

PETER AND HIS APOSTOLIC MINISTRY

Yesterday we talked about the conversion of Peter. Let us talk today about his active participation in the ministry. Let us talk about the call that he received to . . . (inaudible) . . . and as time permits, what he did and how he was instructed to go about performing his ministerial duties, and somewhat as yesterday's material, this matter of testimony was a pattern for us in gaining testimony and becoming completely converted. The things that happened to him in his ministry are a pattern and somewhat of a prototype as to how we could go about performing a ministerial service and duty.

(Inaudible) . . . general references, let us look on page 209 where we have the account of Peter's call and that also of all of the Twelve. "Jesus Calls and Ordains the Twelve." There cannot be, really, any doubt—unfortunately the New Testament is fragmentary so we do not know it, but there cannot be any doubt that these Twelve already held the Melchizedek Priesthood . . . (inaudible) . . . in Christ's ministry before this could begin taking place. Peter joined the Church; the others had joined the Church; they have obviously been baptized; there is a group of disciples that are assembled now, and so what happens is that at the appointed and proper time to make the formal organization of the Twelve, Jesus spends the night in prayer. Luke is the only one who gave us that information and that is the 12th verse: "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called *unto him* his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;" (Luke 6:12-13). And then he gets them listed here.

Well, let us talk a little bit about what is involved in being called to an office in the Priesthood and have our perspective right about this, and we will want to talk a little about the keys that Peter received and also the missionary charge the Lord gave to these apostles in particular. But in principle everyone is called to the ministry.

Our typical and . . . (inaudible) . . . way of diagramming what is involved in ministerial calls—assignments in the ministry—is to draw a circle and say that that circle represents the Priesthood. In this instance we are dealing with the Melchizedek Priesthood. And then what we do is divide that circle up into segments—into five segments and put an office in each one of them. And the offices in the Melchizedek Priesthood are elder, high priest, patriarch, apostle, and president. I write them down in the order in which they came in this dispensation. We would have no knowledge of the order in which they came in the early dispensation, but that does not matter. Now, our definition of Priesthood, which is this circle, is [inaudible]; it is so standardized in the Church that we do not always say it in the same words. Priesthood is the power and authority of God delegated to man on earth to act in all things for the salvation of man. Now, there is another definition of Priesthood that does not concern us in mortality except that it broadens our perspective to know . . . (inaudible). And that definition pertains to the Priesthood as it imbues the created world or the world that comes rolling into existence, but as to pertaining to us, it is the indicated definition.

Priesthood here, then, is a circle, and each one of these segments of the circle is an office in the Priesthood. Now, what happens to a . . . (inaudible) . . . speaker or anybody else is this. The Priesthood is conferred upon us. We sometimes use, rather inappropriately, the word “ordain.” We are not really ordained to the Priesthood. The way we come to use words—now, it is possible to use that word in that sense and it is in one of the headings there in the Doctrine and Covenants, that if you use the word “ordain” in connection with getting the Priesthood, you are not using it in the sense that the Church uses it today in connection with the . . . (inaudible) . . . they are using it in a general sense, like we would say “Eisenhower was ordained to be president.” It was decreed or destined or something else. But when we use the word “ordain” the way we have now come to use it, we are talking about the fact that a man is ordained to an office in the Priesthood. He is ordained an elder; he is not ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood. This is one of our most misused words, this word “ordain.” The reason it is misused is that it has different meanings that are wholly separate and distinct, and we use it in one connection erroneously because we have in mind a particular thing and we use something else in that instance.

Now, just to show you what I am talking about, somebody tell me what happens when a man becomes a member of a high council? Is he set apart or is he ordained a high councilor? He is set apart a high councilor . . . (inaudible) . . . Did you ever hear of anybody being ordained a high councilor? Well, I doubt if anybody has been ordained a high councilor in the last 50 years. They have all been set apart. But our problem is, the Lord says high councilors are ordained and are not set apart. And it says in the revelations that you ordain a man a high councilor. Well, this is our problem in language. We do not ordain high councilors but the revelation says we ordain high councilors.

Comment: What about counselors in . . . (inaudible)?

BRM: I do not know. The revelation does not say anything about that, but in principle it would be the same. Now, what this is doing—what the revelation is doing, is using the words “set apart” or it is using the word “ordain” to mean something in a broader sense than we use it; it is using the word “ordain” in a big, broad sense that includes “set apart,” and what we have come to do in the Church now is to use the word “ordain” in a limited sense of somebody getting an office in the Priesthood. The revelation says that the President of the Church is ordained, but David O. McKay was not ordained; David O. McKay was set apart. Now, that is because we have come to use the words “set apart” to mean this big circle and the Lord in the revelations is using the word “ordain” to mean that big circle, because we begin to particularize that ordain means this limited thing.

Now this is just a matter of words. You could say to a councilor, “This is what we mean.” We set apart all missionaries and we write a letter to their selective service and say, “You ordain them.” Now you see, we are just using the word “ordain” in the way the world uses it. What I am saying is the Lord also uses it that way and it is proper, but it confuses us unless we know what we are talking about. So what we have come to do in modern times in the Church is define the word this way: we have come to say that the Priesthood is conferred upon someone and then that they are ordained to an office in the Priesthood.

In this dispensation we know . . . (inaudible) . . . we know more about it, but it is the same thing that happened back here. In this dispensation what happened was that probably on this day in June, 1829 (we have lost the day and we do not know what it was exactly) Peter, James, and John came and they conferred upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, the Melchizedek Priesthood. That means that they got the entire circle. They did not hold any office in the Priesthood. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery held no office in the Priesthood at all; they just held the Priesthood. Now, you cannot hold an office in an organization if it does not exist. And there is no occasion to have offices in the Priesthood until the kingdom is organized and the Church is set up. We went with just Priesthood from this day until April 6, 1830. And on the 6th day of April, 1830, Joseph Smith was ordained an elder—the first elder, and Oliver Cowdery—the second, following the sustaining vote of the people. Now, there is an organization. You get ordained to an office in an organization by the law of common consent.

So this is the first office in the Church. Now . . . (inaudible) . . . I have forgotten the date, it was either June or September, I believe it was September of 1831 when the next office in the Priesthood came, and that was the office of high priest. And Joseph Smith and others were ordained high priests. Well, the people that did the ordaining to the office of high priest were elders. High priests were ordained by elders. Then in December of 1833 these high priests ordained a patriarch—Joseph Smith, Sr. was ordained the first patriarch in the Church. And on February 14, 1835 the first apostles were ordained and these apostles were ordained by a high priest. The high priests that did it were the three witnesses of the Book of Mormon; and then something happened that is a little unusual, the ordinations were confirmed by the First Presidency of the Church. So there were two sets of hands laid on their heads; it was as though they were being ordained twice. The three witnesses included Oliver Cowdery; the First Presidency of the Church included Joseph Smith. So what we have is a situation in which the hands of both Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were placed on the head of every man who became an apostle. I mention this because it was Joseph and Oliver who got the keys of the Priesthood and the power from heavenly messengers. Then on the 28th of February in 1835, the first seventies were ordained—I do not know who ordained them, come to think of it; we have to . . . (inaudible) . . . I am guessing they were ordained by various people including the apostles and the heads of the Church; they may have been ordained by same high priests, I do not know. But, presumptively, by these people who are apostles.

Now, Joseph Smith was an elder, and Joseph Smith was a high priest and that is it. That is just absolutely all the office that Joseph Smith held in the Priesthood. He was never a . . . (inaudible) . . . well, let us go over here and we put in this circle “deacon, teacher, priest, and bishop.” Joseph Smith was never a deacon, teacher, priest or bishop, or as ordained offices of the Church, but we call him an apostle *and the revelation calls him an apostle*, which we need to define a little, too. But before we do this, and I will take this concept—this is the language almost verbatim of President Joseph F. Smith, one of his great . . . (inaudible) . . . everlasting . . . (inaudible). We said this Priesthood is greater than any of its offices. *No office* had any power, dignity or authority through the Priesthood. All offices *derived* their rights, powers, virtues, authorities and prerogatives *from* the Priesthood. Now *that* is the basic concept of Priesthood and of offices in the Priesthood.

So, it is greater to hold the Melchizedek Priesthood than it is to be an apostle. Now, this runs counter to the thinking of everybody, because they think in terms of the magnitude and the importance of the members of the Council of the Twelve. But Priesthood offices—it is greater to hold the Priesthood than to be an elder, seventy, apostle, patriarch, or anything else. Anything that an apostle gets he derives *from* the Priesthood as far as power and authority is concerned—Priesthood power and authority. So, it does not make any difference what office a person holds in the Priesthood. But it makes a very great deal of difference whether he holds the Priesthood.

Now what do we do with this? We say, “I confer upon you the Melchizedek Priesthood, and I ordain you to the office of an elder *in* that Priesthood.” And if somebody is already an elder and you are making him a seventy, we just simply say, “I ordain you a seventy,” because he already held the circle. However, one day when I ordained a priest a seventy, which is not normal, then I had to say, “I *confer* upon you the Melchizedek Priesthood and I ordain you to the office of a seventy in that Priesthood.”

Now this is the Priesthood side of the picture. We have said nothing up to now about keys. But this is the basic thing that is involved. Now, any questions?

Comment: Is it possible to hold more than one office in the Priesthood at one time?

BRM: Yes, it is. This is another thing that has been said. I guess maybe if we had . . . (inaudible) . . . we might say people hold—many people hold a lot of offices, but what really counts is whether you function in more than one office at a time. That is really what you mean by that question. And the answer to that is yes. Now, there has not always been a missionary in the Church, although theoretically it always should have been this way. Every man who is an apostle is also a high priest. We do not have apostles today who are not high priests and they function in both capacities. So if they want to make a man an apostle who was not already a high priest, they would make him a high priest: when they made Richard Evans an apostle and he was not already a high priest, and so they ordained him a high priest and they ordained him an apostle in the same . . . (inaudible) . . . And the reason for that is that he gets into order of seniority from being president of the Church, and the President of the Church is the presiding high priest. So he has got to be a high priest if he is to ascend to the top of the list and have that opportunity and responsibility come to him. So an apostle and a high priest. They serve in both capacities. There are several hundred people in the Church who are serving as *both high priests and patriarchs* at the same time. Every stake patriarch is serving in that dual capacity. He belongs to the high priest quorum; he serves as a high priest; he is ordained a patriarch; he serves as a patriarch. In recent years President McKay has set it up so that the members of the First Council of the Seventy serve as both high priests and seventies. I serve in a dual capacity. Brother Pope here is serving as a high priest and as a bishop at one and the same time—dual office in the Priesthood. So you can serve in more than one capacity under many situations in the Church.

Comment: Is the president of the high priests a set apart office or an ordained office?

BRM: I think the revelation says he is ordained. But the way we use language, he is set apart.

Comment: Is this the same office as President of the Church?

BRM: It is exactly the same office. Now, this is where it tells us: it has a better language for the same office. It emphasizes the fact that he is presiding over the Priesthood instead of the emphasis being . . . (inaudible) . . . but they extend it in one man; you could not separate it. This is the church of the firstborn.

Comment: One other question: why did the Prophet refer to any Melchizedek Priesthood holder as an elder?

BRM: The word “elder” has two definitions. It refers to this office in the Priesthood, and it also refers to anybody who holds the Melchizedek Priesthood. When I ordained this man a seventy, who was a priest; he had never been ordained an elder; but he will everlastingly be known as “Elder So-and-So” because he holds the Melchizedek Priesthood. That . . . (inaudible) . . . applies both to the ordained office and to any holder of the Melchizedek Priesthood. Now, Peter said that he was an apostle, but then he wrote this way, “I, Peter, *who also am an elder*.” Every apostle is an elder—automatically, even if he is not ordained an apostle-direct without ever having been ordained an elder.

Comment: (Inaudible) . . . has he been ordained an elder? (Inaudible.)

BRM: No. Brother Isaac is a counselor in the First Presidency; he is not ordained an apostle. John R. Winder was a counselor in the First Presidency and he was never ordained an apostle. President Clark was ordained a counselor in the First Presidency and he was a seventy when they called him to be a member of the First Presidency, and they ordained him a high priest and about a year later they ordained him an apostle, . . . (inaudible) . . . he remembered it well so that he would get an order of seniority in the scheme of things. There have been several men in the early days who were in the presidency who were not apostles.

Comment: Have there not been some apostles that were not members of the Quorum of the Twelve also?

BRM: There have been a number of instances where there were apostles who were not members of the Council of the Twelve.

Comment: What did they do for a quorum?

BRM: They did not have a quorum; they just functioned as high priests or something else. This has not been in modern times. Brigham Young did it.

Comment: How can one be a prophet, seer, and revelator and not be an apostle?

BRM: Let us talk in this connection about apostles under two headings. There are two kinds of apostles. This is a first-time thing; we need to talk about this. There are apostles in the sense of them being special witnesses—apostles in the sense that they have had revelation that tells them that Jesus is the Christ and there are apostles in the ordained sense who hold an office in the Melchizedek Priesthood. Now, everybody in the Church who holds the Priesthood is supposed to be an apostle in this sense. Everybody should be, and Joseph Smith was an apostle in this sense, beginning in the spring of 1820. In his instance it is even before the Church was organized, from the time that he saw the Father and the Son. Wilford Woodruff says such things as this; he says: “The day has now come for the Priesthood to magnify their callings. I call upon these apostles to magnify their callings and the seventy apostles to magnify their calling and the high priest apostles and the elder apostles.” Now, everybody who holds the Priesthood is supposed to be an apostle in the sense of having personal revelation and being a witness for Christ and being able to bear record that Jesus is the Son of God. And in a very real sense, this is the most important definition of apostle, but we do not use this definition much because of these twelve men. Now, these twelve men are ordained to an office *in* the Melchizedek Priesthood. Joseph Smith was *not* ordained to the office of an apostle in the Melchizedek Priesthood. However, the revelation says he was ordained an apostle by Peter, James and John. What that means is, it is a different usage of the word “ordained” than we used. He was ordained to be an apostle by Peter, James and John because he got the Melchizedek Priesthood and he was this kind of an apostle but he served in that office in the Melchizedek Priesthood.

Comment: In the 20th section where it says Joseph Smith had been ordained an apostle is it referring to an especial witness?

BRM: It is referring to the fact that he got the Priesthood from Peter, James and John. You will find all kinds—because people have not thought it through—you will find statements in our literature that will say, “Oh Joseph Smith was an apostle—was ordained an apostle.” Well, he was ordained an apostle in the sense that he got the Melchizedek Priesthood and he was an especial witness of the Lord. But he was not ordained in the sense that he held the office in the Priesthood that Mark Petersen holds. And he was never ordained a seventy. But you do not have to be ordained to that specific office to have something greater than the office, because the Priesthood is greater than the office. When we talk about apostles we are talking about twelve men who were ordained, or 96 men who were ordained elders. That is a *limited* definition of the term.

Now, we have these glorious posters put up in our visitors center and they say that Peter, James and John came and conferred upon Joseph Smith the holy apostleship. Well, of course they did! They conferred upon him the holy apostleship, meaning they gave him all of the Priesthood and all of the powers but they were not ordaining him to an office in the Priesthood that we have come to call the office of apostle. He was ordained in the Priesthood sense. Now, this is a distinction that everybody has not made and this is everywhere in our literature. But I think the Brethren all make it; I have heard President Smith preach it in the presence of the Brethren and nobody has ever raised a whimper, and they would have.

Comment: Missionaries, then, serve as active apostles?

BRM: Absolutely. A missionary is an apostle in this general sense of the word. Everybody in this roan is supposed to be an apostle, if you hold the Priesthood. In this general sense of being a witness for Christ, and if you have the testimony and the conversion that we talked about yesterday, you serve as an apostle. Now, these fellows here are *all of this plus the fact* that they have a special office that imposes upon them the obligation to work in this field, and the seventies have the obligation to work in this apostolic field too.

Comment: Well, a couple of questions. First, you say that one can serve in a dual capacity; should a seventy be serving in an elder's quorum? Why do we never ordain a seventy to this office of elder?

BRM: I will tell you what the reason is. I had a high priest who was the president of an elders quorum when I was a mission president. Why did we not tell the Brethren about it? I just did it because it needed to be done and it was the right thing to do and I . . . (inaudible) . . . about it. We had a high priest come and a bishop and he landed in first and we needed an elders quorum president and he was not as good a man, but he was a branch president and he had been a bishop over here, but I had better branch presidents and better district presidents than this man from America, who was a high priest. But they were all elders, . . . (inaudible). So the district president said, "Can I make this high priest the president of my elder's quorum?" And I said, "Sure, go ahead and do it; just keep your mouth shut." Well, we set this man apart as the president of an elder's quorum. And Brother Benson came out there and somebody . . . (inaudible) . . . said to Brother Benson, "How did a high priest get in as president of an elders quorum?" Brother Benson is as smart as I am, or more, and so he pretended not to hear him. He pretended like he could not hear what this fellow was saying and changed the subject; never said a word but he knew that technically a high priest could not be an elder's quorum president, but he knew if I had him there he ought to be there anyway. Now, you just do sane things and there are some things like this that have been done in the history of the Church.

Comment: Why did you ordain him?

BRM: Oh I did not ordain him an elder, no; he is already an elder. But I set him apart or I let the district president set him apart.

Comment: Why ordain Brother Richards a high priest?

BRM: You mean Richard Evans?

Comment: Yes, Richard L. Evans.

BRM: Because . . . (inaudible) . . . well, before I say that, let us say this. If there is a reason we have offices in the Priesthood, it is so that you can afford someone to

specialize in a field or a segment of the Priesthood service. Now, strictly speaking you would not have to have offices; you just give the Priesthood to everybody and let them do everything that the Priesthood requires. *But*, the duties of the ministry are so various and divergent that we need specialists in certain fields. We need somebody to be active in the field of presiding, someone else to be active in the field of giving blessings, someone else to be active in the missionary field. And so this is a matter of organization—the Lord *specifies* the segment of the circle that a man will serve in, *on the basis* of primary responsibility. But he still has the power to serve in the whole circle if he is told to do it. So this is why we have offices. Now, the theory obviously is that they ordained Richard Evans a high priest because, if he becomes president of the Church, he needs to be the presiding high priest. Now, I know what you are going to say.

Comment: No, I am not going to say it.

BRM: I will say it for you. You are going to say, “Oh, that Brigham Young was never ordained a high priest,” which is true! But this might have been a little better theory if he had been. They ordained Brigham Young an elder and then I guess the main thing that happened is they ordained him an apostle and he became president of the Church; he was never ordained a high priest and he said, “I don’t need to be a high priest; I’m an apostle!” Well, of course he did not have to be a high priest. He would have been better off if he had said, “I don’t need to be a high priest because I hold the Melchizedek Priesthood, which is certainly greater than the office.” So we have done a lot of things that do not fully conform to the theory in the Church, but today pretty much we do conform to the theory.

Comment: They had to have been an apostle to be the President of the Church?

BRM: Well, you do not have to hold that ordained office, really. Joseph Smith was the president of the Church. Now, what you have to have to be the president of the Church is *to hold the keys of the kingdom, and as of now, it is these men who do hold the keys*. Now, the way we use words, we ordain a man an apostle and we set him apart as a member of the Council of the Twelve. And keys go with setting apart. Keys do not go with ordination. I ordain a man an elder and I say, “I confer upon you the rights, powers, virtues and authority.” I set a man apart as an elder’s president of the quorum, and I say, “I give you the keys of presidency.” So a man is ordained an apostle, and he is set apart an member of the Council of the Twelve, and the setting apart is in the keys.

Comment: Now . . . (inaudible).

BRM: Here is an exception to that in our day, . . . (inaudible).

Comment: As a high priest, the 27th Section says “you may . . . (inaudible).

BRM: That is correct.

Comment: So when you are a high priest serving as elders quorum president, and I think this would be perfectly legal. But we could not take an elder and have him serve as president of the high priest group.

BRM: I do not know if we even want to get involved in what it says there, but I suspect maybe you are reading . . . (inaudible).

Comment: A high priest could. No, I leave it.

BRM: All right.

Comment: But as a high priest of the Melchizedek Priesthood has authority to officiate in all of the offices, you mean officiating in the office of bishop or a lesser office?

BRM: Well, that is right, that is true; that is absolutely right. A high priest could be appointed to serve in any office. Now, that raises an interesting question: is the apostle the lesser office? I do not know. What we are in the habit of saying is that the offices are equal. This is lesser in the sense that you can give away administrative responsibilities of all these offices.

Comment: I just wonder, why should not a seventy then, who had later been ordained a high priest, then be called to the First Council of the Seventy, for example.

BRM: Well, I will tell you what let us do. Let us both of us wait until maybe some future date and see what happens.

Comment: Well it has had one case already and it . . . (inaudible).

BRM: No.

Comment: (Inaudible) . . . it is taken from the seventies.

BRM: Yes. Up to now, they have taken them all from the seventies and ordained them . . . (inaudible) . . . the last one was Brother Dowan [?] He was a seventy and President McKay ordained him a high priest and set him apart in the First Council of Seventy at the same time. Now, . . . (inaudible).

Comment: (Inaudible) . . . because the traffic cannot bear it.

BRM: Well, I have . . . (inaudible) . . . but it will be *very* interesting to watch the next ten years and see what happens. Maybe we will have to wait longer than that; I do not know. People live a long time. But someday . . . (inaudible) . . . it will be interesting to discover what the . . . (inaudible) . . .

Comment: (Inaudible.)

BRM: Well I think it will be all right. We do not do that today. But bishop is an office in the Aaronic Priesthood.

Comment: (Inaudible.)

BRM: Well, it does not effectively, but . . . (inaudible) . . . does because he is given the responsibility to preside over a ward and it is logical and proper and appropriate that he does become a high priest. But we could not do it otherwise. The revelation says an elder can serve as a bishop's counselor; we do not do it. We make them high priests. Now, we get the organization fixed up and the man who holds the keys does the arranging.

Comment: Brother McConkie, we started today on the ordination of the Twelve at the time of Jesus; is there the slightest possibility that these men were apostles only in the witness sense, that they held another office in the Priesthood and were not ordained?

BRM: I do not think there possibly could be any answer to that. Everybody who heard of it in our dispensation has felt that they had the ordained office in the Priesthood of apostle. Now, Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, *and ordained you . . .*" (John 15:16; emphasis added.) Well, that could mean that they were given the whole Priesthood. But all I can say is that everybody in our dispensation is given the interpretation that they were ordained.

Comment: With the load that the general authorities carry today and the expansion of the Church, is it probable that in the near future the First Quorum of the Seventy will be filled as a general authorities quorum and act as assistants to the Twelve?

BRM: Well, the next 20 years will give us a clue to the whole thing. I do not know what will happen. What does happen depends on who the president of the Church is and what the needs at the time are. This is one of the things we would like to discover as we read along and not cover in our lesson, however. But we happen to live in a day in the Church (and we do not quite realize it), but we happen to live in a day when the organization of the Church is being remolded and reframed and realigned under a heading that we call "Priesthood correlation." There have been a lot of real basic changes and there are going to be a lot more, and so in October Conference this year, see if when the Conference comes that everything is the same as it was before Conference came. We are just in the midst of a period of realignment of Church offices and the appointment of different offices and so on. It will be extremely interesting to all of us to find out what comes; to see what the end result is.

Comment: You said that . . . (inaudible) . . . you spoke of the holy apostleship and that was the term applied to Joseph and Oliver, now if what you say is true, then every man ordained an elder is ordained to the holy apostleship!

BRM: That is correct! That really is right. In this we said that a man who was ordained an elder, if he *really* is worthy and magnifies his calling, he is the Lord's agent and is the

Lord's witness. "Ye are my witnesses"—the elders of Israel; if you are *really* a witness you hold the holy apostleship in this broad sense of the word.

Comment: I would like to kind of go back to talk and see if the revelators . . . (inaudible) . . . it is my understanding that the office of apostles is greater than that of prophets. That says that it really connotes something there above and beyond what you have indicated.

BRM: Well, your understanding is correct. But it has to be couched in this language: it is correct when you *talk about* the people who hold administrative responsibility over the Kingdom—when you talk about apostles who are holding the keys of the Kingdom, their right of presidency. Now, you read such things as this in the Doctrine and Covenants Commentary, for instance, that Adam—it does not say Adam was an apostle—it says *Adam held apostolic power* and it is talking about the keys of the Kingdom. Now, *this* is the greatest thing that people hold in the way of authority and administrative responsibility on earth. But when we say those things, what we are talking about is the keys.

Now, Priesthood is power and authority. By definition, keys are the rights of presidency; the right to direct and control and govern how other people use their Priesthood. So there has been apostolic power in every dispensation—whether people have been called apostles in every dispensation is quite another thing. I do not know whether they have been called apostles, but they have been called something that would be similar, and what counts is that they had apostolic power.

Now, this raises this eternal question: "Well, were these Twelve of the Nephites apostles?" It says in the Book of Mormon they were disciples. Now, there is no question at all that they held apostolic power. They held the keys of the Kingdom as far as the Nephites were concerned. But, as a matter of fact I think they were apostles because Joseph Smith, in talking about them, says "The apostles on the American continent." And I think that what he is talking about is this kind of apostle because he had it in a statement in connection with other Priesthood holders . . . (inaudible) . . . this is in the Wentworth Letter but . . . (inaudible) . . . or is it . . . (inaudible) . . . well, if it is not in the Wentworth Letter it is somewhere in Church History that he called them, in my judgment, apostles. But they were subordinate to the Twelve in Jerusalem, of course.

Now, this . . . (inaudible) . . . we have gotten a little sidetracked, but it is all right. This is what was involved in the life of Peter. Peter was, apparently, as near as we can tell, ordained an apostle. But Peter did not get the keys of the kingdom when he was ordained an apostle. He got them later. This is . . . (inaudible) . . . well, our time has gotten away from us, but we really ought to talk about a couple of other passages, and one of them is on page 380 when the promise is made to Peter that he will get the keys of the kingdom. I suggest that all of you read the commentary portions of the book with some care on this passage, "Church Founded on Rock of Revelation." We ought to spend a whole day on that. But this is really a glorious, glorious passage when properly understood, this business about "thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; . . ." (Matthew 16:18). Just for instance, over on page 384 we go through this again, but this is a kind of

a conclusion and a summary. What that phrase means in the light of the explanation is that Peter . . .

Thou art a mortal man; (Christ is contrasting his divinity with Peter's mortality) Jonah is thy father. I, thy Lord, though I dwell in mortality, am the Son of God in the same sense that thou, Simon, art the son of Jonah; as thou hast testified of my parentage, so I also, by way of contrast, certify of thine. And now, though I have inherited because of my birth the powers of immortality, which sets me apart from thee, yet because of faith and obedience thou shalt receive and exercise the powers and keys which I hold, and in my name thou shalt bind and loose, seal and unseal, both on earth and in heaven. Though thou art mortal, for thou art Peter, the son of Jonah, yet thy power shall prevail in the immortal sphere where I, who have the power of immortality, for God is my Father, reign forever and ever. (*New Testament Commentary*, pp. 384-85; emphasis added.)

Well, will you go through that and see if that conclusion is not the one that gives the essence of what is meant, and pay particular attention to what this “upon this rock I will build my church” means. This is one of the best arguments there is if *properly understood* of current, continuous revelation in the Church, the fact that Jesus said exactly what he did to Peter.

The promise is given here in this reference that Peter is going to get the power to bind on earth and seal in heaven, and eight days later or a week (I do not remember, one or the other—page 397, is it not? In our text) Peter, James and John go up on the Mount of Transfiguration and it is interesting to discover what happened as far as we can on the Mount of Transfiguration, but one of the main things that happened is not specified in these passages but Joseph Smith tells it to us, and that is that Christ and Moses and Elijah gave the keys to Peter, James and John on the Mount—the keys of the kingdom. Now, they had already been ordained apostles, but they get keys now. They get from Moses, obviously, the keys of the gathering of Israel; they get from Elijah the keys of the sealing power. Now, maybe somebody else was there; I do not know. They got from Christ, apparently, the keys of the Kingdom—the right to preside over the Church, so that the pattern seemed to be that they were ordained apostles and then they got the keys.

Now, this precise thing happened in our dispensation. These men were ordained apostles in 1835 and they did not get the keys in their fulness until 1844. They were apostles for nine years before they had all of the keys of the kingdom. And on some day that we do not know in the early months of 1844 in Nauvoo, in that upper store room where they were getting their endowments and being taught by the Prophet, the Prophet gave them all of the keys that had been given. Now, as a matter of fact here—here they are ordained apostles on that date in February of 1835, and on the 3rd of April in 1836 is when Moses and Elijah and Elias, those three, come and give keys. They could not have gotten those keys when they were ordained apostles, and those keys came later to them on this day.

After Joseph Smith had finally given them the keys, there was nothing left that had to be because they now had all the powers, and they could run the Church. And that is when that famous statement was made by the Prophet, “You have now got the keys of the

kingdom of God, and it is up to you to round up your shoulders and bear off the kingdom, and if you do not do it, you will be damned.” Well, once the Twelve get all the keys, there is nothing *administratively* that has to be done, and so the Prophet can now be martyred, and the keys were here.

Comment: I would like to ask you a question about this term, “the fulness of the Priesthood.” Now, several places the Brethren have commented and indicate that normal members of the Church, in order to get the fulness of the Priesthood have to go to the temple and get it through the patriarchal order, but that the ordained Twelve, the Council of the Twelve, in circumspect, get what is called the fulness of the Priesthood by virtue of an apostleship. I do not know what to think of this.

BRM: Well, let me tell you what the fulness of the Priesthood is. The fulness of the Priesthood is the *fulness of the blessings of the Priesthood*. Now every living soul who is ordained an elder gets the fulness of the Priesthood in the sense that he gets all the Priesthood that mortal man can have. But he does not have the fulness of the blessings of the Priesthood, as yet. Meaning, for instance, he has not entered into the order of Priesthood named “The New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage,” which is had only in the temple of God. And what our revelation in section 124 says, there is a fulness of the Priesthood that is had only in the temples of God. What it means is, the fulness of the blessings of the Priesthood are available only in the temples. They get all the Priesthood; we should not be confused about that. They get all the Priesthood there is, and yet *after* they have that Priesthood, then they go and enter, for instance, into an order of celestial marriage, which is an order of the Priesthood according to the language of the revelations. So they begin to get some more blessings that are inherent in the Priesthood. That is what you are talking about, is it not?

Comment: Basically we still want the distinction between Joseph saying that there are three grand orders to the Priesthood, the patriarchal, the Melchizedek and the . . . (inaudible).

BRM: That is correct.

Comment: And a fulness in each order?

BRM: Now, this is something else. This is sort of sad that we are not all in both classes. But I was going to spend a class on that in the other hour about the patriarchal order. Are you in that other class?

Comment: No. But if you will tell us when you do it, I would skip my next class so I can be there.

BRM: It is going to about the last—one of the last three days of the quarter; I do not know which one it is going to be, depending on how it works out. But I was going to talk about this . . . (inaudible) . . . it will probably be the third to the last day—about this

patriarchal order, how it operates and how marriage fits in and the sealing blessings of the temple and so on, and this is just one of these things that you need—if you are going to know about it, you need to spend at least the hour on it and get the whole picture of it. Now, if you do not . . . (inaudible) . . . we can talk about that sometime maybe between ourselves if you do not get a chance to come.

Now, there is one other thing that you ought to know; it would have been wonderful if we could have gotten to it today, but this business of what Jesus said to Peter and the Twelve that begins on page 323 and ends up somewhere around [page] 340—portions of the text talk about what the Twelve do as missionaries. This is just glorious, glorious material that is a packet. It talks about giving them power and sending them to Israel and preaching the gospel and how they are supposed to do it and so on. This is glorious material that sets the standard for missionary work in general.

Apparently the bell is not ringing; I guess we have gone overtime. Tomorrow I will tell you what we will start with, and you can think about this: tomorrow we will start with the subject how God is revealed through the gospel. You think in terms of what the four gospels do to tell what kind of a being God is, and that is where we will pick it up.