

#6: Restoration of the Priesthood

Monte F. Shelley, 15 Mar. 2009

Quotes

- I take my children everywhere, but they always find their way back home.
- When you say a situation or a person is hopeless, you are slamming the door in the face of God. [Rev. Charles L. Allen]
- The best inheritance a parent can give his children is a few minutes of his time each day. [O. A. Battista]
- Real obstacles don't take you in circles. They can be overcome. Invented ones are like a maze. [Barbara Sher]

INTRO: In lesson 25, we will discuss the oath and covenant of the priesthood as well as how priesthood holders lose the priesthood through unrighteous dominion. Today we focus on thy two types of priesthood, their restoration, offices, and keys.

1. What is the priesthood?

"As pertaining to man's existence on this earth, priesthood is the power and authority of God delegated to man on earth to act in all things for the salvation of men. It is the power by which the gospel is preached; by which the ordinances of salvation are performed so that they will be binding on earth and in heaven; by which men are sealed up unto eternal life, being assured of the fulness of the Father's kingdom hereafter; and by which in due course the Lord will govern the nations of the earth and all that pertains to them" (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 136)

2. What is the purpose of the priesthood?

To bless God's children and to help them prepare for exaltation.

President Stephen L Richards: "The Priesthood is usually simply defined as 'the power of God delegated to man.' ... This definition, I think, is accurate. But for practical purposes I like to define the Priesthood in terms of service and I frequently call it 'the perfect plan of service.' " (Thomas S. Monson, "Duty Calls," *Ensign*, May 1996, 43)

What are some ways in which priesthood holders act on behalf of God to bless His children? (D&C 20:38–55; 107:8–12, 23, 35.) How have you been blessed through the service of priesthood holders?

What influence has the priesthood had on you? How have you seen the power of the priesthood manifested in your life? How has the priesthood blessed and strengthened your family? How can you make the influence and power of the priesthood more effective in your life and for your family?

3. What are priesthood keys?

Priesthood keys authorize priesthood holders to preside over and direct the Church within a jurisdiction, such as a stake, ward, or quorum. Presiding priesthood leaders receive these keys when they are set apart. All offices in the priesthood and organizations in the Church function under the direction of these presiding authorities.

4. Aaronic Priesthood

What was it? Levites (1/12) to John the Baptist (prepare way)

JEWISH TEMPLE: Aaronic priesthood role

5. Restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood

How was it restored? May 15, 1829 *Levitical*

6. Offices of the Aaronic Priesthood

Office	Duties	Quorum
Deacon	20:57–59; 84:111	107:85
Teacher	20:53–59; 84:111	107:86
Priest	20:46–52	107:87–88
Bishop	107:13–17, 68, 71–72, 87–88	

D&C 13 (1829); 20 (1830); 84 (1832); 107 (1835)

The bishopric is the presidency of this [Aaronic] priesthood, and holds the keys or authority of the same. (D&C 107:15)

the Aaronic Priesthood "is an appendage to the greater, or the Melchizedek Priesthood" (D&C 107:14).

7. Keys of the Aaronic Priesthood

"The lesser priesthood ... holdeth the key of the *ministering of angels* and the *preparatory gospel*; Which gospel is the gospel of *repentance and of baptism*, and the *remission of sins*, and the law of carnal commandments, which the Lord in his wrath caused to continue with the house of Aaron among the children of Israel until John" the Baptist. (D&C 84:26–27)

The power and authority of the lesser, or Aaronic Priesthood, is to hold the keys of the *ministering of angels*, and to administer in *outward ordinances*, the letter of the *gospel*, the *baptism of repentance* for the remission of sins, agreeable to the covenants and commandments. (D&C 107:20)

Key of the ministering of angels

Gordon B. Hinckley, "That means, as I interpret it, that if you live worthy of the priesthood, you have the right to receive and enjoy the very power of heavenly beings to guide you, to protect you, to bless you" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 45).

Dallin H. Oaks: The ministering of angels can occur through personal appearances and "can also be unseen. Angelic messages can be delivered by a voice or merely by thoughts or feelings communicated to the mind. ... Most angelic communications are felt or heard rather than seen" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 39).

Jeffrey R. Holland: "I have spoken here of heavenly help, of angels dispatched to bless us in time of need. But when we speak of those who are instruments in the hand of God, we are reminded that not all angels are from the other side of the veil. Some of them we walk with and talk with—here, now, every day. Some of them reside in our own neighborhoods. Some of them gave birth to us, and in my case, one of them consented to marry me. Indeed heaven never seems closer than when we see the love of God manifested in the kindness and devotion of people so good and so pure that *angelic* is the only word that comes to mind." (*Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 29–31)

(Moroni 7:25 - 32)²⁵ Wherefore, by the ministering of angels, and by every word which proceeded forth out of the mouth of God, men began to exercise faith in Christ; and thus by faith, they did lay hold upon every good thing; and thus it was until the coming of Christ.²⁹ ... neither have angels ceased to minister unto the children of men.³⁰ For behold, they are subject unto him, to minister according to the word of his command, showing themselves unto them of strong faith and a firm mind in every form of godliness.³¹ And the office of their ministry is to *call men unto repentance*, and to *fulfil and to do the work of the covenants* of the Father, which he hath

made unto the children of men, to *prepare the way* among the children of men, by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him.³² And by so doing, the Lord God prepareth the way that the residue of men may have faith in Christ, that the Holy Ghost may have place in their hearts, according to the power thereof; and after this manner bringeth to pass the Father, the covenants which he hath made unto the children of men.

Keys of the preparatory gospel of repentance and baptism, and the remission of sins

The gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water; and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire and by the Holy Ghost. And then are ye in this strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life; ... and ye have received the Holy Ghost. ... I suppose that ye ponder ... that which ye should do after ye have entered in by the way. ... Do ye not remember that I said ... that after ye had received the Holy Ghost ye could speak with the tongue of angels? ... Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, ... feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do. (2 Ne. 31:17–18; 32:1–3)

(Mos. 18:8–10) As ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to *bear one another's burdens, that they may be light*; ... and ... to *mourn* with those that mourn; ... and *comfort* those that stand in need of comfort, and to *stand as witnesses* of God at all times ... that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life—Now ... if this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a *witness* before him that ye have *entered into a covenant* with him, that ye will *serve him and keep his commandments*, that he may pour out his Spirit *more abundantly* upon you?

John the Baptist preached repentance and baptized people in preparing the way for the Savior (Matt 3:1–6, 11). How can Aaronic Priesthood holders in our day *preach repentance*? (e.g., home teaching, missionary work, testimony bearing, and fellowshipping.)

Duties of Aaronic Priesthood (D&C 20)

⁴⁶ The priest's duty is to preach, teach, expound, exhort, and *baptize*, and administer the *sacrament*. And visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties. ...

⁵³ The teacher's duty is to watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them; And see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other, neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking; And see that the church meet together often, and also see that all the members do their duty. ... Neither teachers nor deacons have authority to baptize, administer the sacrament, or lay on hands; They are, however, to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and *invite all to come unto Christ*.

Dallin H. Oaks: "How does the Aaronic Priesthood hold the key to the ministering of angels? The answer is the same as for the Spirit of the Lord. In general, the blessings of spiritual companionship and communication are only available to those who are clean. As explained earlier, through the Aaronic Priesthood ordinances of baptism and the sacrament, we are cleansed of our sins and promised that if we keep our covenants we will always have His Spirit to be with us. I believe that promise not only refers to the Holy Ghost but also to the

ministering of angels, for "angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ" (2 Ne. 32:3). So it is that those who hold the Aaronic Priesthood open the door for all Church members who worthily partake of the sacrament to enjoy the companionship of the Spirit of the Lord and the ministering of angels." (*Ensign*, Nov 1998, 37)

Under the direction of the bishop, priests may baptize and serve as witnesses at baptisms. AP holders may officiate in the *sacrament*.

8. Melchizedek Priesthood

What was it? Who held it? When was it lost?

Finding there was greater happiness and peace and rest for me, I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; having been myself a follower of righteousness, *desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge*, and to be a *greater follower of righteousness*, and to possess a greater knowledge, and to be a father of many nations, a prince of peace, and *desiring to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God*, I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers. (Abr. 1:2)

Abr. 2:1¹¹ And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal.

(Heb. 7:1–2) For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;² To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

Moses ... sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God; But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory. Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also; (D&C 84:23 - 25)

"Was the Priesthood of Melchizedek taken away when Moses died? All Priesthood is Melchizedek, but there are different portions or degrees of it. That portion which brought Moses to speak with God face to face was taken away; but that which brought the ministry of angels remained. All the prophets had the Melchizedek Priesthood and were ordained by God himself." (TPJS 181 [184]) → held MP by special dispensation.

Nephites held higher priesthood (Al. 13). Apostles held it.

9. Restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood

How was the Melchizedek Priesthood restored to the earth in the latter days? (Some weeks after John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood, Peter, James, and John appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery and conferred upon them the Melchizedek Priesthood. An account is not included in the D&C, but references to it can be found in the heading to D&C 13; 27:12–13; 128:20; and *Our Heritage*, 14.)

10. Offices of the Melchizedek Priesthood

Office	Duties	Quorum
Elder	20:38–45; 42:43–44; 43:15–16; 107:11–12	107:89; 124:137
High priest	107:10, 12, 17	124:133, 136
Patriarch	124:91–93, 124	
Seventy	107:25, 34, 38, 97	107:25–26; 107:93–96; 124:138–39
Apostle	27:12–13; 107:23, 33, 35, 39, 58; 112:30–32; 124:128	107:23–24

We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, namely, apostles, prophets, *pastors*, teachers, *evangelists*, and so forth. (A of F 6)

JS: “Evangelist is a patriarch” (TPJS 151)

BRM: Pastor is a shepherd of a flock, e.g., bishop, branch president, stake president.

Seventy: Discuss change

“Inasmuch as ye impart of your substance unto the poor, ye will do it unto me; and they shall be laid before the bishop of my church and his counselors, two of the elders, or high priests, such as he shall appoint or has appointed and set apart for that purpose.” (D&C 42:31)

11. Keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood

Authority to administer the gospel of Jesus Christ (84:18–22)

This greater priesthood **administereth the gospel** and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.

Keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church

The power and authority of the higher, or Melchizedek Priesthood, is to hold the **keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church**—To have the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to have the heavens opened unto them, to commune with the general assembly and church of the Firstborn, and to enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant. (107:18–19)

The Melchizedek Priesthood includes the authority to govern the Church, preach the gospel, and administer the ordinances of salvation.

What are some of the spiritual blessings that come to us through the Melchizedek Priesthood? (See D&C 84:19–22; 107:18–19.)

a. Knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom and knowledge of God (D&C 84:19; 107:19; this knowledge comes through the gift of the Holy Ghost).

b. The power of godliness, which is manifested through the ordinances of the gospel (D&C 84:20–21). How do priesthood ordinances make “the power of godliness” manifest in our lives? Invite class members to share experiences in which they have felt “the power of godliness” manifested through the ordinances of the gospel.

c. The opportunity to see, commune with, and enjoy the presence of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ (D&C 84:22; 107:19).

• What are some ways that Melchizedek Priesthood holders should be spiritual leaders in their homes?

The right of presidency

The Melchizedek Priesthood holds the right of presidency, and has power and authority over all the offices in the church in all ages of the world, to administer in **spiritual** things. (107:8)

The right of presidency is the right to preside in the Church. The President of the Church is the only person on earth who may use (or authorize another person to use) the keys of the priesthood for governing the entire Church. He authorizes the following priesthood leaders to hold the keys that are necessary for presiding in their callings: temple presidents, mission presidents, stake presidents, bishops, district presidents, branch presidents, and quorum presidents.

OED **right** n. II. 7. a. Justifiable claim, on legal or moral grounds, to have or obtain something, or to act in a certain way. ... 9. a. A legal, equitable, or moral title or claim to the possession of property or authority, the enjoyment of privileges or immunities, etc.

Keys of the gathering of Israel (Moses), the gospel of the dispensation of Abraham (Elias), and the sealing power (Elijah) (D&C 110:11–16)

These keys were restored by Moses, Elias, and Elijah in the Kirtland Temple in 1836. (lesson 18.)

12. Priesthood Ordinances

Old Testament Priesthood Ordinances

Sacrifices, temple duties, cleansing.

Catholic Priesthood Sacraments

- a. Baptism
- b. Eucharist (Holy Communion, Lord's Supper)
- c. Confirmation
- d. Priesthood orders
- e. Penance and reconciliation (confession)
- f. Anointing of the sick (extreme unction, final anointing, last rites)
- g. Marriage

Protestants accept only the first two as being ordained by Christ

LDS Priesthood Ordinances

- a. Naming and blessing children
- b. *Baptizing
- c. *Confirming
- d. *Administering the sacrament
- e. Consecrating oil
- f. *Administering to the sick
- g. Dedicating graves
- h. Blessings (Father's; comfort)
- i. *Conferring priesthood and ordaining to office
- j. Setting apart
- k. *Temple Ordinances (Endowment, Marriage)

13. Ordinances and Covenants

A purpose of the priesthood is to help people understand, make, and keep covenants.

Mission of Church: preach gospel, redeem dead, perfect saints.

Covenants were changed to sacraments

Sacrament: an outward sign that conveys an inward, spiritual grace (favor, gift) through Christ.

OED ordain, v. I. To put in order, arrange, or prepare. II. To decree, order, or appoint.

OED Ordinance: I. Something decreed, ordained, or prescribed. [†]7. The action or process of making ready, preparing, or providing; preparation; provision; *Obs. 8.* The action of ordering or regulating; regulation; direction; management; authoritative appointment or dispensation; control; disposal. Now rare. . . . [†]11. Appointment to office; esp. admission to office in the Christian Church; =

ORDINATION n. 3. *Obs. 12.* [†]a. Arrangement in regular sequence or proper relative position; the quality or disposition (in things or matters) of conforming to rule; ordered, arranged, or regulated condition; order, regularity. *Obs.*

Catholics and most Protestants refer to baptism and the Lord's Supper as sacraments. Sacrament comes from the Latin word *sacramentum* which meant an oath ratified by a rite.

Sacramentum referred to the Roman military oath of allegiance made by new soldiers. Disloyalty and disobedience to military commands were punished as violations of this oath or covenant. In the Latin Bible, *sacramentum* was used to translate the Greek word *μυστήριον* (mystery) which referred to mystery rites of initiation that "often entailed an oath."

"The covenant for Judaism meant the Mosaic law and for the Roman Empire a covenant meant an illegal society. This two-sided conflict made it nearly impossible for early Christianity to use the term meaningfully." This conflict "soon produced a structure of religious thought and life in which the old covenant patterns were not really useful as a means of communication and may have been dangerous in view of the Roman prohibition of secret societies." Sometime before the 3rd century, Christian writers began changing the meaning of sacraments (e.g., baptism and the Lord's Supper) from covenantal rites into rites performed by a priest that imparted grace to the recipient without covenant. Catholics came to believe in seven sacraments that imparted grace to the recipient. Many years later, Protestants accepted only two sacraments as commanded in the New Testament and denied that sacraments imparted grace.

Most Christians agreed that baptism was necessary but disagreed on how it was done and who could baptize a person. Catholic baptism was generally done by immersion until the 13th century when aspersion or sprinkling became common. Some Protestants rejected sprinkling as a form of baptism. Infant baptism started about AD 200 and became common about AD 400. Many Protestants believed that one must be older before baptism.

14. Blessings of the priesthood for all people

The Lord . . . doeth that which is good among the children of men; . . . and he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile. (2 Ne. 26:33)

Although only worthy male members of the Church hold the priesthood, everyone may partake of its blessings.

- How are women blessed by the priesthood? How are children blessed by the priesthood?

(Review some of the blessings that women and children may receive during their lives. Emphasize that although women and children do not hold the priesthood, they are continually blessed by it.)

- How can those who do not have faithful priesthood holders in their homes receive the blessings of the priesthood?

(Through home teachers, priesthood leaders, and extended family members.) Invite class members to tell of experiences when they have received the blessings of the priesthood from priesthood holders who do not live in their home.

15. Conclusion

The priesthood and its keys have been restored. Priesthood holders hold the authority to direct God's work on earth and to act for Him in blessing His children and helping them prepare for exaltation. The blessings of the priesthood are available to all. Encourage class members to seek these blessings.

Quotes

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