



rending the veil of darkness and looking upon the face of god

dc 38.<sup>7-9</sup>

<sup>7</sup>But behold, verily, verily, I say unto you that mine eyes are upon you. I am in your midst and ye cannot see me; <sup>8</sup>but the day soon cometh that ye shall see me, and know that I am; for the veil of darkness shall soon be rent, and he that is not purified shall not abide the day. <sup>9</sup>Wherefore, gird up your loins and be prepared. Behold, the kingdom is yours, and the enemy shall not overcome.

God wants to be known. He wants to be understood. He wants to be seen for who He is. It has been many millennia since God extended His invitation to the Psalmist:

“Seek ye my face.”<sup>1</sup>

The Psalmist not only heard the invitation, but he also cherished and responded to it.

“My heart said unto thee, “Thy face, LORD, will I seek.”<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, in response to this invitation, the Psalmist confesses that,

“I had fainted,  
unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD  
in the land of the living.”<sup>3</sup>

As today’s passage indicates, God remains committed to being known and seen. Indeed, He reminds us of this commitment and extends invitations over and over again in the Doctrine and

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<sup>1</sup> Psalm 27.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Psalm 27.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Psalm 27.<sup>13</sup>

Covenants.

“And again, verily I say unto you that it is your privilege, and a promise I give unto you that have been ordained unto this ministry, that inasmuch as you strip yourselves from jealousies and fears, and humble yourselves before me, for ye are not sufficiently humble, the veil shall be rent and you shall see me and know that I am—not with the carnal neither natural mind, but with the spiritual.”<sup>4</sup>

“Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God...”<sup>5</sup>

“Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will. Remember the great and last promise which I have made unto you...”<sup>6</sup>

But there is a veil that keeps us from understanding, knowing, and seeing God. It is a “veil of darkness.” Darkness covers and fills the mind. In order to understand, know, and see God, that veil; that darkness must be “rent.”

“To rend” is an intense word. It is something more than tearing or parting. And it is not accomplished lightly. “To rend” usually involves a “strong force,” even “sudden violence.” This reminds us that the “veil of darkness” that covers and fills our minds is not as thin as we might want to think and is not as easily removed as we might wish. The veil is thick and heavy, extraordinarily opaque. By such a veil, the children of Israel, when extended the invitation to understand, know, and see God’s face, “hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> DC 67.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> DC 84.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>6</sup> DC 88.<sup>68-69</sup>

<sup>7</sup> DC 84.<sup>24</sup>

God's most powerful and clearest attempt to make Himself known, understood, and seen came in the person of Jesus Christ. God was, in Christ introducing and revealing Himself. It was an aggressive intrusion of the brightest of lights into the deepest of darkness. If you do not believe it was aggressive, just have a look at the extremes to which the darkness went to squelch the light. This darkened world acted aggressively, even going so far as to kill Jesus, eradicate the light.

With Jesus' death, God did not give up the desire or effort of making Himself known, understood, and seen. He is nothing, if not enduring. What has been called "Mormonism" represents but one more in a long line of attempts to rend the veil of darkness; to infuse light into the human mind, heart, and soul. God has flashed a good bit of light in the sections of the Doctrine and Covenants that come before this 38<sup>th</sup> section. But, I submit, with the command to "go to the Ohio" found in DC 37 and the initial directions for the establishment of Zion—the kind and character of place God inhabits—God ups the ante and infuses a more concentrated light than He had previously provided in the Doctrine and Covenants.

The first generation of Mormons fared no better than the ancient Israelites in responding to the invitation to rend the "veil of darkness" and, like their progenitor, Abraham, look "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."<sup>8</sup> Like the ancient Israelites before them, those first latter-day Israelites "hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence." Among the many shortcomings of those latter-day Israelites,

"were jarrings, and contentions, and envyings, and strifes, and lustful and covetous desires among them; therefore by these things they polluted their inheritances."<sup>9</sup>

Looking nothing remotely like God, those latter-day Israelites could not hope to look upon God.

It would be nice if we could do and be better. But there is little to recommend us as doing or being better than those who preceded us. The veil of darkness still holds a powerful sway over our minds. Here's to having another look, not only at DC 38, but at all those sections of the

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<sup>8</sup> Hebrews 11.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> DC 101.<sup>6</sup>

Doctrine and Covenants that contain the playbook for establishing Zion, “where God’s full presence shines.”<sup>10</sup>

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

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<sup>10</sup> LDS Hymn, “How Great the Wisdom and the Love.”