

LESSON 9
“The Only True and Living Church”
D&C 20:1-36, 68-69, 75-79; 21: 27; 115:1-4; Our Heritage, pages 14-16

OVERVIEW:

The Church is organized in the latter-days. The Lord commands Church members to follow the prophet. The Lord encourages Church members to meet together often to partake of the sacrament. The Lord explains the duties of Church members.

Section 20 is called the Constitution of the Church. (Sections 20-22 can be called the “constitution” of the Restored Church. But by length and intent, this title really belongs to Section 20, with the following sections as valuable amendments. Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Studies in Scripture*, 1:109. In the months prior to 6 April 1830, and probably as early as late 1829, Joseph and Oliver had been writing down their various instructions from the Lord concerning the duties of the Church members. An early draft of Doctrine and Covenants 20 was written in late 1829 by Oliver Cowdery and ends with the notation, “Written in the year of our Lord & Saviour 1829 – A True Copy of the articles of the Church of Christ. O.C.” Woodford, *Historical Development* 1:290 “Priesthood Restoration Documents.” This document is in regard to the commandment given in D&C 18: 1 NOW, behold, because of the thing which you, my servant Oliver Cowdery, have desired to know of me, I give unto you these words: 2 Behold, I have ^amanifested unto you, by my Spirit in many instances, that the ^bthings which you have written are ^ctrue; (the Book of Mormon) wherefore you know that they are true. 3 And if you know that they are true, behold, I give unto you a commandment, that you ^arely upon the things which are ^bwritten; Much of Section 20 will be taken from the Book of Mormon.)

There is no information about the duties of an apostle, high priest or seventy in Section 20. This will come later as needed with the growth of the Church in Section 107. Section 20 was read out loud at many of the general conferences of the Church in its early history.)

SCRIPTURES:

THE DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS
SECTION 20

Revelation on Church Organization and Government, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, April 1830. HC 1: 64—70. Preceding his record of this revelation the Prophet wrote: “We obtained of him [Jesus Christ] the following, by the spirit of prophecy and revelation; which not only gave us much information, but also pointed out to us the precise day upon which, according to his will and commandment, we should proceed to organize his Church once more here upon the earth.” (Joseph received a revelation on which day to organize the Church. On 26 March 1830 the Book of Mormon went on public sale. Eleven days later, on 6 April 1830, the Church was organized.)

1—16, The Book of Mormon proves the divinity of the latter-day work; 17—29, The doctrines of creation, fall, atonement, and baptism are affirmed; 29—37, Laws governing repentance, justification, sanctification, and baptism are set forth; 38—67, Duties of elders, priests, teachers, and deacons are summarized; 68—74, Duties of members, blessing of children, and mode of baptism are revealed; 75—84, Sacramental prayers and regulations governing church membership are given.

1 THE ^arise of the ^bChurch of Christ in these last days, being one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the ^ccoming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh, (April 6, 1830, is a particularly significant date because it commemorates not only the anniversary of the organization of The Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in this dispensation, but also the anniversary of the birth of the Savior, our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. Harold B. Lee, CR, Apr 1973, p. 4. We believe April 6th to be the birthday of Jesus Christ, as indicated in a revelation of the present dispensation already cited [Sec. 20:1; 21:3], in which that day is made without qualification the completion of the one thousand eight hundred and thirtieth year since the coming of the Lord in the flesh. This acceptance is admittedly based on faith in modern revelation, and in no wise is set forth as the result of chronological research or analysis. We believe that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea, April 6, B.C. 1. (Jesus the Christ, 1916, pp. 102-4.) Is this revelation giving the year the church was organized, or is it making a statement about the year of the Lord's birth? Some believe this phrase means that the church was organized exactly 1830 years since Jesus was born. This would place the birth of the Lord on April 6, 1 B.C. (See Jesus the Christ, 97) "Does this give the exact year of Christ's birth? That calculation places too much weight on what may have been an elaborate phrase of dating or an incidental statement. The first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants Commentary (Hyrum M. Smith) cautioned against using this to prove that Christ was born at the exact beginning of the Christian Era; so have Bible scholars J. Reuben Clark and Bruce R. McConkie. Part of the problem is that Christ was alive at the death of Herod the Great, an event of 4 B.C. in careful chronologies." (Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson, eds., Studies in Scripture, Vol. 1: The Doctrine and Covenants [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1989], 114 - 115.) From The Encyclopedia of Mormonism: "Concerning the date of Christ's birth...Scholarly consensus recognizes that early Christians probably appropriated December 25 from pagan festivals such as the Dies Natalis Invicti, established by the Emperor Aurelian (cf. Hoehner, pp. 11-27). Controversy, ancient and modern, regarding that date has had little influence in the LDS community (see Christmas). Presidents of the Church, including Harold B. Lee (p. 2) and Spencer W. Kimball (p. 54), have reaffirmed that April 6 is the true anniversary of Christ's birth, but have encouraged Church members to join with other Christians in observing Christmas as a special day for remembering Jesus' birth and teachings. "Some discussion has centered on the actual year of Jesus' nativity. Some argue that the phrase 'one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh' ("D&C 20:1) should be interpreted to mean that Christ was born exactly 1,830 years before April 6, 1830 (Lefgren). This view has been both challenged (Brown et al., pp. 375-83) and supported (Pratt, pp. 252-54). Others assert that the phrase was not intended to fix the year of Christ's birth but was simply an oratorical mode of expressing the current year. "...The LDS Church has not taken an official position on the issue of the year of Christ's birth. Bruce R. McConkie, an apostle, offers what for the present appears to be the most definitive word on the question: 'We do not believe it is possible with the present state of our knowledge—including that which is known both in and out of the Church—to state with finality when the natal day of the Lord Jesus actually occurred' (Vol. 1, p. 349, n. 2)." (Encyclopedia of Mormonism, 1-4 vols., edited by Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 1:62.) it being regularly ^dorganized and established agreeable to the ^elaws of our country, by the will and commandments of God, in the fourth month, and on the sixth day of the month which is called April— (The six who were the first members of the Church were Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Peter Whitmer, Jr., Samuel H. Smith, and David Whitmer. CH 1:76)

2 Which commandments were given to Joseph Smith, Jun., who was ^acalled of God, and ^bordained an ^capostle of Jesus Christ, to be the ^dfirst ^eelder of this church; (Their designation as first and second elders had nothing to do with the sequence of their ordination, but rather with their authority. A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants, 1:130. If Joseph and Oliver were already apostles, why did they have to be ordained Elders? "President Joseph Fielding Smith explained why Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery ordained each other elders nearly a year after they had received the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood: 'The priesthood is greater than the office, and all offices in the priesthood, we are taught, are appendages to the priesthood [see D&C 107:5: All other authorities or offices in the church are ^aappendages to this priesthood.]. ... The priesthood with its keys existed before the Church organization, but not the offices in the Church, which belong to the Church and are held by the consent of the same.' That Joseph and

Oliver had previously received the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood under the hands of Peter, James, and John is further affirmed by the proceedings of the organizational meeting held on 6 April 1830. Without those keys, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery would not have been authorized or would not have had the priesthood power to take the actions they took on that day. Although each already had received the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood and apostolic authority, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery ordained each other to be an elder to ‘signify that they were elders in the newly organized Church.’ They then used the higher priesthood to confirm those who had previously been baptized members of the Church and conferred upon them the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. Of that occasion the Prophet stated, ‘The Holy Ghost was poured out upon us to a very great degree—some prophesied, whilst we all praised the Lord, and rejoiced exceedingly.’” (Larry C. Porter, “The Restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1996, 33-34))

3 And to Oliver Cowdery, who was also called of God, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to be the ^asecond elder of this church, and ordained under his hand; (Orson F. Whitney: What!—exclaims one. After these men had communed with heavenly beings and received from them commandments for their guidance; after receiving divine authority to preach the gospel, administer the ordinances, and establish once more on earth the long absent Church of Christ! After all this must they go before the people and ask their consent to organize them and preside over them as a religious body? Yes, that was precisely the situation. Notwithstanding all those glorious manifestations, they were not yet fully qualified to hold the high positions unto which they had been divinely called. One element was lacking—the consent of the people. Until that consent was given, there could be no church with these people as its members and those men as its presiding authorities. [Sec. 26:2. And all things shall be done by ^acommon consent in the ^bchurch, by much prayer and faith, for all things you shall receive by faith. Amen] The Great Ruler of all never did and never will force upon any of his people, in branch, ward, stake or Church capacity, a presiding officer whom they are not willing to accept and uphold. But suppose it had been otherwise. Suppose the brethren in question had their hands against instead of for them. What would have been the result? Would such action have taken from Joseph and Oliver their Priesthood or their gifts and powers as seers, prophets and revelators of the Most High? No. Any more than it would have blotted out the fact that Joseph had seen God, and that he and Oliver had communed with angels sent from heaven to ordain them. Their brethren had not given them the Priesthood, had not made them prophets and seers, and they would remain such regardless of any adverse action on the part of their associates. The Gospel, the Priesthood, the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven are not within the gift of the membership of the Church. They are bestowed by the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, in person or by proxy, and without his consent no power on earth or under the earth could take them away. But if the vote had been unfavorable, this would have resulted: The brethren and sisters who were waiting to be admitted into the Church would have closed the door in their own faces, would have cut themselves off from a most precious privilege, would have deprived themselves of the inestimable benefits flowing from the exercise of the gifts and powers possessed by the men divinely commissioned to inaugurate this great Latter-day work; and they could have gone elsewhere, and under divine direction, have organized the Church of Christ among any people worthy to constitute its membership and willing that these men should be their leaders. But the vote was in their favor, thank the Lord! and we who are here today are among the beneficiaries of that act of faith and humility. (CR, October 1930, pp. 46-47.))

4 And this according to the ^agrace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be all glory, both now and forever. Amen.

5 After it was truly manifested unto this first elder that he had received a ^aremission of his sins, (Joseph received a remission of his sins as part of the First Vision experience. This shows that Joseph was a typical teenager.) he was ^bentangled again in the ^cvanities of the world;

6 But after ^arepenting, and humbling himself sincerely, through faith, God ministered unto him by an holy ^bangel, (The visits of Moroni) whose ^ccountenance was as lightning, and whose garments were pure and white above all other whiteness;

7 And gave unto him ^acommandments which inspired him;

8 And ^agave him power from on high, by the ^bmeans (Urim and Thummim) which were before prepared, to translate the Book of Mormon;

9 Which contains a ^arecord of a fallen people, and the ^bfulness of the ^cgospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles and to the Jews also;

10 Which was given by inspiration, and is confirmed to ^aothers by the ministering of angels, and is ^bdeclared unto the world by them— (The three witnesses)

11 Proving to the world that the holy scriptures are ^atrue, (One of the purposes of the Book of Mormon is to show that the Bible is true.) and that God does ^binspire men and call them to his ^choly work in this age and generation, as well as in generations of old; (Here we are told that one of the primary purposes of the Book of Mormon is to prove that the Bible is true. This same message was given to Joseph of Egypt when the Lord told him of the mission and ministry of the Prophet Joseph Smith. "Unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins," the ancient Joseph was told, "and not to the bringing forth of my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them in the last days" (JST Genesis 50:30 And again, a seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins, and unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins; and not to the bringing forth of my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them in the last days; 2 Nephi 3:11 But a ^aseer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and unto him will I give ^bpower to ^cbring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins—and not to the bringing forth my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them.). Curiously, it is a common practice among Latter- day Saint missionaries to attempt to prove the Book of Mormon is true using Bible texts. In contrast, the Lord directs that we do the reverse, showing to those not of our faith how the Book of Mormon proves the Bible true. It is the knowledge and testimony restored to us through the Book of Mormon that unlock the greatness of the Bible. Revelations of the Restoration, p. 158. Friends and Brethren, My name is Cowdery, Oliver Cowdery. In the early history of this Church I stood identified with her, and one of her councils. . . . I wrote, with my own pen, the entire Book of Mormon (save a few pages) as it fell from the lips of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as he translated it by the gift and power of God, by the means of the Urim and Thummim, or, as it is called by that book, "holy interpreters." I beheld with my eyes, and handled with my hands, the gold plates from which it was transcribed. I also saw with my eyes and handled with my hands the "holy interpreters." That book is true. Sidney Rigdon did not write it; Mr. Spaulding did not write it; I wrote it myself as it fell from the lips of the Prophet. It contains the Everlasting Gospel, and came forth to the children of men in fulfillment of the revelations of John, where he says he saw an angel come with the Everlasting Gospel to preach to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. [Rev. 14:6-7. 6 And I saw another ^aangel fly in the midst of heaven, having the ^beverlasting ^cgospel to ^dpreach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every ^enation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, 7 Saying with a loud voice, ^aFear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his ^bjudgment is come: and ^cworship ^dhim that made ^eheaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.] It contains principles of salvation; and if you, my hearers, will walk by its light and obey its precepts, you will be saved with an everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God on high. Brother [Orson] Hyde has just said that it is very important that we keep and walk in the true channel, in order to avoid the sand-bars. This is true. The channel is here. The Holy Priesthood is here. (MS, January 28, 1865, 27:57-58.))

12 Thereby showing that he is the ^asame God yesterday, today, and ^bforever. Amen.

13 Therefore, having so great witnesses, (The Three and Eight Witnesses) by ^athem shall the world be judged, even as many as shall hereafter come to a knowledge of this work. (Orson Pratt: Were there any others who saw these plates [of the Book of Mormon]? Yes. How many? Eight; all of whom are dead except one, John Whitmer, who is still living. (Mary Whitmer also saw the plates.) They saw and handled the plates, and saw the engravings upon them, and they testify of the same to all people to

whom the work should be sent. How many does this make? Three witnesses, eight witnesses and the translator, twelve who saw and bare record of the original. Now I ask everyone in this house, Saints and strangers, have you as many witnesses that have seen the original of any one book of the Bible, the Old and New Testament? Have you one witness even that has seen the original from which any one of those books was transcribed? No, not one. You have the transcription of scribes from generation to generation; you have the translation from these manuscripts handed down from generation to generation, and transcribed one copy after another, until they have passed through, perhaps, thousands of copies, before the art of printing was known. But you believe the Bible, do you not? Replies one—"oh yes, we believe that, but as to the Book of Mormon we doubt very much about that." JD, 18:162. We also become witnesses of the truth of the restored gospel.)

14 And those who receive it in faith, and work ^arighteousness, shall receive a ^bcrown of eternal life;
15 But those who ^aharden their hearts in ^bunbelief, and ^creject it, it shall turn to their own ^dcondemnation—

16 For the Lord God has spoken it; and we, the elders of the church, have heard and bear ^awitness to the words of the glorious Majesty on high, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

17 By these things (The Book of Mormon and the witnesses) we ^aknow that there is a ^bGod in heaven, who is infinite and ^ceternal, from everlasting to everlasting the same ^dunchangeable God, the framer of heaven and earth, and all things which are in them; (Bruce R. McConkie: The three greatest events that ever have occurred or ever will occur in all eternity are these: 1. The creation of the heavens and the earth, of man, and of all forms of life; 2. The fall of man, of all forms of life, and of the earth itself from their primeval and paradisiacal state to their present mortal state; and 3. The infinite and eternal atonement, which ransoms man, all living things, and the earth also from their fallen state so that the salvation of the earth and of all living things may be completed. These three divine events—the three pillars of eternity—are inseparably woven together into one grand tapestry known as the eternal plan of salvation. We view the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ as the center and core and heart of revealed religion. It brings to pass the immortality and eternal life of man... It is not possible to believe in Christ and his atoning sacrifice, in the true and full sense required to gain salvation, without at the same time believing and accepting the true doctrine of the fall. If there had been no fall, there would have been no need for a Redeemer or Savior. And it is not possible to believe in the fall, out of which immortality and eternal life come, without at the same time believing and accepting the true doctrine of the creation: If there had been no creation of all things in a deathless or immortal state, there could have been no fall, and hence no atonement and no salvation. The Father's eternal plan called for the creation, for the fall, and for the atonement, all woven together into one united whole. (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 82.))

18 And that he ^acreated man, male and female, after his own ^bimage and in his own likeness, created he them; (The Creation)

19 And gave unto them commandments that they should ^alove and ^bserve him, the only ^cliving and true ^dGod, and that he should be the only being whom they should worship.

20 But by the ^atransgression of these holy laws man became ^bsensual and ^cdevilish, and became ^dfallen man. (The Fall)

21 Wherefore, the Almighty God gave his ^aOnly Begotten Son, as it is written in those scriptures which have been given of him.

22 He ^asuffered ^btemptations but gave no heed unto them. (Neal A. Maxwell: Though He was thus perfected in His empathy because He bore our mistakes, Jesus' own response to the common challenges of temptation that faced Him was not only uncommon, it was utterly unique. His immensely important, but simple, key was: "He suffered temptations *but gave no heed unto them.*" (D&C 20:22. Italics added.) What a grand yet practical insight! Some of us process the same temptations time and time again, letting them linger and savoring them, and thereby strengthening our impulse to sin and weakening our will to resist—rather than dispatching the temptations summarily as Jesus did when He "gave no heed." Giving

no heed includes recognizing for what it is an inducement to do wrong and refusing to consider it further. There is great strength in reflexive rejection and in refusing to spend any of our time, talent, thought, or treasure in hosting a temptation, which is enlarged by any attention given to it. (We Will Prove Them Herewith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 43 - 44.)

23 He was ^acrucified, ^bdied, and ^crose again the third day;

24 And ^aascended into heaven, to sit down on the right hand of the ^bFather, to ^creign with almighty power according to the will of the Father; (The Atonement)

25 That as many as would ^abelieve and be baptized in his holy name, and ^bendure in faith to the end, should be saved—

26 Not only those who believed after he came in the ^ameridian of time, in the ^bflesh, but all those from the beginning, even as many as were before he came, who believed in the words of the holy prophets, who ^cspake as they were inspired by the ^dgift of the Holy Ghost, who truly ^etestified of him in all things, should have eternal life,

27 As well as those who should come after, who should believe in the ^agifts and callings of God by the Holy Ghost, which ^bbearth record of the Father and of the Son; (Joseph Smith said: "For our own part we cannot believe that the ancients in all ages were so ignorant of the system of heaven as many suppose, since all that were ever saved, were saved through the power of this great plan of redemption, as much before the coming of Christ as since; if not, God has had different plans in operation (if we may so express it), to bring men back to dwell with Himself; and this we cannot believe, since there has been no change in the constitution of man since he fell; and the ordinance or institution of offering blood in sacrifice was only designed to be performed till Christ was offered up and shed His blood—as said before— that man might look forward in faith to that time. It will be noticed that, according to Paul, (Galatians 3:8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the ^aheathen through faith, preached before the ^bgospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all ^cnations be ^dblessed.) the Gospel was preached to Abraham. We would like to be informed in what name the Gospel was then preached, whether it was in the name of Christ or some other name. If in any other name, was it the Gospel? And if it was the Gospel, and that preached in the name of Christ, had it any ordinances? If not, was it the Gospel? And if it has ordinances what were they? Our friends may say, perhaps, that there were never any ordinances except those of offering sacrifices before the coming of Christ, and that it could not be possible before the Gospel to have been administered while the law of sacrifices of blood was in force. But we will recollect that Abraham offered sacrifice, and notwithstanding this, had the Gospel preached to him. That the offering of sacrifice was only to point the mind forward to Christ, we infer from these remarkable words of Jesus to the Jews: 'Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad' (John 8:56). So, then, because the ancients offered sacrifice it did not hinder their hearing the Gospel; but served, as we said before, to open their eyes, and enable them to look forward to the time of the coming of the Savior, and rejoice in His redemption. We find also, that when the Israelites came out of Egypt they had the Gospel preached to them, according to Paul in his letter to the Hebrews, which says: 'For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it' (Hebrews 4:2). It is said again, in Galatians 3: 19 ^aWherefore then *serveth* the law? It was ^badded because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.), that the law (of Moses, or the Levitical law) was 'added' because of transgression. What, we ask, was this law added to, if it was not added to the Gospel? It must be plain that it was added to the Gospel, since we learn that they had the Gospel preached to them. From these few facts, we conclude that 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. And this they have done, thousands who have gone before us, whose garments are spotless, and who are, like Job, waiting with an assurance like his, that they will see Him in the latter day upon the earth, even in their flesh" (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 59-61).

Revelations of the Restoration, p. 161-62)

28 Which Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are ^aone God, infinite and eternal, without end. Amen. (Joseph Fielding Smith: It is perfectly true, as recorded in the Pearl of Great Price and in the Bible, that to us there is but one God. [Moses 1:6; And I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; and thou art in the ^asimilitude of mine ^bOnly ^cBegotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the ^dSavior, for he is full of ^egrace and ^ftruth; but there is ^gno God beside me, and all things are present with me, for I ^hknow them all. Mark 12:32. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:] Correctly interpreted, God in this sense means Godhead, for it is composed of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This Godhead presides over us, and to us, the inhabitants of this world, they constitute the only God, or Godhead. There is none other besides them. [1 Cor. 8:5-6. 5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) 6 But to us *there is but* one ^aGod, the ^bFather, of whom *are* all things, and we in him; and one ^cLord Jesus Christ, by whom *are* ^dall things, and we by him.] To them we are amenable and subject to their authority, and there is no other Godhead unto whom we are subject. However, as the Prophet has shown, there can be, and are, other Gods. [Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pp. 369-74. See also John 10:34-36: 34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are ^agods? 35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; 36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath ^asanctified, and ^bsent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the ^cSon of God?; Ps. 82:6: I have said, Ye *are* gods; and all of you *are* ^achildren of the most High..] (Answers to Gospel Questions, 1958, 2:142.))

29 And we know that all men must ^arepent and ^bbelieve on the name of Jesus Christ, and worship the Father in his name, and ^cendure in ^dfaith on his name to the end, or they cannot be ^esaved in the kingdom of God.

30 And we know that ^ajustification (**being declared innocent**) through the ^bgrace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true; (There cannot be a kingdom of God without a system of government and laws. To hold citizenship in that kingdom we must abide by the laws of that kingdom. We are justified when we have complied with the requirements of the law. If our actions are in question, we are justified if those actions, as judged by God, are ratified or approved. Thus we stand innocent or vindicated by the law. The purpose of this verse is to sustain the necessity of the laws and ordinances of the gospel. It is to affirm that the grace of Christ does not dispense with the necessity of obedience to the laws of God. Rather, it states that in and through the atonement of Christ all may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel (Article of Faith 3: We believe that through the ^aAtonement of Christ, all ^bmankind may be ^csaved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 163 Bruce R. McConkie: What then is the law of justification? It is simply this: "All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations" (D. & C. 132:7: And verily I say unto you, that the ^aconditions of this law are these: All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, ^boaths, ^cvows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into and ^dsealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, of him who is ^eanointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by ^frevelation and commandment through the medium of mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this ^gpower (and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to hold this ^hpower in the last days, and there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the ⁱkeys of this priesthood are conferred), are of no efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead.), in which men must abide to be saved and exalted, must be entered into and performed in righteousness so that the Holy Spirit can justify the candidate for salvation in what has been done. (1 Ne. 16:2 And it came to pass that I said unto them that I knew that I had spoken ^ahard things against the wicked, according to the truth; and the righteous have I justified, and testified that they should be lifted up at the last day; wherefore, the ^bguilty taketh the ^ctruth to be hard, for it ^dcutteth them to the very center.; Jac. 2:13-14: 13 And the hand of providence hath

smiled upon you most pleasingly, that you have obtained many riches; and because some of you have obtained more abundantly than that of your brethren ye are ^alifted up in the pride of your hearts, and wear stiff necks and high heads because of the costliness of your apparel, and persecute your brethren because ye suppose that ye are better than they. 14 And now, my brethren, do ye suppose that God justifieth you in this thing? Behold, I say unto you, Nay. But he condemneth you, and if ye persist in these things his judgments must speedily come unto you.; Alma 41:15: For that which ye do ^asend out shall return unto you again, and be restored; therefore, the word restoration more fully condemneth the sinner, and justifieth him not at all.; D. & C. 98; 132:1, 62.) An act that is justified by the Spirit is one that is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, or in other words, ratified and approved by the Holy Ghost. This law of justification is the provision the Lord has placed in the gospel to assure that no unrighteous performance will be binding on earth and in heaven, and that no person will add to his position or glory in the hereafter by gaining an unearned blessing. As with all other doctrines of salvation, justification is available because of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, but it becomes operative in the life of an individual only on conditions of personal righteousness. As Paul taught, men are not justified by the works of the Mosaic law alone any more than men are saved by those works alone. The grace of God, manifest through the infinite and eternal atonement wrought by his Son, makes justification a living reality for those who seek righteousness. (Isa. 53:11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his ^aknowledge shall my righteous ^bservant ^cjustify many; for he shall ^dbear their iniquities.; Mosiah 14:11 He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall ^abear their iniquities.) Mormon Doctrine, p. 408)

31 And we know also, that ^asanctification (**To be made holy**) through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true, to all those who ^blove and serve God with all their ^cmights, minds, and strength. (Through the grace of Christ those who have been justified can be cleansed from sin and be made holy. The text extends this promise to those who serve God with all their might, mind, and strength. Sanctification comes through the Holy Ghost, who purges from the souls of men both the desire for sin and its dreadful effects (Alma 13:12 Now they, after being ^asanctified by the ^bHoly Ghost, having their garments made white, being ^cpure and spotless before God, could not look upon ^dsin save it were with ^eabhorrence; and there were many, exceedingly great many, who were made pure and entered into the rest of the Lord their God.). Teaching this principle, the scriptures repeatedly speak of the necessity of our being baptized not only by water but by "fire and by the Holy Ghost" (2 Nephi 31:17 Wherefore, do the things which I have told you I have seen that your Lord and your Redeemer should do; for, for this cause have they been shown unto me, that ye might know the gate by which ye should enter. For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and ^abaptism by water; and then cometh a ^bremission of your sins by fire and by the Holy Ghost.; see also 31:13 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I know that if ye shall ^afollow the Son, with full purpose of heart, acting no ^bhypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real ^cintent, repenting of your sins, witnessing unto the Father that ye are ^dwilling to take upon you the ^ename of Christ, by ^fbaptism—yea, by following your Lord and your Savior down into the water, according to his word, behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost; yea, then cometh the ^gbaptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost; and then can ye speak with the ^htongue of angels, and shout praises unto the Holy One of Israel.; Luke 3:16 John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall ^abaptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.; 3 Nephi 9:20 And ye shall offer for a ^asacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I ^bbaptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not.; D&C 19:31 And of ^atenets thou shalt not talk, but thou shalt declare repentance and ^bfaith on the Savior, and ^cremission of sins by ^dbaptism, and by ^efire, yea, even the ^fHoly Ghost.; 33:11 Yea, ^arepent and be baptized, every one of you, for a ^bremission of your sins; yea, be baptized even by water, and then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost.; 39:6 And this is my ^agospel—

repentance and baptism by water, and then cometh the ^bbaptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, even the Comforter, which showeth all things, and ^cteacheth the peaceable things of the kingdom.). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 163-64. Brigham Young: I will put my own definition to the term sanctification, and say it consists in overcoming every sin and bringing all into subjection to the law of Christ. God has placed in us a pure spirit; when this reigns predominant, without let or hindrance, and triumphs over the flesh and rules and governs and controls as the Lord controls the heavens and the earth, this I call the blessing of sanctification. Will sin be perfectly destroyed? No, it will not, for it is not so designed in the economy of Heaven. All the Lord has called us to do is to renovate our own hearts, then our families, extending the principles to neighborhoods, to the earth we occupy, and so continue until we drive the power of Satan from the earth and Satan to his own place. That is the work Jesus is engaged in, and we will be co-workers with him. Do not suppose that we shall ever in the flesh be free from temptations to sin. Some suppose that they can in the flesh be sanctified body and spirit and become so pure that they will never again feel the effects of the power of the adversary of truth. Were it possible for a person to attain to this degree of perfection in the flesh, he could not die neither remain in a world where sin predominates. Sin has entered into the world, and death by sin. I think we shall more or less feel the effects of sin so long as we live, and finally have to pass the ordeals of death. JD, 10:173)

32 But there is a possibility that man may ^afall from ^bgrace and depart from the living God; ("As I understand this scripture [D&C 20:31-34] it means that Jesus Christ is kind and merciful to us when we serve him with our whole hearts, but not any of us can take refuge in past righteousness or service. It also means that there is a possibility that any one of us can fall out of good standing, even those who have already achieved a certain degree of righteousness. Therefore, we need to be on our constant guard, each of us, that we not allow ourselves to fall into habits of carelessness in our faith, in our prayers, or in our various Church activities or responsibilities. It is for this reason that I am resolving again to live closer to God each day and to follow his chosen prophets and apostles more diligently than I have ever done in the past." (Theodore M. Burton, Ensign, June 1974, p. 116.))

33 Therefore let the church take heed and pray always, lest they fall into ^atemptation; (Brigham Young said: "Do not suppose that we shall ever in the flesh be free from temptations to sin. Some suppose that they can in the flesh be sanctified body and spirit and become so pure that they will never again feel the effects of the power of the adversary of truth. Were it possible for a person to attain to this degree of perfection in the flesh, he could not die neither remain in a world where sin predominates. Sin has entered into the world, and death by sin. I think we shall more or less feel the effects of sin so long as we live, and finally have to pass the ordeals of death. Do not understand that in the flesh we shall ever overcome the power of sin to such a degree that we shall never taste death" (Journal of Discourses, 10:173). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 164)

34 Yea, and even let those who are ^asanctified take heed also.

35 And we know that these things are true and according to the revelations of John, neither ^aadding to, nor diminishing from the prophecy of his book, the holy scriptures, or the revelations of God which shall come hereafter by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, the ^bvoice of God, or the ministering of angels. (The Articles and Covenants of the Church, which we now know as sections 20 and 22, were read by the Prophet to those assembled at the first conference of the Church held 9 June 1830 at Fayette, New York. They became the first revelations received by Joseph Smith to be formally sustained by the body of the Church. The reading of these revelations became the practice at early Church conferences (Cannon and Cook, Far West Record, 2n). Zebedee Coltrin, Orson Hyde, A. Sidney Gilbert, Orson Pratt, and others had copies of the revelations that they used for this purpose (Woodford, "Historical Developments," 265). In order to do so these men had to make their own longhand copy of the revelations. As those copies are compared we find the same problem that existed in the meridian Church: no two were exactly the same. The possibility existed for those making their own copy of the revelation to add to or take from it. This verse comes as a warning, like that given to those of old (Revelation 22:18-19: 18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall ^aadd unto

these things, God shall add unto him the ^bplagues that are written in this book: 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the ^abook of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.), that they were neither to take from or add to the revelations. This does not suggest that the Prophet himself could not edit his own revelations. With the formal publication of the revelations in our day we are not in a position to add to or take from holy writ as was done anciently (1 Nephi 13:23-29: 23 And he said: Behold it proceedeth out of the mouth of a Jew. And I, Nephi, beheld it; and he said unto me: The ^abook that thou beholdest is a ^brecord of the ^cJews, which contains the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; and it also containeth many of the prophecies of the holy prophets; and it is a record like unto the engravings which are upon the ^dplates of brass, save there are not so many; nevertheless, they contain the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; wherefore, they are of great worth unto the Gentiles. 24 And the angel of the Lord said unto me: Thou hast beheld that the ^abook proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew; and when it proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew it contained the fulness of the gospel of the Lord, of whom the twelve apostles bear record; and they bear record according to the truth which is in the Lamb of God. 25 Wherefore, these things go forth from the ^aJews in purity unto the ^bGentiles, according to the truth which is in God. 26 And after they go forth by the ^ahand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews ^bunto the Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that ^cgreat and abominable ^dchurch, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have ^etaken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are ^fplain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away. 27 And all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord, that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men. 28 Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that there are many plain and ^aprecious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God. 29 And after these plain and precious things were ^ataken away it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles; and after it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles, yea, even across the many waters which thou hast seen with the Gentiles which have gone forth out of captivity, thou seest—because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book, which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, according to the plainness which is in the Lamb of God—because of these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them.). We can, however, add to or take from their intended meaning in the interpretation we place on them. All scriptural commentary is a measure of the spiritual maturity and integrity of those making it. The same, of course, is true of the manner in which we choose to apply the teachings of holy writ in our lives.

Revelations of the Restoration, p. 164-65)

36 And the Lord God has ^aspoken it; and honor, power and glory be rendered to his holy ^bname, both now and ever. Amen.

68 *The ^aduty of the members after they are received by ^bbaptism.*—The elders or priests are to have a sufficient time to expound all things concerning the church of Christ to their ^cunderstanding, previous to their partaking of the ^dsacrament (Should we prevent non-members from partaking of the sacrament?

The First Presidency: “The effort has always been made by the Brethren to avoid hurting the feelings of investigators in the matter of partaking of the sacrament and sometimes investigators do partake of the sacrament, but the Brethren have always felt that in view of the statement of the Savior in III Nephi 18:5 (And when the multitude had eaten and were filled, he said unto the Disciples: Behold there shall one be ^aordained among you, and to him will I give power that he shall ^bbreak ^cbread and bless it and give it unto the people of my ^dchurch, unto all those who shall believe and be baptized in my name.) the partaking of the sacrament by nonmembers is not only not authorized but has little or no real benefit for the non-member partaking of it. Some feel that there is implicit in the Savior's statement an inhibition against non-members partaking of the sacrament. However, the responsibility of partaking or not partaking rests with the individual.” (The Presiding Bishopric's Page, Improvement Era, 1952, Vol. Lv.

November, 1952. No. 11)) and being confirmed by the laying on of the ^chands of the elders, so that all things may be done in ^forder. (In our day, a person is taught prior to being baptized, instead of between baptism and confirmation.)

69 And the members shall manifest before the church, and also before the elders, by a ^agodly walk and conversation, (In Webster's 1828 Dictionary, conversation is defined as, the "general course of manners; behavior; deportment; especially as it respects morals.") that they are worthy of it, that there may be works and ^bfaith agreeable to the holy scriptures—walking in ^choliness before the Lord.

75 It is expedient that the church ^ameet together often to ^bpartake of ^cbread and wine in the ^dremembrance of the Lord Jesus;

76 And the elder or priest shall administer it; and after this ^amanner shall he administer it—he shall kneel with the church and call upon the Father in solemn prayer, saying: (Which scriptures are quoted the most frequently in the Church? Isn't it the Sacramental prayers. They are spoken every Sunday. Maybe there's a reason for that. Maybe these verses are so important that we need to hear them every week. Notice that both prayers are admonishing us to "remember" the Savior.)

77 O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this ^abread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and ^bwitness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing (Elder Dallin H. Oaks observed, "It is significant that when we partake of the sacrament we do not witness that we take upon us the name of Jesus Christ. We witness that we are willing to do so. . . . The fact that we only witness to our willingness suggests that something else must happen before we actually take that sacred name upon us in the most important sense. "What future event or events could this covenant contemplate? The scriptures suggest two sacred possibilities, one concerning the authority of God, especially as exercised in the temples, and the other—closely related—concerning exaltation in the celestial kingdom. . . . "Willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ can therefore be understood as willingness to take upon us the authority of Jesus Christ. According to this meaning, by partaking of the sacrament we witness our willingness to participate in the sacred ordinances of the temple and to receive the highest blessings available through the name and by the authority of the Savior when he chooses to confer them upon us" (Conference Report, April 1985, 102-3). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 170-71) to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his ^ccommandments which he has given them; that they may always have his ^dSpirit to be with them. Amen.

78 The ^amanner of administering the wine—he shall take the ^bcup also, and say:

79 O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this ^awine to the souls of all those who drink of it, that they may do it in remembrance of the blood of thy Son, which was shed for them; that they may witness (**testify**) unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they do always remember him, that they may have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.

SECTION 21

Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Fayette, New York, April 6, 1830. HC 1: 74—79. This revelation was given at the organization of the Church, on the date named, in the home of Peter Whitmer, Sen. Six men, who had previously been baptized, participated. (There were about 60 people in attendance at this meeting.) By unanimous vote these persons expressed their desire and determination to organize, according to the commandment of God; see Section 20. They also voted to accept and sustain Joseph Smith, Jun., and Oliver Cowdery as the presiding officers of the Church. With the laying on of hands, Joseph then ordained Oliver an elder of the Church; and Oliver similarly ordained Joseph. After administration of the sacrament, Joseph and Oliver laid hands upon the participants individually, for the bestowal of the Holy Ghost and for the confirmation of each as a member of the Church. (This is the first revelation given to the Church.)

1—3, Joseph Smith is called to be a seer, translator, prophet, apostle, and elder; 4—8, His word shall guide the cause of Zion; 9—12, The saints shall believe his words as he speaks by the Comforter.

1 BEHOLD, there shall be a ^arecord kept among you; and in it thou shalt be called a ^bseer, (In Old Testament times a prophet was called a seer, from the Hebrew re'eh, meaning "one who sees" (1 Samuel 9:9(Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to ^aenquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the ^bseer: for *he that is now called* a ^cProphet was beforetime called a ^dSeer.)). Contextually this definition carried the idea of seeing that which was hidden to others. The Hebrew hozen, meaning "one who sees a vision," was also translated "seer." Among Book of Mormon peoples a prophet was understood to be a man "chosen of God" to speak his words (Helaman 9:16And now it came to pass that the judges did expound the matter unto the people, and did cry out against Nephi, saying: Behold, we know that this Nephi must have agreed with some one to slay the judge, and then he might declare it unto us, that he might convert us unto his faith, that he might raise himself to be a great man, chosen of God, and a prophet.; Alma 5:11Behold, I can tell you—did not my father Alma believe in the words which were delivered by the ^amouth of Abinadi? And was he not a holy prophet? Did he not speak the words of God, and my father Alma believe them?). He was one to whom God had given great power and authority (Helaman 11:18 And behold, the people did rejoice and glorify God, and the whole face of the land was filled with rejoicing; and they did no more seek to destroy Nephi, but they did esteem him as a ^agreat prophet, and a man of God, having great power and authority given unto him from God.) to act in his name (Alma 19:4And she said unto him: The ^aservants of my husband have made it known unto me that thou art a ^bprophet of a holy God, and that thou hast ^cpower to do many mighty works in his name;). The Book of Mormon makes a clear distinction between a seer and a prophet. Ammon declares a seer to be greater than a prophet. By way of explanation he states: "A seer is a revelator and a prophet also; and a gift which is greater can no man have, except he should possess the power of God, which no man can; yet a man may have great power given him from God. But a seer can know of things which are past, and also of things which are to come, and by them shall all things be revealed, or, rather, shall secret things be made manifest, and hidden things shall come to light, and things which are not known shall be made known by them, and also things shall be made known by them which otherwise could not be known" (Mosiah 8:16-17: 16 And Ammon said that a seer is a revelator and a prophet also; and a gift which is greater can no man have, except he should possess the power of God, which no man can; yet a man may have great power given him from God. 17 But a seer can know of things which are past, and also of things which are to come, and by them shall all things be revealed, or, rather, shall secret things be made manifest, and hidden things shall come to light, and things which are not known shall be made known by them, and also things shall be made known by them which otherwise could not be known.). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 174-75) a translator (Joseph finished translating the Book of Mormon, now he is starting to translate the Bible. Joseph was the only latter-day prophet to be sustained as a translator.), a prophet, (Defining the office and call of a prophet, Anthony W. Ivins explained, "A careful study of the etymology of the word and of the lives, works and character of the prophets of old makes clear the fact that a prophet was, and is, one called to act as God's messenger. He is to teach men the character of God, and define and make known to the people, his will. He is to denounce sin, and declare the punishment of transgression. He is to be above all else a preacher of righteousness, and when the people depart from the path which he has marked out for them to follow, is to call them back to the true faith. He is an interpreter of the scripture, and declares its meaning and application. When future events are to be declared he predicts them, but his direct, and most important calling is to be a forth- teller, or director of present policy, rather than a foreteller of that which is to come" (Conference Report, October 1925, 20). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 175) an ^capostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ, (Every latter-day prophet serves at the will of the Father and the grace of Jesus Christ.)

2 Being ^ainspired of the Holy Ghost to lay the foundation thereof, and to ^bbuild it up unto the most holy

faith.

3 Which ^achurch was ^borganized and established in the year of your Lord eighteen hundred and thirty, in the fourth month, and on the sixth day of the month which is called April.

4 Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give ^aheed unto all his words and ^bcommandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all ^choliness before me; (Heed the prophet's words as well as the commandments he will give us.)

5 For his ^aword ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith. (It is not to be expected that the wisdom in the direction given by our prophets will always be immediately apparent. Faith must always be a part of the life of the Latter-day Saint. President Harold B. Lee explained this principle: "There will be some things that take patience and faith. You may not like what comes from the authority of the Church. . . . It may contradict your social views. It may interfere with some of your social life. But if you listen to these things, as if from the mouth of the Lord himself, with patience and faith, the promise is that 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory' (D&C 21:6)" (Conference Report, October 1970, 152). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 178)

6 For by doing these things the ^agates of hell shall not prevail against you; (Anthon H. Lund: The Lord, in comforting the saints, told them that if they would listen to his counsel, the gates of hell should not have power over them, and this promise is the same to you and to me inasmuch as we listen to the counsels of inspired men. As I understand that expression, "the gates of hell," it means those things which lead to hell, in fact, are the entrances to it. How many things are there that lead to those gates? How many things we have to be warned against and which we have to watch out for, because if we yield to them, they will lead us to the gates of hell! Let us each and every one examine ourselves and know well the path in which we are walking and avoid everything that we know is wrong, and forbidden by the Lord, well knowing that if we yield to such we have not the promise that the gates of hell shall not have power over us; on the other hand, if we perform our duty, live according to the testimony which God has given us, we need not fear, for he will lead us in the paths of righteousness that lead to eternal life. (CR, April 1913, pp. 10-11.)) yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of ^bdarkness from before you, and cause the heavens to ^cshake for your ^dgood, and his name's ^eglory. (Joseph opened the gates of hell so that the work for the dead could be done. Those gates will stay open until everyone has had the opportunity to be baptized by proxy in the temples of God. The gates are open so that missionary work can occur.)

7 For thus saith the Lord God: Him (Joseph Smith) have I inspired to move the cause of ^aZion in mighty power for good, and his diligence I know, and his prayers I have heard. (In verse 7 the word him refers to Joseph Smith, but this verse also applies to anyone else who is given the keys to lead the Church. For the Saints in 1830 Joseph Smith was the prophet whom God inspired to move the cause of Zion. For the Saints in 1860, the one called "to move the cause of Zion" was Brigham Young. For the Saints in the year 2000, the one who had this calling was Gordon B. Hinckley. Student Manual, p. 45. Delbert L. Stapely: I bear witness to you, my brothers and sisters, that God sustains him, and no one else in the world today but him, because he has the holy calling of prophet, seer, and revelator, representing the Lord upon the earth in our time. He only has the right to revelation for the people of the Church, and if all people would understand that they would not be tossed about by those who would seek to divert their minds from the Church and its glorious principles... They will be fortified against false teachers and anti-Christ, and we do have them among us. CR, Oct 1953, p. 70. Harold B. Lee: We are not dependent only upon the revelations given in the past as contained in our standard works—as wonderful as they are—but we have a mouthpiece to whom God does reveal and is revealing His mind and will. God will never permit him to lead us astray. As has been said, God would remove him out of his place if he should attempt to do it. You have no concern. Let the management and government of God, then, be with the Lord. Do not try to find fault with the management and affairs that pertain to Him alone and by

revelation through His prophet—His living prophet, His seer, and His revelator. The Place of the Living Prophet, 8 July 1964, p. 16)

8 Yea, his weeping for Zion I have seen, and I will cause that he shall mourn for her no longer; for his days of rejoicing are come unto the ^aremission of his sins, and the manifestations of my blessings upon his works.

9 For, behold, I will ^abless all those who labor in my vineyard with a mighty blessing, and they shall believe on his words, (This phrase constitutes the test of discipleship for a Latter-day Saint. Elder Bruce R. McConkie stated it thus, "The test of discipleship is how totally and completely and fully we believe the word that was revealed through Joseph Smith, and how effectively we echo or proclaim that word to the world" ("This Generation," 7). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 178) which are given him through me by the ^bComforter, which ^cmanifesteth that Jesus was ^dcrucified by ^esinful men for the sins of the ^fworld, yea, for the remission of sins unto the ^gcontrite heart.

10 Wherefore it behooveth me that he should be ^aordained by you, Oliver Cowdery mine apostle;

11 This being an ordinance unto you, that you are an elder under his hand, he being the ^afirst unto you, that you might be an elder unto this church of Christ, bearing my name— (Anthon H. Lund: Joseph had informed the little flock that gathered there when the Church was organized of what the Lord commanded, and it was proposed to them that Joseph Smith be the first Elder of the Church, and Oliver the second. Then Joseph ordained Oliver and Oliver ordained Joseph to the office of an Elder. This was not bestowing the Melchizedek Priesthood on either of them. They held that before. It had been conferred upon them by Peter, James and John. [Sec. 27:12-13.] It was not given to them by the authority of those present. The Lord had revealed to them, through his servant, and had conferred upon them the Melchizedek Priesthood, but there was no Church organized as yet, and hence there were no officers needed in the Church, but when the Church was organized, on April the 6th, 1830, then it was necessary that men should fill official positions in the Church, and do this by the consent of those over whom they were to exercise authority. As yet, the office of a High Priest had not been given, but Elders had been voted for, and had been ordained, and they took charge of the meeting. (CR, April 1913, pp. 9-10.))

12 And the first ^apreacher (Oliver was the first authorized person to give a public discourse in this last dispensation.) of this church unto the church, and before the world, yea, before the Gentiles; yea, and thus saith the Lord God, lo, lo! to the ^bJews also. Amen.

SECTION 27

Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, August 1830. HC 1: 106—108. In preparation for a religious service at which the sacrament of bread and wine was to be administered, Joseph set out to procure wine for the occasion. He was met by a heavenly messenger and received this revelation, a portion of which was written at the time, and the remainder in the September following. Water is now used instead of wine in the sacramental services of the Church. ("Early in the month of August [1830]," Joseph Smith stated, "Newel Knight and his wife paid us a visit at my place in Harmony, Pennsylvania; and as neither his wife nor mine had been as yet confirmed, it was proposed that we should confirm them, and partake together of the Sacrament, before he and his wife should leave us. In order to prepare for this I set out to procure some wine for the occasion, but had gone only a short distance when I was met by a heavenly messenger, and received the following revelation, the first four paragraphs [D&C 27:1-5a, 14, 15a, 18b] of which were written at this time, and the remainder in the September following" (History of the Church, 1:106). Why was the sacrament administered at this time? Emma was baptized in June of 1830 and Joseph was soon after that arrested. Emma had not had the opportunity to obtain the sacrament and be confirmed a member of the Church. Newel Knight's wife had also been baptized but not confirmed. This revelation was given as a result of this circumstance.)

1—4, The emblems to be used in partaking of the sacrament are set forth; 5—14, Christ and his servants from all dispensations are to partake of the sacrament; 15—18, Put on the whole armor of God.

1 LISTEN to the ^avoice of Jesus Christ, your Lord, your God, and your Redeemer, whose word is ^bquick and powerful.

2 For, behold, I say unto you, that it mattereth not what ye shall ^aeat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament, (David B. Haight: It took a number of years before the congregations of the Saints totally abolished the use of wine in the sacrament, but by the end of President Brigham Young's administration, the use of water for the sacrament was generally the practice. The point of the revelation was that the sacrament be partaken with an eye single to the glory of the Lord. ("Remembering the Savior's Atonement," Ensign, Apr. 1988, 11)) if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my ^bglory—^cremembering unto the Father my ^dbody which was laid down for you, and my ^eblood which was shed for the ^fremission of your sins. (The focus on the sacrament should always be the Savior, and not what we eat or drink for the sacrament. Substitution of bread and water should be if there is no other choice. The sacrament is a unifying ordinance. We all participate together in it and focus on the Savior.)

3 Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, that you shall not purchase ^awine neither strong drink of your enemies;

4 Wherefore, you shall partake of none except it is made ^anew among you; (It's possible that the phrase "new wine" means grape juice, but consider that the Church continued to use fermented sacramental wine both in Kirtland and Nauvoo. A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants, p. 179) yea, in this my Father's kingdom which shall be built up on the earth. (The sacrament for the most part points us back to the atonement of Christ, but should also cause us to look forward to the time when we will partake of the sacrament in the sacrament meeting with the Savior just prior to his Second Coming. This meeting will be held at Adam-ondi-Ahman.)

5 Behold, this is wisdom in me; wherefore, marvel not, for the hour cometh that I will ^adrink of the fruit of the ^bvine with you on the earth, (In the judgment of many students of the Doctrine and Covenants, these verses are descriptive of the great meeting yet to be held at Adam-ondi-Ahman. Expressing this view, Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote as follows: "Before the Lord Jesus descends openly and publicly in the clouds of glory, attended by all the hosts of heaven; before the great and dreadful day of the Lord sends terror and destruction from one end of the earth to the other; before he stands on Mount Zion, or sets his feet on Olivet, or utters his voice from an American Zion or a Jewish Jerusalem; before all flesh shall see him together; before any of his appearances, which taken together comprise the second coming of the Son of God— before all these, there is to be a secret appearance to selected members of his Church. He will come in private to his prophet and to the apostles then living. Those who have held keys and powers and authorities in all ages from Adam to the present will also be present. And further, all the faithful members of the Church then living and all the faithful saints of all the ages past will be present. It will be the greatest congregation of faithful saints ever assembled on planet earth. It will be a sacrament meeting. It will be a day of judgment for the faithful of all the ages. And it will take place in Daviess County, Missouri, at a place called Adam-ondi-Ahman" (Millennial Messiah, 578-79). "With reference to the use of sacramental wine in our day, the Lord said to Joseph Smith: 'You shall partake of none except it is made new among you; yea, in this my Father's kingdom which shall be built up on the earth.' In so stating, he is picking up the language he used in the upper room. Then he says: 'The hour cometh that I will drink of the fruit of the vine with you on the earth.' Jesus is going to partake of the sacrament again with his mortal disciples on earth. But it will not be with mortals only. He names others who will be present and who will participate in the sacred ordinance. These include Moroni, Elias, John the Baptist, Elijah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph (who was sold into Egypt), Peter, James, and John, 'and also with Michael, or Adam, the father of all, the prince of all, the ancient of days.' Each of these is named simply by way of illustration. The grand summation of the whole matter comes in these words: 'And also with all those whom my Father hath given me out of the world' (D&C 27:4-14). The

sacrament is to be administered in a future day, on this earth, when the Lord Jesus is present, and when all the righteous of all ages are present. This, of course, will be a part of the grand council at Adam-ondi-Ahman" (McConkie, Millennial Messiah, 587). At the Last Supper, when Jesus instituted the sacrament, he explained the symbolism of the wine that the apostles drank, saying, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26:28-29). Doctrine and Covenants 27:5 states that Moroni will be in attendance at that meeting. The verses that follow expand the list of those who are invited to partake of the sacrament with the Savior to include all who have been faithful to their testimony of him. Revelations of the Restoration, p. 201-2. and with ^cMoroni, whom I have sent unto you to reveal the Book of Mormon, containing the fulness of my everlasting gospel, to whom I have committed the keys of the ^drecord of the ^estick of ^fEphraim; (Book of Mormon) (If Lehi was a descendant of Manasseh, why is the Book of Mormon called the stick of Ephraim? Joseph Fielding Smith: It is true that Lehi was a descendant of Manasseh (Alma 10:3 And Aminadi was a descendant of Nephi, who was the son of Lehi, who came out of the land of Jerusalem, who was a descendant of ^aManasseh, who was the son of ^bJoseph who was ^csold into Egypt by the hands of his brethren.), but the Nephites were just as much the descendants of Ephraim, for we know that Ishmael, who was the other founder of the colony, was a descendant of Ephraim. This we learn from the Prophet Joseph Smith, but it is not so stated in the Book of Mormon. This information was contained in the 116 pages of lost manuscript which was not re-translated into the Book of Mormon. You are aware of the fact that the sons of Lehi married the daughters of Ishmael. Ezekiel 37:9 reads as follows: Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and they shall be one in mine hand. Now if you will carefully analyze this verse, you will discover that it positively states that this "stick" which is the "stick of Joseph," thus covering both tribes, is "in the hand of Ephraim." The record, after its presentation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, was placed in the hand of Ephraim, for Joseph Smith was of Ephraim. ...The Book of Mormon is as much the stick of Ephraim as it is of Manasseh, because both Ephraim and Manasseh were the sons of Joseph. The record of Joseph is now in the hand of Ephraim. So far as the fulfilment of the prophecy is concerned, it becomes the record of Ephraim, for the Latter-day Saints are, in the main, of Ephraim. (Answers to Gospel Questions, 5 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957-1966], 3: 198.))

6 And also with ^aElias, to whom I have committed the keys of bringing to pass the restoration of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began, concerning the last days; (Correcting the Bible by the spirit of revelation, the Prophet restored a statement of John the Baptist which says that Christ is the Elias who was to restore all things. (Inspired Version, John 1:21-28.) By revelation we are also informed that the Elias who was to restore all things is the angel Gabriel who was known in mortality as Noah. (D. & C. 27:6-7; Luke 1:5-25; Teachings, p. 157.) From the same authentic source we also learn that the promised Elias is John the Revelator. (D. & C. 77: 9, 14.) Thus there are three different revelations which name Elias as being three different persons. What are we to conclude? By finding answer to the question, by whom has the restoration been effected, we shall find who Elias is and find there is no problem in harmonizing these apparently contradictory revelations. Who has restored all things? Was it one man? Certainly not. Many angelic ministrants have been sent from the courts of glory to confer keys and powers, to commit their dispensations and glories again to men on earth. At least the following have come: Moroni, John the Baptist, Peter, James, and John, Moses, Elijah, Elias, Gabriel, Raphael, and Michael. (D. & C. 13; 110; 128:19-21.) Since it is apparent that no one messenger has carried the whole burden of the restoration, but rather that each has come with a specific endowment from on high, it becomes clear that Elias is a composite personage. The expression must be understood to be a name and a title for those whose mission it was to commit keys and powers to men in this final dispensation. (Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 1, pp. 170-174.))

7 And also John the son of Zacharias, which Zacharias he (^aElias) visited and gave promise that he

should have a son, and his name should be ^bJohn, and he should be filled with the spirit of Elias; (Joseph Fielding Smith: It was Gabriel who appeared to Zacharias and promised him a son, and who appeared to Mary and announced the coming of the Son of God as recorded by Luke. It was also Gabriel as an Elias who is mentioned in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 27, verse 7, and was Gabriel or Noah, who stands next to Michael or Adam in the Priesthood. (CR, April 1960, p. 72.))

8 Which John I have sent unto you, my servants, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Oliver Cowdery, to ordain you unto the first ^apriesthood which you have received, that you might be called and ^bordained even as ^cAaron;

9 And also ^aElijah, unto whom I have committed the keys of the power of turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the ^bfathers, that the whole earth may not be smitten with a ^ccurse;

10 And also with Joseph and ^aJacob, and ^bIsaac, and Abraham, your ^cfathers, by whom the ^dpromises remain;

11 And also with Michael, or ^aAdam, the father of all, the prince of all, the ^bancient of days;

12 And also with Peter, and James, and John, whom I have sent unto you, by whom I have ^aordained you and confirmed you to be ^bapostles, and especial ^cwitnesses of my ^dname, and bear the keys of your ministry and of the same things which I revealed unto them; (This text confirms the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood, for which we have no date or official account. Erastus Snow, who served as an apostle for nearly forty years, gives the following account of the restoration of the higher priesthood: "In due course of time, as we read in the history which he [Joseph Smith] has left, Peter, James and John appeared to him— it was at a period when they were being pursued by their enemies and they had to travel all night, and in the dawn of the coming day when they were weary and worn who should appear to them but Peter, James and John, for the purpose of conferring upon them the Apostleship, the keys of which they themselves had held while upon the earth, which had been bestowed upon them by the Savior. This Priesthood conferred upon them by those three messengers embraces within it all offices of the Priesthood from the highest to the lowest. As has been often taught us that the keys of the presidency of this Apostleship represent the highest authority conferred upon man in the flesh. And by virtue of these keys of Priesthood the Prophet Joseph from time to time proceeded to ordain and set in order the Priesthood in its various quorums as we see it today in the Church" (Journal of Discourses, 23:183). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 203. Addison Everett: [Joseph Smith] said that at Colesville, New York, in 1829, he and Oliver were under arrest on a charge of deceiving the people. When they were at the justice's house for trial in the evening, all were waiting for Mr. Reid, Joseph's lawyer. While waiting, the justice asked Joseph some questions, among which was this: "What was the first miracle Jesus performed?" Joseph replied, "He made this world, and what followed we are not told." Mr. Reid came in and said he wanted to speak to his clients in private and that the law allowed him that privilege, he believed. The judge pointed to a door to a room in the back part of the house and told them to step in there. As soon as they got into the room, the lawyer said there was a mob outside in front of the house. "If they get hold of you they will perhaps do you bodily injury; and I think the best way for you to get out of this is to get right out there," pointing to the window and hoisting it. They got into the woods in going a few rods from the house. It was night and they traveled through brush and water and mud, fell over logs, etc., until Oliver was exhausted. Then Joseph helped him along through the mud and water, almost carrying him. They traveled all night, and just at the break of day Oliver gave out entirely and exclaimed, "Oh, Lord! Brother Joseph, how long have we got to endure this thing?" They sat down on a log to rest, and Joseph said that at that very time Peter, James and John came to them and ordained them to the apostleship. They had sixteen or seventeen miles to go to get back to Mr. Hale's, his father-in-law's, but Oliver did not complain any more of fatigue. (Hyrum L. Andrus and Helen Mae Andrus, comps., They Knew the Prophet [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1974], 15.))

13 Unto whom I have ^acommitted the ^bkeys of my kingdom, (Peter, James, and John committed three things to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery: the Melchizedek Priesthood; the keys of that priesthood,

meaning the right to preside over all of its functions and offices; and the keys of the dispensation of the fullness of times. The holding of such keys is properly referred to as the apostleship, for keys are the distinctive characteristic of that office. Revelations of the Restoration, p. 203) and a ^cdispensation of the ^dgospel for the ^elast times; and for the ^ffulness of times, in the which I will gather together in ^gone all things, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; (Now the thing to be known is, what the fullness of times means, or the extent or authority thereof. It means this, that the dispensation of the fullness of times is made up of all the dispensations that ever have been given since the world began, until this time. Unto Adam first was given a dispensation. It is well known that God spake to him with His own voice in the garden, and gave him the promise of the Messiah. And unto Noah also was a dispensation given; for Jesus said, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man;" and as the righteous were saved then, and the wicked destroyed, so it will be now. And from Noah to Abraham, and from Abraham to Moses, and from Moses to Elias, and from Elias to John the Baptist, and from then to Jesus Christ, and from Jesus Christ to Peter, James, and John, the Apostles—all received in their time a dispensation by revelation from God, to accomplish the great scheme of restitution, spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began; the end of which is the dispensation of the fullness of times, in the which all things shall be fulfilled that have been spoken of since the earth was made. History of the Church, 3:51)

14 And also with all (This means all faithful members of the Church, hopefully, that's us, too.) those whom my Father hath ^agiven me out of the world. (This verse constitutes the invitation to all faithful Latter-day Saints to attend the great sacrament meeting over which the Savior will preside in Adam-ondi-Ahman. Revelations of the Restoration, p. 204. Bruce R. McConkie: "The concept of a chosen and favored people, a concept scarcely known in the world and but little understood even by the saints of God, is one of the most marvelous systems ever devised for administering salvation to all men in all nations in all ages... This is the doctrine of election. They were true and faithful in the premortal life, and they earned the right to be born as the Lord's people and to have the privilege, on a preferential basis, of believing and obeying the word of truth. Believing blood, the blood of Abraham, flows in their veins. They are the ones of whom Jesus said: 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.' (John 10:27-28.)" (The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 182.))

15 Wherefore, ^alift up your hearts and ^brejoice, and ^cgird up your loins, and take upon you my whole ^darmor, that ye may be able to withstand the evil day, having done all, that ye may be able to ^estand. (Since Satan wants to keep us from attending this sacrament meeting, the Lord here is telling us how to arm ourselves against Satan to remain worthy of attending this solemn and sacred meeting.)

16 Stand, therefore, having your loins ^agirt about with ^btruth, having on the ^cbreastplate of ^drighteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the ^egospel of ^fpeace, which I have sent mine ^gangels to commit unto you;

17 Taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the ^afiery darts of the wicked;

18 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of my ^aSpirit, (Francis M. Lyman: By observance of the laws of the Lord we are led in the straight and narrow way, and the Holy Spirit alone can keep us there. We have power to so live that the Spirit of the Lord may dwell with us. We cannot be Latter-day Saints without the Spirit of the Lord; and should not try to live without it. Do not try to speak without the Spirit of the Lord; do not try to build up the kingdom of God without the direction of his Spirit. If we endeavor to do these things by our own wisdom we will be sure to go astray and make mistakes. It is the office and calling of the Spirit of the Lord to dwell with you always; to be in your homes, with your families; in your neighborhoods, and in your business affairs, on the Sabbath day and throughout the week, and every day in the year, if you do right. (CR, April 1904, p. 13.)) which I will pour out upon you, and my word which I reveal unto you, and be agreed as touching all things whatsoever ye ask of me (There is a strength in unified prayer that is not found otherwise. This a great example for husband and

wife to be unified in their lives together.), and be faithful until I come, and ye shall be ^bcaught up, that where I am ye shall be ^calso. Amen. (We now come to the "key" or the specific counsel that if followed faithfully will permit us to "stand" as Joseph Smith did and not "fall" as Sidney Rigdon did. All of us who want to be faithful and stand against the enemies of truth and right should internalize vv. 15-18 of section 27 and also study Eph. 6:10-18 in the New Testament. 10 Finally, my brethren, be ^astrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole ^aarmour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we ^awrestle not ^bagainst ^cflesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the ^drulers of the ^edarkness of this world, against spiritual ^fwickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins ^agirt about with ^btruth, and having on the ^cbreastplate of ^drighteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of ^apeace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of ^afaith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery ^bdarts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of ^asalvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 ^aPraying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all ^bperseverance and supplication for all saints; We may all stand faithfully and overcome the things of this world, and be saved at the Lord's coming and partake of the Sacrament with him, if we will put on God's whole armor, and keep it on. No one can escape the battle; Satan makes war upon each servant of the Lord. To stand successfully and come off conqueror, we must wear the armor of the Lord. The six parts of the spiritual armor that we are to wear are enumerated. The first part of the armor mentioned is the girdle of armor that goes about the loins, the armor of truth. An ancient soldier wore a girdle of physical armor about his loins to protect vital parts of his body. A servant of the Lord wears the spiritual armor of "truth" to protect his virtue. Elder Harold B. Lee wrote: "Truth is to be the substance of which the girdle about your loins is to be formed if your virtue and vital strength is to be safeguarded." The next part of the armor mentioned is the "breastplate of righteousness." One of the beatitudes says: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). We cannot build Zion without being pure in heart; to be pure in heart we must keep impurities out. That is done by wearing the breastplate of righteousness. Righteousness means meeting the standards of that which is morally right and just. The Saints are next admonished to have their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Again, Elder Lee, commenting upon this part of God's armor, said: "Your feet, which are to represent your goals or objectives in life, are to be shod. Shod with what? With the preparation of the gospel of peace. . . . He [Apostle Paul] knew that preparedness is the way to victory and that 'eternal vigilance is the price of safety.' Fear is the penalty of unpreparedness and aimless dawdling with opportunity." The Latter-day Saint who would ward off Satan's fiery darts (flaming arrows) takes the shield of faith. When persecution, heartbreak, temptation, disappointment, illness, etc., come into the life of a Latter-day Saint, the first thing he should do is get behind the shield of faith. He must let the Lord help him; if he does not, then Satan's fiery darts may wound him spiritually. Some have sustained so many wounds that their recovery is lengthy, and there are some who have never recovered. That which is to protect our mind, our ability to think properly, is the "helmet of salvation." Wilford Woodruff said that Oliver Cowdery at one time had a powerful testimony, but he "yielded to the temptation of the evil one." Oliver began to think that he was smarter than Joseph Smith and wanted to direct the prophet; thus Oliver apostatized. We are all grateful to Oliver Cowdery for the great contributions he made to the Church. It is tragic that he did not keep the helmet of salvation in place. His thinking deviated from the truth first, and soon his actions followed. The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, is another part of the armor which we are to wear. The Lord never intended that his servants, his soldiers, fight only a defensive battle. He desires that we be on the offensive and help overcome evil, free mankind from the terrible effects of evil, and prepare the earth for the return of the Savior. The sword is primarily an offensive weapon. We are to take the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. Thus we are to study the scriptures, listen to the voices of the living prophets, and have the companionship of the Holy Ghost as we move forward in God's service. One who wears God's whole armor is happy and confident in the

battle against evil. One who does not is devastated by the struggle. We must wear the armor always throughout life, keep it polished through service, and keep it in good repair through repentance. (Leon Hartshorn, *Studies in Scripture*, 1:128-130.)

SECTION 115

Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Far West, Missouri, April 26, 1838, making known the will of God concerning the building up of that place and of the Lord's House. HC 3: 23—25. This revelation is addressed to the presiding officers of the Church. (This section is best known as the revelation that gives the official name of the Church: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In the early years of its existence the Church was called "The Church of Christ," "The Church of Jesus Christ," and "The Church of God." This caused some problems for missionaries because many congregations used these names. To distinguish themselves, members began to refer to the Church as "The Church of Latter-day Saints." Revelations of the Restoration, p. 916)

1—4, The Lord names his church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints;

1 VERILY thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and also my servant Sidney Rigdon, and also my servant Hyrum Smith, and your ^acounselors who are and shall be appointed hereafter; (At this time Sidney Rigdon and Hyrum Smith were first and second counselors, respectively, to the Prophet Joseph Smith in the First Presidency of the Church. Hyrum was set apart as second counselor in the place of Frederick G. Williams, 7 November 1837. Doctrine and Covenants 107:22 (Of the ^aMelchizedek Priesthood, three ^bPresiding High Priests, chosen by the body, appointed and ordained to that office, and ^cupheld by the confidence, faith, and prayer of the church, form a quorum of the Presidency of the Church.) established that the First Presidency was to consist of a quorum of three. Additional counselors became counselors to that quorum, not counselors in that quorum. Those who have served as counselors to that quorum include the following: John C. Bennett (1841-42), Amasa M. Lyman (1843-44), Joseph F. Smith (1866-77), Lorenzo Snow (1873-77), Brigham Young Jr. (1873-77), Albert Carrington (1873-77), John W. Young (1873-77), George Q. Cannon (1873-77), Hugh B. Brown (1961), Joseph Fielding Smith (1965-70), H. Thorpe B. Isaacson (1965-70), Alvin R. Dyer (1968-70), and Gordon B. Hinckley (1981-82) (1999-2000 Church Almanac, 16, 47-55). Revelations of the Restoration, p. 916-17. At a conference held on 3 September 1837 at Kirtland, Ohio, Oliver Cowdery, Joseph Smith, Sr., Hyrum Smith, and John Smith were sustained as assistant counselors. However, on 26 April 1838, when section 115 was given, only Joseph Smith, Sr. and John Smith were serving as assistant counselors. Hyrum Smith had taken the place of Frederick G. Williams in the First Presidency, and Oliver Cowdery had lost his membership in the Church. Later, in Nauvoo, others served as counselors to the Prophet: John C. Bennett (who served a short time because Sidney Rigdon was ill), William Law, and Amasa Lyman. History of the Church 4:255, 264, 282-86, 341; 2:509. Jesse Gause also served as a counselor in the First Presidency.)

2 And also unto you, my servant ^aEdward Partridge, and his counselors; (Edward Partridge was the bishop in Zion; his counselors were Isaac Morley and Titus Billings. John Corrill, who had been his second counselor, was released the previous August to serve as a Church historian. Revelations of the Restoration, p. 917)

3 And also unto my faithful servants who are of the high council of my ^achurch in Zion, for thus it shall be called, and unto all the elders and people of my Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, scattered abroad in all the world;

4 For thus shall ^amy ^bchurch be called in the last days, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day ^cSaints. (Elder B. H. Roberts explained the significance of the Lord naming his Church in this revelation: "Previous to this the Church had been called 'The Church of Christ,' 'The Church of Jesus

Christ,' 'The Church of God,' and by a conference of Elders held at Kirtland in May, 1834 (see [Smith, History of the Church, 2:62-63]), it was given the name 'The Church of the Latter-day Saints.' All these names, however, were by this revelation brushed aside, and since then the official name given in this revelation has been recognized as the true title of the Church, though often spoken of as 'The Mormon Church,' the 'Church of Christ,' etc. The appropriateness of this title is self evident, and in it there is a beautiful recognition of the relationship both of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Saints to the organization" (Smith, History of the Church, 3:23-24n.)

Our Heritage 14-16: **Organization of the Church**

The Lord revealed to Joseph Smith that 6 April 1830 was the day on which the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation was to be organized (see **D&C 20:1**). Notices were sent to believers and friends, and some 56 men and women gathered at the log home of Peter Whitmer Sr. in Fayette, New York. Six men were chosen by the Prophet to assist in the organization "agreeable to the laws of our country, by the will and commandments of God" (**D&C 20:1**).

The Prophet recorded: "Having opened the meeting by solemn prayer to our Heavenly Father, we proceeded, according to previous commandment, to call on our brethren to know whether they accepted us as their teachers in the things of the Kingdom of God, (common consent) and whether they were satisfied that we should proceed and be organized as a Church according to said commandment which we had received. To these several propositions they consented by a unanimous vote." 11

With the consent of those present, Joseph ordained Oliver an elder of the Church and Oliver ordained the Prophet an elder as they had been directed by the Lord. The sacrament was blessed and passed to the members present. Those who had been baptized were confirmed and given the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Prophet said that "the Holy Ghost was poured out upon us to a very great degree—some prophesied, whilst we all praised the Lord, and rejoiced exceedingly." 12 During this meeting, Joseph received a revelation in which the Lord instructed the Church to give heed to the words of the prophet as if they came from the Lord himself (see **D&C 21:4–6**).

The elements present at that meeting in 1830 continue in the Church today: exercise of the law of common consent, singing, praying, partaking of the sacrament, sharing of personal testimonies, bestowal of the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, ordinations, personal revelation, and revelation through priesthood officers.

Joseph's mother, Lucy Mack Smith, recorded a tender scene that occurred that day when Joseph Smith Sr., the Prophet's father, was baptized: "When Mr. Smith came out of the water, Joseph stood upon the shore, and taking his father by the hand, he exclaimed, with tears of joy, 'Praise to my God! that I have lived to see my own father baptized into the true Church of Jesus Christ!'"

13 Joseph Knight Sr. said of that moment: "[The Prophet] was filled with the Spirit to a great degree. ... His joy seemed to be full. I think he saw the great work he had begun and was desirous to carry it out." 14

There was a strong bond of love between father and son. Later in a eulogy to his father, the Prophet said, "I love my father and his memory; and the memory of his noble deeds rests with ponderous weight upon my mind, and many of his kind and parental words to me are written on the tablet of my heart." 15

The love that existed between the Prophet and his father was also manifested by Joseph Smith Sr. for his father, Asael Smith. In August 1830, Joseph Smith Sr. took copies of the Book of Mormon northeast into St. Lawrence County, New York, to give to his father and mother and brothers and sisters. Asael Smith read the book nearly through before his death in October 1830 and declared that his grandson, Joseph Smith Jr., “was the very Prophet that he had long known would come in his family.”¹⁶ Three more of the sons of Asael eventually joined the Church—Silas, John, and Asael Jr. The Prophet had the privilege of seeing all his immediate family immersed in the waters of baptism, and many of his father’s family.

Sidney Rigdon, who later became a member of the First Presidency, spoke of the humble beginnings of the Church and the grand vision of the future that the organizers had even then:

“I met the whole church of Christ in a little old log house about 20 feet square, near Waterloo, N.Y. and we began to talk about the kingdom of God as if we had the world at our command; we talked with great confidence, ... although we were not many people; ... we saw by vision, the church of God, a thousand times larger; ... the world being entirely ignorant of the testimony of the prophets and without knowledge of what God was about to do.”¹⁷

The events that transpired on 6 April 1830 in western New York have changed the lives of millions of people. From a handful of converts in a small log house, the gospel has spread throughout the world. Now the Church is established in many lands, often in circumstances as humble as those that surrounded the original organization at Fayette. Saints across the world rejoice and find solace in the promise of the Savior: “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, ... behold, there will I be in the midst of them” (**D&C 6:32**).

11. *History of the Church*, 1:78.

12. *History of the Church*, 1:78.

13. Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, 168.

14. Dean Jessee, ed., “Joseph Knight’s Recollection of Early Mormon History,” 37; spelling modernized.

15. *History of the Church*, 5:126.

16. *History of the Church*, 2:443.

17. “Conference Minutes,” *Times and Seasons*, 1 May 1844, 522–23.