

#6: Recognizing Personal Revelation

Monte F. Shelley, 1 Mar. 2009

Quotes

- If you want to walk on water, you must get out of the boat.

1. I will tell you in your mind and in your heart

I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost ... This is the spirit of revelation.^{8:2}

2. Still small voice

Thus saith the *still small voice*, which whispereth through and pierceth all things, and often times it maketh my bones to quake while it maketh manifest^{85:6}

Dallin H. Oaks: "Visions do happen. Voices are heard from beyond the veil. I know this. But these experiences are exceptional. ... Most of the revelation that comes to leaders and members of the Church comes by the *still, small voice or by a feeling rather* than by a vision or a voice that speaks specific words we can hear. I testify to the reality of that kind of revelation, which I have come to know as a familiar, even *daily*, experience to guide me in the work of the Lord" ("Teaching and Learning by the Spirit," *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 14).

Boyd K. Packer: "These delicate, refined spiritual communications are not seen with our eyes nor heard with our ears. And even though it is described as a voice, it is a *voice that one feels more than one hears*" (*That All May Be Edified*, 335).

3. Enlightens and speaks peace to our minds

Oliver learned about the plates from Joseph's parents and prayed about it. The next day he told them, "I firmly believe that it is the will of the Lord that I should go" to Joseph in Pennsylvania. Joseph's parents urged him to seek confirmation. The Lord visited Oliver, showed him the plates in a vision, and told him of the translation Joseph had begun. He arrived in answer to Joseph's pleas for help three days earlier. (Harper, 36-37)

As often as thou hast inquired thou hast received instruction of my Spirit. If it had not been so, thou wouldst not have come to the place where thou art at this time. Behold, thou knowest that thou hast inquired of me and I did *enlighten thy mind*; and now I tell thee these things that thou mayest know that thou hast been enlightened by the Spirit of truth; ... If you desire a further witness, cast your mind upon the night that you cried unto me in your heart, that you might know concerning the truth of these things. Did I not *speak peace to your mind* concerning the matter? What greater witness can you have than from God? ... Look to me in every thought; doubt not, fear not.^{6:14-23, 36}

Oliver wrote to David Whitmer that Joseph "had told him secrets of his life that he knew could not be known to any person but himself, in any other way than by revelation." (Harper 39)

4. Burning in the bosom or stupor of thought

Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me. But, behold, I say unto you, that you must *study it out in your mind*; then you must *ask me if it be right*, and if it is right I will cause that *your bosom shall burn within you*; therefore, you shall *feel that it is right*. But if it be not right you shall have *no such feelings*, but you shall have a *stupor of thought* that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong; therefore, you cannot write that which is sacred save it be given you from me.^{9:7-9}

Remembering a name;

Picking food from a menu;
Shopping for a dress, furniture
Looking for solution to problem
TRANSLATION

Bruce R. McConkie: "How do you choose a wife? I've heard a lot of young people from Brigham Young University and elsewhere say, "I've got to get a feeling of inspiration. I've got to get some revelation. I've got to fast and pray and get the Lord to manifest to me whom I should marry." Well, maybe it will be a little shock to you, but *never in my life did I ever ask the Lord whom I ought to marry. It never occurred to me to ask him. I went out and found the girl I wanted; she suited me; I evaluated and weighed the proposition, and it just seemed a hundred percent to me as though this ought to be.* Now, if I'd done things perfectly, I'd have done some *counseling with the Lord*, which I didn't do; but *all I did was pray to the Lord and ask for some guidance and direction in connection with the decision that I'd reached.* A more perfect thing to have done would have been to *counsel with him* relative to the decision and get a spiritual confirmation that the conclusion, which I by my agency and faculties had arrived at, was the right one." (Bruce R. McConkie, "Agency or Inspiration?" *New Era*, Jan 1975, 38-43)

Stupor of thought OR Fear of mistake

5. Bring all things to your remembrance

The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, ... shall teach you all things, and *bring all things to your remembrance*, whatsoever I have said unto you. ... Peace I leave with you. ... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.^{John 14:26-27}

6. Carry to the heart

When a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost *carrieth it unto the hearts* of ... men.^{2 Ne. 33:1}

I was one day reading [James 1:5] which reads: *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, ... and it shall be given him.* Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. It seemed to enter with great force into *every feeling of my heart.* I *reflected on it again and again*, knowing that if any person needed wisdom from God, I did; for *how to act I did not know.* ... At length I came to the conclusion that I must either remain in darkness and confusion, or else I must ... ask of God.^{JS-H 1:11-12}

Wisdom= knowing how to act or what to do

7. Guide you into all truth

The Spirit of truth ... will *guide you into all truth.*^{John 16:13}

Knowledge of past, present, and future

Like a Map

I now resume the subject of the baptism for the dead, as that subject seems to *occupy my mind*, and *press itself upon my feelings* the strongest.^{128:1}

I sat in my room *pondering over the scriptures*; And *reflecting upon the great atoning sacrifice* ... And the *great and wonderful love* made manifest by the Father and the Son. ... While I was thus engaged, *my mind reverted to the writings* of ... Peter, ... I opened the Bible and read ... and *as I read I was greatly impressed* ... *As I pondered* over these things which are written, *the eyes of my understanding were opened*, ... and I saw ... *I marveled*, for I understood that the Savior spent ... [only 3 days with the spirits in prison.] And *I wondered* at the words of Peter ... And *as I wondered*, my eyes were opened, and my understanding quickened, and I perceived ...^{138:1-29}

"Pondering is, in my feeling, a form of prayer." (Marion G. Romney, "Magnifying One's Calling in the Priesthood," *Ensign*, Jul 1973, 89)

8. Liahona illustrates spiritual communication

What were the two functions of the Liahona?

- Guide:** One spindle pointed the way to go or stop. Look. NOT an AAA map
- Teach:** "there was also *written upon them a new writing, which was plain to be read, which did give us understanding concerning the ways of the Lord*; and it was *written and changed from time to time*", 1 Ne 16

Given for Laman, Lemuel and us. NOT Lehi and Nephi

What did they have to do so it would work? Alma 37:41-42

Look, do. It worked according to their faith, diligence, and heed. Because *those miracles were worked by small means* it did show unto them marvelous works. *They were slothful*, and forgot to exercise their faith and diligence and then those marvelous works ceased, and they did not progress in their journey; Therefore, they tarried in the wilderness, or did not travel a direct course, and were afflicted with hunger and thirst, because of their transgressions. Alma 37:41-42

How were Israelites guided in the wilderness? Ex 40:36-38

When the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys. Ex 40:36-38

Spencer W. Kimball compared the Liahona to _____

Ensign, Nov 1976, 77

Spencer W. Kimball: "The ball, or Liahona ... was prepared by the Lord especially to show unto Lehi the course which he should travel in the wilderness. Wouldn't you like to have that kind of a ball—each one of you—so that whenever you were in error it would point the right way and write messages to you? ... That, my young brethren, you all have. The Lord gave to every boy, every man, every person, *a conscience which tells him every time he starts to go on the wrong path*. He is always told *if he is listening*; but people can, of course, become so used to hearing the messages that they ignore them until finally they do not register anymore." (Spencer W. Kimball, "Our Own Liahona," *Ensign*, Nov 1976, 77)

Alma compared the Liahona to _____

Just as surely as this director did bring our fathers, by following its course, to the promised land, shall *the words of Christ*, if we follow their course, carry us beyond this vale of sorrow into a far better land of promise. O my son, do not let us be slothful because of the easiness of the way; for so was it with our fathers; for so was it prepared for them, that if they would *look* they might live; even so it is with us. The way is prepared, and if we will look we may live forever. Alma 37:45-46

How could you guide a blind person without words?

Guiding a blind person by feeling. Testify of jerks
Can you guide a person who does not move; OR steer a car not moving?

How does the Holy Ghost guide us?

I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do. 1 Ne. 4:6

GR for spirit is same as wind. Feel it most when going against GPS car voice

The Spirit of the Lord ... [will] guide you in wisdom's paths that ye may be *blessed, prospered, and preserved*. Mos. 2:36

They that are wise and have received the truth, and have *taken the Holy Spirit for their guide*, and have not been deceived— ... they shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day. 45:57

200 a day; remember, feel right or not; promptings to do good

Joseph F. Smith (Paraphrased): As we were returning on the train, I saw Joseph F. Smith go out to the end of the car on the platform ... immediately return and hesitate a moment, and then sit down in the seat just ahead of me. He had just taken his seat when a broken rail caused the engine and most of the cars to go off the track. Our car remained on the track. The President immediately said to me that he had gone on the platform when he heard a voice saying, 'Go in and sit down.' He came in, hesitated. He thought 'Oh ... perhaps it is only my imagination' when he heard the voice again say, 'Sit down,' and he immediately took his seat. He would have been very seriously injured had he remained on the platform. ... He said, 'I have heard that voice a good many times in my life, and I have always profited by obeying it.' (13-12 in CCR class materials; Charles W. Nibley, *Improvement Era*, Jan. 1919, 22:197; *Classic Stories from the Lives of Our Prophets*, 182-183)

Harold B. Lee: I was suffering from an ulcer condition that was becoming worse and worse. We had been touring a mission; my wife, Joan, and I were impressed the next morning that we should *get home as quickly as possible*, although we had planned to stay for some other meetings. ... As we approached a certain point en route, someone laid his hand upon my head. I looked up; I could see no one. That happened again before we arrived home, again with the same experience. Who it was, by what means or what medium, I may never know. ... As soon as we arrived home, ... there came *massive hemorrhages* which, had they occurred while we were in flight, I wouldn't be here today talking about it. I know that there are powers divine that reach out when all other help is not available. (Harold B. Lee, "'Stand Ye in Holy Places,'" *Ensign*, Jul 1973, 121)

Sister Webb was at a stoplight? when she was prompted to roll up her window even though it was hot day. Just after rolling it up, a water balloon hit the window. Prompted to check dryer

Spencer W. Kimball and his wife were on his way from Utah to Arizona in December while it was snowing. He was prompted to go through Las Vegas. He ignored the prompting. The car began to skid and then went down a hillside. His wife had broken ribs. (*Spencer W. Kimball*, 298-299)

Wilford Woodruff: While visiting with part of his family in December, the Spirit said on Monday, 'Take your team and go home to Salt Lake.' My family persuaded me to stay until Saturday even though the Spirit was continually prompting me to go home. As I was traveling home, a bishop urged me to stay a few days with him, but I refused. Within 15 miles of home, a furious snow storm began and I could not see the road. "I prayed to the Lord to forgive my sin in not obeying the voice of the Spirit to me, and implored him to preserve my life. (several examples in *Classic Stories from the Lives of Our Prophets*, 115-126)

9. It shall be given you in the very moment

Speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and you shall not be confounded before men; For *it shall be given you in the very hour*, yea, in the very moment, *what ye shall say*.^{100:5-6}

Neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say; but treasure up in your minds continually the words of life, and it shall be *given you in the very hour* that portion that shall be meted unto every man.^{84:85}

Missionary in Romania?: “Did you ever have a gun pointed at you?” “Yes. One night I turned a corner and a man put a gun to my head and said, ‘You have three seconds to tell me why you are here in this country or you are dead.’ ‘Gordon B. Hincley sent me.’ ‘Who is he?’ ‘A prophet.’ ‘What’s a prophet?’ ... The man joined the church and became a leader.

10. Show you all things you should do

How could ye speak with the tongue of angels save it were by the Holy Ghost? Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore ... *feast upon the words of Christ*; for behold, *the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do*. ... If ye will enter in by the way, and *receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do*. Behold, this is the doctrine of Christ.^{2 Ne. 32:2-6}

Wisdom.

Words of Christ are not just written.

Go your way whithersoever I will, and it shall be given you by the Comforter what you shall do and whither you shall go.^{31:11}

“Brother Lyman Sherman ... requested to have the word of the Lord through me; ‘for,’ said he, ‘I have been *wrought upon* to make known to you my feelings and desires, and was promised that I should have a revelation which should make known my duty.’” (HC 2:345)

My servant Lyman: Your sins are forgiven you, because you have *obeyed my voice* in coming up hither this morning to *receive counsel* of him whom I have appointed.^{108:1}

Obeyeth my voice

03/1830: At a public Palmyra meeting, people agreed to boycott the Book of Mormon. “Martin became alarmed. ... Arms full of books, a distraught Martin told Joseph, ‘The books will not sell for nobody wants them.’

‘I think they will sell well,’ Joseph responded.

‘I want a commandment,’ Martin demanded. ...

‘Fulfill what you have got,’ replied Joseph ... [D&C 5]

‘I must have a commandment,’ Martin said increasingly anxious.” (Harper 68)

The next morning, Martin again demanded a revelation. Later that day **D&C 19** was received.

^{19:13} Wherefore, I command *you* to repent, and keep the *commandments* which *you* have received by the hand of my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., in my name;

JS in wagon saw overturned wagon and heard a man calling for help.

11. Counsel with the Lord in all they doings

Pray always ... Ye must not perform any thing unto the Lord save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father.^{2 Ne. 32:9}

Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good.^{Alma 37:37}

12. It is not meet that I should command in all things

For behold, *it is not meet that I should command in all things*; for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant; wherefore he receiveth no reward. ... Men should be *anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will*, and bring to pass much righteousness; For *the power is in them*, wherein they are agents unto themselves.^{58:26-28}

With great expectations for Zion, Joseph, bishop Edward Partridge and others were disappointed on their arrival in Independence because it was far from being the promised land. Bishop Partridge, whom the Lord had called upon to turn the place into Zion, despaired. (Harper)

As I spake concerning my servant Edward Partridge, this land is the land of his residence, and those whom he has appointed for his counselors; ... Wherefore, let them bring their families to this land, *as they shall counsel between themselves and me*.^{58:24-25}

13. As seemeth you good, it mattereth not unto me

Let there be a craft made, or bought, *as seemeth you good, it mattereth not unto me*, and take your journey speedily for the place which is called St. Louis.^{60:5}

It mattereth not unto me ... if it so be that they fill their mission, whether they go by water or by land; let this be as it is made known unto them *according to their judgments* hereafter.^{61:22}

Then you may return to bear record ... altogether, or two by two, *as seemeth you good, it mattereth not unto me*; only be faithful, and declare glad tidings unto the inhabitants. ... If any among you desire to ride upon horses, or upon mules, or in chariots, he shall receive this blessing. ... These things remain with you *to do according to judgment and the directions of the Spirit*.^{62:5}

Go ye and preach my gospel, whether to the north ... south ... east or ... west, *it mattereth not*, for ye cannot go amiss.^{80:3}

14. What if no answer?

Brigham Young: “If I do not know the will of my Father, and what He requires of me in a certain transaction, if I ask Him to give me wisdom concerning any requirement in life, or in regard to my own course, or that of my friends, my family, my children, or those that I preside over, and get no answer from Him, and then do the very best that my judgment will teach me, He is bound to own and honor that transaction, and He will do so to all intents and purposes.” (JD 3:205; *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 43)

HT girls who would stay home waiting for prompting.

Boyd K. Packer: “Sometimes you may struggle with a problem and not get an answer. What could be wrong? It may be that you are not doing anything wrong. It may be that you have not done the right things long enough. Remember, you cannot force spiritual things. Sometimes we are confused simply because we *won’t take no for an answer*. ... *Put difficult questions in the back of your minds and go about your lives*. Ponder and pray quietly and persistently about them. The answer may not come as a lightning bolt. It may come as a little inspiration here and a little there, ‘line upon line, precept upon precept’ (D&C 98:12). Some answers will come from reading the scriptures, some from hearing speakers. And, occasionally, when it is important, some will come by very direct and powerful inspiration. The promptings will be clear and unmistakable” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 21).

Joseph Fielding McConkie: [In Vietnam,] Chaplain Smith and I would take turns asking [Victor L. Brown of the Presiding Bishopric] questions. ... He said, "Brethren, I am going to tell you a story. You won't like it, but it is a great story." ... The story centered around a young man who had a very difficult problem. He did not know what to do, so he visited with his bishop.

The bishop listened carefully and thoughtfully. He asked a few questions. ... He then confessed that he had no idea what counsel to give [but would ask]. ...

The next evening the bishop met with the stake president. He explained the young man's problem. The stake president listened attentively and asked a few questions. ... He then said, "Bishop, I have no idea what to tell you [but I will ask]." ...

The next day, as he met with the member of the Quorum of the Twelve, the stake president raised the matter. The Apostle listened attentively and asked a few questions. ... He then said, "President, I have no idea what to tell you, [but I will ask]." ...

That afternoon he met with President McKay and carefully explained the problem. President McKay listened attentively and asked a few questions ... and then said, "Well, that's his (meaning the young man's) problem, isn't it." ...

The story brought an end to our question session and with it the realization that our problems were ours and it was for us to solve them. That is why the Lord placed us there. (Joseph Fielding McConkie, "Finding Answers," BYU Devotional, 12/12/2006)

Revelations come in the Lord's own time and way:

Dallin H. Oaks: "The Lord will speak to us through the Spirit in his own time and in his own way. Many people **do not understand this principle.** They believe that when they are ready and when it suits their convenience, they can call upon the Lord and he will immediately respond, even in the precise way they have prescribed. Revelation does not come that way. ... The principle stated in [D&C 88:68] applies to every communication from our Heavenly Father: 'It shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will.' We cannot force spiritual things" (*Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 10–11).

Help thy servants to say, with thy grace assisting them: Thy will be done, O Lord, and not ours. ^{109:44}

Richard G. Scott: "When we seek inspiration to help make decisions, the Lord gives gentle promptings. These require us to think, to exercise faith, to work, to struggle at times, and to act. Seldom does the whole answer to a decisively important matter or complex problem come all at once. More often, it comes a piece at a time, without the end in sight" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 32).

15. How can one tell the Holy Ghost from other spirits?

I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do. ^{1 Ne. 4:6}

Led by evil spirit not knowing before hand. Satan "has power to place thoughts in our minds and to whisper to us in unspoken impressions to entice us to satisfy our appetites or desires and in various other ways he plays upon our weaknesses and desires. ... We should ... resist every impression, every unwholesome thought or desire, and every persuasion to do wrong that may come from any source whatever, even from our most cherished friends. Satan knows all the tricks and has had long experience in persuading people to do evil." (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 3:82–83)

If ye would hearken unto *the Spirit which teacheth a man to pray* ye would know that ye must pray; for the *evil spirit ... teacheth him that he must not pray.* ^{2 Ne. 32:8}

Put your trust in that Spirit which *leadeth to do good*—yea, to *do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously; and this is my Spirit.* ... I will impart unto you of my Spirit, which shall *enlighten your mind*, which *shall fill your soul with joy*; ... By this shall you know, all things whatsoever you desire of me, which are pertaining unto things of righteousness, in faith believing in me that you shall receive. ^{11:12–14}

The Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God. But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; ... for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him. ^{Moro. 7:16–17}

That which *doth not edify* is not of God, and is darkness. ^{50:23}

"When the Prophet Joseph appeared to him in a dream or vision, Brigham pleaded to be reunited with the Prophet. [He] asked the Prophet if he had a message for the Brethren. The Prophet said: 'Tell the people to be humble and faithful, and to be sure to keep the spirit of the Lord and it will lead them right. Be careful and not turn away the still small voice; it will teach them what to do and where to go; it will yield the fruits of the kingdom. Tell the Brethren to keep their hearts open to conviction, so that when the Holy Ghost comes to them, their hearts will be ready to receive it. ... They can tell *the Spirit of the Lord* from all other spirits; it will *whisper peace and joy to their souls; it will take malice, hatred, strife and all evil from their hearts; and their whole desire will be to do good, bring forth righteousness and build up the kingdom of God.*'" (James E. Faust, "The Gift of the Holy Ghost—A Sure Compass," *Ensign*, May 1989, 31)

Two wolves: Once an old Cherokee Indian said to his grandson: "A fight is going on inside me. It is a terrible fight between two wolves. One is evil— he is contention, anger, hate, envy, regret, greed, pride, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, discouragement, despair, misery. The other wolf is good— he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. The same fight is going on inside every person." The grandson thought for a moment and then asked, "Grandfather, which wolf will win?" The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed." (Anon)

I feed one or the other by choosing the thoughts that I dwell on or act upon.

Questions about my personal revelations:

- Does it apply to my own stewardship?^{28:2, 6-7}
Joseph Smith taught, “It is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or any one, to receive instruction for those in authority, higher than themselves” (*TPJS*, 21).
No one shall be appointed to receive commandments and revelations in this church excepting my servant Joseph Smith ... And thou shalt not command him who is at thy head, and at the head of the church; For I have given him the keys of the mysteries, and the revelations which are sealed, until I shall appoint unto them another in his stead.^{28:2, 6-7}
- Is it in harmony with scriptures, apostles, and prophets?
The First Presidency said: “When ... inspiration conveys something out of harmony with the accepted revelations of the Church or contrary to the decisions of its constituted authorities, Latter-day Saints may know that it is not of God, no matter how plausible it may appear. ... Anything at discord with that which comes from God through the head of the Church is not to be received as authoritative or reliable” (in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:285).
- Does it invite and entice me to love God, and do good?

16. Conclusion

At speeches.byu.edu, see “The Voice of the Lord” by Gerald N. Lund, (12/2/97) and “Revelation” by Dallin H. Oaks (9/29/81).

Quotes

“*Pondering* is, in my feeling, a form of prayer.” (Marion G. Romney, *Ensign*, Jul 1973, 89)

“The object of prayer is not to change the will of God, but to secure for ourselves and for others blessings that God is already willing to grant, but that we must ask for in order to obtain.” (GTS Prayer)