

#25: Priesthood: “The Power of Godliness”

Monte F. Shelley, 26 July 2009

Quotes

- We are leaving Nauvoo willingly ... because we have to!
- Did Brigham say, "This is the place!" or "THIS is the place???"

Timeline of Priesthood Offices	
	Moses. 12 elders (Num 1:44; Josh 3:12), seventy (Ex 24:1), judges/rulers of 1000s, 100s, 50s, 10s (Ex 18:21)
-200	DSS. Teacher+ 2 assistants, 12 overseers, Melchizedek and Aaronic priests
30+	Christ. 12 apostles (Mt 10:1), seventy (Lk 10:1), prophets, evangelists (patriarchs), pastors, teachers (Eph 4:11)
1829	May 15. Aaronic Priesthood (D&C 13) May/June. Melchizedek Priesthood (D&C 128:20)
1830	Apr. Apostles, elders, priests, teachers, deacons (20:38–60)
1831	Feb. Bishop (41:9–10) Edward Partridge Jun. High Priests (52:heading)
1832	First Presidency (D&C 81; 90) Sept. Revelation on priesthood (D&C 84)
1833	Dec. 18. Patriarch (TPJS, 38–39; D&C 124:91)
1834	Feb. High Council (D&C 102)
1835	Mar. Quorum of Twelve Apostles, Seventies, First Quorum of the Seventy (D&C 107)
1836	Kirtland Temple dedicated; washings, anointings, heavens opened; Moses, Elias, Elijah restored priesthood keys.
1839	Mar. 20. D&C 121. Keys to priesthood power & influence
1975	More than 7 in First Quorum of the Seventy
1986	All stake quorums of Seventy discontinued
1989	Second Quorum of Seventy
1997	Area Authority Quorums of Seventy

1. Ordinances and “the power of godliness” (84:19–22)
[The Melchizedek] priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. ²⁰Therefore, *in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness* is manifest. ²¹And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; ²²For *without this no man can see the face of God*, even the Father, and live.

2. Moses wanted his people to see God (84:23–24)
Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to *sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God*; But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not *enter into his rest* while in the wilderness, *which rest is the fulness of his glory*.

Moses ... builded an altar ... offered burnt offerings ... and ... took the book of the covenant, and read ... and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do. ... And Moses ... said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you. ... Then went up Moses ... Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And they saw the God of Israel. (Ex. 24:4–10)

3. Ancient and Modern Temples

4. Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood (84:31–43)

³¹The sons of Moses and ... Aaron shall offer an acceptable offering and sacrifice in the house of the Lord. ... ³²And the sons of Moses and of Aaron shall be filled with the glory of the Lord ... whose sons are ye. ... For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining

these two priesthoods ... and the *magnifying their calling*, are *sanctified by the Spirit* unto the *renewing of their bodies*. They become the *sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham*, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.

³⁵And also all they who *receive this priesthood* receive me, saith the Lord; ³⁶For he that *receiveth my servants* receiveth me; ³⁷And he that *receiveth me* receiveth my Father; ³⁸And he that *receiveth my Father* receiveth my Father’s kingdom; therefore *all that my Father hath shall be given unto him*.

³⁹And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood. ⁴⁰Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved.

⁴¹But whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and altogether turneth therefrom, shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come. ⁴²And wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood which ye have received, which I now confirm upon you who are present this day, by mine own voice out of the heavens; and even I have given the heavenly hosts and mine angels charge concerning you.

⁴³And I now give unto you a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life. ⁴⁴For you shall *live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God*. ...

- **Author:** Christ, Lord Almighty, Alpha and Omega
- **Blessings:** Filled with the glory of the Lord, sanctified by Spirit unto the renewing of body, become sons of Moses and Aaron, the seed of Abraham, the elect of God; “all that my Father hath shall be given him”; “I have given ... mine angels charge concerning you.”
- **Curses:** no forgiveness of sins if break covenant and never repent; not receive eternal life
- **Duties:** Be faithful in obtaining two priesthoods, magnify calling, receive Lord’s servants, beware concerning self, give diligent heed to the words of eternal life, live by every word from the mouth of God, not treat “lightly the things [we] have received” (84:54), “remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments” (84:57)
- **Enter:** Ordination, receive ordinances

5. How do we magnify callings?

Gordon B. Hinckley: “That word *magnify* is interesting. As I interpret it, it means to enlarge, to make more clear, to bring closer, and to strengthen. ... When we live up to our high and holy calling, when we show love for God through service to fellowmen, when we use our strength and talents to build faith and spread truth, we magnify our priesthood. ... We magnify our priesthood ... when we serve with diligence and enthusiasm in those responsibilities to which we are called by proper authority. ... when we reach out to those in distress and give strength to those who falter ... [and] when we walk with honesty and integrity” (*Ensign*, May 1989, 48–49).

“Let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence. He that is slothful ... [or] learns not his duty and shows himself not approved shall not be counted worthy to stand” (D&C 107:99-100).

6. Kirtland Temple (1833–1836)

1833: Thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am; (D&C 93:1)

Inasmuch as my people build a house unto me in the name of the Lord, and do not suffer any unclean thing to come into it, that it be not defiled, my glory shall rest upon it;¹⁶ Yea, and my presence shall be there, for I will come into it, and all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God. (D&C 97:15–16)

1836: Joseph sanctified the Saints with washings, anointings, and the sacrament. Many saw the heavens opened and saw Christ.

7. Why are many called but few chosen? (121:34–40)

³⁴ Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen? ³⁵ Because their hearts are set so much upon the *things of this world*, and aspire to the *honors of men*, that they do not learn this one lesson—³⁶ That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the *principles of righteousness*. ³⁷ That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to *cover our sins*, or to *gratify our pride, our vain ambition*, or to *exercise control or dominion or compulsion* upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man. ³⁸ Behold, ere he is aware, he is left unto himself, to kick against the pricks, to persecute the saints, and to fight against God. ³⁹ We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a *little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion*. ⁴⁰ Hence many are called, but few are chosen.

8. Become like God → Priesthood power or influence

⁴¹ No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only *by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned; By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—*Reproving *betimes* with *sharpness*, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an *increase* of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy; That he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death. Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men ... and let *virtue garnish* thy thoughts unceasingly; → **then** shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven. ⁴⁶ The *Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion*, and thy scepter an unchanging *scepter* of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting *dominion*, and *without compulsory means* it shall flow unto thee forever and ever.

9. Priesthood ordinances and covenants

A purpose of the priesthood is to help people understand, make, and keep covenants so they can become more Christlike and thus receive the power of Godliness (God-like-ness).

I have beheld how thou [Nephi] hast *with unwearyingness declared the word, which I have given unto thee*, unto this people. And thou hast not feared them, and hast not sought thine own life, but hast *sought my will, and to keep my commandments*. ... Behold, I will bless thee forever; and I will make thee mighty in word and in deed, in faith and in works; yea, even that all things shall be done unto thee according to thy word, for *thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will*. (Hel. 10:4–5)

10. Live by every word of God

And I now give unto you a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life. ⁴⁴ For

you shall *live by every word* that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God. ... ⁴⁷ And every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father. (D&C 84:43–47)

Search these commandments. ... What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken ... whether *by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same*. (D&C 1:37–38)

If my people will hearken unto *my voice*, and unto the *voice of my servants* whom I have appointed to lead my people, behold ... they shall not be moved out of their place. (D&C 124:45)

The day cometh that they who will not hear the *voice of the Lord*, neither the *voice of his servants*, neither give heed to the *words of the prophets and apostles*, shall be cut off from among the people;

¹⁵ For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant; ¹⁶ They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, (D&C 1:14–16)

Quotes

a. Joseph Fielding Smith: “The blessings of the priesthood are not confined to men alone. These blessings are also poured out our wives and daughters and upon all the faithful women of the Church. ... The Lord offers to his daughters every spiritual gift and blessing that can be obtained by his sons, for neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord” (Conference Report, Apr. 1970, 59).

b. Marion G. Romney: “Who are his servants? They are representatives in the offices of the Priesthood. ... It behooves us to keep this in mind when we are tempted to disregard our presiding authorities, bishops, quorum and stake presidents, etc. when, within the jurisdiction of their callings, they give us counsel and advice.” (Conference Report, Oct. 1960)

c. Joseph: “Many ... have been ordained, who ought not to hold official stations in the Church, because they dishonor themselves and the Church, and bring persecution swiftly upon us, in consequence of their zeal without knowledge.” (HC 2:394)

d. Spencer W. Kimball: “We have heard of men who have said to their wives, ‘I hold the priesthood and you’d better do what I say.’ Such a man should be tried for his membership. Certainly he should not be honored in his priesthood.” (*Teachings of ...*, 316)

e. Gordon B. Hinckley: “No man who abuses his wife or children is worthy to hold the priesthood of God.” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 72)

f. M. Russell Ballard: “Those who hold the priesthood must never forget that they have no right to wield priesthood authority like a club over the heads of others in the family or in Church callings. ... Any man who ... seeks to use the priesthood in any degree of unrighteousness in the Church or in the home simply does not understand the nature of his authority. Priesthood is for service, not servitude; compassion, not compulsion; caring, not control” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 78).

g. Joseph: “If the sisters loved the Lord, let them feed the sheep, and not destroy them. How oft have wise men and women sought to dictate Brother Joseph by saying, ‘O, if I were Brother Joseph, I would do this and that;’ but if they were in [my] shoes they would find that men or women could not be compelled into the kingdom of God, but must be dealt with in long-suffering, and at last we shall save them. The way to keep all the Saints together, and keep the work rolling, is to wait with all long-suffering, till God shall bring such characters to justice. There should be no license for sin, but mercy should go hand in hand with reproof.” (HC 5:24)

h. Brigham Young: “If you are ever called upon to chasten a person, never chasten beyond the balm you have within you to bind up.” (*JD* 9:124–125)