

cellence in faithfulness that their CALLING AND ELECTION are made sure (cf. 2 Pet. 1:10). These become “the elect according to the covenant” (JS—M 1:22) and are made partakers of the same eternal reward that was extended to Abraham. That is, they are assured of EXALTATION in God’s presence with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Luke 13:28; D&C 132:29–32, 37).

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ELIAS

Elias is both a name and a title and has four meanings: (1) Elias was a man, presumably of Abraham’s time, who “committed the dispensation of Abraham”—which included the blessings of God’s covenant with Abraham—to the Prophet Joseph SMITH and Oliver COWDERY on April 3, 1836, in the KIRTLAND TEMPLE (D&C 110:12); nothing more is known about this man. (2) “Elias” appears in the New Testament as the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew name ELIJAH (e.g., Matt. 17:3; James 5:17–18). (3) A forerunner in building God’s kingdom is called “an Elias” (*TPJS*, pp. 335–36). (4) A prophet who helps restore something of particular importance is also referred to as an “Elias” (cf. JST Matt. 17:13–14). In scripture, therefore, the name Elias may refer to a preparer, a forerunner, a restorer, to Elias himself, or to Elijah.

Individuals who have acted as forerunners or restorers include Jesus Christ (JST John 1:21–28); Noah as Gabriel (D&C 27:6–7; *TPJS*, p. 157); John the Baptist (Luke 1:17); John the Revelator (D&C 77:9, 14); Adam as Michael, Moroni₂, and Peter, James, and John (D&C 27:5–13; 128:20–21); and Joseph Smith (D&C 1:17–18; *TPJS*, p. 335). Each of these may be considered an Elias.

Preparatory work in the Church is primarily associated with the AARONIC PRIESTHOOD; but when performed by the MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD, it is done under the spirit and power of Elijah (*TPJS*, pp. 336–37). In this connection, the keys given by Elias in the Kirtland Temple (D&C 110:12) were specifically for the ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

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ELIAS, SPIRIT OF

The “spirit of Elias” is a LDS concept that refers to the preparatory power that initiates gospel RESTORATION following periods of APOSTASY. The Prophet Joseph SMITH explained, “The spirit of Elias is to prepare the way for a greater revelation of God, which is the Priesthood of Elias, or the Priesthood unto which Aaron was ordained. And when God sends a man into the world to prepare for a greater work, holding the keys of the power of Elias, it was called the doctrine of Elias, even from the early ages of the world. . . . We find the Apostles endowed with greater power than John [the Baptist]: their office was more under the spirit and power of Elijah than Elias” (*TPJS*, pp. 335–36).

JOHN THE BAPTIST was the forerunner of Jesus Christ in the MERIDIAN OF TIME (Matt. 11:12–14; 17:12; JST John 1:21–24). He “was ordained by the angel of God . . . to make straight the way of the Lord before the face of his people, to prepare them for the coming of the Lord” (D&C 84:28). By authority of the AARONIC PRIESTHOOD, John preached repentance and baptism for the remission of sins, in preparation for the coming of one mightier who would baptize with the HOLY GHOST.

On May 15, 1829, John the Baptist, as a resurrected being, ordained Joseph Smith and Oliver COWDERY to the Aaronic Priesthood preparatory to Christ’s SECOND COMING. Describing this ordination, Joseph Smith stated:

An angel . . . laid his hands upon my head, and ordained me to a Priest after the order of Aaron, and to hold the keys of this Priesthood, which office was to preach repentance and baptism for the remission of sins, and also to baptize. But I was informed that this office did not extend to the laying on of hands for the giving of the Holy Ghost; that office was a greater work, and was to be given afterward; but that my ordination was a preparatory work, or a going before, which was the spirit of Elias [*TPJS*, p. 335].

Later, PETER, JAMES, and JOHN conferred upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery the MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD (D&C 27:12), and still later (April 3, 1836) ELIJAH conferred additional keys upon them (D&C 110:13–16).

Joseph Smith further explained:

The spirit of Elias is first, Elijah second, and Messiah last. Elias is a forerunner to prepare the way,