



DOCTRINE & COVENANTS

& CHURCH HISTORY GOSPEL DOCTRINE CLASS

* GREEN MOUNTAIN 1ST WARD * LAKEWOOD, COLORADO * 12 JULY 2009 * PAGE 1 *

Lesson 25: Priesthood: "The Power of Godliness", Doctrine and Covenants 84:33-44; 107; 121:34-46; Our Heritage, pages 26-27.

Introduction



LIGHT
POWER



WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD



TIMELESS

HERE ON EARTH TODAY
ACT IN THE NAME OF GOD



HE DENIETH NONE

ALL ARE ALIKE UNTO GOD



Lesson Highlights

- Order in the restoration of the priesthood and its offices
- The oath and covenant of the priesthood
- Principles for using the priesthood

A study of this lesson will help us gain a greater understanding of the priesthood and seek the blessings that come from using it righteously.

Next Week

#26 "Go Ye into All the World, and Preach My Gospel"
(D&C 112; Our Heritage, pp. 30-33, 36)

Consider why you are grateful to be a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Most likely, none of the things you thought of would be possible without the priesthood. For example, eternal marriage would not be possible without the sealing power of the priesthood. Even something as simple as unity in the Church would not be possible without prophets, apostles, and other priesthood leaders, who help us gain a "unity of the faith" (Ephesians 4:13; see also verses Ephesians 4:10-12).

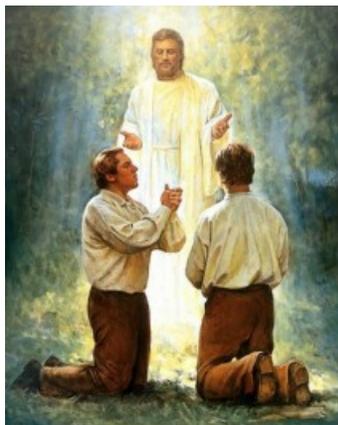
Elder Robert D. Hales: "The priesthood is the power of God, which is given to man to act in His name. The priesthood of God is timeless. It "was in the beginning, [and] shall be in the end of the world also" (Moses 6:7; see also History of the Church, 3:386). Before this world was created, the premortal Council in Heaven was held under the direction of the priesthood. The formation of the universe and of the world upon which we live was brought to pass—not by chance, but through the power of the priesthood. The great Creator spoke, and the elements obeyed. The processes of nature that enable us to exist on this planet, and the resources of this world that sustain life—all were set into motion and continue their course through the power of God's magnificent priesthood. While most of the earth's inhabitants do not recognize this priesthood power, all living creatures are its beneficiaries." ("Blessings of the Priesthood," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 32)

This lesson discusses the priesthood and some of the covenants and blessings that are associated with it.



Order in the restoration of the priesthood and its offices

The Aaronic Priesthood and the Melchizedek Priesthood were restored to the earth in 1829. Following the organization of the Church in 1830, the Lord gradually revealed priesthood offices, quorums, and councils as needed to provide leadership for the growth of the Church. In our day the Lord continues to give revelations about the organization and responsibilities of the priesthood to guide the growth of the Church. One example of this is the calling of Area Authority Seventies and the accompanying organization of the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Quorums of the Seventy in 1997.



15 May 1829 - John the Baptist Restores the Aaronic Priesthood to Joseph Smith & Oliver Cowdery.

The oath and covenant of the priesthood

In addition to revelations about priesthood offices and government, the Lord revealed principles about receiving and exercising the priesthood. For example, He revealed the oath and covenant of the priesthood, which is found in **D&C 84:33–44**. These verses outline (1) the covenants a man makes with the Lord when he receives the Melchizedek Priesthood and (2) the covenants the Lord makes with faithful Melchizedek Priesthood holders.

Elder Carlos E. Asay said: *“Of all the holy agreements pertaining to the gospel of Jesus Christ, few, if any, would transcend in importance the oath and covenant of the priesthood. It is certainly one of the most sacred agreements, for it involves the sharing of heavenly powers and man’s upward reaching toward eternal goals”* (Ensign, Nov. 1985, 43).

Joseph Fielding Smith: *“The blessings of the priesthood are not confined to men alone. These blessings are also poured out ... 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*

Historical Time Line of Restoration of Priesthood & Offices

15 May 1829	Aaronic Priesthood	D&C 13
May or June 1829	Melchizedek Priesthood	D&C 128:20
April 1830	Apostles, elders, priests, teachers, and deacons	D&C 20:38–60
4 February 1831	Bishop	D&C 41:9–10
June 1831	High Priests	Heading to D&C:52
1832–33	First Presidency	D&C 81; 90
18 December 1833	Patriarch	Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith [1976], 38–39
17 February 1834	High Council	D&C 102
1835	Quorum of the Twelve Apostles	D&C 107:23–24
1835	Seventies	D&C 107:25
1835	First Quorum of the Seventy	D&C 107:26; 93–97

without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord” (Improvement Era, June 1970, 66; see also Alma 32:23).

D&C 84:33, 36, 39–44. Priesthood holders covenant to:

- Be faithful in obtaining the Aaronic Priesthood and the Melchizedek Priesthood (verse 33).
- Magnify their callings (verse 33).
- Receive the Lord’s servants (verse 36).
- Give diligent heed to the words of eternal life (verses 43–44).

D&C 107:99; Jacob 1:17–19. Magnifying one’s calling.

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: *“We magnify our priesthood and enlarge our calling when we serve with diligence and enthusiasm in those responsibilities to which we are called by proper authority. ... We magnify our calling, we enlarge the potential of our priesthood when we reach out to those in distress and give strength to those who falter. ... We magnify our calling when we walk with honesty and integrity”* (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 63; or Ensign, May 1989, 48–49).

President Henry B. Eyring:

“[D]ecide...to go forward in faith in keeping your covenants with God and so claim the promise He has made to you with an oath. You can do it in simple things. When you meet with your [ward members], you can decide to see them as brothers [and sisters] in the family of God. There will be someone in your [ward] who is in need. He [or she] may not show it. You may not be able to see it with your eyes. But God knows and invites you to be His servant in helping him.”

(Ensign, May 2008, 61–64)



As we magnify our callings, it is important that we find the correct balance so we do not neglect our families.

Elder Neal A. Maxwell said: *"Sometimes, unintentionally, even certain extracurricular Church activities, insensitively administered, can hamper family life. Instructively, after the resurrected Jesus taught the Nephites, He said, 'Go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said,' and pray and prepare 'for the morrow' (3 Nephi 17:3). Jesus did not say go to your civic clubs, town meetings, or even stake centers!"* (in Conference Report, Apr. 1994, 120; or *Ensign*, May 1994, 89).

D&C 84:36. Receive the Lord's servants. When we accept the messages and ordinances of the gospel from the Lord's servants, we also receive the Lord.

Principles for using the priesthood

D&C 121:34–46. In these verses the Lord reveals principles for using the priesthood. He also reveals promises to those who use it righteously. In addition to their application to priesthood holders, these principles apply generally to all human relationships. Therefore, they are also important for those who do not hold the priesthood.

D&C 121:34–40, the Lord reveals why some priesthood holders are not able to exercise the priesthood with power. According to these verses, this occurs when hearts are set on the things of the world, when we aspire to the honors of men, attempt to cover sins, gratify pride or vain ambition, and exercise unrighteous dominion.

The priesthood may be used only in righteousness and a spirit of love as a means of serving and blessing others.

Elder M. Russell Ballard said: *"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).

D&C 121:41–42 reveals principles for exercising the priesthood—persuasion, long-suffering, gentleness and meekness, love unfeigned, kindness, pure knowledge, humility and guilelessness.

D&C 84:33–34, 38, 42. The Lord covenants to:

- a. Sanctify us by the Spirit (verse 33).
- b. Renew our bodies (verse 33).
- c. Give us the blessings promised to Abraham and his posterity (verse 34).
- d. Make us His elect, or chosen (verse 34).
- e. Give us all that the Father has (verse 38).
- f. Give His angels charge over us (verse 42).

D&C 84:33–34. The Lord promises that if we are faithful, we will become *"the seed of Abraham ... and the elect of God"*.

Abraham 2:9–11. The blessings and responsibilities of the seed of Abraham specify that *"all the families of the earth [will] be blessed"* through the priesthood.

D&C 84:38. The crowning promise in the oath and covenant of the priesthood is that we can receive *"all that [the] Father hath"*.

D&C 121:43–44 teach principles for giving correction or discipline. (Note: *Betimes* means "promptly" or "soon". *Sharpness* means "clearly" or "precisely".)

D&C 121:45 counsels us to "let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly", and **D&C 27:15–18** explains that we can do that by taking upon us the whole armor of God and the shield of faith.

In **D&C 121:45–46**, the Lord promises, if we are *"full of charity"* and *"let virtue garnish [our] thoughts unceasingly"*, that our confidence will wax strong in the presence of God and the Holy Ghost shall be a constant companion.

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley said: *"It has been my privilege on various occasions to converse with Presidents of the United States and important men in other governments. At the close of each such occasion I have reflected on the rewarding experience of standing with confidence in the presence of an acknowledged leader. And then I have thought, what a wonderful thing, what a marvelous thing it would be to stand with confidence—unafraid and unashamed and unembarrassed—in the presence of God. This is the promise held out to every virtuous man and woman"* (*Improvement Era*, Dec. 1970, 73).

The bounteous blessings of the priesthood can be ours through our obedience and all of the magnificent, eternal blessings that God makes available to men and women and families upon this earth can be ours through the power of the priesthood.

Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on the teachings discussed in this lesson.

- How have you been blessed by someone who magnified his or her calling?
- How have you been able to more actively fill your mind with virtuous thoughts?

