



# DOCTRINE & COVENANTS

## & CHURCH HISTORY GOSPEL DOCTRINE CLASS

\* GREEN MOUNTAIN 1<sup>ST</sup> WARD \* LAKEWOOD, COLORADO \* 15 NOVEMBER 2009 \* PAGE 1 \*

### Lesson 42: Continuing Revelation to Latter-day Prophets (See Study Guide).

#### Introduction

The following story was shared by **President Harold B. Lee**:

*"Elder John A. Widtsoe of the Council of the Twelve once told of a discussion he had with a group of stake officers. In the course of the discussion someone said to him, 'Brother Widtsoe, how long has it been since the Church received a revelation?' Brother Widtsoe rubbed his chin thoughtfully and said in reply, 'Oh, probably since last Thursday'" (Stand Ye in Holy Places [1974], 132-33).*

**President Spencer W. Kimball** declared that the Church continues to be guided by revelation:

*"We testify to the world that revelation continues and that the vaults and files of the Church contain these revelations which come month to month and day to day. We testify also that there is, since 1830 when The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, and will continue to be, so long as time shall last, a prophet, recognized of God and his people, who will continue to interpret the mind and will of the Lord. ...*

*"Expecting the spectacular, one may not be fully alerted to the constant flow of revealed communication. I say, in the deepest of humility, but also by the power and force of a burning testimony in my soul, that from the prophet of the Restoration to the prophet of our own year, the communication line is unbroken, the authority is continuous, a light, brilliant and penetrating, continues to shine. The sound of the voice of the Lord is a continuous melody and a thunderous appeal. For nearly a century and a half there has been no interruption" (Ensign, May 1977, 78).*

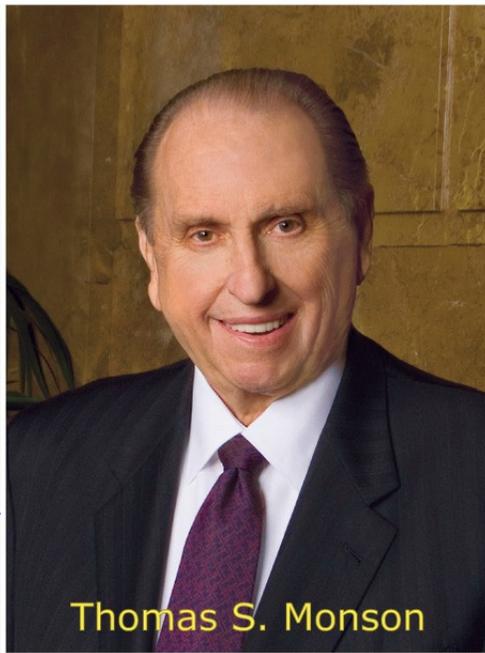
President Kimball's statement continues to be true today. The heavens are open, and the Lord continues to reveal His will to latter-day prophets.

**D&C 1:38, D&C 68:1-4.** The members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are latter-day prophets, seers, and revelators. They continue to receive revelation to guide the Church. Their direction is *"the will of the Lord, ... the mind of the Lord, ... the word of the Lord, ... the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation"* (D&C 68:4). This lesson discusses a few examples of continuing revelation to guide the Church.

#### Church correlation

As a result of the Church's dramatic growth during the 1950s, President David O. McKay announced the priesthood correlation program (see *Our Heritage*, last paragraph p. 117, p 118). A committee, chaired by Elder Harold B. Lee of the Quorum of the Twelve, was assigned to conduct a thorough, prayerful study of all Church programs to see how well they met the Church's most important objectives.

Church correlation was initiated and continues to operate today by revelation from the Lord to His prophets.



Thomas S. Monson

#### Lesson Highlights

- Church correlation
- Revelation extending the blessings of the priesthood to every worthy male member of the Church
- Publication of new Latter-day Saint editions of the scriptures
- Additional Quorums of the Seventy

**A study of this lesson will help show us that the Lord continues to guide the Church through revelation to latter-day prophets, seers, and revelators.**

#### Next Week

#43 - "Take upon you My Whole Armor" (See Study Guide)

The purpose of Church correlation is to preserve “*the right way of God*” (Jacob 7:7). Ultimately it is intended to help accomplish the mission of the Church, which is to invite all people to “*come unto Christ, and be perfected in him*” (Moroni 10:32; see also D&C 20:59).

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve oversee correlation in the Church. Correlation includes:

- a. Maintaining purity of doctrine.
- b. Emphasizing the importance of the family and the home.
- c. Placing all the work of the Church under priesthood direction.
- d. Establishing proper relationships among the organizations of the Church.
- e. Achieving unity and order in the Church.
- f. Ensuring simplicity of Church programs and materials.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** of the Quorum of the Twelve said that correlation is a process “*in which we take all the programs of the Church, bring them to one focal point, wrap them in one package, operate them as one program, involve all members of the Church in the operation—and do it all under priesthood direction*” (Let Every Man Learn His Duty [pamphlet, 1976], 2).

Following are highlights of how the Church’s correlation efforts bless our lives.

#### **Importance of the family**

The correlation effort has emphasized the importance of the family in many ways. One is the establishment of the family home evening program. Parents are to hold a weekly family home evening to teach and strengthen their families. Monday evenings are reserved for family home evening throughout the Church and should be kept free from Church meetings and activities.

The correlation effort has also emphasized the importance of the family by clarifying the role of the organizations, programs, and activities of the Church in relation to the family. The *Church Handbook of Instructions* states: “*The most important place for gospel teaching and leadership is in the family and the home (see Mosiah 4:14–15; D&C 68:25–28). ... Quorums, auxiliaries, programs, and activities in the Church should strengthen and support the family. They should enhance gospel-centered family activities, not compete with them*” (Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders [1998], 299).

### **Revelation extending the blessings of the priesthood to every worthy male member of the Church**

**Official Declaration 2** was announced by President Kimball in June 1978. This revelation has been a great blessing to the Church and all worthy male members.

The correlation effort also emphasizes that Church programs and activities should not make unnecessary demands on the effort, time, or other resources of Church members.

#### **Operation of Church auxiliaries**

One important role of correlation is to unify and coordinate the auxiliary organizations of the Church—the Relief Society, Young Men, Young Women, Primary, and Sunday School. For many years these organizations were somewhat independent. At the general Church level, some had their own magazines, funding, and conferences. As they grew, they became increasingly complex and often had unnecessary duplication in their programs and materials.

Through the process of correlation, such complexity and duplication have been reduced. Through correlation, there has also been an emphasis on auxiliary organizations functioning under the direction of priesthood leaders. For example, in a ward these organizations all function under the direction of the bishopric.

#### **Preparation of Church publications**

Church publications, such as lesson manuals and Church magazines, are produced to help members learn and live the gospel of Jesus Christ. The correlation process helps ensure that these materials are scripture-based, doctrinally accurate, and appropriate for the intended audience. All Church publications are planned, prepared, reviewed, and implemented under the direction of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve.

One result of correlation in Church publications is that adult and youth Gospel Doctrine classes and most Primary classes study the same book of scripture during the year. This can encourage and facilitate discussion of the scriptures in the home.

#### **Home teaching**

**D&C 20:53–55.** Home visits by priesthood holders have been part of the Church since the time of the Prophet Joseph Smith. As part of the correlation effort, these visits were reemphasized in the 1960s and called home teaching. Home teaching continues to be a vital responsibility of teachers, priests, and Melchizedek Priesthood holders.

**D&C 84:109–10; D&C 132:8.** These scriptures teach our mutual dependence on each other and the divine wisdom and order of the Church’s correlated approach to church programs and activities.

*Our Heritage*, pages 125–127 reveal details about the reception of this important revelation.

The inspired changes noted throughout this lesson present compelling evidence of continuing revelation to the Lord’s modern prophets. Correlation was begun under the administration of President David O. McKay. The work leading up to the new LDS edition of the scriptures began under the direction of President Harold B. Lee and continued during the administration of President Spencer W. Kimball. The revelation extending the blessings of the priesthood came to Spencer W. Kimball. And the evolving structure of the Church, as noted in this lesson, has continued through all of the administrations from Spencer W. Kimball to Gordon B. Hinckley.



In 1979, after years of careful work under the direction of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve, the Church published a Latter-day Saint edition of the Bible. This edition of the Bible has the same text as the King James Version, but it includes special study aids, such as the Topical Guide, the Bible Dictionary, and footnotes referring to passages in other books of scripture and to excerpts from Joseph Smith's translation of the Bible.

In 1981, the Church published a new edition of the triple combination (the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price in a single volume), with expanded footnotes and index entries.

**Ezekiel 37:15–19.** “[T]he stick of Judah” is the Bible and “the stick of Ephraim” is the Book of Mormon. The new editions of the LDS scriptures help the sticks of Joseph and Judah become one.

- Many footnotes in the Bible refer to scriptures in the Book of Mormon, and many footnotes in the Book of Mormon refer to scriptures in the Bible.
- **Elder Boyd K. Packer** of the Quorum of the Twelve observed: “*The stick or record of Judah—the Old Testament and the New Testament—and the stick or record of Ephraim—the Book of Mormon, which is another testament of Jesus Christ—are*

### Additional Quorums of the Seventy

As the Church has grown, the Lord has revealed how general Church administration should change to meet the needs of members all over the world. These changes have been especially evident in the organization of additional Quorums of the Seventy.

**D&C 107:25, 34** define responsibilities of the Seventy.

For many years there were only seven General Authorities of the Church who served as Seventies. They made up the First Council of the Seventy. In 1975, others were called; they served in the First Quorum of the Seventy. Further expansion came in 1989, when a Second Quorum of the Seventy was added.

In April 1995, President Gordon B. Hinckley announced the calling of new local officers, called Area Authorities, who would serve for a period of about six years. (*Ensign*, May 1995, 52.)

### Conclusion

**President Kimball** testified that “*the sound of the voice of the Lord [to His prophets] is a continuous melody and a thunderous appeal*” (see handout p.1). We are greatly blessed by having the Lord's guidance through latter-day prophets.

*now woven together in such a way that as you pore over one you are drawn to the other; as you learn from one you are enlightened by the other. They are indeed one in our hands”* (*Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53).

Soon after these scriptures were printed, **Elder Boyd K. Packer** prophesied: “*With the passing of years, these scriptures will produce successive generations of faithful Christians who know the Lord Jesus Christ and are disposed to obey His will. ... The revelations will be opened to them as to no other [generation] in the history of the world. Into their hands now are placed the sticks of Joseph and of Judah. They will develop a gospel scholarship beyond that which their forebears could achieve. They will have the testimony that Jesus is the Christ and be competent to proclaim Him and to defend Him*” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1982, 75; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53).

In the April 1995 general conference, **President Gordon B. Hinckley** made an observation that shows that Elder Packer's words are being fulfilled: “*I look back to my own youth. Neither young men nor young women were doing much scripture reading at that time. What a marvelous change has been wrought. A new generation is arising who are familiar with the word of the Lord*” (*Ensign*, May 1995, 87).

In 1997, President Hinckley announced that Area Authorities would be ordained Seventies and would form the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Quorums of the Seventy. Unlike Seventies who serve as General Authorities, Area Authority Seventies serve in the areas in which they live and continue in their present employment. (*Ensign*, May 1997, 5–6.)

**D&C 107:93–97.** Area Authority Seventies serve in the area in which they live and continue in their present employment. These expansions of the Quorums of the Seventy are fulfillment of instruction in D&C 107.

Concerning the creation of additional Quorums of the Seventy, **President Hinckley** said: “*With these respective quorums in place, we have established a pattern under which the Church may grow to any size with an organization of Area Presidencies and Area Authority Seventies, chosen and working across the world according to need. Now, the Lord is watching over His kingdom. He is inspiring its leadership to care for its ever growing membership*” (*Ensign*, May 1997, 6).

### Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on the teachings discussed in this lesson.

- How have Church organizations and activities strengthened you and your family?
- What experiences have shown you the importance of home teaching?

