**DC 84                                                 Historical Background**

Several months had passed since the Prophet received section 83. At that time, he was counseling with the saints in Missouri. In early May 1832, he started back to Kirtland. While en route, the Prophet and Bishop Newel K. Whitney were riding in a carriage when, “the horses became frightened, and while going at full speed Bishop Whitney attempted to jump out of the coach, but having his coat fast, caught his foot in the wheel, and had his leg and foot broken in several places; at the same time I jumped out unhurt.” (Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, 1:271) The Prophet sent Sidney Rigdon on to Kirtland while he stayed back to care for his injured Bishop.  The two travelers would not get back to Kirtland until early June of 1832. The Prophet spent the summer primarily working on the translation of the Bible.

“In September 1832, the Prophet moved from the Johnson home in Hiram, Ohio, into quarters above Bishop Whitney’s store in Kirtland, with a kitchen downstairs. During the time Joseph had been in Missouri, Emma, pregnant again and still grieving for the death of her adopted son, Joseph, had been required to live with three different families in Kirtland under cramped and difficult circumstances.

“During 1832 certain difficulties involving Sidney Rigdon began. Sidney had suffered from depression from time to time but for the most part had been able to keep it under control. During the mobbing of 24 March 1832, Sidney was also dragged by his heels along the ground, so that his head suffered severe blows. Following this physical abuse, in addition to his emotional trauma, his depression apparently worsened. After returning to Kirtland from Missouri, Sidney claimed on 5 July 1832 to have had a revelation  and ‘was telling the people that the kingdom was rent from them, and they might as well all go home for they were rejected.’ Reportedly, he also bemoaned that ‘it was useless to pray or do anything.’ His emotional distress is particularly apparent in this last statement.

“In response to Sidney’s claims, Joseph went immediately from Hiram to Kirtland and relieved Sidney of his priesthood calling and of his license to preach, but three weeks later a repentant Sidney Rigdon was reinstated in the Presidency of the High Priesthood. Joseph Smith, ever kindhearted, explained these events in a letter to W. W. Phelps:  ‘When Brother Sidney learned the feelings of the Brethren [in Missouri] in whom he had placed so much confidence, for whom he had endured so much fatigue and suffering, and whom he loved with so much love, his heart was grieved, his spirits failed, and for a moment he became frantic, and the adversary taking the advantage, he spake unadvisedly with his lips… [B]ut [he] has since repented like Peter of old, and after a little suffering by the buffeting of Satan, has been restored to his high standing in the church of God.’ Nevertheless, President Ridgon was never quite the same man after the mobbing and beating in March 1832 and the difficult journey to Missouri immediately thereafter. Sidney had already moved from Hiram, so when Joseph returned with Bishop Whitney in late June, he spent the rest of that summer in Hiram working on the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible with Frederick G. Williams as scribe rather than Sidney. In August 1832, Joseph received Doctrine and Covenants 99 in Hiram.

“Several months before, in January 1832, the Lord had called at least twenty-four elders on missions, mostly to the eastern states (D&C 75). By September 1832, these missionaries began returning to Ohio with accounts of their many successes.” (Stephen E. Robinson, H. Dean Garrett,*A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2001] 3:23-24)

**DC 84:2 for the restoration of his people… and for the gathering of his saint to stand upon Mount Zion**

When we speak of the *Restoration*, we refer to the ministry of Joseph Smith. However, the ancient prophets often referred to the end result of Joseph’s ministry. They spoke of something more great and marvelous than what is transpiring in our day. Actually, the restitution of all things (Acts 3:21) is a Millennial concept not a latter-day one. Similarly, this scripture speaks of the restoration of the House of Israel to a status of greatness.

Figuratively, the Lord’s people have already been restored to the ancient covenant relationship. Figuratively, the saints have already been gathered. Figuratively, the saints can attend the temples and thereby “stand upon Mount Zion.”  But the restoration of the tribes of Jacob to the lands of their inheritance still awaits. The gathering of the Lord’s righteous to two great cities, Jerusalem and New Jerusalem, has not yet occurred. Temples have been built but not the two most important ones—the New Jerusalem Temple and the Old Jerusalem Temple—must still be built.

**DC 84:3 Which city shall be built, beginning at the temple lot**

**Orson Pratt**

There [New Jerusalem] . . . we expect to build a temple different from all other temples in some respects. It will be built much larger, cover a larger area of ground, far larger than this Tabernacle covers and this Tabernacle will accommodate from 12,000 to 15,000 people. We expect to build a temple much larger, very much larger, according to the revelation God gave to us forty years ago in regard to that temple. But you may ask in what form will it be built? Will it be built in one large room, like this Tabernacle? No; there will be 24 different compartments in the temple that will be built in Jackson County. The names of these compartments were given to us some 45 or 46 years ago; the names we still have, and when we build these 24 rooms, in a circular form and arched over the centre, we shall give the names to all these different compartments just as the Lord specified through Joseph Smith. . . . Perhaps you may ask for what purpose these 24 compartments are built. I answer not to assemble the outside world in, nor to assemble the Saints all in one place, but these buildings will be built with a special view to the different orders, or in other words the different quorums or councils of the two Priesthoods that God has ordained on the earth. That is the object of having 24 rooms so that each of these different quorums, whether they be High Priests or Seventies, or Elders, or Bishops, or lesser Priesthood, or Teachers, or Deacons, or Patriarchs, or Apostles, or High Councils, or whatever may be the duties that are assigned to them, they will have rooms in the temple of the Most High God, adapted, set apart, constructed, and dedicated for this special purpose. . . . But will there be any other buildings excepting those 24 rooms that are all joined together in a circular form and arched over the center—are there any other rooms that will be built—detached from the temple? Yes. There will be tabernacles, there will be meeting houses for the assembling of the people on the Sabbath day. There will be various places of meeting so that the people may gather together; but the temple will be dedicated to the Priesthood of the Most High God, and for the most sacred and holy purposes. (*JD,* October 26, 1879, 25:24-25. as taken from *Latter-day Prophets and the Doctrine and Covenants,*comp. by Roy W. Doxey, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978], 3: 68 - 69.)

**DC 84:4 which temple shall be reared in this generation**

**The First Presidency**

That the Lord requires from his people no more than that they shall exhaust all human means to obey the law is shown in the following quotations, which are from revelations given to the Church, the first on September 22-23, 1832 (D&C 84), and the latter January 19, 1841 (D&C 124), nine years later.

Revelation, September 22-23, 1832: (quotes D&C 84:1-5)

In this revelation the Lord definitely declares that a city and temple are to be built at Independence, Missouri, and that this was to be accomplished during the existing generation. Because of wicked persecutions the Church was obliged to leave the State of Missouri, which had been designated as the gathering place of the saints. Under orders signed by Lilburn W. Boggs, Governor of Missouri, twelve thousand members of the Church were compelled to abandon their homes and flee to the State of Illinois, where they established the city of Nauvoo.

As stated above, on January 19th, 1841, a revelation was given to the Church at Nauvoo, from which the following is copied:

   “Verily, verily, I say unto you, that when I give a commandment to any of the sons of men to do a work unto my name, and those sons of men go with all their might and with all they have to perform that work, and cease not their diligence, and their enemies come upon them and hinder them from performing that work, behold, it behooveth me to require that work no more at the hands of those sons of men, but to accept of their offerings.

   And the iniquity and transgression of my holy laws and commandments I will visit upon the heads of those who hindered my work, unto the third and fourth generation, so long as they repent not, and hate me, saith the Lord God.

   Therefore, for this cause have I accepted the offerings of those whom I commanded to build up a city and a house unto my name, in Jackson County, Missouri, and were hindered by their enemies, saith the Lord your God….

   And this I make an example unto you, for your consolation concerning all those who have been commanded to do a work, and have been hindered by the hands of their enemies, and by oppression, saith the Lord your God." (Doctrine and Covenants, Sec. 124:49-53.)

(HEBER J. GRANT, ANTHONY W. IVINS, J. REUBEN CLARK, JR., First Presidency from *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,*compiled by James R. Clark, (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-75), 5: 324.)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

It is perfectly clear that the New Jerusalem, crowned by the Holy Temple to which our Lord shall come, was destined to be built within the promised generation. The fact is that neither the city nor the temple yet graces Missouri's soil, and the generation is long since gone by. Why so? This is the foreshadowed case in which the Lord said he commanded and then revoked, and we are left to say naught except, Blessed be the name of the Lord. As to why he revoked, that is quite another thing. Could it be other than because his people did not climb the gospel heights that it was in their power to reach? Their faith was imperfect, as is ours, and their enemies drove them from their inheritance. It could have been otherwise had they, as ancient Israel did on occasions, persuaded the Lord to fight their battles. (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 601.)

**DC 84:5 an house shall be built unto the Lord, and a cloud shall rest upon it**

“Over and over in the scriptures, the Lord appears in a cloud to his prophets and his people.

“The Lord often dealt with the children of Israel in the wilderness from within a cloud. He ‘went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way’ (Ex. 13:21). He spoke to Moses on Sinai and to the elders of Israel from within a cloud (Ex. 24:16; 19:9; 24:15; 34:5; Num. 11:25)…The Lord came to the dedication of the Temple of Solomon in a cloud:

   Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, [and stood] over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord’s glory. (Ezek. 10:4; see also 2 Chr. 5:13)

“The Lord informed Joseph Smith that when the temple is built in Jackson County a cloud of glory will rest upon it: ‘For verily this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house’ (D&C 84:5).” (Richard G. Oman, Exterior Symbolism of the Salt Lake Temple: Reflecting the Faith That Called the Place Into Being, *BYU Studies, vol. 36 (1996-97)*, Number 3--1996-97)

**DC 84:6-16 The importance of priesthood line of authority**

“Priesthood authority comes directly from God himself. Prophets are a necessary link in the priesthood chain between God and man. When I was ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood I received a priesthood line of authority indicating how my priesthood authority comes from God. My father laid his hands on my head and ordained me. He was ordained by my grandfather. The line of priesthood authority goes back several generations to the Prophet Joseph Smith, who received his priesthood from Peter, James, and John. They received their priesthood directly from the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Alan S. Fuller, “Priesthood Authority Binds Eternal Ordinances,” *LDS Church News, 1992*, 05/09/92)

“Many years ago my brother, LeRoy E. Matthews, and his family lived in a neighboring state in a town where a state hospital was located.

“One day Roy was invited to the hospital superintendent’s office for a brief interview. The superintendent explained that after a great deal of consideration, he had decided to ask Roy to serve as chaplain to the hospital for the coming year. He further explained that for many years it had been the hospital’s policy to appoint a different minister each year from among the churches in that area on a kind of rotation basis. Up to that time, these appointments had gone to clergymen of other churches, even though the town was approximately 50 percent Latter-day Saint.

“Roy told the superintendent that he felt honored and would be very happy to accept this appointment.

“A few days later, however, Roy was called back to the superintendent’s office, where he learned that the ministers of the area had objected to his appointment. They pointed out that they had nothing against Roy Matthews personally, but were very much opposed to his appointment as chaplain because he was ‘not even an ordained minister of the gospel.’

“The superintendent then asked Roy if he had any document that might substantiate his position as a minister of the gospel. Roy said he would go home and be back in less than an hour with the necessary information.

“Shortly afterward, Roy returned to the office and handed the superintendent a card on which was typed his priesthood line of authority, a list showing how ordination to the priesthood had descended to him through earlier brethren who had each been ordained in turn. The superintendent read it carefully and then said, ‘Do you mean, Roy, that your authority traces back to our Lord?’

“’Yes, Doctor, that is correct,’ he replied.

“The superintendent expressed joy and amazement and asked if he could keep the card for a few days. Of course Roy consented.

“Later in the week Roy was called back to the office, where the superintendent explained that he had met with the ministers, had read Roy’s line of authority to them, and asked if they had anything that could compare with this. Their only reply was that they had each been schooled and ordained in ministerial colleges.

“Roy was granted the appointment without further protest or opposition.” (Victor W. Matthews, “The Chaplain’s Authority,” *Ensign*, July 1985, 50-51)

“Recent growth of the Church and the simplification of the Church’s record-keeping procedures have made it increasingly difficult for the Church Historical Department to trace a member’s priesthood line of authority. As a result, the Church Historical Department no longer traces each member’s priesthood authority line.

“These changes have placed the responsibility and opportunity of record keeping squarely on the family and on the individual. It is important for each of us to recognize that it is our responsibility and privilege, not the Church’s, to preserve records about ourselves and our families.” (Glenn N. Rowe, “I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, July 1994, 67)

“If a priesthood bearer desires to trace his own line of authority, he should pursue his current office in the priesthood—not former offices. Bishops and patriarchs should trace their line of authority as high priests. In completing an authority line, each step should go back through the office held by the person at the time he performed the ordination.

“It is not appropriate to trace the line of authority in cases of setting apart or for other ordinances.” (“Church Policies and Announcements,” Ensign, Aug. 1976, 66)

**DC 84:6 Moses…received [the priesthood] under the hand of his father-in-law, Jethro**

”From modern revelation we learn that it was Jethro (a descendant of Abraham through Abraham's wife Keturah and thus a non-Israelite) who ordained Moses to the Melchizedek Priesthood (D&C 84:6). This was done through a priesthood line outside of Israel. We are accustomed to thinking of ancient priesthood holders such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Ephraim, and so on, but here we learn that others also had the holy priesthood of God. As the modern missionary effort spreads the gospel wider across the earth, it may be a great plus in the presentation for it to become known that Moses, the great prophet of ancient Israel, obtained the priesthood not through the house of Israel, but through another Semitic lineage.” (Robert J. Matthews, *A Bible! A Bible!*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1990], 60.)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

There were also in the days of Abraham other nations and peoples of whom we know nothing—except that they dwelt on earth and worshipped the true God—who also held the priesthood. Through these nations the priesthood descended to Jethro, who conferred it upon his son-in-law Moses. The revealed account speaks of one Esaias, of whose ministry we know nothing, except that he received the priesthood under the hand of God (meaning, apparently, by special dispensation); that he lived in the days of Abraham and was blessed by him; and that he conferred the priesthood upon Gad. From Gad it descended by successive and authoritative conferrals to Jeremy, Elihu, Caleb, and Jethro, and then to the great lawgiver, Moses. (D&C 84:6-15.) (*The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary,* 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979-1981], 1: 55.)

**DC 84:7-10 Caleb, Elihu, Jeremy, and Gad**

“Significant for this discussion are the unfamiliar names of the priesthood bearers between Jethro and Abraham. The Lord does not provide any detail about the relationship of Caleb, Elihu, Jeremy, Gad, and Esaias to Jethro or Abraham. It is not clear from the revelation whether these men are Midianite ancestors of Jethro or simply righteous men with no direct relation to the Midianites.” (Sperry Symposium *Voices of Old Testament Prophets: The 26th Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*[Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997], 25 - 26.)

“That the priesthood had been given to Jethro through Midian implies—once again, as was the case with the priesthood descending through Abel, in addition to Seth (D&C 84:6-16; 107:40)—that there was more than one line of authority. It may be that the priesthood was transmitted through several lines but that the keys or right of presidency remained with and were passed on by the ordained patriarchs.” (Sperry Symposium*Voices of Old Testament Prophets: The 26th Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*[Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997], 203.)

**DC 84:12 Esaias received it under the hand of God**

Interesting, isn’t it, that Moses could not trace his priesthood line back to Adam? He could trace it to an unknown prophet, Esaias, who received it directly from God. Esaias must have been a man of great enough faith to open the heavens and receive his authority directly from the source.

Esaias and Adam were not the only prophets who received the priesthood directly from the Lord. The prophets who lived since the days of Moses ministered by the Melchizedek priesthood. This would include Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, Daniel, Lehi, Nephi, etc. These men apparently received the priesthood in the same manner as did Esaias, for Joseph Smith said they “had the Melchizedek Priesthood and were ordained by God himself.” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,*180-181)

**DC 84:14 Abraham received the priesthood from Melchizedek**

Abraham’s father, Nehor, was a wicked, idolatrous man. He would make idols of stone and then require young Abraham to sell them by the side of the road. (*Traditions About the Early Life of Abraham*, Tvedtnes et al, 53). Horrified by his father’s evil practices, Abraham could entertain no hope of receiving the priesthood from his father. Instead, he said:

   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.

   It was conferred upon me from the fathers; it came down from the fathers, from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth, down to the present time, even the right of the firstborn, or the first man, who is Adam, or first father, through the fathers unto me.

   I sought for mine appointment unto the Priesthood according to the appointment of God unto the fathers concerning the seed.

   My fathers having turned from their righteousness, and from the holy commandments which the Lord their God had given unto them, unto the worshiping of the gods of the heathen, utterly refused to hearken to my voice; (Abr 1:2-5)

**Joseph Smith**

Abraham says to Melchizedek, I believe all that thou hast taught me concerning the priesthood and the coming of the Son of Man; so Melchizedek ordained Abraham and sent him away. Abraham rejoiced, saying, Now I have a priesthood. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 322-323)

**DC 84:14 Melchizedek…received it through the lineage of his fathers**

Ancient Jewish traditions and the apocryphal work, *The Book of Jasher*, suggest that Melchizedek is none other than Shem, the favored son of Noah. Probably based on *The Book of Jasher*, John Taylor, proposed the same thing in *Times and Seasons*5:746, dated Dec. 15, 1844. Over the years, this has led to the tradition that Shem and Melchizedek are the same individual. A careful reading of D&C 84:14 refutes this claim. If Melchizedek was Shem, the verse would read, “Which Abraham received the priesthood from Melchizedek; and Melchizedek received it under the hand of his father Noah.” Instead, the text indicates that there are multiple generations between Melchizedek and Noah, for Melchizedek “received it through the lineage of his fathers, even till Noah.” Certainly, we should believe the Doctrine and Covenants as the supreme doctrinal treatise over apocryphal works and Jewish traditions.

**Bruce R. McConkie**

There is an unsupported tradition to the effect that Melchizedek was the same person as Shem the son of Noah. That this could hardly have been the case is seen from the revelation which says: “Abraham received the priesthood from Melchizedek, who received it through the lineage of his fathers, even till Noah.” (D. & C. 84:14.) In other words, there seem to have been at least two generations between Melchizedek and Shem. (*Mormon Doctrine,*2d ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], 475.)

**DC 84:17 Which priesthood…is without beginning of days or end of years**

Very little is contained in the Bible about Melchizedek and his priesthood. The most impressive reference was made by Paul, but even it has been a source of confusion. The text implies that Melchizedek was “Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God.” (Heb 7:3). This passage has been a mystery for Christendom.

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

Many Christian teachers have been greatly puzzled because of the reference in the Book of Hebrews to Melchizedek. Bible commentators have scratched their heads and reached false conclusions trying to solve the mystery. It was not Melchizedek who was without father and without mother and without beginning of days or end of life, but it was the priesthood which he held. (*Doctrines of Salvation,*3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 3: 82

**Joseph Smith**

The Priesthood is an everlasting principle, and existed with God from eternity, and will to eternity, without beginning of days or end of years. The keys have to be brought from heaven whenever the Gospel is sent. When they are revealed from heaven, it is by Adam’s authority. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 157)

**DC 84:19 the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God**

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

This Holy Priesthood which is eternal, is the authority which prevails in all the universe. The ordinances of the gospel are made valid through its power, and without it the knowledge of God could not be made manifest. It is by this authority and through the ordinances that man is able to know of God. Without the priesthood it would be impossible for man to gain the knowledge which would bring him into the presence of the Father. Is there any wonder, then, that the world, deprived of the priesthood, is in such spiritual darkness and confusion?

Men may search and they may study, but they will never come to a knowledge of God until they receive the gospel and obtain light through the power of the priesthood and the ordinances of the gospel. (*Conference Report, April 1967*, General Priesthood Meeting 98.)

**Marion G. Romney**

The Prophet Joseph Smith used to repeatedly urge the brethren to make their calling and election sure. There is no way to do this except by receiving the Priesthood and magnifying it. (*Conference Report, October 1960*, General Priesthood Meeting 73.)

**DC 84:21 without the ordinances…the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh**

The worthy male member must receive the Melchizedek Priesthood, which holds “the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God” (D&C 84:19; see also D&C 107:18–19), in order to receive these “mysteries.” Therein lies the key to the principal purpose of the higher priesthood—to reveal the principles of exaltation in the house of the Lord through ordinances, consisting of washings, anointings, the priesthood endowment, and marriage for eternity. (See D&C 124:37–42.) Marriage for eternity is an order of the priesthood “in which the participating parties are promised kingdoms and thrones if they are true and faithful to their obligations.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, Ensign, December 1971, p. 98.) These blessings include the power to beget spirit children after the resurrection. In this regard, **Joseph Smith** said:

“The question is frequently asked, ‘Can we not be saved without going through with all those ordinances?’ I would answer, No, not the fulness of salvation. …

“If a man gets a fullness of the priesthood of God he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments and obeying all the ordinances of the house of the Lord.” (*Teachings*, pp. 331, 308.) (Roy W. Doxey, “Accepted of the Lord: The Doctrine of Making Your Calling and Election Sure,” Ensign, July 1976, 52)

**Charles W. Nibley**

“That is what holds these people together—the power of the priesthood. And in the administration of it we have seen and do see the power of godliness; not a form of godliness, mind you, but the power of godliness. Paul said that in the latter days men would be ‘having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof;’ but what I refer to is the power of godliness. Have you ever seen it manifested in your lives? We heard of it this morning from the leader of the Church as manifested in the healing of the sick. We see it in the temples of the Lord.” (*Conference Report, April 1927*, First Day—Morning Meeting 26.)

**James E. Faust**

Of course, going to the temple is a matter of choice, but many do not realize that in order to come unto Christ receiving the ordinances of the temple is not optional, it is essential. No one will be able to come unto Christ without these steps and ordinances. (*In the Strength of the Lord: The Life and Teachings of James E. Faust*[Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1999], 443.)

**Ezra Taft Benson**

Many parents, in and out of the Church, are concerned about protection against a cascading avalanche of wickedness which threatens to engulf [the world]. … There is a power associated with ordinances of heaven—even the power of godliness—which can and will thwart the forces of evil if we will but be worthy of those sacred [covenants made in the temple of the Lord]. … Our families will be protected, our children will be safeguarded as we live the gospel, visit the temple, and live close to the Lord. (Dean L. Larsen, “The Importance of the Temple for Living Members,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1993, 12)

**DC 84:23 Moses…sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God**

“This, in fact, was the goal Moses sought when he brought the children of Israel to Mount Sinai. Jehovah had wanted to sanctify Israel and make them ‘a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation’ through covenant with him. (See Ex. 19:5–6.) Their sanctification would have been accomplished as God has ordained—through obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. By exercising faith in Christ unto repentance and covenanting to keep his commandments by being baptized, each of the children of Israel could have been sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost. (See 2 Ne. 31:17–20; 3 Ne. 27:18–21.)

“Thus sanctified by the Spirit and endowed with the gift of the Holy Ghost, Israel would have entered a heightened spiritual state in which, through the ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood now administered in God’s holy temples, they could have access to the ‘mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God.’

“With that key, they would, in effect, have the key to eternal life. Eventually, they might have so risen in spiritual stature, going ‘from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation,’ that they could enter into God’s rest fully and forever to ‘dwell in everlasting burnings, and to sit in glory, as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power.’ (See *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 298–99, 346–47; see also D&C 93:11–20.) They would truly have come to know God, which the Savior said is eternal life. (See John 17:1–3.)” (Melvin J. Petersen, “I Have a Question,” Ensign, Dec. 1985, 61)

**DC 84:25 Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also**

By virtue of their rebellion, the Lord would give the people a lesser law. With it would come a lesser priesthood, a lesser temple with lesser temple ordinances, lesser covenants, and lesser blessings. Could this lesson apply to us? Is our prophet seeking diligently to sanctify us so that we might behold the face of God? Are we hardening our hearts so that we cannot endure his presence?

**Henry B. Eyring**

I pray with all my heart that you will sense the tragedy in that. I have deep appreciation for the blessings of the Aaronic Priesthood, for the ministering of angels, and for the gospel of repentance. But can you imagine the grief of Moses, of Aaron, and of the people who rejected God's offer to commune with him when they understood what they had lost? We will not lose that blessing again as a people, but you and I could lose it as individuals, and perhaps for all in our families who will come after us.

So I don't just invite you to read the scriptures, to pray, to listen for the word of God. I plead with you. Put yourself where you can hear the words of testimony. Listen with the simplicity of a child. Expect that spirit of testimony and revelation to impel you to action, to keep the commandments. And never think you have been taught enough, that you have listened long enough, that now is your time and turn to rest. (*To Draw Closer to God: A Collection of Discourses* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997], 39.)

**DC 84:28 John…was ordained by the angel of God at the time he was eight days old**

This verse should not be construed to mean that John the Baptist was ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood by this angel. John received the priesthood from his father by virtue of his lineage through the tribe of Levi. This is how the Levitical Priesthood was transferred—from father to son—by birth, not by ordination. This is what is meant by the preceding verses, “the lesser priesthood continued…with the house of Aaron among the children of Israel until John.”

Then to what power was John ordained by this angel? He was certainly ordained to be an Elias, the great forerunner of Christ. This calling was above and beyond the priesthood he would receive from his father. His calling as Elias could not be better described than with the charge “to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews, and to make straight the way of the Lord before the face of his people, to prepare them for the coming of the Lord.”

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

The reason Zacharias could not ordain John is because of the fact that John received certain keys of authority which his father Zacharias did not possess. Therefore this special authority had to be conferred by this heavenly messenger, who was duly authorized and sent to confer it. John's ordination was not…the bestowal of the Aaronic Priesthood, which his father held, but…the conferring of certain essential powers peculiar to the time among which was the authority to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews and “to make straight the way of the Lord.” Moreover, it was to prepare the Jews and other Israelites for the coming of the Son of God. This great authority required a special ordination beyond the delegated power that had been given to Zacharias or any other priest who went before him, so the angel of the Lord was sent to John in his childhood to confer it. (*Answers to Gospel Questions,* 5 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957-1966], 5: 2.)

**DC 84:29-30 the offices of elder and bishop are necessary appendages**

“Webster defines *appendage*as ‘something attached to a greater thing.’ The Doctrine and Covenants describes the position of the Melchizedek Priesthood, indicating that ‘all other authorities or offices in the church are appendages to this priesthood’ (107:5). Thus, the Aaronic Priesthood ‘is called the lesser priesthood … because it is an appendage to the greater’ (107:14).

“In section 84, the Lord refers to the offices of bishop and elder as being ‘necessary appendages belonging unto the high priesthood,’ and the offices of teacher and deacon as being ‘necessary appendages belonging to the lesser priesthood’ (84:29-30). Smith and Sjodahl state that ‘while it is here stated that these offices are `necessary appendages` to the Priesthood, this does not signify, as some have supposed, that the other offices in the Priesthoods are not appendages. All the offices grow out of, and are appendages to the Priesthood as well as those mentioned here.’ (SS, 504.)

“**President Joseph F. Smith** emphatically declared: ‘There is no office growing out of this Priesthood that is or can be greater than the Priesthood itself. It is from the Priesthood that the office derives its authority and power. No office gives authority to the Priesthood. No office adds to the power of the Priesthood.’ (GD,148.)” (Hoyt W. Brewster, Jr., *Doctrine and Covenants Encyclopedia*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988], 23.)

**DC 84:31 the sons of Aaron shall offer an acceptable offering and sacrifice in the house of the Lord**

Ezekiel saw Millennial temples in a great and glorious vision (Ezek. 40-48). Some might be surprised to find out that he saw Levites offering animal sacrifice. Speaking of the Millennial Levites, the Lord said, “they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the house, and ministering to the house:  they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them.” (Ezek. 44:11)  Interestingly, these Levites may not enter certain areas of the temple—those areas reserved for ordinances related to the Melchizedek Priesthood. Hence, the scripture continues, “they shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a (high) priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, in the most holy place.”  (Ezek. 44:13)  Nevertheless, these Levites will offer animal sacrifice until the prophecy of John the Baptist has been fulfilled wherein he prophesied that the Aaronic Priesthood would “never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness.” (DC 13:1)

**Joseph Smith**

It is generally supposed that sacrifice was entirely done away when the Great Sacrifice (i.e., the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus) was offered up, and that there will be no necessity for the ordinance of (animal) sacrifice in the future: but those who assert this are certainly not acquainted with the duties, privileges and authority of the Priesthood, or with the prophets. . . .

These sacrifices, as well as every ordinance belonging to the Priesthood, will, when the Temple of the Lord shall be built, and the sons of Levi purified, be fully restored and attended to in all their powers, ramifications, and blessings. This ever did and ever will exist when the powers of the Melchizedek Priesthood are sufficiently manifest; else how can the restitution of all things spoken of by the holy prophets be brought to pass?It is not to be understood that the Law of Moses will be established again with all its rites and variety of ceremonies; this has never been spoken of by the prophets; but those things which existed prior to Moses' day, namely, sacrifice will be continued. (*History of the Church,* 4:211)

**DC 84:31 which house shall be built unto the Lord in this generation**

See commentary for verse 4.

**DC 84:33 whoso if faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods…and the magnifying their calling**

**Delbert L. Stapley**

There are two main requirements of this oath and covenant. First is faithfulness, which denotes obedience to the laws of God and connotes true observance of all gospel standards. … The second requirement … is to magnify one’s calling. To magnify is to honor, to exalt and glorify and cause to be held in greater esteem or respect. It also means to increase the importance of, to enlarge and make greater. (*Conference Report*, Apr. 1957, pp. 76–77.)

**Marion G. Romney**

Ordination to the priesthood is a prerequisite to receiving [such transcendent blessings], but it does not guarantee them. For a man actually to obtain them, he must faithfully discharge the obligation which is placed upon him when he receives the priesthood; that is, he must magnify his calling. (*Conference Report, April 1962*, First Day—Morning Meeting 17.)

**Spencer W. Kimball**

The faithful in the priesthood are those who fulfill the covenant by “magnifying their calling” and living “by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.” (D&C 84:33, 44.) Far more seems to be implied in these requirements than token obedience—far more is needed than mere attendance at a few meetings and token fulfillment of assignments. The perfection of body and spirit are implied, and that includes the kind of service that goes far beyond the normal definition of duty. “Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen.” (D&C 121:34.) (“The Example of Abraham,” *Ensign,* June 1975, 4)

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

I have seen and known such men. I met some such the other day when I was at the St. George Temple. I have known and watched these brethren for many years. Their hair is now white, and they do not walk with that vitality which was once their characteristic. Those of whom I speak have never had much of wealth. But they have had much of wisdom, and they have had much of faith. They are men who since the days of their youth have held the priesthood of God, have walked in its light, and have magnified their callings. They have left home at personal sacrifice to serve as missionaries and as mission presidents. They have served as bishops and presidents of stakes. Wherever they have gone, whether in their vocational or ecclesiastical callings, they have touched a candle with the flame of their own faith and brought light where before there was darkness.

In season and out of season, in sunshine and in storm, in defeat as well as in victory, they have kept their eyes at the right end of the lens, magnifying their callings and bringing closer, as it were, the sacred and eternal things of God. (“Magnify Your Calling,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 48)

**DC 84:33 are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies**

**Marion G. Romney**

I believe that is true. I think that men and boys who magnify their callings in the priesthood have a change wrought in their bodies. This morning while President Lee was talking in the welfare meeting, he told about someone, some stranger, who saw President McKay and said to him, “Are you a prophet of God?” President McKay’s answer was, “You look into my face and get the answer.”

I heard a story once about President Joseph F. Smith, the father of our present beloved leader, who was down in Arizona attending some function with the governor and other prominent men. Some of them wanted to have their pictures taken with the President of the Church. President Joseph F. Smith graciously consented and stood with them while their pictures were taken. When they stepped back into the crowd, the governor was heard to say, “You know, when I stood out there by that man, I felt like a thief.” He could feel the power in a great man who was magnifying his calling in the priesthood. (“The Covenant of the Priesthood,” *Ensign*, July 1972, 98)

**Hugh B. Brown**

Brethren, I bear testimony to the fact that that promise has been realized in the lives of many of us. I know that it has been realized in the life of President David O. McKay, that he has been sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of his body, and some of the rest of us are better off today than we were many years ago so far as physical health is concerned—and we attribute that fact to his blessing. (*Conference Report,*April 1963, General Priesthood Meeting 90.)

**DC 84:33 they become the sons of Moses and of Aaron**

Often, the ancient priesthood is said to be *patriarchal*. Today, we don’t always confer the priesthood in a patriarchal fashion. For one, priesthood leaders not fathers perform priesthood worthiness interviews. Additionally, many converts cannot hope to be ordained by their unbelieving fathers.

Yet, we are told that the priesthood is the same, without beginning of days nor end of years. Therefore, if the priesthood used to be patriarchal, it must still be patriarchal. How can this be?

We are all familiar with the doctrine that those who are baptized into the church are adopted into the House of Israel. They become the sons and daughters of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The same principle applies to receiving the priesthood. All men who receive the Melchizedek priesthood become the sons of Moses; all men and boys who receive the Aaronic priesthood become the sons of Aaron. Sonship implies eligibility to receive an inheritance. Just as those who are the sons and daughters of Abraham are entitled to the blessings of Abraham, those who are sons of Moses and Aaron are entitled to inherit the blessings of Moses and Aaron. This doctrine helps us to understand how the priesthood is *still patriarchal.*

The sons of Moses have a responsibility to assist Moses in accomplishing his priesthood stewardship. From Moses came “the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north.” (DC 110:11)  Melchizedek priesthood holders have long been charged with the gathering of Israel, and this charge can be traced back to the ministry of Moses himself.  What other significance can we attach to the terms sons of Moses and Aaron? In verse 31, the Lord referred to the sons of Moses and the sons of Aaron offering an acceptable offering in the house of the Lord. The priesthood holders referred to will be Melchizedek and Aaronic priesthood brethren who will administer in the temples of God. Certainly, these brethren already serve in the temples, but verse 31 refers to the temple in New Jerusalem and to animal sacrifices belonging to the Aaronic priesthood anciently (see commentary for v. 31).

**Stephen L. Richards**

I have reached the conclusion in my own mind that no man, however great his intellectual attainments, however vast and far-reaching his service may be, arrives at the full measure of his sonship and the manhood the Lord intended him to have, without the investiture of the Holy Priesthood, and with that appreciation, my brethren, I have given thanks to the Lord all my life for this marvelous blessing which has come to me—a blessing that some of my progenitors had, and a blessing which more than any other heritage I want my sons and my grandsons and my great-grandsons to enjoy. (James E. Faust, “Power of the Priesthood,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 43)

**DC 84:34 They become…the seed of Abraham**

**David A. Bednar**

The heirs of all the promises and covenants made by God to Abraham are referred to as *the seed of Abraham* (see Bible Dictionary, "Seed of Abraham," 771). These blessings are obtained only by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Brethren, the process of becoming a missionary is directly related to understanding who we are as the seed of Abraham.

Abraham was a great prophet who desired righteousness and was obedient to all of the commandments he received from God, including the command to offer as a sacrifice his precious son, Isaac. Because of his steadfastness and obedience, Abraham is often referred to as the father of the faithful, and Heavenly Father established a covenant with and promised great blessings to Abraham and his posterity:

   Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

   That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

   And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou has obeyed my voice (Genesis 22:16–18).

Thus, Abraham was promised a great posterity and that the nations of the earth would be blessed through that posterity.

How are the nations of the earth blessed through the seed of Abraham? The answer to this important question is found in the book of Abraham:

   And I will make of thee [Abraham] a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations;

   And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father (Abraham 2:9–10).

We learn in these verses that Abraham's faithful heirs would have the blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the authority of the priesthood. Thus, the phrase “bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations” refers to the responsibility to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and to invite all to receive by proper priesthood authority the ordinances of salvation. Truly, great responsibility rests upon the seed of Abraham in these latter days.

How do these promises and blessings relate to us today? Either by literal lineage or adoption, every man and boy within the sound of my voice tonight is a rightful heir to the promises made by God to Abraham. We are the seed of Abraham. One of the primary reasons we receive a patriarchal blessing is to help us more fully understand who we are as the posterity of Abraham and to recognize the responsibility that rests upon us.

My beloved brethren, you and I, today and always, are to bless all peoples in all the nations of the earth. You and I, today and always, are to bear witness of Jesus Christ and declare the message of the Restoration. You and I, today and always, are to invite all to receive the ordinances of salvation. Proclaiming the gospel is not a part-time priesthood obligation. It is not simply an activity in which we engage for a limited time or an assignment we must complete as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Rather, missionary work is a manifestation of our spiritual identity and heritage. We were foreordained in the premortal existence and born into mortality to fulfill the covenant and promise God made to Abraham. We are here upon the earth at this time to magnify the priesthood and to preach the gospel. That is who we are, and that is why we are here—today and always. (“Becoming a Missionary,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 44)

**DC 84:35-37 all they who receive this priesthood receive me**

**Spencer W. Kimball**

The word “receive” in these sentences has deep meaning. To receive in this connection seems to mean more than merely to accept casually, but to magnify and develop and make effective. To receive the servants might mean to accept calls and responsibilities and to serve well and faithfully; to receive the Lord would mean loving him and obeying all his commandments; to receive the Father would mean to leave nothing undone toward arriving at personal perfection; and all this means exaltation and eternal life, for the promise is the kingdom and "all that my Father hath." A moment's reflection will remind us of the infinite knowledge, power, dominion, kingdoms, exaltations, and joy offered to us here in an oath and covenant which the Father cannot break. If we measure up fully we are guaranteed limitless blessings! (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969], chap. 9)

**Rudger Clawson**

Now, brethren and sisters—and I say sisters because, as I have said, the sisters participate in the blessings of the Priesthood through their husbands—do we appreciate the Priesthood of God, this divine authority? Do we honor it in our lives? Do we honor it in our file leaders? Do we teach our boys at home the importance and value of the Priesthood? Are they receiving this instruction in the various organizations? Because, I take it that the Priesthood of God is about the greatest gift unto man, for it represents divine authority. Let us give heed to this matter. Oh, I pray that the responsibility of it may rest down mightily upon the authorities in the stakes of Zion, and that they will see to it that proper and full instruction is given in respect to this matter. (*Conference Report, April 1921*, Afternoon Session 26)

**DC 84:38 therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him**

**Wilford Woodruff**

Who in the name of the Lord can apprehend such language as this? Who can comprehend that, by obeying the celestial law, all that our Father has shall be given unto us—exaltations, thrones, principalities, power, dominion—who can comprehend it? Nevertheless it is here stated. (*Journal of Discourses,*26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 22: 209 - 210.)

**George Q. Cannon**

Here is plainly pointed out to us as a people the future glory that God has in store for all those who receive and magnify the Priesthood. They are to receive the Father's Kingdom, and if they receive the Father's Kingdom, they are to receive all that the Father hath, for all that he hath will be given unto them. Can you conceive of this? Can any human being conceive of the immeasurable extent of the glory here promised—the immeasurable extent of exaltation here offered unto all those who receive the Priesthood of the Son of God, and who magnify it? It is impossible for mortal man to have the least conception even when his mind is enlightened by the Spirit of God—that is, the least conception compared with the immeasurable extent of the glory that is here promised. We can have some conception of it, we can have some foretaste of it, when we receive the Spirit of God, when it rests down upon us in power; but to conceive of the fullness of this glory is impossible for any being in this mortal condition of existence. (*Journal of Discourses,*26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 25: 292.)

**Rudger Clawson**

You get some idea… how extremely sacred is the Holy Priesthood, which is nothing more nor less than divine authority committed unto man, and in the foregoing declaration is shown the absolute impartiality of our Father in heaven, for he says: “Whoso,” (meaning any man and every man), “is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling,” will enter into the possession of all things, for he will become a joint heir with Jesus Christ, the Lord, in such possession. Now, I ask you, what more could a faithful high priest receive than the promise of this blessing? Could he receive any more if he were an apostle? Could he receive any more if he were a counselor in the Presidency of the Church? Could he receive anything more if he were the President of the Church, than a promise which gives to him a joint heirship in all things? No, he could not. And so it is with the faithful seventy, and so with the faithful elder in the Church.

There is no need for envy. There is no need for overweening ambition. There is no need to reach out and try to grasp that to which we are not entitled. The essential thing is that every man should see to it, that he obtains the High Priesthood. If he advances no further than the office of an elder but is faithful in the magnifying of his calling, he will enter into his glory and exaltation and will receive the fulness of which the record speaks.

And does this not show clearly, beautifully, that God indeed is no respecter of persons? And as we heard in the prayer that was offered this afternoon. God has made us equal. Oh, I delight in this principle of equality in the Church, which is invariably determined by the principle of faithfulness, of worthiness. Nothing will be withheld from the man who is worthy and no blessing will be withheld from the woman who is faithful and true. (*Conference Report, October 1917*, Afternoon Session. 29.)

**DC 84:39 the oath… which belongeth to the priesthood**

The oath of the priesthood is poorly understood. While we understand the nature of covenants, we don’t talk much of the oath of the priesthood. If a covenant is a two-way promise, then an oath is a one-way promise. It is a promise that the Father gives to us. It is an oath that he cannot break, neither can it be moved. It may surprise some readers to realize that this oath is not specifically recorded in section 84. Rather, Paul records it without identifying it as the oath of the priesthood. Quoting Psalms 110:4, Paul said, “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”  (Heb. 5:6) Speaking of Christ as the great high priest, Paul continues:

   After the similitude of Melchisedec, there ariseth another priest,

   Who is made…after the power of an endless life.

   For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec…

   And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest:

   (for those priests [of Levi] were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)  (Heb. 7:15-21)

While these words were not spoken when we were ordained to the priesthood, perhaps we should imagine the Father saying to us, “thou art an elder forever after the order of Melchisedec,” or “thou art an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.”  This is the oath of the priesthood. It emphasizes the eternal nature of the priesthood—that once administered, it will continue with the individual throughout the eternities.  The blessing of receiving all that the Father hath is not the oath of the priesthood but rather the natural consequence and blessing of obeying the covenant.

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

“Now may I say a few words about the oath which accompanies the reception of the Melchizedek Priesthood.

To swear with an oath is the most solemn and binding form of speech known to the human tongue; and it was this type of language which the Father chose to have used in the great Messianic prophecy about Christ and the priesthood. Of him it says: ’The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.’ (Ps. 110:4.) (*Conference Report, October 1970*, Afternoon Meeting 92.)

**DC 84:40 all those who receive the priesthood receive this oath and covenant of my Father**

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

As all of us know, a covenant is a contract and an agreement between at least two parties. In the case of gospel covenants, the parties are the Lord in heaven and men on earth. Men agree to keep the commandments and the Lord promises to reward them accordingly. The gospel itself is the new and everlasting covenant and embraces all of the agreements, promises, and rewards which the Lord offers to his people.

And so when we receive the Melchizedek Priesthood we do so by covenant. We solemnly promise to receive the priesthood, to magnify our callings in it, and to live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God. The Lord on his part promises us that if we keep the covenant, we shall receive all that the Father hath, which is life eternal. Can any of us conceive of a greater or more glorious agreement than this? (*Conference Report, October 1970*, Afternoon Meeting 91.)

**DC 84:40 Does the oath and covenant apply to the Aaronic Priesthood?**

Verse 33 clearly refers to both Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthoods. Some have taught that the oath and covenant applies just as much to the Aaronic Priesthood as it does to the Melchizedek. Is this correct?

Properly understood, there is no oath associated with the Aaronic Priesthood.  Of course there is a covenant associated with the lesser priesthood (Ex. 34:1-10). Every time the Lord reveals the priesthood, whether Aaronic or Melchizedek, he reveals it by covenant. The difference is that the Aaronic Priesthood has a covenant but not an oath.  Paul said that “those priests (speaking of the Levitical priests) were made without an oath; but this (the Melchizedek priesthood) with an oath.” (Heb. 7:21) “For the law *was administered without an oath* and made nothing perfect.” (JST Heb. 7:19)

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

Thus when a man is ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood, he receives it with an oath *and* covenant that he will magnify his calling and be faithful before the Lord. That does not follow in the case of the Aaronic Priesthood, so the Prophet tells us. (*Doctrines of Salvation,*3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 3: 141, emphasis added)

**Joseph Smith**

What is called the Levitical Priesthood, consisting of priests to administer in outward ordinances, [is] made without an oath; but the Priesthood of Melchizedek is by an oath and covenant. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,*323)

**DC 84:40 this oath and covenant of my Father…he cannot break, neither can it be moved**

**N. Eldon Tanner**

Who cannot break? The Lord cannot break. That is the only thing I know the Lord cannot do, is break a covenant that he has made with his people and when he says, “All that I have is thine,” (D&C 84:38) I would like to know, my brethren, what more we could ask for; and all we need to do is to keep the commandments and magnify our priesthood. (*Conference Report, April 1965*, General Priesthood Meeting 95)

**N. Eldon Tanner**

Note that the Lord says (and I am not quoting word for word): "I cannot break this covenant, but if you break it there is no promise." Isn't it something to think about when the Lord says he cannot break a covenant that he makes with his people. That covenant stands as long as we will keep the covenant, but when we break the covenant, there is no covenant as far as the Lord is concerned. (*Conference Report, October 1966*, General Priesthood Meeting 99)

**DC 84:41 whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and altogether turneth therefrom**

This curse belongs to those who have held the Melchizedek priesthood and then have apostatized. They are those who have left the Church but can’t leave the Church alone. They are those who fight against God and his servants. These are those who have altogether turned from the oath and covenant of the priesthood.

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

The Lord is promising us everything that he has if we will be faithful. Isn't it only fair, that the punishment for violation of that covenant and the trampling of that priesthood under our feet should bring a punishment, on one hand, as severe, as glorious will be the reward on the other? (*Conference Report, October 1945*, Afternoon Meeting 99.)

**Lorenzo Snow**

This makes a very serious matter of receiving this covenant and this Priesthood; for those who receive it must, like God himself, abide in it, and must not fall, and must not be moved out of the way; for those who receive this oath and covenant and turn away from it, and cease to do righteously and to honor this covenant, and will to abide in sin, and repent not, there is no forgiveness for them either in this life or in the world to come.(*Conference Report, April 1898*, Afternoon Session)

**DC 84:42 wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood**

President Marion G. Romney makes an important distinction between priesthood holders who turn altogether from the priesthood and those who “come not unto this priesthood.”  The first group are those who rebel against the priesthood; the second group are those who hold the priesthood but don’t magnify their callings. Many inactive church brethren fall into this latter category. It is important to recognize that the cursings are different for the two groups. The first is told they shall not have forgiveness of sins. On the second is pronounced a nonspecific wo—or curse from God.

**Marion G. Romney**

With such a penalty prescribed for breaking it, one might be prompted to question the advisability of accepting the obligations of the covenant; that is, he might question it until he reads the verse which follows the statement of the penalty. There he learns that those who do not receive the oath and covenant are not *much*, if any, better off than those who receive it and break it. For in that verse the Lord says: “And wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood which ye have received” (D&C 84:42). (“The Oath and Covenant Which Belongeth to the Priesthood,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 43–44)

**Marion G. Romney**

The revelation says that the Lord cannot break his part of the oath and covenant. But we can break our part of it, and many priesthood bearers do so… Now, I do not think this means that all who fail to magnify their callings in the priesthood will have committed the unpardonable sin, but I do think that priesthood bearers who have entered into the covenants that we enter into—in the waters of baptism, in connection with the law of tithing, the Word of Wisdom, and the many other covenants we make—and then refuse to live up to these covenants will stand in jeopardy of losing the promise of eternal life. (“The Covenant of the Priesthood,” *Ensign*, July 1972, 99)

**Marion G. Romney**

I used to think if that (no forgiveness) was the penalty, it would have been maybe better for me not to have received the covenant, with that penalty over me, if I break it. And then I read the next verse, and it said, “And wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood which ye have received.” (D&C 84:42.)

I knew I had only one chance—that was to receive it and honor it. From these scriptures it seems perfectly clear to me that to receive the holy priesthood and not magnify my calling in it, I will fall short of eternal life; and that if I fail to receive the holy priesthood, I will likewise fall short. There is but one safe course, and that is to receive it and magnify my calling in it. (“According to the Covenants,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1975, 73)

**Rudger Clawson**

You can see from that which you have heard that the Priesthood truly has great power, and unless we make up our minds to magnify the Priesthood, it would have been better that we had never had it. It is like a two-edged sword that cuts both ways, cuts to the right and cuts to the left. It also condemns those who receive the Priesthood but fail to magnify it. (*Conference Report, April 1942*, First Day—Morning Meeting 12.)

**DC 84:44 you shall live by every word which proceedeth forth from the mouth of God**

**Joseph Smith**

I made this my rule:  When the Lord commands, do it. (*History of the Church*, 2:170)

**Joseph Smith**

If we are faithful, and live by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God, I will venture to prophesy that we shall get a blessing that will be worth remembering, if we should live as long as John the Revelator; our blessings will be such as we have not realized before, nor received in this generation. (*Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* compiled by Alma P. Burton [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977], 147 - 148.)

**DC 84:46 the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world**

**Harold B. Lee**

That means that every soul who walks the earth, wherever he lives, in whatever nation he may have been born, no matter whether he be in riches or in poverty, had at birth an endowment of that first light which is called the Light of Christ, the Spirit of Truth, or the Spirit of God—that universal light of intelligence with which every soul is blessed. (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee,*edited by Clyde J. Williams [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 99.)

**James E. Faust**

All people are enlightened by the Spirit of God, or Light of Christ, which is sometimes called conscience. Job stated, “There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.” (Job 32:8.) This is the Spirit of God emanating from Deity. This power is the means by which, as **President Joseph F. Smith** stated, “every man is enlightened, the wicked as well as the good, the intelligent and the ignorant, the high and the low, each in accordance with his capacity to receive the light.” (*Gospel Doctrine,* p. 62)  (*Reach Up for the Light* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1990], 116.)

**Harold B. Lee**

Now, that light which lighteth every person that cometh into the world—the Light of Christ, the Spirit of Truth, variously spoken of, the Spirit of God—is the eminence of great blessings upon all of mankind… Every one of us has been born with that light, the Light of Christ, that lights all of us who come into the world and it never ceases to strive with us, as long as we are keeping the commandments of God, to warn us and to guide us. You may call it conscience—you may call it the warning of the flesh. When you encounter obscene or filthy things, may you be preserved never to lose the righteous blush of shame when you are confronted with these things. (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee,*edited by Clyde J. Williams [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 102.)

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

The Holy Ghost, as we are taught in our modern revelation, is the third member in the Godhead and a personage of Spirit. These terms are used synonymously: Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit of Truth, Holy Spirit, Comforter; all having reference to the Holy Ghost. The same terms largely are used in relation to the Spirit of Jesus Christ, also called the Light of Truth, Light of Christ, Spirit of God, and Spirit of the Lord; and yet they are separate and distinct things. We have a great deal of confusion because we have not kept that clearly in our minds.

… If a man who has never heard the gospel will hearken to the teachings and manifestations of the Spirit of Christ, or the Light of Truth, which come to him, often spoken of as conscience—every man has a conscience and knows more or less when he does wrong, and the Spirit guides him if he will hearken to its whisperings—it will lead him eventually to the fulness of the gospel. That is, he is guided by the Light, and when the gospel comes he will be ready to receive it.  (*Doctrines of Salvation,*3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 1: 50-51.)

**DC 84:47 every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God**

**Joseph Smith**

We consider that God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect; and that the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin; and like the ancients, arrives at that point of faith where he is wrapped in the power and glory of his Maker, and is caught up to dwell with him. But we consider that this is a station to which no man ever arrived in a moment. (*Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* compiled by Alma P. Burton [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977], 133 - 134.)

**DC 84:49-53 the whole world lieth in sin, and groaneth under darkness**

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

There are fewer, in my judgment, among the Christian peoples, who believe in the Son of God as the Redeemer of the world. The tendency has been, during all these years, to get farther away from the principles of the gospel as they are contained in the holy scriptures. The worship of reason, of false philosophy, is greater now than it was then. Men are depending upon their own research to find out God, and that which they cannot discover and which they cannot demonstrate to their satisfaction through their own research and their natural senses, they reject. They are not seeking for the Spirit of the Lord, they are not striving to know God in the manner in which he has marked out by which he may be known, but they are walking in their own way, believing in their own man-made philosophies, and teaching the doctrines of devils and not the doctrines of the Son of God. (*Conference Report, April 1917*, Afternoon Session 59 - 60.)

**Jeffrey R. Holland**

By and large the modern world has not come unto him, has not accepted the atonement of Jesus Christ, has not received the voice of his prophets, has not made covenants or kept his commandments, has not remembered him always or claimed the promises of exaltation in the kingdom of heaven.

So he has offered us one last covenant, given us one last testament, as part of his final outreach to fallen man. He has offered us one last written witness of his love and his mercy extended for the final time, speaking dispensationally. As one Book of Mormon prophet foresaw it, God is sending laborers into the vineyard one final time, and “then cometh the season and the end.” That testament and culminating witness, that “new covenant” offered to the children of men but once more, is the message of the Book of Mormon. (*Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997], 8 - 9.)

**DC 84:52-53 whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice**

**George Q. Cannon**

This is the rule by which we may know that the world groaneth under the bondage of sin.

There is this that every human being who has joined this Church knows: that when he heard the testimony of the servants of God there was a spirit in his heart that bore testimony to him that that was of God, that that voice was of the True Shepherd. Thousands have stifled that feeling within them. I believe there have been thousands who have visited this tabernacle and have heard the words of God from His servants, borne testimony by the powers of His Holy Spirit, whose hearts have been touched by that testimony, and who would, if they had listened to the voice of the Spirit, have sought to know more, and not gone away rejecting the message they heard. But the love of the world and the fear that they might become converted to what is called Mormonism deterred them from cherishing that Spirit and following its guidance; and they have become under condemnation because of this. By this we know, that the whole world is under bondage of sin, and the power of the adversary is so great that, apparently, they cannot break through that bondage. But there are humble, honest souls who listen to the voice of the Spirit of God; when they hear the testimony of the servants of God their hearts are touched, and they know as well as they can know at that time that it is of God. Not content with listening to the mere statements of the Elders, they go unto God and ask Him, in the name of Jesus, for a testimony for themselves, that they may know whether this is true or not. And no man or woman ever did this in the proper spirit that did not receive a testimony from God that it was true. (*Collected Discourses,* 5 vols. [Burbank, Calif., and Woodland Hills, Ut.: B.H.S. Publishing, 1987-1992], vol. 3, Sept. 18, 1892)

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

The Lord has given to “every man that cometh into the world,” the guidance of the Light of Truth, or Spirit of Jesus Christ, and if a man will hearken to this Spirit he will be led to the truth and will recognize it and will accept it when he hears it. We have seen this demonstrated thousands of times, where men were led to investigate and have had the desire to investigate in spite of the prejudices and traditions which they were taught in the world.

If they refuse to come unto him, then he calls them wicked and they are under the bondage of sin. It seems to me that when a person declares that he is satisfied with his religion and therefore does not care to investigate, it is evidence that he has not hearkened to the Light of Truth which was given him; else he would not have been satisfied with the false religion which he has and would be seeking the truth. (*Doctrines of Salvation,*3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 1: 53.)

**DC 84:53  By this you may know the righteous from the wicked**

   my brethren, it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil…

   For every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuiade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ…

   But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ…then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil…(Moroni 7:15-17)

**Elder Brigham Young, Jr.**

My brethren and sisters, here is a test for you:

By these things that I have read you may know the righteous from the wicked. Who is it that will receive that spirit and cultivate it? Who is it that listens to the voice of the men whom God has placed to redeem the world and guide in the redemption of the human family? Who are these men? and what do they say to the people? What have they said to the people during this conference? What has the President and his fellow-laborers said at this conference? They have delivered unto you the words of life and salvation, and as true as God lives, according to the spirit that is in me, we will be judged by the words of these men in the time to come. They have given unto you the words of everlasting life. (*Conference Report, April 1899*, Third Day—Morning Session)

**DC 84:54 your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief**

**Bruce R. McConkie**

Is the Lord telling us we are guilty of sin if we do not believe the doctrines he has given us? If we treat lightly—neither reading, nor pondering, nor obeying—the revelations he has given us, are we guiltless? …Is it a sin to have the Book of Mormon and do nothing about it? to use it neither for our own guidance nor as a means of presenting the message of the restoration to the world?

Is it not a sin to walk in darkness when we have light? Is it not a sin to hold the holy priesthood and do nothing about it? “There are many who have been ordained among you,” the Lord says to his saints, “whom I have called but few of them are chosen. They who are not chosen have sinned a very grievous sin, in that they are walking in darkness at noon-day. . . . If you keep not my commandments, the love of the Father shall not continue with you, therefore you shall walk in darkness.” (D&C 95:5-6, 12.)

Oh, what a grievous thing it is to receive the light of heaven and yet walk in darkness! As Jesus said to certain people in his day: “If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.” (John 9:41.) (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 226.)

**DC 84:54 you have treated lightly the things you have received**

**Ezra Taft Benson**

In 1829, the Lord warned the Saints that they are not to trifle with sacred things. (See D&C 6:12.) Surely the Book of Mormon is a sacred thing, and yet many trifle with it, or in other words, take it lightly, treat it as though it is of little importance.

In 1832, as some early missionaries returned from their fields of labor, the Lord reproved them for treating the Book of Mormon lightly. As a result of that attitude, He said, their minds had been darkened. Not only had treating this sacred book lightly brought a loss of light to themselves, it had also brought the whole Church under condemnation, even all the children of Zion. And then the Lord said, “And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon.” (D&C 84:54–57.)

Has the fact that we have had the Book of Mormon with us for over a century and a half made it seem less significant to us today? Do we remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon? …If the early Saints were rebuked for treating the Book of Mormon lightly, are we under any less condemnation if we do the same? (“The Keystone of Our Religion,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1992, 2, 4)

**Jeffrey R. Holland**

Can we, like these early Saints, also be accused of taking this book lightly? Some of us treat it as if it were just another book—let it gather a little dust, or use it to press the rose from Mary Jane's wedding, or use it as a doorstop in the hallway, or do almost anything with it but read it. I believe we will be indicted for the darkness we incur and that we will owe penitence in this life or the next for that which we fail to learn, especially that which we fail to learn from the Book of Mormon. **President Joseph Fielding Smith**taught that “no member of this church can stand approved in the presence of God who has not seriously and carefully read the Book of Mormon.” (*However Long and Hard the Road* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 57.)

**Ezra Taft Benson**

Oh, my brethren, let us not treat lightly the great things we have received from the hand of the Lord! His word is one of the most valuable gifts He has given us. I urge you to recommit yourselves to a study of the scriptures. Immerse yourselves in them daily so you will have the power of the Spirit to attend you in your callings. Read them in your families and teach your children to love and treasure them. Then prayerfully and in counsel with others, seek every way possible to encourage the members of the Church to follow your example. If you do so, you will find, as Alma did, that “the word [has] a great tendency to lead people to do that which [is] just—yea, it [has] more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else, which [has] happened unto them.” (Alma 31:5.)

Like Alma, I say unto you, “It [is] expedient that [you] should try the virtues of the word of God” (Alma 31:5), in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. (“The Power of the Word,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 82)

**DC 84:56 this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all**

**Ezra Taft Benson**

If the early Saints were rebuked for treating the Book of Mormon lightly, are we under any less condemnation if we do the same? The Lord Himself bears testimony that it is of eternal significance. Can a small number of us bring the whole Church under condemnation because we trifle with sacred things? What will we say at the Judgment when we stand before Him and meet His probing gaze if we are among those described as forgetting the new covenant?

There are three great reasons why Latter-day Saints should make the study of the Book of Mormon a lifetime pursuit.

The *first* is that the Book of Mormon is the keystone of our religion. This was the Prophet Joseph Smith’s statement. He testified that “the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion” (Introduction to the Book of Mormon). A keystone is the central stone in an arch. It holds all the other stones in place, and if removed, the arch crumbles.

There are three ways in which the Book of Mormon is the keystone of our religion. It is the keystone in our witness of Christ. It is the keystone of our doctrine. It is the keystone of testimony.

…The *second* great reason why we must make the Book of Mormon a center focus of study is that it was written for our day….

The *third* reason why the Book of Mormon is of such value to Latter-day Saints is given in the same statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith cited previously. He said, “I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book” (*History of the Church*, 4:461). That is the third reason for studying the book. It helps us draw nearer to God. (“The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 4-7)

**DC 84:57 they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember…the Book of Mormon**

**Russell M. Nelson**

Not long after my call to serve as one of the Twelve Apostles, I was summoned to the office of the President of our Quorum, President Ezra Taft Benson. He expressed deep concern that members of the Church did not fully appreciate the value of the Book of Mormon. With emotion in his voice, he read to me from the 84th section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

“Your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.”

By that time, President Benson had completely captured my attention. He then concluded his admonition:

“And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon.”

I shall never forget that lesson. (“A Testimony of the Book of Mormon,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 69)

**Dallin H. Oaks**

Along with other General Authorities, I have a clear recollection of the General Authority temple meeting on 5 March 1987. For a year, President Benson had been stressing the reading of the Book of Mormon. Repeatedly he had quoted these verses from the Doctrine and Covenants, including the Lord’s statement that the Saints’ conduct had “brought the whole church under condemnation” (D&C 84:55).

In that temple meeting, **President Benson** reread those statements and declared, “This condemnation has not been lifted, nor will it be until we repent.” He also repeated his declaration of a year earlier that “in our day the Lord has inspired His servant to reemphasize the Book of Mormon to get the Church out from under condemnation.”

Along with others, I felt the impact of this declaration of *condemnation*. As I studied the subject, I was relieved to find that the serious consequences of this condemnation need not be permanent. The use of this term elsewhere in modern revelation suggests that it refers to a punishment or a penalty, not to a permanent banishment (see, for example, D&C 82:3). In fact, the words President Benson quoted invite the Saints to repent of their deficiencies so the condemnation can be removed.

To understand why President Benson has exhorted us to reemphasize the Book of Mormon and why this is necessary to remove us from condemnation, we need to remember the major theme of that book.

In his many messages about the Book of Mormon, President Benson has taught us that the major significance of the Book of Mormon is its witness of Jesus Christ as the Only Begotten Son of God the Eternal Father, who redeems and saves us from death and sin. Of related and equal importance is its explanation of our Savior’s atonement, which is the most fundamental doctrine of our faith. (“Another Testament of Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1994, 60-61)

**DC 84:57 not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written**

“Some may ask, ‘What is the difference between knowing that the Book of Mormon is true and being converted to the truths of the Book of Mormon?’ My understanding is that a person can *know* something and not do anything about it. There is no causal relationship between *knowing*and *doing.* However, when a person is converted there is a change; his actions become 100 percent consistent with his knowledge. Otherwise he is not truly converted.

“Our challenge as believers is to become truly converted, so that we not only can *say* that the Book of Mormon is true but will also *do* what the Lord has commanded to be written in his holy record.” (Paul R. Cheesman, ed., *The Book of Mormon: The Keystone Scripture* [Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1988], 15.)

**DC 84:58 That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father’s kingdom**

**Ezra Taft Benson**

Success in righteousness, the power to avoid deception and resist temptation, guidance in our daily lives, healing of the soul—these are but a few of the promises the Lord has given to those who will come to His word. Does the Lord promise and not fulfill? Surely if He tells us that these things will come to us if we lay hold upon His word, then the blessings can be ours. And if we do not, then the blessings may be lost. (“The Power of the Word,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 82)

**Ezra Taft Benson**

Now, in the authority of the sacred priesthood in me vested, I invoke my blessing upon the Latter-day Saints and upon good people everywhere.

I bless you with increased discernment to judge between Christ and anti-Christ. I bless you with increased power to do good and to resist evil. I bless you with increased understanding of the Book of Mormon. I promise you that from this moment forward, if we will daily sup from its pages and abide by its precepts, God will pour out upon each child of Zion and the Church a blessing hitherto unknown—and we will plead to the Lord that He will begin to lift the condemnation—the scourge and judgment. Of this I bear solemn witness. (“A Sacred Responsibility,” *Ensign,* May 1986, 78)

**Ezra Taft Benson**

Since last general conference, I have received many letters from Saints, both young and old, from all over the world who accepted the challenge to read and study the Book of Mormon.

I have been thrilled by their accounts of how their lives have been changed and how they have drawn closer to the Lord as a result of their commitment. These glorious testimonies have reaffirmed to my soul the words of the **Prophet Joseph Smith**that the Book of Mormon is truly “the keystone of our religion” and that a man and woman will “get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.” (“The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 7)

**DC 84:62 unto whatsoever place ye cannot go ye shall send**

“…In many cases, local missionaries and their families just don’t have the financial resources to support them on missions. In such cases, the missionary family, friends, and branch members sacrifice all they can. Then, if funds are still lacking, the stake president or mission president may solicit money from the general missionary fund to make up the balance. The money contributed to the fund is welcomed and put to very effective use in these areas—an interesting application of the principle of “unto whatsoever place ye cannot go ye shall send.” (See D&C 84:62.)

Once again, the principle involved is: support your own first, and then branch out to help others when resources permit. However much your resources allow you to contribute, sending money on a mission can be one more way for you to fulfill *your* responsibility to share the gospel! (Lane Johnson, “Send Your Money on a Mission,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1977, 33)

**DC 84:63-64 you are mine apostles, even God’s high priests**

At the time of this revelation, only Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were apostles. They had received this authority under Peter, James, and John. The other brethren, to whom this revelation was addressed, were priesthood brethren who had returned from their missions. Herein, the Lord is using the term apostle in a more generic sense. These brethren were all apostles; they were “sent forth” as representatives of the Lord even though they were not organized into an official Quorum of the Twelve. They were apostles with a small “a.” This is probably the same context in which Barnabas of old is referred to as an apostle (Acts 14:14).

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

In calling these brethren apostles more than two years before the first apostles in this dispensation were ordained, the Lord had reference to their mission to all the world as his witness, and upon them the same commission to preach and bear witness was laid as was given to his disciples when he sent them forth on such a mission. In the broad sense an apostle is a witness, or one who is sent to proclaim his truth. The dictionary said he is “one who first evangelizes a certain nation;” and to this great work these brethren were now called. “Therefore, as I said unto mine apostles I say unto you again, that every soul who believeth on your words, and is baptized by water for the remission of sins, shall receive the Holy Ghost.” (v. 64) (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1946-1949], 2: 107.)

**DC 84:63 ye are they whom my Father hath given me**

See commentary for D&C 50:42.

**DC 84:65-72 these signs shall follow them that believe**

**Orson Pratt**

Here is one thing connected with Joseph Smith's message which will at once prove him to be an impostor or else a true prophet. It is a certain promise contained in a revelation which was given through him to the apostles of this Church in the year 1832. It reads as follows: (quotes D&C 84:62-75.)

Here, then, this great modern prophet has presented himself before the whole world with a bold, unequivocal promise to every soul who would believe on his message, a promise, too, that no impostor would dare to make with the most distant hope of success. An impostor might indeed make such a promise to his followers, but they never would realize a fulfillment of it. If these miraculous signs have not followed according to the above promise, then the tens of thousands who have complied with the conditions would know Joseph Smith to be an impostor, and with one accord would turn away, and that would be the end of the imposition. But the very fact that vast multitudes are annually being added to the Church, and continue therein year after year, is a demonstrative evidence that the promise is fulfilled—that the Holy Ghost is given, and the miraculous signs also. (*Divine Authority or the Question, Was Joseph Smith Sent of God?* p. 15.)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

“In this Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints we worship a God of miracles who has given us the same gifts enjoyed by the ancients. We do not boast, yet it is no secret that among the faithful the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, and the dead are raised.” (*Conference Report*, Nov. 1979 *Ensign*, “The Mystery of Mormonism”)

**Orson F. Whitney**

I am a living witness to the fulfilment of this divine promise. These miraculous “signs” follow belief now, the same as in days of old. I have seen devils cast out by the power of the Priesthood. I have seen and heard manifested the gift of tongues and the interpretation of tongues. I have seen the sick healed with a touch, and have been healed myself by the laying on of hands, accompanied by the prayer and power of faith. (*Conference Report, April 1930*, Afternoon Meeting 134.)

**DC 84:73 they shall not boast themselves of these things, neither speak them before the world**

**Dallin H. Oaks**

While renewing his promise of the signs that would follow those who believed, the Lord commanded the members of his church that “they shall not boast themselves of these things, neither speak them before the world; for these things are given unto you for your profit and for salvation.” (D&C 84:73.) Two years later he repeated that direction to the erring Saints in Missouri, cautioning them that they should not “boast of faith nor of mighty works.” (D&C 105:24.) Later the **Prophet Joseph Smith** cautioned, “Let us be faithful and silent, brethren, and if God gives you a manifestation, keep it to yourselves.”

By and large, Latter-day Saints observe this direction. They do not speak publicly of their most sacred experiences. They seldom mention miracles in bearing their testimonies, and they rarely preach from the pulpit about signs that the gospel is true. They usually affirm their testimony of the truthfulness of the restored gospel by asserting the conclusion, not by giving details on how it was obtained. (*The Lord's Way* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991], 96.)

**James A. Cullimore**

It was not intended that we make merchandise out of the gifts of God and shout to the world the result of these most wonderful gifts. They are given to us for our salvation, to strengthen our testimony and the testimonies of others as we bear humble witness of them in our meetings, quietly, by the Spirit but not before the world. (“Gifts of the Spirit,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, 28)

**DC 84:74 they who believe not on your words, and are not baptized….shall be damned**

The gateway to the celestial kingdom is often said to be the ordinance of baptism. This scripture confirms that concept—that those who reject the gospel and are not baptized may not enter the Lord’s kingdom, otherwise called the celestial kingdom, where the Father and Jesus dwell.

“Every natural man and woman aspiring to the celestial kingdom—whether living or dead—must experience total baptism before he or she can enter the ‘strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life.’ (2 Ne. 31:17-18.) Thus, the ordinance must be completed either in mortality or—as will seemingly be the case with most who have lived—in the spirit world. For baptism is the *only* means by which fallen men and women can be born again, obtain the remission of sins, and, in the resurrection, ‘become holy, without spot.’ (Moro. 10:33.)” (Rodney Turner, *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 7: 1 Nephi to Alma 29,*ed. by Kent P. Jackson, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 225.)

**Joseph Smith**

A man may be saved, after the judgment, in the terrestrial kingdom, or in the telestial kingdom, but he can never see the celestial kingdom of God, without being born of water and the Spirit. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 12.)

**DC 84:76 your brethren in Zion [are to be upbraided] for their rebellion against you at the time I sent you**

In April 1832, Joseph Smith arrived in Missouri with his counselors in the First Presidency, Sidney Rigdon and Jesse Gause. The Missouri saints had suffered significant hardships the preceding winter. At this time the bishop, Edward Partridge and others, began to murmur about Church leadership. In particular, Bishop Partridge had some unkind feelings toward Sidney Rigdon.

The Prophet’s history downplayed the conflict, “We found the brethren in Zion, generally enjoying health and faith; and they were extremely glad to welcome us among them…a difficulty or hardness which had existed between Bishop Partridge and Elder Rigdon, was amicably settled, and when we came together in the afternoon, all hearts seemed to rejoice.” (*History of the Church*, 1:266-267)

**Orson Hyde and Hyrum Smith**

[A letter to the Bishop and saints in Zion] At the time Joseph, Sidney and Newel left Zion, all matters of hardness and misunderstanding were settled and buried, (as they supposed) and you gave them the hand of fellowship; but, afterwards, you brought up all these things again, in a sensorious spirit, accusing Brother Joseph in rather an indirect way of seeking after monarchial power and authority.(*History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,* 1: 318 - 319.)

**The First Presidency**

Rebellion, jealousy, pride, unbelief and hardness of heart prevailed among the brethren in Zion—Jackson county, Missouri—in all of which Bishop Partridge participated…Edward Partridge—was at that time out of order, neglecting his own duty, and putting “forth his hand to steady the ark” (D&C 85:8); hence, he was warned of the judgment of God impending, and the prediction was made that another, “one mighty and strong,” would be sent of God to take his place, to have his bishopric… (JOSEPH F. SMITH, JOHN R. WINDER, ANTHON H. LUND,*Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,*6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-75), 4: 115.)

**DC 84:77 from henceforth I shall call you friends**

To be called a friend of God is one of the greatest compliments that can be received from the Lord. We often quote the phrase, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant,” (Matt. 25:21) but it is much better to be the Lord’s friend than his servant. With his friend, a man will share feelings and sensitive information that he would never tell his servant or even his son. The Lord is just as willing to have such an intimate relationship with those He can trust. They have completely overcome the Fall.  Having been born with a carnal nature, like the natural man—an *enemy* to God, have instead become His close and intimate *friend*, through the merits of Christ. This principle underscores the meaning of the Lord’s word that “Greater love hath no man thanthis, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” (John 15:13-14)

**DC 84:79 the laborer is worthy of his hire**

**Sylvester Q. Cannon**

We had the pleasure of meeting with the mission presidents and with some of the missionaries in all the various missions… I wish to say to you that they are happy, and, with very few exceptions, are in perfect health, full of faith and courage and going forth to perform their duties and responsibilities. In my missionary experience I have found that, in general, the missionaries who spend the least money and accept the simple hospitality of the people, accomplish the most work, develop the greatest faith and obtain the greatest results. This is in harmony with the word of the Lord: “Behold, I send you out to prove the world, and the laborer is worthy of his hire... And he who feeds you, or clothes you, or gives you money, shall in nowise lose his reward.” (D. & C. 84:79, 90.) (*Conference Report*, October 1938, Afternoon Meeting, p.96)

**DC 84:80 any man that shall go and preach…shall not be weary in mind…body, limb, nor joint**

**Henry D. Moyle**

As long as [missionaries] are in the line of their duty… they are in the hands of the Lord, and he has promised to take care of them and is bound by those promises. I can conceive of nothing more wonderful in all the world than to have the absolute assurance that the Spirit of God is with your sons and daughters in the mission field to preserve them, to protect them, to inspire them, to perform a service that no one upon this earth can perform unless he has the delegated power from God to do so. (*Conference Report, October 1961*, Second Day—Morning Meeting 46 - 47.)

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

Thousands of missionaries have put this promise to the test and the Lord has kept his promise to all those who have been faithful in their calling. Surely if the Father notices when a sparrow falls, he will not forsake any who in faithful obedience to his will seek his aid. That there have been those who have gone forth and have been weary in body and mind, and who have gone hungry, there is no doubt, for there are missionaries who have not given all their heart to the Lord and they have idled away valuable time when it was needful for them to proclaim the truth. (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1946-1949], 2: 108.)

**Ezra Taft Benson**

If you have become weary in this work you had better give yourself a good self-examination, because the Lord has said that no man shall be weary in this work. (*God, Family, Country: Our Three Great Loyalties*[Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974], 66.)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

If faithful, we will thereby experience this “renewing of [our] bodies” (D&C 84:33). If we are not specifically focused, however, we will tire in both body and mind—a dual drain. As the Brethren of today gladly attest, amid aging and jet lagging, the Lord keeps His promise of renewal.

One major cause of real fatigue, little appreciated by those so afflicted, is trying to serve two masters. This is devastating double duty. If so divided, one inevitably ends up being ineffective, even disloyal, in respect to one master or another—a most fatiguing circumstance. (*If Thou Endure It Well*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 115.)

**DC 84:81-84 take ye no thought for the morrow**

See commentary for Matthew 6:25-34 and 3 Nephi 13:25-34.

**DC 84:85 Neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say…and it shall be given you in the very hour**

**Elder Dilworth Young**

I am a proud mission president, my brothers and sisters, when a boy can walk to a cottage meeting with his mind full of the subjects on which he has studied long and hard in the privacy of his room, but who has not made up his mind what he will say at that meeting until, having prayed before he leaves his room that he may be given the words to say, and arriving at the meeting, opens his mind and says to the Lord and to the people, “I pray I may be inspired to say what I should say to you,” and then proceeds to say what the Lord puts in his mind. That, to my way of thinking, is one of the finest gifts which can come to a missionary. He has a right to have that experience. (*Conference Report, April 1949*, Afternoon Meeting 98.)

**DC 84:88 I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left**

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

We have nothing to fear. God is at the helm. He will overrule for the good of this work. He will shower down blessings upon those who walk in obedience to His commandments. Such has been His promise. Of His ability to keep that promise none of us can doubt.

The little stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands as seen in Daniel’s vision is rolling forth to fill the whole earth (see Dan. 2:44–45). No force under the heavens can stop it if we will walk in righteousness and be faithful and true. The Almighty Himself is at our head. Our Savior, who is our Redeemer, the Great Jehovah, the mighty Messiah, has promised: “I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up” (D&C 84:88).

“Therefore… fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail. …

   Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not.

   Behold the wounds which pierced my side, and also the prints of the nails in my hands and feet; be faithful, keep my commandments, and ye shall inherit the kingdom of heaven” (D&C 6:34, 36–37).

Unitedly, working hand in hand, we shall move forward as servants of the living God, doing the work of His Beloved Son, our Master, whom we serve and whose name we seek to glorify. (“This Is the Work of the Master,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 71)

**DC 84:89 the same will feed you, and clothe you, and give you money**

“I am a sister missionary serving in my own country, Jamaica. Recently, I felt a great depression come over me. I felt alone, and I felt I had had no achievement as a missionary.

“Then I heard two sister missionaries talking about a passage of scripture where angels are sent to bear us up. I quickly turned to the Doctrine and Covenants and read this passage. I learned that Heavenly Father knew how depressed I felt and how important my calling was as a missionary, that I am called of God.

“However, I did not think that verse 89 applied to me. Who would feed, clothe or give me money? I laughed quietly, but I was so wrong. My companion and I met a fellow Jamaican who now resides in England. She had lunch with us and then as we were ready to leave, she took her purse out and offered us money! I remembered suddenly and clearly the verse I had read. I was amazed at how all verses of the scripture applied to me.

“I am grateful for Heavenly Father and I know He is involved in our lives, if we want Him to be. He really is our Heavenly Father and dearest friend.—Sister C. Meikle, Kingston, Jamaica. (Living by the Scriptures , *LDS Church News, 1994*, 11/12/94)

**DC 84:96-97 I, the Almighty, have laid my hands upon the nations, to scourge them for their wickedness**

**Orson F. Whitney**

Calamities do not come on the world merely to scourge the wicked and avenge the wrongs of the righteous. The primal aim of Divine Punishment is to purify, and if possible save those upon whom the 'Great Avenger' lays a chastening hand. The object is to bring sinners to repentance to throw down the barriers that prevent men from coming to Christ, and turn into the upward path those bent upon pursuing the downward road. The Gospel saves all who are willing to be saved, and who show their willingness by their obedience, their faith by their works. It also aims to save the unwilling and disobedient—here if possible, and if not here, then hereafter. Wars and other woes are sent to put a stop to men's evil practices, lest they add sin to sin and pile up guilt to their greater condemnation. To be swept off the earth and ministered to in the spirit world, is not the worst fate that can befall the wicked. Omnipotence wields the powers of destruction in such a way as to make of them instruments of salvation. It may seem cruel, but in reality it is kind. (Roy W. Doxey, *Prophecies and Prophetic Promises from the Doctrine and Covenants* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1969], 250 - 251.)

**DC 84:98 all shall know me, who remain, even from the least unto the greatest**

**Matthias F. Cowley**

As the apostasy and its effects were universal, so will the restoration of the Gospel be universal, extending to every nation, kindred, tongue and people, until Satan shall be bound and the voice of “peace on earth and to men good will” shall be heard from the rivers to the ends of the earth; when “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea ;” and when “they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for all shall know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest.” (*Cowley's Talks on Doctrine*[Chattanooga: Ben. E. Rich, 1902], 26.)

**DC 84:98 All…shall lift up their voice, and…sing this new song**

If the words to this Millennial hymn come directly from the Lord, then surely the music itself will be inspired from on high. One of the most stirring experiences is to hear a wonderful choir singing an inspired song. How wonderful will it be to hear not just a choir but “all…who remain” lifting up their voices together—singing this new and glorious hymn?

“When that happy day arrives, Jehovah will have his Peculiar people at last. For, like Enoch’s ‘city of Holiness,’ Israel will ascend unto the hill of the Lord and enjoy the literal presence of the Lord Jesus Christ! The saints will be his own possession. No longer will Israel be obliged to depend upon the prophets for their knowledge of the Lord.” (Rodney Turner, "The Quest for a Peculiar People," *Liahona*, September 1980

“Further, harmony and joy reign over all… The harmony of sweet music fills the region, reaching a climax as the heavens explode into the rhapsody of a new song—new not only because it has never been sung before, but also because it could never have been sung before. It signals a total victory that only now has become possible.” (Richard D. Draper, *Opening the Seven Seals: The Visions of John the Revelator* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991], 155.)

**Rudger Clawson**

I declare to you, my brethren and sisters, that this new song… is one of the greatest songs that was ever written, and I have no doubt that it is a greater song than anything that ever can be written, because it sets forth the works of Almighty God and the consummation of all things. (*Conference Report, April 1932*, Third Day—Morning Meeting 87.)

**DC 84:106 if any man among you be strong in the Spirit, let him take with him him that is weak**

**Harold B. Lee**

You cannot lift another soul until you are standing on higher ground than he is. You must be sure, if you would rescue the man, that you yourself are setting the example of what you would have him be. You cannot light a fire in another soul unless it is burning in your own soul. You teachers, the testimony that you bear, the spirit with which you teach and with which you lead, is one of the most important assets that you can have, as you help to strengthen those who need so much, wherein you have so much to give. Who of us, in whatever station we may have been in, have not needed strengthening? (“Stand Ye in Holy Places,” *Ensign*, July 1973, 123)

**Craig W. Zwick**

In my own life, I have been largely on the receiving end. Just the right people have always blessed my life at just the right time. They have obeyed the Lord’s command for the strong to help the weak: “And if any man among you be strong in the Spirit, let him take with him him that is weak, that he may be edified in all meekness, that he may become strong also” (D&C 84:106).

These strong helpers are often family members, but they may also be friends, teachers, or priesthood leaders. I learned a lot from a wonderful mission president. He was exceptional. I also learned a lot from outstanding priesthood advisers and a bishop, all of them always willing to listen and to teach by their examples. My parents also steadily taught gospel principles with love and understanding.

A great leader once told me that true leadership is raising the sights of those you lead so that they can discover their own strengths and feel the power of accomplishments.

As a young boy, I went on a rafting trip on the Colorado River. A wonderful adviser said, “On this rapid, I want you to be the ‘tiller  (the one who steers the raft).” The adviser, whom I admired because of his physical strength and spiritual integrity, took a much less significant position in the raft, handed me the oar, and said, “Now it’s your turn.”

We calculated how we would run the rapid, and then we ran it. I broke two paddles in the rapid, but with the help of a well-prepared crew, we met the challenge safely. I thought, There’s an adviser who understands. It was a remarkable example of a trusting priesthood adviser raising a young man’s potential for service. He was there to hand us the oar, not just steer for us. It helped me gain self-confidence. ("Friend to Friend," *Friend*, March 1998)

**DC 84:107 take with you those who are ordained unto the lesser priesthood**

“We have in the Church some wards where ordained teachers and priests accompany more experienced men in their monthly visits. In this way they gain courage, learn to organize their thoughts and to express them effectively in the homes of the Church. The members visited who are trying to keep the commandments of the Lord will appreciate the opportunity they have of helping these young men prepare for greater responsibilities.

“In some wards priests and teachers have been so well trained that they are performing these labors without the aid of older and more experienced men. These young men are learning thus early, that the Lord never forsakes those who rely upon his help and that rich blessings follow the humble performance of these duties.

“What a wonderful opportunity the Lord is giving us to prepare these boys to go into the mission field qualified to engage immediately in spreading the truth! Is it not possible that, because of our failure so to encourage them and provide such training, blessings are withheld not only from them but also from those whose hearts might be touched by their simple message?

“The Presiding Bishopric desires to call this matter to the attention of all who are engaged in Church work, with the hope that these young men shall not be deprived of this experience.” (Edwin Markham, *Improvement Era, 1929*, Vol. Xxxii. October, 1929 No. 12)

**DC 84:109 let every man stand in his own office, and labor in his own calling**

**Harold B. Lee**

This significant statement meant clearly that, first, each organization was to have its specific function, that it was not to usurp the field of the other which would be like the eye saying to the hand, “I have no need of thee”; second, that each subdivision is of equal importance in the work of salvation, just as each part of the physical body is essential to the complete human being; and third, that every member in the Church may be edified or educated together; and finally that the system may be kept perfect, or in other words, that within the framework of the Lord's plan of organization for the salvation of his children, the Church will perform as a perfectly organized human body with every member functioning as it was intended. (*Conference Report, October 1962*, General Priesthood Meeting, 72.)

**DC 84:110 the body hath need of every member**

“He (Joseph Smith) continued to read the chapter (1 Cor. 12), and give instructions respecting the different offices, and the necessity of every individual acting in the sphere allotted him or her, and filling the several offices to which they are appointed. He spoke of the disposition of many men to consider the lower offices in the Church dishonorable, and to look with jealous eyes upon the standing of others who are called to preside over them; that it was the folly and nonsense of the human heart for a person to be aspiring to other stations than those to which they are appointed of God for them to occupy; that it was better for individuals to magnify their respective calling, and wait patiently till God shall say to them, ‘come up higher.’” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* 223-224.)

**Harold B. Lee**

The Church indeed hath need of every member, that all may be edified, so that the system may be made perfect and every member has a deep need to participate fully in the Church as we seek to reach that level of spirituality in which we are fully entitled to be called the sons and daughters of God… We need appropriate involvement for every individual because there is little individual progress without participation, for it is participation by everyone which permits us to apply the principles of the gospel. (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee,*edited by Clyde J. Williams [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 474.)

**Sterling W. Sill**

The scriptures… compare the parts of the body to the members of the church, and the Lord has said, “Also the body hath need of every member, that all may be edified together, that the system may be kept perfect.” (D&C 84:110.) In his great human creation God made no duplicates, and everyone is given a mission that no one can do except him. No one is ever born into the world whose work is not born with him. Each can do some part of the work of the world better than anyone else. The world is not complete if anyone is missing. The world cannot say to any of its members, “I have no need of thee.” (*Principles, Promises, and Powers* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1973], 287.)

**DC 84:112 the bishop…should travel round about …searching after the poor**

**Dallin H. Oaks**

The most important church officer in the Lord's program to care for the poor is the bishop. He is assigned this responsibility in modern revelation (for example, D&C 38:34-36; 42:30-31; 72:9-10, 12). His responsibility was reaffirmed when the welfare program was reinstituted. **The First Presidency**said: “The responsibility of seeing that no one is hungry or cold or insufficiently clad rests upon the bishops, each one for the members of his own ward.”

Bishops perform the duty of “searching after the poor to administer to their wants by humbling the rich and the proud.” (D&C 84:112.) **President J. Reuben Clark, Jr.,**described that responsibility: “By the word of the Lord the sole mandate to care for and the sole discretion in caring for, the poor of the Church is lodged in the bishop. . . . It is his duty and his only to determine to whom, when, how, and how much shall be given to any member of his ward from Church funds and as ward help.” (*The Lord's Way* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991], 112.)

**DC 84:114 let the bishop go unto the city of New York, also the city of Albany, and also to the city of Boston, and warn the people**

**Joseph Smith**

I continued the translation of the Bible and ministering to the Church, through the fall, excepting a hurried journey to Albany, New York and Boston, in company with Bishop Whitney, from which I returned on the 6th of November, immediately after the birth of my son Joseph Smith the third. (*History of the Church*, 1:295)

**Elizabeth Ann Whitney**

My husband (Newel K. Whitney) traveled with Joseph the Prophet through many of the Eastern cities, bearing testimony and collecting means toward building a temple in Kirtland, and also toward purchasing lands in Missouri. During this journey the Prophet Joseph often prophesied of the destruction that ultimately would come upon the cities of the Eastern States, and especially New York, that in that city there would not be left a vestige of its grandeur. He said that wars would soon commence in our own land, which last has since transpired. He said to my husband, “If they reject us they shall have our testimony, for we will write it and leave it upon their doorsteps and window sills.”

He prophesied of the desolation by fire, by storms, by pestilence and by earthquakes. (Hyrum L. Andrus and Helen Mae Andrus, comps., *They Knew the Prophet* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1974], 39.)

**DC 84:114 desolation and utter abolishment… await them if they do reject these things**

**Wilford Woodruff**

On the 21st of August, 1863, in company with the President of the Church, the Twelve Apostles, and a large number of Elders, and a large train of carriages, we entered the town of Logan, and we met a large number of boys and girls, young men and maidens parading the streets, the females dressed in white on one side of the road, and males in their best attire on the other side, all to celebrate the coming of President Young and his company.

August 22nd—Sunday morning we met in a large bowery… There were present of the authorities of the Church… After prayer, President Young called upon [me] to speak.

As I arose I was clothed upon with the Spirit of God, and my mind was turned toward the young people who had met us the evening before; and the following is a synopsis of some of the remarks which I made:

“…the day will come, after your fathers, and these prophets and apostles are dead, you will have the privilege of going into the towers of a glorious Temple built unto the name of the Most High (pointing in the direction of the bench), east of us upon the Logan bench; and while you stand in the towers of the Temple and your eyes survey this glorious valley filled with cities and villages, occupied by tens of thousands of Latter-day Saints, you will then call to mind this visitation of President Young and his company. You will say: That was in the days when Presidents Benson and Maughan presided over us; that was before New York was destroyed by an earthquake; it was before Boston was swept into the sea, by the sea heaving itself beyond its bounds; it was before Albany was destroyed by fire; yea, at that time you will remember the scenes of this day. Treasure them up and forget them not. President Young followed and said: `What Brother Woodruff has said is revelation and will be fulfilled'.  Deseret News, Vol. 33, page 678.” (N. B. Lundwall, *Temples of the Most High*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1993], 97 - 98.)

**DC 84:115 their house shall be left unto them desolate**

**Orson Pratt**

If it be asked, why is America thus to suffer? The answer is, because they have rejected the kingdom of God, and one of the greatest divine messages ever sent to man; because they have sanctioned the killing of the Saints, and the martyrdom of the Lord's Prophets, and have suffered his people to be driven from their midst, and have robbed them of their houses, and homes, and land, and millions of property, and have refused to redress their wrongs. For these great evils, they must suffer; the decrees of Jehovah have gone forth against them; the sword of the Lord has been unsheathed, and will fall with pain upon their devoted heads. Their great and magnificent cities are to be cut off. New York, Boston, Albany, and numerous other cities will be left desolate. Party will be arrayed in deadly strife against party; State against State; and the whole nation will be broken up; the sanguinary weapons of the dreadful revolution will devour the land. Then shall there be a fleeing from one city to another, from one State to another, from one part of the continent to another, seeking refuge, from the devastations of bandits and armies; then shall their dead be left unburied, and the fowls of heaven shall summer upon them, and the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them. Moreover, the Lord will visit them with the deadly pestilence which shall sweep away many millions by its ravages; for their eyes shall fall from their sockets, and their flesh from their bones, and their tongues shall be stayed in their mouths, that they shall not be able to blaspheme against their Maker. And it will come to pass, that the heavens will withhold their rains and their fruitful fields be turned into barrenness, and the waters of their rivers will be dried up, and left in standing pools, and the fish therein will die; and the Lord will send forth a grievous plague to destroy the horses and cattle from the land. Thus by the sword and by pestilence, and by famine, and by the strong arm of the Almighty, shall the inhabitants of that wicked nation be destroyed. Millennial Star, Vol. 28, pp. 633-634 October 6 1866. (Gerald N. Lund,*The Coming of the Lord*[Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971], 56.)

**DC 84:117 the desolation of abomination**

**Bruce R. McConkie**

Daniel spoke prophetically of a day when there would be “the abomination that maketh desolate” (Dan. 11:31; 12:11), and the phrase was recoined in New Testament times to say, “the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet.” (Matt. 24:15.) Aside from the prophetic setting and relying solely on the plain meaning of words, we would conclude that this phrase (abomination of desolation) would have reference to some great act or status of corruption and befoulment, of contamination and filthiness, which would bring to pass destruction, ruination, devastation, desolation.

Such is the case. These conditions of desolation, born of abomination and wickedness, were to occur twice in fulfilment of Daniel's words. The first was to be when the Roman legions under Titus, in 70 A.D., laid siege to Jerusalem, destroying and scattering the people, leaving not one stone upon another in the desecrated temple, and spreading such terror and devastation as has seldom if ever been equaled on earth…

Then, speaking of the last days, of the days following the restoration of the gospel and its declaration “for a witness unto all nations,” our Lord said: “And again shall the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, be fulfilled.” (JS-Hist. 1:31-32.) That is: Jerusalem again will be under siege… It will be during this siege that Christ will come, the wicked will be destroyed, and the millennial era commenced.

In a general sense, this expressive designation, abomination of desolation, also describes the latter-day terrors to be poured out upon the wicked wherever they may be. And so that the honest in heart may escape these things, the Lord sends his missionaries forth to raise the warning voice, to declare the glad tidings of the restoration, lest “desolation and utter abolishment” come upon them. The elders are commanded to reprove “the world in righteousness of all their unrighteous and ungodly deeds, setting forth clearly and understandingly the desolation of abomination in the last days.” (D. & C. 84:114, 117.) (*Mormon Doctrine,*2d ed. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966], 12.)

**DC 84:118 For, with you saith the Lord Almighty, I will rend their kingdoms**

See D&C 45:66-75, 3 Nephi 21:11-21; 22:15-17; 3 Nephi 29.