

Sept *Tracks*

THE TRUE SHEPHERD *L*

The Sheepfold; the Door; the Porter

John 10:1-11: Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and **leadeth them out.**

4. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

5. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

6. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

7. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. . . .

11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

For over sixty years I have been at intervals a hearer or reader of sermons by Latter Day Saint ministers in which the above scriptures have been employed in a way that to my mind conveys a very different meaning than is justified or was intended by their author, and which fails to display the stretch and grandeur of the field they cover.

Three times during the past twenty-five years I have used the pulpit and once the press in an effort to publish what I think is the real direction in which the statements point and thus make others share my gladness in the more excellent picture. As the press is the only medium now through which I can hope, at my age, to keep my concept alive, I use it and hope it is worth and will receive a kindly reading, feeling, as I do, certain that there is nothing in it that will deprive the reader of his trust or God of his glory. To me it is the true rendering.

In reading the Bible it is important that we recognize first who the speaker is; second, who he is talking to, and third, what is his **subject**. This will help.

Here we have Jesus Christ as the speaker. Pharisees, and other Jews who rejected his claim to being the Son of God, the promised Christ, as hearers; and one distinct, outstanding subject: "TRUE AND FALSE SHEPHERDS." Getting away from this point has led to much disputation. In discussing that subject Jesus set forth the marks by which the distinction between the true and false shepherd could be made, and outstanding among them was the **way** or "**door**" by which entrance was made into the fold. **What then is that door?** To my mind, a clear vision of that will throw light on the entire parable or picture. I will deal with that later.

Next comes the duty or service of "**the porter,**" which included the opening of that door, and this has been made to have its fulfillment in the baptism of Jesus, the fold being declared to be the church and baptism being the door thereinto. With this I take issue for reasons which follow. It is admitted that

John was the porter and that as such the baptism of Jesus by him was a necessity; but as will appear, that was but one item of performance in the commission under which he operated as porter. But more on this further.

In the 6th and 8th verses we are told that the statement was a parable and that the hearers did not grasp the meaning of it, so Jesus repeated it with a slight change in the arrangement of the words and said: "Verily, I say unto you, **I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers. . . .** (for the reason given in the first verse—they entered not by the door). **"I am the true shepherd."** The whole point, as to which one is true and which one false, hinges upon the door entered. I am aware of the added words, in the eighth verse of the church translation, but the first verse in both books tells the important reason. Keep this fact before you, **that Jesus was defending his claim to being the true shepherd** as against the claims of others who had preceded him, and the meaning of his declaration is made clear. I give it here to you as it reads to me: "I am the **true shepherd**. All who ever came before me, **claiming to be the true shepherd—the promised Christ**—were gross deceivers—thieves and robbers—trying to steal and occupy the place designed of God for his anointed. They failed to discern what the door of entrance into the fold was and blindly entered by **some other way**. Again I ask: **What was that necessary door?** I am slowly approaching that point, but let me risk the statement right here that it was absolutely impossible for anyone but Jesus to enter by the indicated and appointed door. He alone was ordained for that passage and after passing through it, he himself became the **door** through which alone all men must pass in order to secure all his mission to earth was intended to provide. This will become clearer as we proceed.

There is no good ground for claiming that baptism is **the door** referred to in the first verse, as is being taught, for Jesus said: "He that entereth in by the door **is the shepherd of the sheep,**" undoubtedly referring to himself; but having a very different meaning if baptism were the door referred to, for it would then imply that any one who was baptized was the shepherd of the sheep, and that would be unbelievable. It would make the act of being baptized to be the only distinguishing mark between the true and false shepherd. Every unbaptized one who entered among them, would thus be branded a thief and a robber. Again I ask, What then is **the door** of entrance referred to? I will try to make that clear as I proceed. I keep repeating that question because it is so vital to the point involved.

The word "sheepfold" in the first verse, evidently does not mean the Church of Christ, as has been and is being taught, for the sheep referred to were in it before Christ entered and his entrance into it was to **lead them out of it**, which he did (see verse 3). It simply meant the mass of people under the traditions of the Mosaic Economy, in Jerusalem and all Judea. His sermon on the mount, together with all his controversial engagements with them everywhere show his method of **leading them out**. He also told them he had other sheep—not of this fold, whom he intended to visit and preach to with the object of forming one fold eventually. (See verse 16.) Then turn to your Book of Mormon and to Nephi 7:2, 14, 24, where he used the same method of **leading them out** of the Mosaic fold, and told the Nephites that they were the other sheep he had referred to in Jerusalem, and also that he had still other sheep to visit in other **lands**—using the word "lands" instead of folds. His visit to each was to be as the true shepherd to bring all into one fold.

Let us now learn something about "the porter": "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. **That was the true light**, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:6-9.

MATTHEW 3:1-3. In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

2. And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

MATTHEW 11:10-14 Jesus said:

10. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

11. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

13. For all the prophets and the law prophesied UNTIL JOHN.

14. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.

The Angel Gabriel's visit to Zacharias. Luke 1:13-17.

13. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

14. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

15. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

16. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

17. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

LUKE 3:2-6. The word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

3. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

4. As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

5. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth.

In all this service John was to open the scriptural way of entrance for Jesus into the field or fold of his life work.

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 83:4. "The law of carnal commandments which the Lord in his wrath caused to continue with the house of Aaron, among the children of Israel until John, whom God raised up, being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb, for he was baptized while he was yet in his childhood, and was ordained by the angel of God at the time he was eight days old, unto this power—to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews and to make straight the way of the Lord before the face of his people, to prepare them for the coming of the Lord in whose hand is given all power."

This last passage agrees with, but makes more clear, the point I wish here to present, namely, that John's portership included a vast deal more than the baptism of Jesus. His business was to wind up the Mosaic regime—"The Law and the Prophets"—and to open up the new regime—the Christian dispensation—to declare that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. He was God's porter or doorkeeper—to **close the old and open the new door**. This included the baptism of Jesus, of course, for he was the only one ordained of God possessing the right to administer the affairs of the new dispensation. He had been busy baptizing others and announcing the approach of Christ when Christ presented himself and demanded baptism, and God spoke approval from heaven. As declared in John 1:6: He was "the man sent from God" to bear witness of the approaching light—the "true light which was the light of men." In simple words, he was busy "preparing the way and making the paths straight." He was Porter of the New Dispensation and was opening its door.

Jesus said, "The law and the prophets were **until John**. **SINCE THAT TIME THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS PREACHED AND EVERYONE PRESSETH INTO IT.**"—Luke 16:16.

From all this John is shown to be the porter—not **because he baptized Jesus**, but rather that he baptized Jesus and that Jesus came to him for that purpose, **because he was** the porter God had appointed to prepare his way in the steps that were essential to the termination of the old dispensation and the opening of the new. There was no one else to do it. This was the porter's duty in the divine commission under which he acted. The baptism of Jesus was but one item in the program he labored to execute. The fold into which Jesus entered as referred to in the first verse was not entered by the act of baptism in water, and he entered into it, as I have already said, not to lead anybody else into it, but to lead those **OUT** of it who were already in it. They were in it before him. See the third verse.

In John 15:24 we are told that Jesus said to his disciples, "If I had not done among them the work, **which none other man did** they had not had sin. This sin referred to their rejection of him as the true shepherd—the Messiah. His baptism in water could hardly be included in the meaning of that statement, for according to Mark all the land of Judea and Jerusalem were baptized, and according to Luke Jesus seems to have been in the crowd. There does not seem to have been anything in his going into the water with them to distinguish his act from theirs, of itself. Of course I may be told that the descent of the Spirit as a dove and the voice of God from heaven declaring his approval and the Sonship of Jesus was unusual and marvelous, but let me ask you, reader, **Who saw and heard** these happenings? The Bible account of them confines the revelation to Jesus and John the Baptizer only. It seems to have been intended as a personal testimony of God to them.

Matthew says the heavens were opened **UNTO HIM** (Jesus) and **HE SAW** the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him, and heard the approving voice (Matt. 3:16, 17). Mark says that on coming out of the water **HE** (Jesus) saw the Spirit like a dove descending, and heard the voice (Mark 1:10, 11) which said, **THOU ART** my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Luke says the words were, "**THOU ART** my beloved son. In **THEE** I am well pleased." John the Baptist said he did not know Jesus, but he had been told of God that he would know him by the descent of the Spirit upon him, and he

adds: "I SAW and bear record that this is the Son of God." (John 1:31-36.) Why was the record thus made if the event was public?

It was probably necessary that John as the porter and "preparer of Christ's way" should be thus assured and equipped for his work. All the direct evidence regarding this divine interposition at the baptism was probably related by John, and perhaps confirmed by Jesus when appeal regarding it was made to him. But so far as Jesus' part in the act of baptism is concerned, it can hardly be rated as one of the demonstrating works referred to by him, as having never been done by any other man, and therefore being sufficient to prove that he was what he claimed to be. Oh, no, the historic page is deluged with mention of acts by him which distance his baptism by miles in proclaiming unquestionably the divinity of his mission and claim. This I state, not to express a thought as to its unimportance or essentiality, but simply to show that it is not, as has been a thousand times taught, THE DOOR referred to in the first verse I have referred to, and as a preface to what follows, wherein it is expressly and repeatedly declared that his works were done **that the scriptures** might be fulfilled and that those scriptures all indicated what the route of the Christ entrance would be—in other words—the DOOR.

Jesus came as the true shepherd in the prepared way, to fulfill all righteousness, and, without doubt, God from heaven declared himself well pleased, and certified that Jesus was his beloved Son. John thus in the spirit and power of Elias, the restorer, fulfilled the mission in which Moses as lawgiver was to make his exit and Christ his advent. The closing of one and the opening of the other door was his business as porter. He issued passports by baptism to those who obey his instructions to repent and be baptized for entrance into the kingdom that was at hand. Jesus himself then engaged in John's work, for it is written in Matthew 4:17: "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, The time is fulfilled, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (See Mark 1:15 and Matthew 4:17.)

In attempting now to make clear my assertion as to what is the door referred to in this parable, through which none but Jesus ever did or ever could enter, if my claim be true, let me ask you to carefully and studiously follow me through my long prelude to the answer. I think it is worth your while as a claimed disciple of Jesus. It constitutes the door or path through which I found access to my conclusions. It will cost you nothing but a little time and patience. Remember that the word "door" has several meanings in the scriptures. In one place a whole valley in Jericho (the Valley of Achor) is named as a door of hope given of God. (See Hosea 2:15.)

HEBREWS 10:5-9. Referring to Christ: "When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not; but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O, God."

Above, when he said, "Sacrifice and burnt offerings thou wouldst not, neither had pleasure therein, which are offered by the law, then said he: Lo, I come to do thy will, O God; he taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus **ONCE FOR ALL.**"

There are **four** things, here clearly announced and confirmed on the authority of Christ: First, that God had no pleasure in burnt offerings and the slaughter

of bulls and goats as offerings for sin. Second, that he had prepared a body for **Christ**, that by its offering the law requiring the others as types would be fulfilled and taken away, and this **"once for all"** sacrifice would take their place and give salvation from sin for all and forever. Third, that **"in the volume of the book"** it was written of him. And fourth, that he had come and was ready now **"to do thy will, O God."**

What or where that book is in which this was written I don't of certainty know; perhaps that is the book referred to by John in Revelation 13:8. **"The book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."** Perhaps it was a duplicate of our scriptures, which Jesus showed himself to be perfectly acquainted with. Whether or not, it is certain that in that book to which he referred it was shown that he was to come to earth to do the will of God in the offering of a sacrifice that was to be the antitype of all the bloody types of the Mosaic Economy; and, as Paul says, was to terminate all the bloody offerings that remitted no sin by making of one that would remit sin and that **"once for all."**

What is certain from these words is, as I read them, that Christ **knew what was written in the scripture referred to**, before he came to earth, and he came to earth purposely to fulfill the requirements, and on entering **"the body prepared for him when he came, he promptly announced himself ready to engage in his mission of sacrifice."** **"Lo, I come, to do thy will, O God."** In other words, **"I am ready to proceed, according to the understanding we had in heaven."**

I think I have rightly interpreted the chapter, though I have abbreviated it. My only object is to make clear the fact that Christ knew distinctly **before coming here** that that body would be given him here and what for, and his announcement after entering it was to declare his unchanged determination to proceed with the divine program. His earthly program was evidently inscribed in that book he referred to and he knew what that program was. All his later announcements indicate that.

"I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me."—John 6:38.

"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work."—John 4:34.

"I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day. The night cometh when no man can work."—John 9:4.

Book of Nephi: 12:18: **"Behold, I have given unto you my gospel, and this is the gospel which I have given unto you, that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me: And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross and that after I had been lifted up upon the cross I might draw all men unto me."**

JOHN 8:13, 14, 42: **"Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true, for I know whence I came and whither I go. . . . I proceeded forth and came from God, neither came I of myself, but he sent me."**

These make clear the fact that he was meeting no surprises in his earth life. He was merely contacting what he had foreseen from heaven. He had taken his mission with a full understanding of what he would meet and what would be required of him, and his frequent reference to the scriptures showed his familiarity with them.

When Peter smote off the ear of the high priest's servant (see Matthew

26: 51-4) Jesus rebuked him and told him to put up his sword, and healed the man, and added that by asking he could secure twelve legions of angels for protection, "but," said he, "how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

MARK 14: 48, 49: "Why have ye come out as against a thief with swords and with staves to take me." "I was daily with you in the temple teaching and ye took no heed." "But the scriptures must be fulfilled." He knew the scriptures contained this item.

JOHN 18:11, in reciting the same occurrence says, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" He here discerned the event as one he had expected—had noted in heaven before coming here, as an item in his foreseen program.

Yes, the denial of Peter, the betrayal of Judas, the judgment of Pilate, the desertion of his apostles, Gethsemane, Golgotha, Calvary, his descent into the grave and hell, his resurrection and ascension, were all items that he had learned of in "the volume of the book," he referred to, and which he came to have fulfilled. He was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

JOHN 10:17, 18: "My Father loveth me because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." This indicates to me that it was a joint, voluntary, prearranged matter.

Paul wrote that "Though he was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of man, and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself and became obedient unto death—even the death of the cross. (Philippians 2:6-8.)

Being in the form of God and equal with God justifies my assurance as to his foreknowledge. This change of state and submission to what was involved in it was voluntary, and in full view of all it consequentially implied. There was nothing hidden from his eye when he resigned his God estate and assumed the estate of a servant. There was no guessing as to what was involved.

Again we read in 2 Corinthians 8:9: "Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor that we through his poverty might become rich."

This decision to change was made while in possession of the form and wisdom and riches of God. That by the change he might, at the cost to himself of all he foresaw it involved, invest us with joint heirship to all that had been his. This motive moved him and gave love a voicing which was echoed throughout the whole course of his earthly administrations. He never forgot and never regretted what he had undertaken and the last word his quivering lips uttered as he hung impaled, and amid the agonies of crucifixion, was a prayer for those who had despised his claim and whose hands were stained with the blood that issued from his veins. Yes, "I CAME TO DO THY WILL, O GOD." "I HAVE FINISHED THE WORK THOU DIDST GIVE ME TO DO." "IT IS FINISHED," all with unparalleled exactness tell the story of "God manifest in flesh." LOVE, as Christ understood and revealed it; and it just as clearly indicates that what he foreknew when "equal with God" he continued to be governed by, both in motive and in execution as a man.

In John 12:27 we are told that he said, "Now is my soul troubled, and what

shall I say?" Father, save me from this hour? **But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name!** Then came a voice from heaven, saying: "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again."

Here we have Jesus in agony such as his course invited upon him, and refusing to ask deliverance from it by his Father; because of the consciousness that he had promised and had come on purpose to meet it. He had foreseen it and agreed to endure it. In Gethsemane, when agony forced blood as sweat from his pores, and nature broke forth in a quest of possible deliverance, his soul cried out, "**Not my will, but thine be done,**" and he submitted himself meekly to the harrowing details following. He had consecrated himself to the doing of that Father's **will before he left heaven**, and when the torturing experiences he had foreseen came crowding upon him, his one thought was to keep this pledge made to his Father inviolate—knowing, of course, what his Father had in view in requiring it.

I repeat, with full assurance, that he knew all that was written in "the volume of the book" he referred to, and that "the body that was prepared for him" was furnished that in entering it he might face the items inscribed in it, and hence he announced himself ready for the mission "To do thy will, O God." And I unhesitatingly affirm that thus he entered "the door" that no other man ever entered or could enter and pass through as he did, and that door was simply the **path, or way, or course, or passage, of scriptural fulfilment**, which so far as its earthly features were concerned, was **opened in Bethlehem and closed on Calvary**, though the initial steps for entering it were taken in heaven, while he was in "**the form of God and equal with God,**" and its final ones lifted him back to where his prayer was answered: "Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." "**I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.**"

In Luke 18: 31-33 we are told, "He took unto him the Twelve and said unto them: Behold we go up to Jerusalem and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles and shall be mocked and spitefully entreated and spitted upon, and they shall scourge him and put him to death, and the third day he shall rise again." He knew what was coming and went to meet it.

In Luke 21 we have Christ foretelling a host of things that were to befall the world and his followers, and in the twenty-second verse he says, "for these be the days of vengeance, that all things that are written may be fulfilled." He knew all that was written and, as declared in so many places, he moved always so that all the details regarding himself should have fulfillment.

In Luke 4: 12-21, we find him entering a synagogue, taking up and reading a prophecy of Isaiah, regarding himself, and on closing the book declaring, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." He had come to fulfill it, knowing the scripture required it. All these things prove the fact that he knew the course outlined in the scriptures for his journeys and performances, and when every item regarding him had been covered, he cried out, "It is finished," and yielded up his spirit, having, as he said in his prayer (John 17): "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." "And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self with the glory I had with thee before the world was." In other words, he had covered the whole ground—traversed the whole scriptural path from his cradle to his death.

In John 10: 37, 38, Jesus said, "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though you believe me not, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in him." In other words, those works would demonstrate that he was passing through the door appointed for the true shepherd's entrance.

In John 5: 37 he says, "I have greater witness than that of John. For the works that the Father gave me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me. . . . Ye have not his word abiding in you. . . . Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they that testify of me." "For had you believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me; but if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

From these it is evident that had they been acquainted with the scriptures which showed the path or door by which Christ would enter among them, they would have clearly identified him, for his works were in fulfillment of them, but they "had not his words abiding in them; that is, they were ignorant of them and they therefore could not know whether he fulfilled them or not. If they had known the door ordained for his entrance into their fold, they would have hailed his approach.

They were all looking for Christ's coming; but their eyes were fixed on a different door of entrance. They were watching for his appearance as a destroyer of their enemies, a conquering hero, wielding a scepter of carnal might to establish "a kingdom of this world." I might fill pages with references to passages wherein it is said that the occurrences told of occurred "THAT THE SCRIPTURES MIGHT BE FULFILLED."

Read Luke 2:42-49 and imagine that twelve-year-old child sitting in the temple among that group of law doctors, asking and answering questions to their astonishment, and when found by his mother after a three-day search, and asked why he had so dealt with her, giving her such an answer as he did: "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Not yet in his teens and yet having this discernment of opportunity and knowledge of and equipment of God's business, and engaging therein to the astonishment of such beholders. All this means to me that he had known it all in heaven and brought it here with him. As occasion arose, the opportunity spelt duty to him and the divinity within him stirred him to action. "I must" be about it was life's meaning to him.

Let me now show what a confirmation Jesus furnished to all of this after his resurrection. You know that at the start of his mission, when Satan approached him for a season and tempted him by several propositions, his answer to everything was, "It is written." And that line of performance, as I have shown, marked his whole career. He never varied therefrom, and after his resurrection he called the attention of his disciples to that fact.

Go with me now to Luke 24 and begin to read at the 13th verse. Two disciples who had just been told by another disciple that Jesus had risen, were traveling to Emmaus and solemnly talking about the all-absorbing topic, when Jesus himself drew near, unrecognized, and walked with them and inquired as to their sadness. Cleopa asked him if he was a stranger in the country that he should ask such a question, and then told him briefly the whole story of their hope in Jesus, and also about his cruel persecution and death, and how all their

trust that he would have redeemed Israel seemed to have been lost, and now this astonishing story of his resurrection had greeted them, and they were bewildered beyond description. Jesus said to them:

“O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures, the things CONCERNING HIMSELF.”—Luke 24:24-32.

And so they walked along till they reached the village, when they persuaded him to enter their home and tarry, as it was near night. There they gave the stranger meat, which he blessed and ate, and then their eyes were opened, and they knew him; but he vanished out of their sight. Then they said one to another, “Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way and while he opened to us the scriptures?”

Yes, he opened up the whole route, “beginning with Moses and all the prophets,” and showed them that all, even to the death they were deploring and the resurrection they were dubious about, were a part of the long avenue—the door—through which the Christ must proceed. And these facts were the finishing of the work begun by his Father, and the living testimony that their hope was divinely secure. No wonder their “hearts burned within them.”

As soon as they recovered from the shock of their surprise they hurried to Jerusalem and found the eleven apostles, with others assembled, discussing the same event, and they added their testimony that Jesus had surely risen from the dead; and while they were thus engaged, Jesus himself suddenly appeared in their midst with a salutation of peace. To allay their fear and fright he exposed his hands and feet and turned their doubts into certainty by actually eating “boiled fish and honeycomb” at their table. Then he called their attention to his former interviews with them and said:

These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations; . . . And ye are witnesses of these things.—Luke 24: 33-48.

How plain it is! He called their attention to what he had formerly told them must be done to fulfill the scriptures by the true shepherd, and then wound up by declaring they were now the witnesses that he had fulfilled the word and met the requirement. Peter (Acts 10:43), said, “To him give all the prophets witness,” and Jesus said, “The scriptures must be fulfilled.”—Mark 14:49. Paul said that “Christ died according to the scriptures”; also was buried and rose again according to the scriptures.” (See Acts 13:2, 3) And thus we see everywhere that Jesus held himself to honor Moses to the uttermost limit and to fulfill the prophecies and the psalms. He never missed a step in the scriptural road appointed for him.

In further corroboration of all this, read Matthew 17:1-9; Mark 9:1-10; Luke 9:27-36. In all of these you will find an account of the transfiguration of Jesus on the Mount. All the accounts agree in nearly every detail. All agree that Jesus said there are “those standing here who shall not taste of death till they see.” See what? Matthew says, “The Son of Man coming in his king-

dom." Mark says, "The kingdom of God come with power." Luke says: "The kingdom of God." They had all been preaching this kingdom was at hand, but nothing more.

Matthew and Mark tell us that six days after Jesus had said that to them, he took Peter and James and John up into a high mountain apart. Luke seems to be uncertain as to the exact number of days, but says it was about eight days after these sayings. He goes more into detail, however, for he alone says they went up to pray, and that what occurred happened while Jesus was praying. All agree as to the facts of the glorious transfiguration—even in the fashion of his countenance and the brilliance of his raiment, also as to the appearance of Moses and Elias and the fact of their conversation with Jesus and the request of Peter to build a tabernacle for each; but only Luke tells us what was **the subject of the conversation between those glorified beings**. It is interesting to know what Jesus went up there to talk about to those two particular personages—one the mediator of the old, dying covenant—the synonym of the old regime of "the law and the prophets," the other the Elias—the messenger whom God had sent to prepare the way before the Messiah—"to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews and prepare the way for the coming of the Lord"—to close the old and open the new dispensation; who, having finished his work and died as a martyr, was fittingly permitted to participate in the divine revelation of its ultimate—the kingdom in glory.

Yes, it is significant, and Luke says that those two men who appeared in glory, talked with Jesus about "**his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.**" Does the reader catch any significance in that? The "type and shadows" of the outgoing law and covenant were to find their antitype in that event. The culmination of their service was to be there expressed. On that cross, whence would issue the words, "It is finished" from the lips of the dying Son of God, would be "**nailed**" "the law contained in ordinances," and Moses as the mediator was to receive his honorable dismissal, and from thence the new testament would come into effect. It was to be an epoch equal to that which brought angels from heaven as heralds on the plains of Judea. It was to betoken the intent of that former event and terminate a dispensation which for centuries had swayed the world. It was to usher in the new era that embodied all the pledges God had ever made to the race.

That conversation on the mount was not an accidental exchange of words. It was a divinely foreplanned interview between the outgoing and incoming mediators, with the intervening Elias as a participant. The subject was vital. It had its planning when the foundations of the earth were laid, and when Jesus was predestined as the "Lamb slain" from thence. It was the event that God and angels had centered their eyes upon from the earth's beginning; and it was now impending—at the door. Jesus was there by the foreordination of God to close the Moses door through which he had passed and become himself the eternal door of entrance to life for the world—the only gateway to God. Thereafter the words, "I am the door," were to be the salutation for the ears of the world. No greater event had ever engaged the thought of God, and as these participants in the change of dispensations conversed together regarding it, he let in upon them a flood of glory such as characterizes his estate, in the presence of chosen witnesses, who were, after its accomplishment, to be witnesses of the divinity of

the transfer to all the world. Those two were evidently sent of God to meet Jesus and converse regarding the event to which all other events relate.

All of the writers agree in testimony that a voice from the cloud declared to them, concerning Jesus: "This is my beloved Son—hear him." Once before—at his baptism—God had declared Jesus to be his beloved Son, but this time he added the words: **Hear him!** What does that signify? Simply that thereafter he was to be their lawgiver and counselor. That "crucifixion to be accomplished at Jerusalem" was to mark the exit of Moses (the law and the prophets) and the installation of Christ, and from thence Christ alone was to be their "witness, leader, and commander." The Door that opened to life.

It will be remembered that on descending the mountain after the transfiguration Jesus charged the disciples to say nothing about the occurrence till after his resurrection. He also opened their eyes to the fact that John the Baptist was the Elias. Why should they withhold this information from the world till then? They had witnessed the fulfillment of Christ's promise made six days before. They had seen the kingdom of God coming in glory and power so far as it bore upon the King, and they had been commanded from heaven to hear him—he was to be their ruler and lawgiver. Why delay the publication?

Of course the writer can only express an opinion, and he bases it upon Paul's words (Hebrews 9: 16, 17,) that a testament or will is of no effect until the death of the testator. Moses' regime held till the death of Jesus. Then the claims of the new testament became of force. It only required then the resurrection to attest the verity of all the pledges associated therewith and to authorize the universal publication of that new testament—the gospel of the new regime—the kingdom of heaven, which up to that time they had declared was at hand. It would then be in order to proclaim the dominion of the Christ kingdom, and to bear witness of its certified divinity as preattested by the voice of God to them. The law which had come by Moses had yielded, that grace and truth by Jesus Christ might obtain. The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus had entered to free men forever from the old law of sin and death. The "right of way" for Christ had been secured by his having finally met and dissolved the obligations of the thing that stood in its way.

By reason of these and many other testimonies we have concluded as above shown: First, that the door by which Jesus entered the fold referred to was **the scriptures**. Second, that the "fold" was the body of worshipers under the Jewish code at Jerusalem. Third, that Jesus closed that door behind him and thereby terminated the Mosaic economy, and following the work of the Elias—John the Baptist—who was God's messenger or porter to prepare his way before him in that closing work, and in introducing him as the mediator of the new covenant he himself became the door, proved himself to be the true shepherd, the living way—and was justified in proclaiming as he did: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me."—John 14:6.

We can see a beauty and consistency in a holy conference being held between the outgoing and the incoming heads or mediators of two divine dispensations and the divine agent that operated in the transition, and also in the ministry of glory that attached the divine seal to the occurrence. We, of course, do not know all that was said; but the fulfillment dispensation was honored and the new one started under the divine seal. We see therein also a fulfillment of the promise made to the disciples six days before, as a result of which the testimony of

heavenly participation and approval is furnished through chosen witnesses to the world, and we are prepared to shout a loud **amen** to the words of one of those witnesses as found in 2 Peter 1: 16-18, to-wit:

“We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of HIS MAJESTY. For he received from God, the father, honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; and this voice came from heaven, we heard when we were with him in the holy mount.”

This signifies that Peter considered the transfiguration a fulfillment of Christ's promise to them which he made six days before it occurred. And the writer thinks so too.

As a fitting conclusion, I submit the statement of our blessed Lord himself when talking to those “other sheep” referred to by him: See Book of Nephi the Son of Nephi. Book of Mormon, large edition. Chapter 7: 2-10.

“He perceived there were some among them who marveled and wondered what he would concerning the law of Moses; for they understood not the saying that old things had passed away and that all things had become new. And he said unto them, Marvel not that I said unto you that old things had passed away and that all things have become new. Behold I say unto you, that the law is fulfilled that was given unto Moses. Behold I am he that gave the law, and I am he that covenanted with my people Israel. Therefore the law in me is fulfilled, for I have come to fulfill the law, therefore it hath an end . . . the law which was given unto Moses hath an end in me. Behold I am the law and the light; look unto me and endure unto the end and ye shall live, for unto him that endureth to the end will I give eternal life. Behold I have given unto you the commandments; therefore keep my commandments.”

In conclusion let me tell you that the issuance of this document is an effort to discharge an obligation that dawned upon me when in answer to earnest supplication my mind was illuminated with the interpretation I have here given and the volume of supportive scriptures added. However the reading of it may impress others, to me it is the partial payment of a debt I owe my Lord. He made me his minister and representative sixty-four years ago. The meaning and significance of that commission has grown on me through the years that have followed, and to truly represent my Lord when handling the material he entrusted me with has made me hesitate in accepting and applying everything because others before me have done so.

I am now eighty-seven years old, but never was I more anxious than now to be certain that I am representing Christ rather than some theory that has become popular regarding him and the meaning of his utterances, and it matters not whether my discussion is with his bitterest enemies or against the errors of his dearest friends.

JOSEPH LUFF.