the election of grace—But some hardened their hearts against it—The Gentiles are grafted into the house of Israel—The gospel goes preferentially to the Gentiles until the fulness of the Gentiles comes in.

1 I SAY then, Hath God cast away his people? ^aGod forbid. (May it not be) For I also am an ^bIsraelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. (After the 10 tribes were sacked and taken north by the Assyrians (circa 722 BC), the two tribes left over were Judah and Benjamin. These two tribes comprised the kingdom of Judah. Most of the Jews in Paul's day would have descended from one of these two tribes. There would have been a few descendants of other tribes as well, particularly Levi, Ephraim, and Manasseh (1 Chron. 9:2-3). Regardless of the tribe, members of the house of Israel considered themselves "Jews." Hence, Paul referred to himself as 'a Jew of Tarsus' (Acts 21:39) even though he was more specifically of the tribe of Benjamin. His Israelite descent is important to demonstrate his loyalty to the Jews in spite of his teachings that demonstrate the apostasy of his people (v. 8-10, 17, 25).)

2 God hath not cast away his ^apeople which he ^bforeknew. ^cWot (Know) ye not what the Scripture saith of ^dElias (Elijah)? how he maketh ~~intercession~~ (complaint) to God against Israel, saying,

3 Lord, they have ^akilled thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am ^bleft alone, and they seek my life.

4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have ^areserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image of Baal*.

5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the ^aelection of grace. (We learn from Abraham 2:22, that in the premortal existence, the spirit offspring of God were not all the same. Abraham saw that there were both noble and great and less than noble and great spirits in the premortal realm. President Joseph Fielding Smith explained: "The spirits of men had their free agency, some were greater than others, and from among them the Father called and foreordained his prophets and rulers. Jeremiah and Abraham were two of them. . . . The spirits of men were not equal. They may have had an equal start, and we know they were all innocent in the beginning; but the right of free agency which was given to them enabled some to outstrip others, and thus, through the eons of immortal existence, to become more intelligent, more faithful, for they were free to act for themselves, to think for themselves, to receive the truth or rebel against it." Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:59. Those who were more valiant in the premortal world earned certain blessings in mortality. One of the major blessings they earned is the right to have access to the gospel in mortality. To ensure this right, the valiant of God's spirit children were foreordained to be born into a particular lineage: the House of Israel. "There was a group of tested, tried and proven souls before they were born into the world," Elder Melvin J. Ballard taught. "And the Lord provided a lineage for them. That lineage is the House of Israel, the lineage of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their posterity. Through this lineage were to come the true and tried souls that had demonstrated their righteousness in the spirit world before they came here. We came through that lineage. Our particular branch is the House of Joseph through his son Ephraim. That is the group from whence shall come the majority of the candidates for celestial glory." Melvin J. Ballard, *Three Degrees of Glory*, p. 20. Likewise, President Harold B. Lee taught: "It would seem very clear, then, that those born to the lineage of Jacob, who was later to be called Israel, and his posterity, who were known as the children of Israel, were born into the most illustrious lineage of any of those who came upon the earth as mortal beings. All these rewards were seemingly promised, or foreordained, before the world was. Surely these matters must have been determined by the kind of lives we had lived in that premortal spirit world. Some may question these assumptions, but at the same time they will accept without any question the belief that each one of us will be judged when we leave this earth according to his or her deeds during our lives here in mortality. Isn't it just as reasonable to believe

that what we have received here in this earth [life] was given to each of us according to the merits of our conduct before we came here?" Understanding Who We Are Brings Self Respect, Ensign, Jan 1974, p. 4-5. As members of the House of Israel, the valiant were rightful heirs of the gospel. Of this Elder McConkie stated: "Israel is an eternal people. Members of that chosen race first gained their inheritance with the faithful in the pre-mortal life. Israel was a distinct people in pre-existence. Many of the valiant and noble spirits in that first estate were chosen, elected, and foreordained to be born into the family of Jacob, so as to be natural heirs of all of the blessings of the gospel." DNTC, 2:284. This is the election of grace Paul spoke of. Elder McConkie explained further: "This election of grace is a very fundamental, logical, and important part of God's dealings with men through the ages. To bring to pass the salvation of the greatest possible number of his spirit children the Lord, in general, sends the most righteous and worthy spirits to earth through the lineage of Abraham and Jacob. This course is a manifestation of his grace or in other words his love, mercy, and condescension toward his children. "This election to a chosen lineage is based on pre-existent worthiness and is thus made "according to the foreknowledge of God." (1 Pet. 1:2.) Those so grouped together during their mortal probation have more abundant opportunities to make and keep the covenants of salvation, a right which they earned by pre-existent devotion to the cause of righteousness. As part of this election, Abraham and others of the noble and great spirits were chosen before they were born for the particular missions assigned them in this life. (Abra. 3:22-24; Rom. 9.) "As with every basic doctrine of the gospel, the Lord's system of election based on pre-existent faithfulness has been changed and perverted by an apostate Christendom. So absurd have been the false conclusions reached in this field that millions of sincere though deceived persons have devoutly believed that in accordance with the divine will men were pre-destined to receive salvation or damnation which no act on their part could change. (*Teachings*, p. 189.) "Actually, if the full blessings of salvation are to follow, the doctrine of election must operate twice. First, righteous spirits are elected or chosen to come to mortality as heirs of special blessings. Then, they must be called and elected again in this life, an occurrence which takes place when they join the true Church. (D. & C. 53:1.) Finally, in order to reap eternal salvation, they must press forward in obedient devotion to the truth until they make their "calling and election sure" (2 Pet. 1), that is, are "sealed up unto eternal life." (D. & C. 131:5.) MD, p. 216 The LDS Bible Dictionary states that the election of grace "has reference to one's situation in mortality; that is, being born at a time, at a place, and in circumstances where one will come in favorable contact with the gospel. This election took place in the premortal existence." Election LDS Bible Dictionary, p. 662-3.)

6 And if by ^agrace, then *is it* no more of ^bworks: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. (Neal A. Maxwell said: "The foreseeing of those who will accept the gospel in mortality, gladly and with alacrity, is based upon their parallel responsiveness in the premortal world. No wonder the Lord could say, as he did to Jeremiah, 'Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; ... and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations' (Jer. 1:5). Paul, when writing to the Saints in Rome, said, 'God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew' (Rom. 11:2). Paul also said of God that 'he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world' (Eph. 1:4). "The Lord, who was able to say to his disciples, 'Cast the net on the right side of the ship' (John 21:6), knew beforehand that there was a multitude of fishes there. If he knew beforehand the movements and whereabouts of fishes in the little Sea of Tiberias, should it offend us that he knows beforehand which mortals will come into the gospel net? "It does no violence even to our frail human logic to observe that there cannot be a grand plan of salvation for all mankind, unless there is also a plan for each individual. The salvational sum will reflect all its parts. "Once the believer acknowledges that the past, present, and future are before God simultaneously—even though we do not understand how—then the doctrine of foreordination may be seen somewhat more clearly." ("A More Determined Discipleship," *Ensign*, Feb. 1979, 71))

7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which ~~he seeketh~~ (they seek) for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest ^awere blinded (became callous)

8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of ^aslumber, (deep sleep, stupor) eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not ^bhear;) unto this day.

9 And David saith, Let their table be made a ^asnare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a ^brecompence (retribution, requital) unto them:

10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? ^aGod forbid (may it not be): but *rather* through their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to ^bjealousy.

12 Now if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the ^adiminishing (default, failure) of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?

13 For I speak to you ^aGentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I ^bmagnify mine office:

14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are* my flesh, and might save some of them.

15 For if the casting away of them ~~be~~ (is) the ^areconciling of the world, what *shall* the ~~receiving~~ (restoring) of them *be*, but life from the dead?

16 For if the firstfruit *be* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*: and if the ^aroot *be* holy, so *are* the branches.

17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive ^atree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root (Christ is the root) and fatness of the olive tree; (The Gentiles that join the Church shall obtain all of the blessings that the faithful members of the house of Israel will receive – all that the Father has.)

18 ^aBoast not against the branches. ~~But if thou boast,~~ (for) thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

19 (For if thou boast,) Thou wilt say ~~then,~~ The branches were broken off, that ~~I~~ (we) might be grafted in.

20 Well; because of ^aunbelief they were ^bbroken off, and thou standest by ^cfaith. Be not highminded, but ^dfear:

21 For if God spared not the ^anatural branches, *take heed* lest he also ^bspare not thee. (“In Paul’s allegory, the cultivated olive (*kallielaios*) is Israel, from which some of the branches were broken off (usually understood as Jews who rejected Christ, and so lost their place as God’s people), while shoots of the wild olive (*agrielaos*) were grafted in their place (interpreted as the inclusion of Gentiles in the people of God). Eventually, however, God is able to graft the natural branches back into their own stock (Jews who ‘do not persist in their unbelief’ will be restored, and so ‘all Israel will be saved’). The stock remains the same; it is only in the branches that changes occur. Similarly Israel, the people of God, is a continuous entity (cf. the Old Testament use of the olive as a symbol for Israel), but its membership is subject both to the exclusion of native Israelites and the inclusion of the alien stock of Gentile believers.” (Stephen D. Ricks and John W. Welch, eds., *The Allegory of the Olive Tree: The Olive, the Bible, and Jacob 5* [Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book Co., Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1994], 467.) “There is no finer statement in all of holy writ as to God’s infinite love and patience with Israel than the allegory of Zenos (Jacob 5). Jacob, the brother of Nephi, delivered this metaphorical marvel—unfolded this ‘mystery’ (see Romans 11:25; 16:25; Ephesians 3:3)—to his people as a means of dramatizing Jehovah’s tender regard for his chosen people over the millennia of their existence. ‘How merciful is our God unto us,’ Jacob exclaimed in retrospect, ‘for he remembereth the house of Israel, both roots and branches; and he stretches forth his hands unto them all the day long.’ In pleading fashion, Jacob applied the symbolism of the allegory and encouraged his people to ‘cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you’ (Jacob 6:4-5). **It may well be that Paul the apostle was drawing upon his knowledge of the allegory of Zenos when he wrote his epistle to the Saints at Rome.**” Robert L. Millet, *The Power of the Word: Saving Doctrines from the Book of Mormon* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1994], 30.) “It takes little or no imagination to see a connection between Jacob 5 and Romans 11:8-24. Both texts use the olive tree to explain God’s salvation of Israel, and in both texts the metaphor of grafting is central...Both of these passages use the metaphor of grafting to discuss the same theme, the restoration of Israel. As part of that discussion, both Romans and Jacob use the idea of grafting as

part of a discussion of the remnant of Israel reserved to God, a discussion that answers the question of whether Israel's apostasy means that she has been rejected. And both passages focus on the operation of grace in the work of Israel's salvation. That there is a connection between these two passages of scripture is obvious.” (James E. Faulconer, *The Allegory of the Olive Tree: The Olive, the Bible, and Jacob 5*, ed. by Stephen D. Ricks and John W. Welch, [Salt Lake City and Provo: Deseret Book Co., Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1994], 347.) ‘But there is a possibility that a man may fall from grace and depart from the living God; Therefore let the church take heed and pray always, lest they fall into temptation.’ D&C 20:32 ‘Paul’s letters also make it clear that ‘the elect’ can fall from grace and thus lose their reward. (See Rom. 11:17–21.) In fact, Paul claimed no guarantee of his own salvation; one of his favorite themes was the necessity of holding ‘stedfast unto the end.’ (Heb. 3:14; see also 1 Cor. 9:27.) Such constant exhortations to righteousness would hardly seem necessary if he had believed that human beings did not help determine their own eternal destinies by their conduct during mortality. “From these scriptures, it seems clear that Paul did not believe in predestination—at least as a Calvinist defines the term.” (Eldon R. Taylor, “I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1990, 30))

22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again.

24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural *branches*, be graffed into their own olive tree?

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own ^aconceits; that ^bblindness (**callousness**) in part is happened to Israel, until the ^cfulness of the ^dGentiles be come in. (Joseph Fielding Smith said: “**We may observe that the times of the Gentiles are rapidly nearing their close by watching the signs of the times.** One of the first signs that the days of the Gentiles are nearing their close was given when Palestine was turned over to Great Britain and a Jewish state proclaimed. Another indication is the fact that the Jews are beginning to believe in Christ. They have not yet reached the point where they are willing to receive him as their Redeemer, and they will not, only here and there an individual, until Christ comes as their Deliverer. During the past one hundred years, however, there has come a wonderful change in belief and attitude on the part of our Jewish brethren towards Jesus Christ. One hundred years ago, they had no good words to say about him, but now many of their influential men accept him as one of their prophets. A remarkable thing about this is that Nephi prophesied and said: ‘And it shall come to pass that the Jews which are scattered also shall begin to believe in Christ; and they shall begin to gather in upon the face of the land; and as many as shall believe in Christ shall also become a delightsome people.’—II Nephi 30:7.” (*The Restoration of All Things* [Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1945], 164. For the nearly two thousand years between Abraham and Christ, the statutes and judgments of God were reserved almost exclusively for the seed of Abraham and for the house of Israel. During the mortal ministry of our Lord, the message was limited to Israel, to the Jews, and it was not then offered to the Gentiles. After Jesus’ resurrection, Peter opened the door to the preaching of the gospel of the Gentiles, and Paul became their chief apostolic advocate and teacher. **Thus, there was a period or time for the Gentiles to take precedence. The times of the Gentiles is the period during which the gospel goes to them on a preferential basis, and this will continue until they have had a full opportunity to accept the truth, or in other words until the fullness of the Gentiles. Then the message will go again to the Jews, meaning to the Jews as a nation and as a people.** DNTC, 2:290. See also, D&C 45:19, 25, 28-30.)

26 And \wp (**then**) all ^aIsrael shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of ^bSion the ^cDeliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: (Bruce R. McConkie said: “All Israel shall be justified; all Israel shall be saved—meaning, all those who keep the commandments shall be saved and justified, and those so doing shall be called by the name *Israel*. As Paul expressed it: ‘They are not all Israel, which

are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: . . . That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not children of God.’ (Rom. 9:6-8.) In the eternal sense, Israel consists of the members of the Church who keep the commandments and are thereby justified in this life and saved in the life to come. The wicked, of course, are not justified. (Alma 41:13-15.)” (*The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978], 345.))

27 For this *is* my ^acovenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

28 As concerning the gospel, *they* (Jews) *are* enemies for your (Gentile Christians) sakes: but as touching the election, *they are* beloved for the fathers’ sakes.

29 For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.

30 For as ye in times past ^ahave not believed (were disbelieving, disobedient to) God, yet have now obtained mercy through their ^bunbelief; (disobedience, disbelief)

31 Even so have these also now not ^abelieved, (obeyed) that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. (Bring back the natural branch.)

32 For God hath ^aconcluded (closed up together) them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

33 O the depth of the ^ariches both of the ^bwisdom and ^cknowledge of God! how ^dunsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past ^efinding out! (John Taylor said: “We see, then, the power of God manifested in [the heavens]; but when we reflect a little further, that while our planetary system rolls in perfect order round the sun, there are other systems which perform their revolutions round their suns; and the whole of these, our system with its center, and other systems with their centers, roll round another grand center: and the whole of those, and innumerable others, equally as great, stupendous, and magnificent, roll round another more great, glorious, and resplendent, till numbers, magnificence, and glory, drown the thought, we are led to exclaim with the prophet, ‘O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!’ Romans 11:33. Without referring again to the motions of our earth, and the beautiful regularity and precision of the whole of this elegant machinery, we will turn our attention a little to the works of creation as found on the earth. The make, construction, and adaptation of each for its proper sphere, are the work of God; and they are all controlled by His wisdom and power, independent of man. In the conformation of the birds, the beasts, the fishes, the reptiles, the grains, herbs, plants, and trees, we see a striking exemplification of this fact. No matter which way we turn our attention, the same order and intelligence are displayed.” (*The Government of God* [Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1852], 4 - 5.))

34 For who hath known the ^amind of the Lord? or who hath been his ^bcounsellor?

35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

36 For of him, and ^athrough him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

Romans 12

(Bruce R. McConkie: A knowledge of these wondrous truths places upon us a greater burden than rests upon any other people to follow Christ—to take his yoke upon us, to keep his commandments, to do ever those things that please him. And if we love and serve him, we will give heed to the words of the apostles and prophets whom he sends to reveal and teach his word among us. CR Apr 1974, 103-4)

Paul counsels the saints to present their bodies as a living sacrifice; to use their own grace-given gifts; to live as becometh saints.

1 I BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your ^abodies a living ^bsacrifice, (Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: To present [oneself] as a living sacrifice is to come forth with a broken heart and a contrite spirit through obedience.” DNTC, 2:292) ^choly, ^dacceptable unto God, *which is your reasonable* ^eservice. (Neal A. Maxwell said: “So it is that real, personal sacrifice never was placing an animal on the altar. Instead, it is a willingness to put the animal in us upon the altar and

letting it be consumed! Such is the ‘sacrifice unto the Lord ... of a broken heart and a contrite spirit,’ (D&C 59:8), a prerequisite to taking up the cross, while giving ‘away all [our] sins’ in order to ‘know God’ (Alma 22:18) for the denial of self precedes the full acceptance of Him.” (“Deny Yourselves of All Ungodliness,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 68. M. Russell Ballard: There are two major, eternal purposes for the law of sacrifice that we need to understand. These purposes applied to Adam, Abraham, Moses, and the New Testament Apostles, and they apply to us as we accept and live the law of sacrifice. The two major purposes are to test us and prove us and to assist us in coming unto Christ. New Testament Symposium, BYU 13 Aug 1996, 13.)

2 And be not conformed to this ^aworld: but be ye ^btransformed by the ^crenewing of your ^dmind, that ye may ^eprove (test, try, prove) what ~~is~~ that good, and acceptable, and perfect, ^fwill of God (is). (Similarly, the Book of Mormon states: “And now, my beloved brethren, I would that ye should come unto Christ, who is the Holy One of Israel, and partake of his salvation, and the power of his redemption. Yea, come unto him, and offer your whole souls as an offering unto him, and continue in fasting and praying, and endure to the end; and as the Lord liveth ye will be saved” (Omni 1:26).)

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to ^athink of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think ^bsoberly, according as ^cGod hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same ^aoffice: (function, operation)

5 So we, *being* many, are ^aone ^bbody in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the ^agrace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of ^bfaith; (D&C 46: 8 Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived; and that ye may not be deceived ^aseek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given; 9 For verily I say unto you, they are given for the benefit of those who love me and keep all my commandments, and him that seeketh so to do; that all may be benefited that seek or that ask of me, that ask and not for a ^asign that they may ^bconsume it upon their lusts. 10 And again, verily I say unto you, I would that ye should always remember, and always retain in your ^aminds what those ^bgifts are, that are given unto the church. 11 For all have not every ^agift given unto them; for there are many gifts, and to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God. 12 To some is given one, and to some is given another, that all may be profited thereby. 13 To some it is given by the ^aHoly Ghost to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he was crucified for the sins of the world. 14 To others it is given to ^abelieve on their words, that they also might have eternal life if they continue faithful. 15 And again, to some it is given by the Holy Ghost to know the ^adifferences of administration, as it will be pleasing unto the same Lord, according as the Lord will, suiting his ^bmercies according to the conditions of the children of men. 16 And again, it is given by the Holy Ghost to some to know the diversities of operations, whether they be of God, that the manifestations of the ^aSpirit may be given to every man to profit withal. 17 And again, verily I say unto you, to some is given, by the Spirit of God, the word of ^awisdom. 18 To another is given the word of ^aknowledge, that all may be taught to be wise and to have knowledge. 19 And again, to some it is given to have ^afaith to be healed; 20 And to others it is given to have faith to ^aheal. 21 And again, to some is given the working of ^amiracles; 22 And to others it is given to ^aprophecy; 23 And to others the ^adiscerning of spirits. 24 And again, it is given to some to speak with ^atongues; 25 And to another is given the interpretation of tongues. 26 And all these ^agifts come from God, for the benefit of the ^bchildren of God. 27 And unto the ^abishop of the church, and unto such as God shall appoint and ordain to watch over the church and to be elders unto the church, are to have it given unto them to ^bdiscern all those gifts lest there shall be any among you professing and yet be not of God. 28 And it shall come to pass that he that asketh in ^aSpirit shall receive in Spirit; 29 That unto some it may be given to have all those gifts, that there may be a head, in order that every member may be profited thereby.)

7 Or ministry, *let us wait* on *our* ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with ^acheerfulness. (Bruce R. McConkie said: “Members of the Church should use, and be called to positions which enable them to use, the specific talents and gifts with which they are endowed. Musicians belong in the choir, preachers in the pulpit, teachers in the classroom, and prophets in positions of presidency. Those who can influence the young and rising generation for good should be appointed to do so; those having converting power and zeal should labor as missionaries; and those with financial and business ability should be assigned to build up the kingdom temporally. A bishop may not be a farmer, nor an apostle a financier; but there will be others who can serve in these areas. And one of the talents of superior leaders is their ability to call the right person to serve in the right position at the right time.” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 2: 293.))

9 *Let* love be ^awithout dissimulation (^{sincere, unfeigned, real}). Abhor that which is ^bevil; (^{and}) cleave to that which is good.

10 *Be* kindly ^aaffectioned one to another with ^bbrotherly ^clove; in honour preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in ^abusiness; (^{haste, diligence}) ^bfervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; ^apatient in ^btribulation; ^ccontinuing (^{constantly persisting in}) instant in prayer;

13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to ^ahospitality.

14 Bless them which ^apersecute you: bless, and ^bcurse not.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and ^aweep with them that weep.

16 *Be* of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but ^acondescend to men of low estate (^{conforming willingly with the humble}). Be not wise in your own ^bconceits. (Joseph Smith said: “...remember those who are in bondage, and in heaviness, and in deep affliction for your sakes. And if there are any among you who aspire after their own aggrandizement, and seek their own opulence, while their brethren are groaning in poverty, and are under sore trials and temptations, they cannot be benefited by the intercession of the Holy Spirit, which maketh intercession for us day and night with groanings that cannot be uttered. “We ought at all times to be very careful that such highmindedness shall never have place in our hearts; but condescend to men of low estate, and with all long-suffering bear the infirmities of the weak.” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 141.))

17 ^aRecompense to no man ^bevil for evil. Provide things ^chonest in the ^dsight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live ^apeaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, ^aavenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if thine ^aenemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 *Be not overcome of evil, but ^aovercome evil with good.* (Gordon B. Hinckley said: “Should we be surprised if we are called upon to endure a little criticism, to make some small sacrifice for our faith, when our forebears paid so great a price for theirs? “Without contention, without argument, without offense, let us pursue a steady course, moving forward to build the kingdom of God. If there is trouble, let us face it calmly. Let us overcome evil with good. This is God's work. It will continue to strengthen over the earth, touching for good the lives of countless thousands whose hearts will respond to the message of truth. No power under heaven can stop it. This is my faith and this is my testimony.” (*Conference Report, April 1970, First Day—Morning Meeting 23.*))

Have the students point out the strengths and gifts of their fellow students.

Dallin H. Oaks: As Latter-day Saints use the words *saved* and *salvation*, **there are at least six different meanings.** According to some of these, our salvation is assured—we are already saved. In others,

salvation must be spoken of as a future event (e.g., 1 Cor. 5:5) or as conditioned upon a future event (e.g., Mark 13:13). But in all of these meanings, or kinds of salvation, salvation is in and through Jesus Christ.

① First, all mortals have been saved from the permanence of death through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:22).

② As to salvation from sin and the consequences of sin, our answer to the question of whether or not we have been saved is “yes, but with conditions.” Our third article of faith declares our belief:

“We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel” (A of F 1:3).

Many Bible verses declare that Jesus came to take away the sins of the world (e.g., John 1:29; Matt. 26:28). The New Testament frequently refers to the grace of God and to salvation by grace (e.g., John 1:17; Acts 15:11; Eph. 2:8). But it also has many specific commandments on personal behavior, and many references to the importance of works (e.g., Matt. 5:16; Eph. 2:10; James 2:14–17). In addition, the Savior taught that we must endure to the end in order to be saved (see Matt. 10:22; Mark 13:13).

Relying upon the totality of Bible teachings and upon clarifications received through modern revelation, we testify that being cleansed from sin through Christ’s Atonement is conditioned upon the individual sinner’s faith, which must be manifested by obedience to the Lord’s command to repent, be baptized, and receive the Holy Ghost (see Acts 2:37–38). “Verily, verily, I say unto thee,” Jesus taught, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5; see also Mark 16:16; Acts 2:37–38). Believers who have had this required rebirth at the hands of those having authority have already been saved from sin *conditionally*, but they will not be saved *finally* until they have completed their mortal probation with the required continuing repentance, faithfulness, service, and enduring to the end.

Some Christians accuse Latter-day Saints who give this answer of denying the grace of God through claiming they can earn their own salvation. We answer this accusation with the words of two Book of Mormon prophets. Nephi taught, “For we labor diligently ... to persuade our children ... to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Ne. 25:23). And what is “all we can do”? It surely includes repentance (see Alma 24:11) and baptism, keeping the commandments, and enduring to the end. Moroni pleaded, “Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ” (Moro. 10:32).

We are not saved *in* our sins, as by being unconditionally saved through confessing Christ and then, inevitably, committing sins in our remaining lives (see Alma 11:36–37). We are saved *from* our sins (see Hel. 5:10) by a weekly renewal of our repentance and cleansing through the grace of God and His blessed plan of salvation (see 3 Ne. 9:20–22).

The question of whether a person has been saved is sometimes phrased in terms of whether that person has been “born again.” Being “born again” is a familiar reference in the Bible and the Book of Mormon. As noted earlier, Jesus taught that except a man was “born again” (John 3:3), of water and of the Spirit, he could not enter into the kingdom of God (see John 3:5). The Book of Mormon has many teachings about the necessity of being “born again” or “born of God” (Mosiah 27:25; see Mosiah 27:24–26; Alma

36:24, 26; Moses 6:59). As we understand these scriptures, our answer to whether we have been born again is clearly “yes.” (3) We were born again when we entered into a covenant relationship with our Savior by being born of water and of the Spirit and by taking upon us the name of Jesus Christ. We can renew that rebirth each Sabbath when we partake of the sacrament.

Latter-day Saints affirm that those who have been born again in this way are spiritually begotten sons and daughters of Jesus Christ (see Mosiah 5:7; Mosiah 15:9–13; Mosiah 27:25). Nevertheless, in order to realize the intended blessings of this born-again status, we must still keep our covenants and endure to the end. In the meantime, through the grace of God, we have been born again as new creatures with new spiritual parentage and the prospects of a glorious inheritance.

(4) A fourth meaning of being saved is to be saved from the darkness of ignorance of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, and of the purpose of life, and of the destiny of men and women. The gospel made known to us by the teachings of Jesus Christ has given us this salvation. “I am the light of the world,” Jesus taught; “he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12; see also John 12:46).

(5) For Latter-day Saints, being “saved” can also mean being saved or delivered from the second death (meaning the final spiritual death) by assurance of a kingdom of glory in the world to come (see 1 Cor. 15:40–42). Just as the Resurrection is universal, we affirm that every person who ever lived upon the face of the earth—except for a very few—is assured of salvation in this sense. As we read in modern revelation:

“And this is the gospel, the glad tidings ...

“That he came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, and to bear the sins of the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness;

“*That through him all might be saved* whom the Father had put into his power and made by him;

“Who glorifies the Father, and *saves all the works of his hands*, except those sons of perdition who deny the Son after the Father has revealed him” (D&C 76:40–43; emphasis added).

The prophet Brigham Young taught that doctrine when he declared that “every person who does not sin away the day of grace, and become an angel to the Devil, will be brought forth to inherit a kingdom of glory” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* [1997], 288). This meaning of *saved* ennobles the whole human race through the grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. In this sense of the word, all should answer: “Yes, I have been saved. Glory to God for the gospel and gift and grace of His Son!”

(6) Finally, in another usage familiar and unique to Latter-day Saints, the words *saved* and *salvation* are also used to denote exaltation or eternal life (see Abr. 2:11). This is sometimes referred to as the “fulness of salvation” (Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 4 vols. [1979–81], 1:242). This salvation requires more than repentance and baptism by appropriate priesthood authority. It also requires the making of sacred covenants, including eternal marriage, in the temples of God, and faithfulness to those covenants by enduring to the end. If we use the word *salvation* to mean “exaltation,” it is premature for any of us to say that we have been “saved” in mortality. That glorious status can only follow the final judgment of Him who is the Great Judge of the living and the dead.

I have suggested that the short answer to the question of whether a faithful member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been saved or born again must be a fervent “yes.” Our covenant relationship with our Savior puts us in that “saved” or “born again” condition meant by those who ask this question. Some modern prophets have also used “salvation” or “saved” in that same present sense. President Brigham Young declared:

“It is present salvation and the present influence of the Holy Ghost that we need every day to keep us on saving ground. ...

“I want present salvation. ... Life is for us, and it is for us to receive it today, and not wait for the Millennium. Let us take a course to be saved today” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1954], 15–16). President David O. McKay spoke of the revealed gospel of Jesus Christ in that same present sense of “salvation *here*—here and now” (*Gospel Ideals* [1953], 6). CR Apr 1998, 76-78)

The Law of Sacrifice

Elder M. Russell Ballard

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

CES Symposium on the New Testament • 13 August 1996 • Brigham Young University



Last year my family and I visited Palmyra, Kirtland, and Nauvoo. We reviewed the early history of the Church on that trip and were reminded of the overwhelming sacrifices the founders of the Church made to establish the kingdom of God on earth in this last dispensation.

The Law of Sacrifice Is Eternal

Reflecting upon our Church history has focused my mind on the eternal nature of the law of sacrifice, which is a vital part of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was practiced in Old Testament, New Testament, and Book of Mormon times. As the course of study this year, the New Testament describes a time when the law of sacrifice was practiced in two different ways. In the first half of the New Testament it was practiced as outlined in the law of Moses. Then, through the Atonement of Christ, the law of Moses was fulfilled and the practice of the law of sacrifice changed. For this reason it would be helpful for students to understand how the law of sacrifice was practiced before *and* after the Atonement.

Usually, the first thing people think of when they hear “law of Moses” is animal sacrifice. The somewhat gruesome nature of blood sacrifice has led some people to ask, “How could such an activity have anything to do with the gospel of love?”

The Purpose of the Law of Sacrifice

There are two major, eternal purposes for the law of sacrifice that we need to understand. These purposes applied to Adam, Abraham, Moses, and the New Testament Apostles, and they apply to us today as we accept and live the law of sacrifice. The two major purposes are to test and prove us and to assist us in coming unto Christ.

To Test, Try, and Prove Us

The first purpose of the law of sacrifice is described by President Lorenzo Snow: “The trials and temptations have been very great to many of our people, and more or less, perhaps, to all of us. The Lord seems to require some proof on our part, something to show that He can depend upon us when He wants us to accomplish certain things in His interest” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1900, 2).

Throughout history we learn of many righteous people who suffered trials and tribulations as a result of trying to serve the Lord Jesus Christ: Abel, Noah, Abraham, Job, Lehi, Nephi, Abinadi, Stephen, Peter, Paul, Mormon, Moroni, Martin Luther, John Wesley, Roger Williams, Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and a host of others. One writer said it this way: “We see that *every* age has been a time of stress, war, conflict, and struggle. . . . Men have been continually tempted and pressed to make decisions about their loyalty to their religious beliefs; they have been repeatedly forced to examine their relationship to their Father in heaven—and, in fact, they have been tested again and again and again” (Victor B. Cline, “‘Handcart Pioneers’ Through the Ages,” *Instructor*, Feb. 1967, 90).

The Lord himself spoke of proving and trying us:

“I have decreed in my heart, saith the Lord, that *I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy.*

“For if ye will not abide in my covenant ye are not worthy of me” (D&C 98:14–15; emphasis added).

In describing his life of trials, the Prophet Joseph said: “I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force, . . . knocking off a corner here and a corner there. Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 304).

The law of sacrifice also provides an opportunity for us to prove to the Lord that we love him more than any other thing. As a result, the course sometimes becomes difficult, but understandably so, since this is the process of perfection that prepares us for the celestial kingdom to “dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever” (D&C 76:62). How important it is for full-time missionaries to understand this principle before serving the Lord on their missions. Obedience to mission guidelines would automatically be part of every missionary’s life if the law of sacrifice was correctly understood.

To Assist Us in Coming unto Christ

Now let us turn to the second purpose of the law of sacrifice, that of coming unto Christ. President Ezra Taft Benson explained that “the sacred mission of the Church . . . [is] to ‘invite all to come unto Christ’ (D&C 20:59)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1988, 97; or *Ensign*, May 1988, 84; see also Moroni 10:32). The law of sacrifice has always been a means for God’s children to come unto the Lord Jesus Christ.

No one will ever accept the Savior without having faith in him first. Hence, the first principle of the gospel is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Prophet Joseph Smith explained an important relationship between the principle of faith and the principle of sacrifice. He said:

“Let us here observe, that three things are necessary in order that any rational and intelligent being may exercise faith in God. . . .

“First, the idea that he actually exists.

“Secondly, a *correct* idea of his character, perfections, and attributes.

“Thirdly, an actual knowledge that the course of life which he is pursuing is according to his will” (*Lectures on Faith* [1985], 38).

Joseph then explained: “Let us here observe, that a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation. . . . It is through the medium of the sacrifice of all earthly things that men do actually know that they are doing the things that are well pleasing in the sight of God. When a man has offered in sacrifice all that he has for the truth’s sake, not even withholding his life, and believing before God that he has been called to make this sacrifice because he seeks to do his will, he does know, most assuredly, that God does and will accept his sacrifice and offering, and that he has not, nor will not seek his face in vain. Under these circumstances, then, he can obtain the faith necessary for him to lay hold on eternal life” (*Lectures on Faith*, 69).

Let me summarize: To have faith and come unto Christ we must know that God exists, have a correct understanding of God, know what we do is pleasing before God, and understand that this knowledge comes to us through sacrifice and obedience. To those who come unto Christ in this way comes a confidence that whispers peace to their souls and that will eventually enable them to lay hold on eternal life.

Sacrifice allows us to learn something about ourselves—what we are willing to offer to the Lord through our obedience.

To illustrate, Truman G. Madsen tells about a visit he made to Israel with President Hugh B. Brown. As they approached a valley known as Hebron, where tradition has it that there is a tomb of father Abraham, Brother Madsen asked President Brown, “What are the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?” After a short moment of thought, Elder Brown answered, “Posterity.” Brother Madsen concluded: “I almost burst out, ‘Why, then, was Abraham commanded to go to Mount Moriah and offer his only hope of posterity?’ “It was clear that this man [President Brown], nearly ninety, had thought and prayed and wept over that question before. He finally said, ‘Abraham needed to learn something about Abraham’” (Truman G. Madsen, *The Highest in Us* [1978], 49).

Now let’s look at another way that the law of sacrifice brought people unto Christ. Anciently, through blood sacrifices, the law of sacrifice brought people to Christ through typifying and foreshadowing his life and mission.

Adam was taught that sacrifice was done as a “similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father” (Moses 5:7). This teaches us that originally ancient Israel understood the relationship between the sacrifice of their offerings and the sacrifice of the Lamb of God (see D&C 138:12–13).

It is within the Book of Mormon that we find the clearest doctrinal teachings about the purpose of the law of sacrifice as practiced in the law of Moses. Nephi taught that sacrifice was done in remembrance of Christ (see 2 Nephi 11:4). He also stated:

“We keep the law of Moses and look forward with steadfastness unto Christ. . . .

“For, for this end was the law given” (2 Nephi 25:24–25).

Amulek testified that Christ’s ultimate sacrifice was “the whole meaning of the law, every whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice” (Alma 34:14).

In Alma we read:

“They did look forward to the coming of Christ, considering that the law of Moses was a type of his coming. . . .

“. . . The law of Moses did serve to strengthen their faith in Christ” (Alma 25:15–16).

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “Whenever the Lord revealed Himself to men in ancient days, and commanded them to offer sacrifice to Him, that it was done that they might look forward in faith to the time of His coming, and rely upon the power of that atonement for a remission of their sins” (*Teachings*, 60–61; see also p. 58).

Brothers and sisters, notice how the following story told by President Gordon B. Hinckley illustrates how the law of sacrifice both tests us *and* brings us to Christ.

Most members of the Church are familiar with the tragic experience of the Martin and Willie handcart companies who, in 1856, ran out of food and became stranded in the early snows of Wyoming. “Over two hundred members of the two ill-fated handcart companies were buried in frozen graves before they could reach Zion. More people died in these two companies than in any other immigrant group in the United States” (*Church History in the Fulness of Times* [1989], 361).

Less familiar to the Church is the testimony born years later by Francis Webster, one of the members of the Martin handcart company. President Hinckley read from a manuscript he had that told what happened years later at a meeting in Cedar City, Utah, where some members were criticizing Church leaders for the tragedies and the loss of life connected with the two companies:

“One old man in the corner sat silent and listened as long as he could stand it. Then he arose and said, . . .

“. . . ‘I ask you to stop this criticism. You are discussing a matter you know nothing about. . . . I was in that company and my wife was in it. . . . *We suffered beyond anything you can imagine* and many died of exposure and starvation, but did you ever hear a survivor of that company utter a word of criticism? . . . Every one of us came through with the absolute knowledge that God lives, *for we became acquainted with him in our extremities*’” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 77; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 54; emphasis added).

Can you see, brothers and sisters, how their sacrifices both tested them *and* brought them unto Christ? President Hinckley continued and said, “We must rise above our love for comfort and ease, and in the very process of effort and struggle, even in our extremity, we shall become better acquainted with our God” (in Conference Report, 78; or *Ensign*, 59).

President Spencer W. Kimball explained this to a young man who was struggling with his testimony. He told my friend, “Through sacrifice and service one comes to know the Lord.” **As we sacrifice our selfish desires, serve our God and others, we become more like him. Elder Russell M. Nelson taught: “We are still commanded to sacrifice, but not by shedding blood of animals. Our highest sense of sacrifice is achieved as we make ourselves more sacred or holy.**

“This we do by our obedience to the commandments of God. Thus, the laws of obedience and sacrifice are indelibly intertwined. . . . As we comply with these and other commandments, something wonderful happens to us. . . . We become more sacred and holy—[more] like our Lord!” (“Lessons from Eve,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 88).

It is interesting to note that the word *sacrifice* means literally “to make sacred” or “to render sacred.” As we sacrifice more and more, we will come to better understand the life of Jesus Christ, who is the perfect example of sacrifice. Elder Franklin D. Richards taught: “Jesus’ life was the perfect example of

dedication and sacrifice. He had no silver or gold to give, but he gave faith to his disciples, health to the sick, . . . hope to the discouraged” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1967, 76; or *Improvement Era*, June 1967, 70), and his life for all.

The purposes of the law of sacrifice are eternal. The ways it has been practiced, however, have varied according to the Lord’s will.

The Law of Sacrifice in the Premortal Life

Our first lessons about the law of sacrifice, along with an understanding of all gospel principles, began in our premortal life. In the premortal world we were taught the fulness of the gospel and the plan of salvation (see D&C 138:56). We knew of the Savior’s mission, of his future atoning sacrifice, and we willingly sustained him as our Savior and our Redeemer. In fact we learn from Revelation 12:11 that it is by “the blood of the Lamb” (Christ’s atoning sacrifice) and our testimony that we are able to overcome Satan. President Joseph F. Smith explained: “The Lord designed in the beginning to place before man the knowledge of good and evil, and gave him a commandment to cleave to good and abstain from evil. But if he should fail, he would give to him the law of sacrifice and provide a Savior for him, that he might be brought back again into the presence and favor of God and partake of eternal life with him. This was the plan of redemption chosen and instituted by the Almighty before man was placed on the earth” (*Gospel Doctrine* [1939], 202).

The Law of Sacrifice from Adam to the Prophet Moses

Adam and Eve were given the law of sacrifice and commanded to practice it by giving offerings. These included two emblems: the firstlings of the flock and the first fruits of the field. They obeyed without questioning (see Moses 5:5–6). President David O. McKay explained, “The effect of this [law] was that the best the earth produced, the best specimen in the flock or herd should not be used for self, but for God” (“The Atonement,” *Instructor*, Mar. 1959, 66). At a time in history when just making sure your family had food, those who sought to worship the Lord were asked to sacrifice the best part of their source of life. It was a real test of Adam and Eve’s faith, and they obeyed.

Likewise, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the holy prophets from Adam to Moses offered the Lord sacrifices in a similar way.

The Law of Sacrifice from Moses to the End of Christ’s Life

Due to the rebellious nature of the children of Israel in the days of Moses, the law of sacrifice changed and became a strict law requiring a daily practice of performances and ordinances. From Adam’s day to Moses’, there was just one kind of sacrifice offered. During the time of Moses there was an expansion in the number and variety of offerings under the law of sacrifice.

A detailed explanation of the varieties and degrees of sacrifices is far less important than understanding their purpose. The real value in understanding these offerings is that by so doing we learn more about Jesus Christ, his infinite atoning sacrifice, and what we must do to come unto him.

The Mosaic sacrifices consisted of five major offerings that fell into two primary categories, namely obligatory and voluntary. The difference between the obligatory and the voluntary offerings might be compared with the law of tithing and with the law of fast offerings. To save time tonight I will not go into the detail of these sacrifices, but some charts explaining them will accompany the text of this talk and will be made available to you later.

While there were many different offerings, one thing remained the same in all of them. Everything about Mosaic sacrifice focused on Christ. Like Christ, the priest acted as the mediator between the people and

their God. Like Christ, the priest had to have the right parentage to officiate in his office. Like Christ, the offerer through obedience willingly sacrificed what was required by the law. The part of sacrifice that most strongly paralleled the Savior was the offering itself. Notice with me some of these parallels. First, like Christ, the animal was chosen and anointed by the laying on of hands. As you are aware, the Hebrew name *Messiah* and the Greek name *Christ* both mean “the Anointed One.” Second, the animal spilt its life’s blood. Third, it had to be without blemish—totally free from physical flaws, complete, whole, and perfect. Fourth, the sacrifice had to be clean and worthy. Fifth, the sacrifice had to be domesticated, that is, not wild but tame and of help to man (see Leviticus 1:2–3, 10; 22:21; Numbers 15:3). Sixth and seventh, for the original sacrifice practiced by Adam and the most common sacrifice in the law of Moses, the animal had to be a firstborn and a male (see Exodus 12:5; Leviticus 1:3; 22:18–25). Eighth, the sacrifice of grain had to be ground into flour and made into breadstuffs, which reminds us of our Lord’s title the Bread of Life (see John 6:48). Ninth, the firstfruits that were offered remind us that Christ was the firstfruits of the Resurrection (see 1 Corinthians 15:20).

The Savior truly was the focus and purpose of each sacrifice.

The Law of Sacrifice in the New Testament and a Fulfillment of the Law of Moses

Help your students understand that the law of sacrifice and the system of offerings as given to Moses continued to be practiced in New Testament times. Since Jesus Christ of the New Testament was Jehovah of the Old Testament, it is he who gave the law of Moses in the first place. It would seem only appropriate then that he would be the one with authority to fulfill that law.

Jehovah in Old Testament times knew the details of his future atoning sacrifice and, therefore, prescribed elements of the law of Moses that would specifically point to it. Then with his final words, “It is finished” (John 19:30), the Lord pronounced the fulfillment of the law of Moses. Amulek spoke of the fulfillment of the law in this way:

“Therefore, it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice, and then shall there be . . . a stop to the shedding of blood; then shall the law of Moses be fulfilled. . . .

“And behold, this is the whole meaning of the law, every whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice; and that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God, yea, infinite and eternal” (Alma 34:13–14).

I stand as a special witness today of this most singular event of all time. I testify in a unique way of the far-reaching effects of this most holy of all offerings. In a future day of another life when our finite reasoning will be expanded, we will more fully understand the penetrating powers of the Atonement and feel moved even more with gratitude, admiration, worship, and love toward our Savior in ways not possible in this present state.

At the fulfillment of the law of Moses, the Lord changed the practice of the law of sacrifice. To change a law that had been practiced for centuries served as a means to further emphasize the importance of the Atonement. Prior to the Atonement, blood sacrifice pointed forward to his sacrifice; after the Atonement the sacrament points minds back to the Atonement.

Help your students understand that the law of Moses is not the same thing as the law of sacrifice. Although the law of Moses was fulfilled, the principles of the law of sacrifice continue to be a part of the doctrine of the Church.

While the primary purpose of the law of sacrifice continued to be that of testing and assisting us to come unto Christ, two adjustments were made after Christ's ultimate sacrifice. First, the ordinance of the sacrament replaced the ordinance of sacrifice; and second, this change moved the focus of the sacrifice from a person's animal to the person himself. In a sense, the sacrifice changed from the offering to the offerer.

Sacrifice versus Sacrament

As we contemplate the replacing of animal sacrifice with the sacrament, we cannot help but notice a strong relationship between the two. Both sacrifice and sacrament:

- Are affected by a person's attitude and worthiness (see Amos 5:21–22; 3 Nephi 18:27–29; Moroni 7:6–7).
- Were designed to be performed by priests officiating in the Aaronic Priesthood (see D&C 13:1; 20:46).
- Focus on Christ (see Luke 22:19–20; Alma 34:13–14).
- Contain emblems that represent Christ's flesh and blood (see Luke 22:19–20; Moses 5:7).
- Provide a means whereby one can make and renew covenants to God (see Leviticus 22:21; D&C 20:77–79).
- Are performed regularly on the Sabbath as well as on other special occasions (see Leviticus 23:15; D&C 59:9–13).
- Are associated with meals that symbolically partake of the Atonement (see Leviticus 7:18; Matthew 26:26).
- Share the distinction that they're the only saving ordinance in which members participate for themselves more than once.
- Provide an important step in the process of repentance (see Leviticus 19:22; 3 Nephi 18:11; Moses 5:8).

President Joseph F. Smith compared the purpose of the sacrament with ancient sacrifice when he said that the purpose of the sacrament “is that we may keep in mind continually the Son of God who has redeemed us from eternal death, and brought us to life again through the power of the gospel. Before the coming of Christ to the earth, this was borne in mind . . . by another ordinance [blood sacrifice] which was a type of the great sacrifice that should take place in the meridian of time” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 103).

The Sacrifice of Ourselves Instead of Our Animals

Now let us discuss the second effect resulting from the change Christ made in the law of sacrifice when he fulfilled the law of Moses. After his mortal ministry, Christ elevated the law of sacrifice to a new level. In describing how the law of sacrifice would continue, Jesus told his Nephite Apostles that he would no longer accept burnt offerings, but that his disciples should offer “a broken heart and a contrite spirit” (3 Nephi 9:19–20; see also D&C 59:8, 12). Instead of the Lord requiring a person's animal or grain, now the Lord wants us to give up all that is ungodly. This is a higher practice of the law of sacrifice; it reaches into the inner soul of a person. Elder Neal A. Maxwell described it this way: “Real, personal sacrifice never was placing an animal on the altar. Instead, it is a willingness to put the animal in us upon the altar and letting it be consumed!” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 91; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 68).

How is it that we show the Lord that we have symbolically put ourselves upon today's sacrificial altar? We show the Lord we are willing to live the law of sacrifice today by living the first great commandment. Jesus said:

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.
“This is the first and great commandment” (Matthew 22:37–38).

When we overcome our own selfish desires and put God first in our lives and covenant to serve him regardless of the cost, then we are living the law of sacrifice. One of the best ways to keep the first great commandment is to keep the second great commandment. The Master himself taught that “inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40) and that “when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17). **Sacrifice is a demonstration of pure love. The degree of our love for the Lord and for our fellowman can be measured by what we are willing to sacrifice for them.**

Sometimes the most effective way to teach a principle is to give an example of its use in practice. Let me share a few examples of how some have successfully lived the law of sacrifice in their lives.

Henry Ballard

At the time of the Restoration of the Church, sacrifice was a common part of life for those who believed the truth. Sacrifices made by our pioneer forefathers to establish the Church in the western United States have become legendary. One such example that I have spoken of before is my great-grandfather, Henry Ballard, the father of Melvin J. Ballard. Of the many pioneer stories in our Church, I have found none that are any more significant than those within my own family.

Henry was born 27 January 1832 in England. His parents “were poor, but honorable people” (Douglas O. Crookston, *Henry Ballard* [1994], 2). Henry was the youngest of four sons. At the age of seventeen Henry was taught the gospel and baptized by Joseph Kimber.

During the Black Plague epidemic of 1849, Henry became deathly sick. For days he laid in bed. Although his parents ignored his request of calling for the elders for a blessing, eventually they did come; through the power of a priesthood blessing, Henry was healed. The healing was of such a miraculous nature that his father and mother were converted and baptized shortly thereafter. Henry’s determination to serve the Lord resulted in him and his parents going to Zion. On 10 January 1852 Henry sailed from Liverpool in advance of his parents. The voyage across the ocean took sixty-three days and was described as “a long and rough one.”

At the mouth of the Mississippi River, they boarded a steamboat called the *Saluda* along with eighty other Saints and traveled up the river to Council Bluffs. After many more delays, Henry described what happened one morning as he was eating breakfast: “The Boilers [of the *Saluda*] burst blowing away about half the boat taking away the fore part of it[;] killed and wounded about fifty of the Saints[.] . . . I was blown about two rods [thirty-two feet]. . . . I was Stuned and made senseless for about half an hour with a hole cut in my head near the brain[.]” Henry lost all of his belongings in the accident. He continued his journey with what he described as “what I had upon my back and another Shirt and one sock with no hat on my head and no money” (in Crookston, *Henry Ballard*, 11–12).

In order to pay for his voyage to America, Henry contracted his service for the next two years to a company owned by Lorenzo and Erastus Snow. He was hired to drive a herd of sheep west to the Salt Lake Valley. Henry described his entrance into the valley in the following words: “In October as I drove the sheep down little mountain and through the mouth of Emigration Canyon, I first beheld the Salt Lake Valley. While I rejoiced in viewing the ‘Promised Land,’ I lived in fear that some one might see me. I

hid myself behind bushes all day until after dark for the rags I had on did not cover my body and I was ashamed to be thus exposed. After dark I crossed over the field to a house where a light was shining, near the mouth of the canyon, and timidly knocked on the door. Fortunately, a man answered the door and the candle light did not expose me to the view of the other members of his household. I begged for clothes to cover my naked body. . . . I was given some clothing and the next day continued my journey . . . feeling very thankful to God” (in Crookston, *Henry Ballard*, 14–15).

Margaret McNeil Ballard

Another example of pioneer sacrifice would be Margaret McNeil Ballard, Henry’s wife. She crossed the plains as a young eleven-year-old girl. In her own words she described one of many experiences:

“The company we were assigned to had gone on ahead and as my mother was anxious for me to go with them she strapped my little brother James on my back with a shawl. He was only four years old and . . . quite sick with the measles; but I took him since my mother had all she could do to care for the other children. I hurried and caught up with the company, traveling with them all day. That night a kind lady helped me take my brother off my back. I sat up and held him on my lap with the shawl wrapped around him, alone, all night. He was a little better in the morning. The people in the camp were very good to us and gave us a little fried bacon and some bread for breakfast.

“We traveled this way for about a week, before my brother and I were united with our family again” (quoted by M. Russell Ballard, in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 106; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 75).

Henry served faithfully as bishop of the Logan Second Ward for just a few months under forty years. His devoted wife Margaret served as Relief Society president for thirty years. A few days ago I traveled along the pioneer trail and found myself wondering how my faithful great-grandparents ever survived and how it was possible for them to do what they did. Surely they came to know God and his Holy Son on that trail as they willingly gave all that they had to serve them.

Church Sesquicentennial Celebration

In 1997 the Church will celebrate the sesquicentennial anniversary of the arrival of the first Latter-day Saints in the valley of the Great Salt Lake. “Faith in Every Footstep” will be the theme under which the various activities of the celebration will take place. The faith of those early pioneers and the sacrifices they were willing to make for their faith left an enduring legacy that still blesses the Church today. The spirit of that legacy was captured in a poem by Vilate Raile:

They cut desire into short lengths
And fed it to the hungry fires of courage.
Long after, when the flames had died,
Molten gold gleamed in the ashes.
They gathered it into bruised palms
And handed it to their children
And their children’s children forever.

(In T. Edgar Lyon, “Some Uncommon Aspects of the Mormon Migration,” *Improvement Era*, Sept. 1969, 33.)

The Church Educational System will participate in the celebration by providing a packet of materials, also called *Faith in Every Footstep*, to help students throughout the world celebrate the spirit of faith, sacrifice, and pioneering demonstrated by our forefathers. There will be a presentation in this symposium designed to help you more effectively use these materials and prepare for this celebration.

The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve have also commissioned the publication of a short history of the Church that is titled *Our Heritage: The Coming Forth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. This volume emphasizes the commitment, dedication, and sacrifice of Church members all over the world. It would be appropriate if every seminary and institute student read this inspired material as part of their study program for 1997.

How to Sacrifice Today

Brothers and sisters, our commitment to the kingdom should match that of our faithful ancestors even though our sacrifices are different. Today in the Church there are many examples of sacrifice that may help us understand that sacrifice for the gospel is not over and that coming unto Christ requires as much commitment and devotion today as it ever has.

Not long ago I was assigned to preside over a regional conference in La Paz, Bolivia. Members came to the conference from small towns and villages scattered throughout the area of La Paz and the Altiplano. Great sacrifice and commitment were required of some of these members to attend the meetings. Prior to the priesthood leadership training session, I stood in front of the stake center and greeted the brethren as they gathered. I greeted one older brother who told me that he lived a long way from La Paz. I noticed that his shirt was a different color from the middle of his chest down. The upper portion of his shirt was white, while the lower portion was a brownish-red color.

I learned that he and three of his companions, all Melchizedek Priesthood holders, had taken many hours to travel to the meeting. They had walked most of the way and had to ford two rivers where the brownish-red water came up to their chests. They had flagged down a truck and stood in the back of it for the last two hours of their journey to the stake center.

These faithful men said to me: “Elder Ballard, you are one of the Lord’s Apostles. My brethren and I would do whatever was required to be taught by you.” Imagine how humble that made me feel. Brothers and sisters, do we have a similar attitude when we are asked to attend leadership meetings in wards, stakes, or professional Church employment?

The Blessings of Sacrifice

We sing, “Sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven” (*Hymns*, 27). This is a true principle. Let me illustrate:

Some time ago I reported this in general conference, but feel to repeat this experience tonight since it is a personal testimony of the sacrifices of today. I was named bishop of the Holladay Twelfth Ward in 1958. In those days, local members paid 50 percent of the cost of constructing a building. One of the most important leadership experiences in my life came several weeks before the announced dedication of the building. Our ward of young families, who were struggling to make ends meet, needed to raise the final \$30,000 in order to pay for our share of the cost. I fasted and prayed to know what I should say to our ward members regarding this obligation. We already had pressed them very hard, and they had willingly contributed money and personal labor beyond anything I believed possible, but still we needed to raise the last \$30,000.

As the brethren gathered for priesthood meeting, I was impressed to read to them the testimony my Grandfather Ballard bore when he was ordained to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on 7 January 1919. I quote a small portion of his testimony: “Two years ago, about this time, I had been on the Fort

Peck Reservation for several days with the brethren, solving the problems connected with our work among the Lamanites. Many questions arose that we had to settle. There was no precedent for us to follow, and we just had to go to the Lord and tell Him our troubles, and get inspiration and help from Him. On this occasion I had sought the Lord, under such circumstances, and that night I received a wonderful manifestation and impression which has never left me. I was carried to this place—into this room. I saw myself here with you. I was told there was another privilege that was to be mine; and I was led into a room where I was informed I was to meet someone. As I entered the room I saw, seated on a raised platform, the most glorious being I have ever conceived of, and was taken forward to be introduced to Him. As I approached He smiled, called my name, and stretched out His hands towards me. If I live to be a million years old I shall never forget that smile. He put His arms around me and kissed me, as He took me into His bosom, and He blessed me until my whole being was thrilled. As He finished I fell at His feet, and there saw the marks of the nails; and as I kissed them, with deep joy swelling through my whole being, I felt that I was in heaven indeed. The feeling that came to my heart then was: Oh! If I could live worthy . . . so that in the end when I have finished I could go into His presence and receive the feeling that I *then* had in His presence, I would give everything that I am and ever hope to be!” (Melvin R. Ballard, *Melvin J. Ballard: Crusader for Righteousness* [1966], 65–66). At the conclusion of this testimony, the Spirit of the Lord touched our hearts. Very little else was said because this small group of faithful brethren in the priesthood meeting also knew in their own way that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that He is our Savior and Redeemer. We all knew that with greater faith in Him we could reach our goal. During that same day, family after family came to my office with money, making personal sacrifices that were far beyond what I, the bishop, would ever have asked of them. By eight o’clock Sunday evening, the ward clerk had written receipts for a little more than \$30,000.

Sacrifice truly brought forth the blessings of heaven to the members of our ward. Never have I lived among a people who were more united, more caring, more concerned for one another than these ward members were. In the midst of our greatest sacrifice, we became bonded together in the true spirit of the gospel of love and service.

Now brothers and sisters, today the budget allowance procedures have lifted much of the financial sacrifice. Yet sacrifice is still necessary if we are to develop faith strong enough to lay hold on eternal life. I believe we should increase our spiritual devotion and service to the Lord and others in order to demonstrate to the Lord our love for him and our Heavenly Father.

Sacrifice in the Church Educational System

The Church Educational System provides a wonderful opportunity to keep sacred temple covenants that relate to the law of sacrifice. The work of this marvelous educational system is founded on the unselfish sacrifice not only of the earliest pioneers, but upon those offerings of the valiant souls who sit among us today.

Many of you who teach early-morning seminary make great sacrifices of getting up early—sometimes 4:00 and 5:00 a.m. every weekday to go to class. This, of course, results in sacrifice by you and often your family as well. You also sacrifice by taking time out of an already busy schedule to prepare lessons for sometimes sleepy and seemingly disinterested students; but you are blessed as Nephi of old because you do not murmur as you perform this important service (see 1 Nephi 3:6).

I am told of a handful of early-morning teachers who have now passed the thirty-year mark of faithful volunteer teaching. Such unselfish dedication is remarkable and deeply appreciated.

Some of you who are home-study seminary teachers must travel great distances to get to your classes. Others of you teach in a setting that may not be conducive to teaching the gospel, but you faithfully fulfill your duty.

Maybe the greatest sacrifice you full-time seminary teachers make is the constancy of being there in the classroom with your students day after day and year after year, having a fresh, positive attitude every class period, even on days when things don't go well. There is personal sacrifice and commitment to improve your understanding of the gospel and improve in your teaching abilities when no promotions and only a teacher's modest income exist for those who go the extra mile.

You who are coordinators sacrifice great amounts of your time in your job. You are up early with the early-morning classes and frequently home late from the home-study class or night institute class and even have many weekends with Saturday activities and Sunday meetings to encourage priesthood leaders toward recruitment and enrollment. You sacrifice personal and valuable family time.

Many of you work out in the mission field, alone for weeks without contact from other CES associates. You sacrifice the friendship, camaraderie, lesson suggestions, and ideas of the big seminary or institute faculty.

Your leaders, too, have given and continue to give long hours of dedicated service. There is a grand corps of 244 Church service missionaries with CES assignments. They currently serve in thirty-three countries of the South Pacific, South America, Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe, the Caribbean, the United States, and Canada. Many of these missionaries come from the ranks of retired CES personnel.

God recognizes and accepts these and all other similar offerings. To each of you who willingly sacrifice so much, we say thank you and God bless you.

Caution

May I offer a word of caution. The blessings and benefits that have come to CES in recent years have been monumental. With so many blessings there will be a need to carefully guard against ingratitude. The Lord said:

“Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things. . . .

“And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things” (D&C 59:7, 21).

The spirit of the law of sacrifice promotes gratitude. In many ways we have gone through a period of great prosperity that may, when history is written, prove to be as devastating to our souls as the effects of the physical persecutions were upon the bodies of our pioneer ancestors.

President Harold B. Lee said, “Today we are being tested and tried by another kind of test that I might call the ‘test of gold’—the test of plenty, affluence, [and] ease” (*Sweet Are the Uses of Adversity . . .*, Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year [7 Feb. 1962], 3).

President Brigham Young warned: “Poverty, persecution and oppression we have endured; many of us have suffered the loss of all things in a worldly point of view. Give us prosperity and see if we would bear it, and be willing to serve God. See if we would be as willing to sacrifice millions as we were to sacrifice what we had when in comparative poverty” (*Journal of Discourses*, 13:264).

We would do well to remember the “prosperity cycle” found in the Book of Mormon. Let us not forget the Lord in our day of prosperity. Let us maintain the spirit of the law of sacrifice and always thank the Lord for what we have, even if what we have is not as much as some. This may prove to be one of our greatest tests in life.

The Challenge to Sacrifice

Today we are not called to pull handcars through the snow-swept plains of Wyoming. What we are asked to sacrifice may be different, but it may be just as difficult. Listen to the language of the scriptures as they describe the level of sacrifice the Lord requires of us: “Offer your whole souls as an offering unto [God]” (Omni 1:26; see also Mosiah 2:24). “Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God” (Romans 12:1). The Lord himself said that we should keep our “covenants by sacrifice—yea, every sacrifice which I, the Lord, shall command” (D&C 97:8). The sacrifice the Lord asks of us is to wholly rid ourselves of the “natural man” and all the ungodliness associated with it. When we completely surrender ourselves to the Lord, then he will cause a mighty change in us and we will become a new person, justified, sanctified, and born again with his image in our countenances (see Mosiah 5:2; Alma 5:14; Moses 6:59–60).

As in all things, our Lord and Savior manifested the supreme example of sacrifice. His life and ministry established a pattern for us to follow. His divine mission was culminated in a supreme act of love as he gave his life for our redemption. Through his personal sacrifice, he provided a way for us to have our sins forgiven and return to the presence of our Father.

Brothers and sisters, may the Lord bless each of you who work in the most important cause of Church education. May your love for the Lord increase as you continue to willingly serve him and teach his gospel to others. May the blessings that come from quiet sacrifice serve to strengthen your testimony and devotion to God.

I thank you on behalf of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for your faithful service.

Testimony and Blessing

I would close with this last thought. If I have a fear, the fear I have is that the principle of sacrifice may be slipping away from us. I’ve chosen to talk on this subject to you, the teachers of the youth. The principle of sacrifice is a law of God. We are obliged to understand it and to teach it and to practice it. If it becomes too easy to be a member of this Church, testimonies will become shallow, the roots of testimony will not go down into the soil like they did with our pioneer forefathers. May God grant you an understanding of the law of sacrifice and that it is with us today. It is vitally important that we understand it, teach it, and live it.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I would invoke a blessing upon you, my fellow workers, that the peace of the Lord will be yours, that as you work with the youth you will realize that in your hands you are molding the future leadership of the Church. Which one of you knows which one of those young

men sitting in your class today may be sitting in the red chairs tomorrow? Which one of you knows who among those sweet young women that are your students will be taking their place in the leadership of the women's organizations of the Church?

May God grant you the blessing of being able to look at each student as a son or daughter of God, a precious, precious stewardship. And may you have the strength, the energy, the courage, and the Spirit of the Lord to guide you in your preparation and to bless you in your presentation that students will *feel*, I say that again, that students will *feel* the power of the message of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the power of the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God. I witness and testify to you, my beloved brothers and sisters, that he lives, this is his Church, he presides over it, he loves us, and will guide us if we surrender, give up our sins and our ungodliness and completely trust in him. I would ask our Father to bless you that you can do this more effectively in the future than you've been able to do it in the past. May your families be watched over and cared for; some of you are away from them. I would ask our Father to watch over them and cradle them in his care while you are here learning to be more effective in your sacred calling. This blessing, my testimony, and my love to each one of you I leave very gratefully and humbly, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

Romans 13

Paul counsels: Be subject unto God's ministers; keep the commandments; love one another; righteousness leads to salvation.

1 LET every soul ^abe subject (be submissive, render obedience) unto the higher ^bpowers. (authorities) (James E. Talmage said: "Governments are instituted of God, sometimes by His direct interposition, sometimes by His permission. When the Jews had been brought into subjection by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, the Lord commanded through the prophet Jeremiah (27:4-8) that the people render obedience to their conqueror, whom He called His servant; for verily the Lord had used the pagan king to chastise the recreant and unfaithful children of the covenant. The obedience so enjoined included the payment of taxes and extended to complete submission. After the death of Christ the apostles taught obedience to the powers that be, which powers, Paul declared 'are ordained of God.' See Rom. 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Tim. 2:1-3; see also 1 Pet. 2:13, 14. Through the medium of modern revelation, the Lord has required of His people in the present dispensation, obedience to and loyal support of the duly established and existing governments in all lands. See D&C 58:21-22; 98:4-6; and section 134 throughout. The restored Church proclaims as an essential part of its belief and practice: 'We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.'" (*Jesus the Christ: A Study of the Messiah and His Mission According to Holy Scriptures Both Ancient and Modern* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983], 522, footnote 2.)) For there is no ^cpower (in the church) ^dbut of God: the ^epowers that be are ordained of God.

2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that ^aresist shall receive to themselves ^bdamnation (punishment).

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the ^apower (authority)? do that which is ^bgood, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

4 For he is ^athe minister of God (a servant) to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the ~~sword~~ (rod) in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for ^aconscience sake.

6 ^aFor, for this cause pay ye ~~tribute~~ (your consecrations) also (unto them): for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

7 (But first) Render ~~therefore~~ to all their dues, (according to custom,) tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; (that your consecrations may be done in) fear (of him) to whom fear (belongs; and in); ^ahonour (of him) to whom honour (belongs).

8 (Therefore) ^aOwe no man any thing, (“Clearly scripture cautions us against incurring unnecessary debt. Modern prophets and apostles have echoed that plea... President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: ‘Reasonable debt for the purchase of an affordable home and perhaps for a few other necessary things is acceptable. But from where I sit, I see in a very vivid way the terrible tragedies of many who have unwisely borrowed for things they really do not need’ (“I Believe,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1992, 6).” (Scott Nash, “Understanding Interest on Debt,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1997, 64)) but to love one another: for he that ^bloveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit ^aadultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not ^bsteal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not ^ccovet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy ^dneighbour as thyself.

10 ^aLove worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the ^blaw.

11 And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high ^atime to awake out of ^bsleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

12 The night is far spent, the ^aday is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of ^bdarkness, and let us put on the ^carmour of ^dlight.

13 Let us walk ^ahonestly, (with propriety) as in the day; not in ^brioting and ^cdrunkenness, not in ^dchambering (lewdness, whoredoms) and wantonness, not in strife and ^eenvying.

14 But ^aput ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to ~~fulfil~~ (gratify) the ^blusts thereof

Romans 14

Avoid doubtful disputations and unrighteous judgment of each other—Every knee shall bow to Christ—Kingdom of God embraces righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

1 HIM that is ^aweak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to ^bdoubtful ^cdisputations.

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth ^aherbs. (vegetables)

3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not ^ajudge him that eateth: for God hath received him. (Those on diets shouldn't criticize those who aren't.)

4 Who art thou that ^ajudgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

5 One man esteemeth one ^aday above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth *it* unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

7 For none of us ^aliveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we ^adie unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be ^aLord both of the ^bdead and living.

10 But why dost thou ^ajudge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the ^bjudgment seat of Christ.

11 For (I live, saith the Lord, as) it is written, ~~As I live, saith the Lord,~~ (And) every ^aknee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall ^bconfess (swear) to God. (Joseph Fielding Smith said: “The time will come when ‘every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall *confess to God,*’ that Jesus is the Christ,

(Romans 14:11; italics added.) and all who are worthy of a place in any of the kingdoms of glory will have to learn to be obedient to the divine laws by which they will be governed. All who refuse [to submit to Christ] will have to go with the devil and his angels into perdition.” (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, 5 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957-1966], 1: 77.)

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a^a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother’s way.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing ^aunclean (ceremonial unclean) of itself: but to him that ^besteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean. (Is an alcoholic beverage unclean? Is it the alcohol or tobacco which tarnishes our souls? The answer is no, for ‘*there is nothing unclean of itself*’ and it is ‘not that which goeth into the mouth [that] defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man’ (Matt. 15:11). A man who has not been taught the Word of Wisdom is not made unclean by a cigarette or a glass of beer. His choice may be unwise, but it is not sinful. Nevertheless, he may find some Mormons looking down on him. Like the judgmental Romans, we sometimes fall prey to judgmental attitudes about those who smoke and drink. But how can we hold him accountable for violating a law he has never covenanted to keep? Paul would ask us, ‘why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at naught thy brother?’ (v. 10) When a member of the church breaks the Word of Wisdom, he is unclean—not because the substance itself is unclean but because he has broken his covenants to be obedient to God’s law. Faith, hope, charity, peace and joy are the fruits of the Spirit and are much more important than our latter-day dietary code. Word of Wisdom “faddists,” as Elder McConkie calls them, sometimes forget to place this law in its proper perspective. If we liken the scriptures to ourselves, we might correctly declare, ‘For the kingdom of God is not *abstinence from tobacco and alcohol*; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost’ (v. 17). “In the field of the Word of Wisdom, for instance, it is a sin for a Latter-day Saint to use tea, coffee, tobacco, or liquor, but it is not a sin for a nonmember of the Church so to do. DNTC, 2:302)

15 But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, ^anow (thou) walkest ~~thou~~ not ^bcharitably (according to love) (if thou eatest. Therefore,) destroy not him ^cwith thy meat (on account of food), for whom Christ died.

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17 For the kingdom of God is not ^ameat and drink (food); (Bruce R. McConkie said: “Some unstable people become cranks with reference to [our] law of health. It should be understood that the Word of Wisdom is not the gospel, and the gospel is not the Word of Wisdom. As Paul said, ‘The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.’ (Rom. 14:17.) “There is no prohibition in Section 89, for instance, as to the eating of white bread, using white flour, white sugar, cocoa, chocolate, eggs, milk, meat, or anything else, except items classified under the headings, tea, coffee, tobacco, and liquor. As a matter of fact those who command that men should not eat meat, are not ordained of God, such counsel being listed by Paul as an evidence of apostasy. God has created ‘meats,’ he says, ‘to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.’ (1 Tim. 4:3.) If some particular food or drink disagrees with an individual, then that person should act accordingly without reference to the prohibitions in this particular law of health.” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], 846.) but ^brighteousness, and ^cpeace, and ^djoy in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for ^apeace, and things wherewith one may ^bedify another. (Marvin J. Ashton said: “Be one who nurtures and who builds. Be one who has an understanding and a forgiving heart, who looks for the best in people. Leave people better than you found them. Be fair with your competitors, whether in business, athletics, or elsewhere. Don’t get drawn into some of the parlance of our day and try to ‘win’ by intimidation or by undermining someone’s character. Lend a hand to those who are frightened, lonely, or burdened. “If we could look into each other’s hearts and understand the unique challenges each of us faces, I think we would treat each other

much more gently, with more love, patience, tolerance, and care.” (“The Tongue Can Be a Sharp Sword,” *Ensign*, May 1992, 20))

20 ^aFor meat (because of food) destroy not the ^bwork of God. All things indeed *are* pure; but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is ^aoffended, or is made weak.

22 Hast thou faith? have *it* to thyself before God. Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself ^ain that thing which he alloweth (by what he tries, approves).

23 And he that ^adoubteth is ~~damned~~ (condemned) if he eat, because ~~he eateth~~ (it is) not of faith: for *whatsoever is not of ^bfaith is ^csin*. (Joseph Smith said: “By faith in this Atonement, or plan of redemption, Abel offered to God a sacrifice that was accepted, which was the firstlings of the flock. Cain offered of the fruit of the ground and was not accepted, because he could not do it in faith. He could have no faith, or could not exercise faith, contrary to the plan of heaven. It must be the shedding of the blood of the Only Begotten to atone for man, for this was the plan of redemption, and without the shedding of blood was no remission. And as the sacrifice was instituted for a type by which man was to discern the great sacrifice which God had prepared, to offer a sacrifice contrary to that, no faith could be exercised, because redemption was not purchased in that way, nor the power of atonement instituted after that order. Consequently, Cain could have no faith, and ‘*whatsoever is not of faith is sin*’ [Rom. 14:23]. But Abel offered an acceptable sacrifice by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God himself testifying of his gifts [Heb. 11:4]. Certainly, the shedding of the blood of a beast could be beneficial to no man, except it was done in imitation, or as a type or explanation, of what was to be offered through the gift of God himself, and this performance done with an eye looking forward in faith on the power of that great sacrifice for a remission of sins.” (Kent P. Jackson, comp. and ed., *Joseph Smith’s Commentary on the Bible* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1994], 16 - 17.))

Romans 15

True saints fellowship one another—Paul recounts his diligence in preaching the gospel—Gifts of the Spirit poured out upon the Gentiles.

1 WE then that are strong ought to ^abear (remove, endure, bear with) the infirmities of the ^bweak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please *his* ^aneighbour for *his* good to ^bedification.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The ^areproaches (revilings, insults) of them that reproached thee fell on me.

4 For whatsoever things were ^awritten aforetime were ^bwritten for our ^clearning, that we through ^dpatience and comfort of the ^escriptures might have ^fhope.

5 Now the God of patience and ^aconsolation (comfort) grant you to be ^blikeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

6 That ye may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify God, even the ^aFather of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the ^acircumcision for the truth of God, to ^bconfirm (establish, make constant) the ^cpromises *made* unto the fathers: (Paul frequently speaks of those “of the circumcision” in reference to the Jews (Rom 4:12; Gal 2:7-12; Col. 4:11; Titus 1:10). So when Paul refers to Christ as ‘a minister of the circumcision,’ he is referring to his lineage through the house of Israel and his ministry among the Jews, for Jesus said, ‘I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel’ (Matt. 15:24).)

9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for *his* ^amercy; as it is written, For this cause I will ^bconfess (profess openly, praise) to thee among the ^cGentiles, and sing unto thy name.

10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye ^aGentiles, with his people.

11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

12 And again, ^aEsaias (Isaiah) saith, There shall be a root of ^bJesse, (Christ) and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and ^apeace in believing, that ye may abound in ^bhope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all ^aknowledge, able also to ^badmonish one another.

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in ^asome (part) sort, as putting you in mind, because of the ^bgrace that is given to me of God,

16 That I should be the ^aminister (servant's at ones own expense) of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the ^boffering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being ^csanctified by the Holy Ghost.

17 I have therefore whereof I may ^aglory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,

19 Through mighty ^asigns and wonders, by the power of the ^bSpirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum (Present day Albania and Macedonia), I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's ^afoundation:

21 But as it is written, To whom he was not ^aspoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

22 For which cause also I have been much ^ahindered from coming to you.

23 But now having no more ^aplace (opportunity) in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;

24 ~~Whensoever~~ I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: (“Paul was in Corinth at the time he informed the Romans of his intention to visit Spain. But he said that he must first go to Jerusalem. To go to Jerusalem from Corinth would add about 1,600 miles to the trip. In terms of the overall distance, this meant about a 7,000-mile trip from Corinth, to Jerusalem, to Spain, and back to Jerusalem—a most ambitious and time-consuming undertaking when we consider the mode of travel available. Whether Paul ever got to Spain we do not know, but his plans are certainly impressive. The subject is chiefly of interest to us in this article because the whole idea of a trip to Spain is to be learned only from Paul’s epistle to the Romans.” (Robert J. Matthews, “St. Paul Writes about the Church,” *New Era*, Apr. 1977, 33) “Did Paul ever get to Spain? “The record of Acts ends with Paul’s first imprisonment, and the official account of Paul’s known life is closed. From that point on, the scholars are uncertain, but there is strong evidence that Paul was eventually acquitted and freed, during which time he would naturally have continued his missionary labors. Since he had expressed intent to go to Spain, many have assumed he succeeded in doing so before he was arrested again and put to death under a wave of Christian persecution. Clement of Rome (about A.D. 100) states that Paul had ‘gone to the extremity of the west,’ which would seem to imply Spain. Others of the early Christian fathers also reported that he labored in Spain. Thus, Paul’s intentions to go to Spain may have been eventually realized.” (Institute Manual, *The Life and Teachings of Jesus & his Apostles*, 2nd ed., p. 335)) for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled ~~with your company~~ (through your prayers).

25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain ^acontribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers

of their ^aspiritual things, their ^bduty is also to minister unto them in ^ccarnal things (material, temporal).
 28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this ^afruit, I will come by you into Spain. (There is no record of Paul going to Spain.)
 29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the ^afulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.
 30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me;
 31 That I may be delivered from them that ^ado not believe (refuse belief, or obedience) in Judaea; and that my service which *I have* for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;
 32 That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be ^arefreshed.
 33 Now the God of peace *be* with you all. Amen.

Romans 16

Paul salutes divers saints—He counsels the saints to avoid those who cause divisions—They should be wise concerning good, and simple concerning evil.

1 I COMMEND unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchræa:
 2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.
 3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: (“Aquila and his wife Priscilla had ‘lately come from Italy’ when the Emperor Claudius had expelled the Jews ‘from Rome’ (Acts 18:2). They were strong missionaries, for they had convinced Apollos that he had only part of the truth (Acts 18:26). Paul found them so valuable that he brought them to Ephesus (Acts 18:18), from which place they sent greetings (1 Cor. 16:19). Afterward they were free to return to Rome... They had shared their knowledge of Jewish-Christian tensions at Rome when they labored with Paul on two missionary journeys after their expulsion. They probably kept in contact with the Saints there when they were away; there was a church ‘in their house’ after returning to Rome (Rom. 16:5)” (Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Understanding Paul* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983], 171 - 172.))
 4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.
 5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.
 6 Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us.
 7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.
 8 Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.
 9 Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.
 10 Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' ^ahousehold (church).
 11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the ^ahousehold (church) of Narcissus, which are in the Lord. (“The first mention [of the Christian community at Rome] occurs in Paul's epistle to the Romans, written about A.D. 58 or 59. By that time, there was a substantial group of Christians in the city. Although we possess no account of the first missionaries who preached there, we can infer from the way Paul arranges his greetings that at least five separate congregations or branches met in the homes of various members of the Church. (See Rom. 16:3–5, 10–11, 14–15.) Since no Christian meetinghouses were built until long after the first century, it would have been natural for branches to meet in private homes for worship.” (S. Kent Brown, “Whither the Early Church?” *Ensign*, Oct. 1988, 8))
 12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

13 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. (Neal A. Maxwell said: “Simon, the Cyrenian, wandered into Jerusalem on the very day of Christ’s crucifixion and was pressed into service by Roman soldiers to help carry the Savior’s cross. Simon’s son, Rufus, joined the Church and was so well thought of by the Apostle Paul that the latter mentioned Rufus in his epistle to the Romans, describing him as ‘chosen in the Lord’ (Rom. 16:13) Was it, therefore, a mere accident that Simon ‘who passed by, coming out of the country,’ was asked to bear the cross of Jesus? (Mark 15:21).” (“A More Determined Discipleship,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1979, 73))

14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them. (It is truly remarkable that Paul sends greetings to so many individuals when, by tradition, he has not as yet visited Rome. How could he have known so many Roman saints? “Romans has the longest list of greetings to individuals of any letter. Part of this is Paul’s desire to cultivate friendships in an important place to be visited. The fact that he knew so many shows the effective communication network of the Early Church. The faith of the Saints at the world capital was ‘spoken of throughout the whole world’ (Rom. 1:8; also 16:19). Although Paul had not yet been there, he had no doubt met travelers and members from Rome, to whom he sent greetings. Before Paul was converted, Jewish visitors heard the apostles at Pentecost (Acts 2:10), a process of investigation open thereafter at the three annual feasts that drew pilgrims from the world. When such contacts grew to conversions or when missionaries first visited Rome is not known. Now the apostle to the Gentiles sought to visit the Gentile political center, to build up the Church ‘even as among other Gentiles’ (Rom. 1:13). “Romans 16 sends greetings to twenty-eight individuals in Rome, about a fourth of which were women. Families and Church circles were also included. And Paul sent greetings from nine members in Greece. Although identities are mostly obscure, these names show the intense personal relationships that Christ’s gospel produced. Paul’s letters shared eternal ideas, but his personal messages show the effective fellowship of the Church.” (Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Understanding Paul* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983], 170 - 171.))

16 Salute one another with an holy ^akiss (salutation). The ^bchurches of Christ salute you.

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, ^amark (watch, beware of) them which cause ^bdivisions and ^coffences (stumbling blocks, scandals) contrary to the ^ddoctrine which ye have learned; and ^eavoid them.

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and ^afair speeches deceive the hearts of the ^bsimple. (innocent, guileless)

19 For your ^aobedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you ^bwise unto that which is good, and ^csimple (blameless, innocent) concerning evil. (Spencer W. Kimball said: “Now, my brothers and sisters, as we move into the last half of the Church’s second century, let us keep our faith beautifully simple. May we, as Paul said, be ‘wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil’ (Rom. 16:19). Learn to recognize evil, and shun it always. May we keep Church programs and organizations simple. If we do, we will build to a thrilling and rewarding momentum in the days and months and years ahead. The Savior urged his followers to be ‘wise as serpents, and harmless as doves’ (Matt. 10:16). Let us follow that counsel today. Let us so live that if people speak critically of us they must do so falsely and without justification.” (“Let Us Not Weary in Well Doing,” *Ensign*, May 1980, 81))

20 And the God of ^apeace shall ^bbruise (break the power of, crush) ^cSatan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

21 Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.

22 I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord. (“[In writing the epistles] it appears that Paul did not actually do the writing with his own hand, but dictated to a scribe, although he would sign the epistle himself. Hence we find in Rom. 16:22, ‘I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you’; and in 1 Cor. 16:21, ‘The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand’; and in 2 Thes. 3:17, ‘The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write’ (see also Col. 4:18; Philem.

1:19; Gal. 6:11).” (Robert J. Matthews, *Behold the Messiah* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1994], 325.)

23 Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

24 The ^agrace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

25 Now to him that is of power to ^astablish you according to ~~my~~ (the) gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the ^bmystery, which was kept secret since the world began, (To an endowed latter-day saint, there is nothing so mysterious about “the mysteries of godliness.” Properly understood, they are the powerful, saving principles of the gospel and the sealing power which makes them binding. “As commentators note, Paul's ‘mystery’ is not an eternal obscurity, something mystically beyond the understanding of unquestioning believers. Paul does not proclaim the mystery but ‘the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages’ (Rom. 16:25, JB)... The best dictionary of New Testament Greek says of ‘mystery’: ‘Our literature uses it to mean the secret thoughts, plans, and dispensations of God which are hidden from the human reason . . . and hence must be revealed to those for whom they are intended.’ In Ephesians and Colossians Paul mingles mystery and dispensation and revelation of salvation to the Gentile world. He is clearly talking of the premortal plan of salvation, a mystery to the world during times of apostasy, but known and proclaimed by the prophets in Paul's day.” (Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Understanding Paul* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1983], 267))

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the ^aeverlasting God, made known to all nations for the ^bobedience of faith:

27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.