

REVELATION

December 6, 1974

The Lord willing—and he is—I shall speak about the doctrine of revelation, and shall lay before you some of the great and wondrous principles which enable man to commune with his Maker. These are matters about which I can speak with some confidence and surety because I have received revelations and learned by experience to recognize the voice of the Spirit.

Revelation is the making known of divine truth by communication with the heavens. It Comes from God to man and is concerned chiefly with those saving truths which prepare mortals for a celestial inheritance. It deals with spiritual things, comes by the power of the Holy Spirit, and can be understood only by those whose minds are enlightened by the Spirit.

If we gain light and understanding about revelation, we must be guided by the Holy Ghost, for “the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” (1 Cor. 1:11.) Unless your minds are quickened by that power, my words will seem as the ravings of one who is demented. But if you are in tune with the Holy Spirit of God, you will know of their verity and be led to seek and obtain revelation for your selves. Let us all pray in faith for the power to turn our hearts away from worldly and carnal things, and center them on the things of God and his gospel, so we may comprehend the law of revelation and prepare ourselves to receive the mind and will of the Lord in our lives.

Providentially we live in an age of revelation. This is the great era of restoration, the day when the Lord is giving again that which was had anciently. This is the promised day when the heavens, long sealed, have been opened. In our day the voice of God is heard again; once more angels are descending from his presence; and the gift of the Holy Ghost is now poured out upon the faithful.

We have received again that testimony of Jesus which is the spirit of prophecy and have available to us the saving truths of the everlasting gospel, as they have been revealed to modern prophets. Once more the Lord has legal administrators among us who have power to bind and seal both on earth and in heaven. Signs again follow those who believe; miracles are wrought by their faith; and every gift and power ever enjoyed by the Lord’s people in any past period, is now available to those who obey the law upon which its receipt is predicated.

It was not ever thus. There have been times when men were without revelation; and, there have been those who lived in the land of revelation who failed to attune their souls to the Infinite and hear his voice in their hearts.

Of one period in Israel’s history, the record says: “The word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision.” (1 Sam. 3:1.) Of a man who dwelt among the

prophets, but who did not receive revelation, the account recites: “When Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.” (1 Sam. 28:6.)

And, among us, until the Spring of 1820 there was “a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.” (Amos 8:11.) But beginning in that year with the appearance of the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith, revelations again began to fall as rain upon the righteous. And such a state of intimate communion between the Lord and his people has continued from that day to this and is destined to endure forever.

The canon of scripture is not full. The wells of revelation shall never run dry. Truth still flows from the Eternal Fountain. We are not numbered among those who murmur because the Lord continues to speak. “We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.” (*Ninth Article of Faith.*)

Now let us reason together; let us set forth the basic truths relative to revelation; let us declare them clearly, plainly, and simply. First, there is a God and he has created us and all things. We exist. It is the plan and purpose of the great God to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of we children. Eternal life is salvation, and salvation comes from God. Man cannot save himself. All the combined wisdom and power of all the men who ever lived cannot call forth sleeping dust from its grave. All of the combined verities and theories of all the philosophers and all the scientists of all the ages cannot create a kingdom in heaven or chart the course leading to celestial bliss.

Let us not deceive ourselves as to these eternal verities. God himself is the author of the plan of salvation. Salvation is in Christ. Revelation is essential to salvation. God and his saving truths stand revealed or they remain forever unknown. Man did not create himself. He cannot resurrect himself. And he can neither create nor obtain eternal life by his own power. All of these things come from God and are known by revelation and in no other way.

Joseph Smith put it this bluntly: “Salvation cannot come without revelation; it is in vain for anyone to minister without it. No man is a minister of Jesus Christ without being a Prophet. No man can be a minister of Jesus Christ except he has the testimony of Jesus; and this is the spirit of prophecy. Whenever salvation has been administered, it has been by testimony.” (*TPJS*, p. 160.)

He also said: “Faith comes by hearing the word of God, through the testimony of the servants of God; that testimony is always attended by the Spirit of Prophecy and revelation.” (*TPJS*, p. 148.)

Further: “We never can comprehend the things of God and of heaven, but by revelation. We may spiritualize and express opinions to all eternity; but that is no authority.” (*TPJS*, p. 292.)

Also from the Prophet I quote these two statements: “One truth revealed from heaven is worth all the sectarian notions in existence.” (*TPJS*, p. 338.) And, “Men of the present time testify of heaven and hell, and have never seen either and I will say that no man knows these things without this.” (*TPJS*, p. 160.)

It is thus self-evident, and no spiritually enlightened person can reach any other conclusion, that revelation is always found in the true Church and kingdom of God on earth—not revelation given to Peter, James, and John 2000 years ago; not revelation received by Joseph Smith between 1820 and 1844; not revelation received in 1973 when President Harold B. Lee guided the destinies of the Lord’s earthly kingdom; but revelation today and tomorrow and every day until men gain exaltation, know all things, become even as God is, and are themselves Revelators in their own eternal kingdoms.

Peter received the revelation of our Lord’s divine Sonship. It came from God by the power of the Holy Ghost. Jesus said to him, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” Then came the eternal and everlasting truth from the lips of the incarnate Jehovah: “Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matt. 16:13-18.) “What rock?” the Prophet asked. Implicit in the message and clear to his spiritually quickened mind: “Revelation.” (*TPJS*, p. 274.)

“Where there is no kingdom of God there is no salvation,” the Prophet said. “What constitutes the kingdom of God?” he asked. His answer: “Where there is a prophet, a priest, or a righteous man unto whom God gives His oracles there is the kingdom of God; and where the oracles of God are not, there the kingdom of God is not.” (*TPJS*, p. 271.)

There neither is nor can be any question as to these conclusions: Where there is revelation, where the voice of God is heard, where the gift of the Holy Ghost is poured out upon the people, there is the true Church; and where these are not, there the true Church is not; and if at any time the Lord’s people depart from their ancient moorings so that constant and daily revelation ceases, then the Lord has forsaken his people and mortal men no longer have a hope of salvation.

Now let us take the most important of all steps in our consideration of the law of revelation. Let us continue to reason together. Let us bring the matter down to every individual member of the Church and to every honest truth seeker of whatever religious persuasion.

It does not suffice to live in an age of revelation. It does not suffice to belong to a Church that is continually guided by revelation. Salvation is a personal matter. It is one thing for Joseph Smith to receive revelation. It is one thing for the Holy Ghost to fall upon him so that he is born again, so that his soul is sanctified, so that he becomes clean before the Lord and qualifies to dwell with Gods and angels forever. But it is another thing for that to happen to each of us. And if we are going to receive, inherit, and possess those things merited by Joseph Smith and the prophets, we must live as they lived and receive revelation as received revelation.

God is no respecter of persons. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. ..He is. an unchangeable being in whom there is no variableness neither shadow of turning. His course is one eternal round. Every soul is precious in his sight and he is just as anxious to give the visions of eternity to me and to you as he was to Enoch and Abraham and Moses.

We are almost overwhelmed by the limited knowledge we have of the great truths revealed to Joseph Smith. But in that connection hear these words of the Prophet: “God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what He will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them.” (*TPJS*, p. 149.)

This also is from the Prophet: “Could we all come together with one heart and one mind in perfect faith the veil might as well be rent today as next week, or any other time.” (*TPJS*, p. 9.)

“Reading the experience of others, or the revelations given to them,” the Prophet also said, “can never give us a comprehensive view of our condition and true relation to God. Knowledge of these things can only be obtained by experience through the ordinances of God set forth for that purpose. Could you gaze into heaven five minutes, you would know more than you would by reading all that ever was written on the subject.” (*TPJS*, p. 324.)

Members of the Church receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. This gift is the right to the constant companionship of that member of the Godhead based on faithfulness. “The Holy Ghost is a revelator,” the Prophet said, and, “No man can receive the Holy Ghost without receiving revelations.” (*TPJS*, p. 328.) Also, “The Holy Ghost has no other effect than pure intelligence.” It has the effect of “expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding, and storing the intellect

with present knowledge.” (*TPJS*, p. 149.)

Our Lord’s promise is: “He will guide you into all truth: . . . he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me.” (John 16:13-14.) Moroni said, “By the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.” (Moro. 10:5.) Our latter-day revelation affirms: “God shall give unto you knowledge by his Holy Spirit, yea, by the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost, that has not been revealed since the world was until now.” (D&C 121:26.)

“A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation,” the Prophet said, “for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; (i. e.) those things that were presented unto your minds by the Spirit of God, will come to pass; and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus.” (*TPJS*, p. 151.)

But perhaps the most glorious of all promises relative to revelation is couched in these words of Joseph Smith. He says that when “any man”—and please note he is not talking about apostles and prophets and leaders of the people—when “any man” abides the law, “he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him or appear unto him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; and this is the state and place the ancient saints arrived at when they had such glorious visions—Isaiah, Ezekiel, John upon the Isle of Patmos, St. Paul in the three heavens, and all the saints who held communion with the general assembly and Church of the First Born. “(*TPJS*, p. 150.)

Along this same line the Prophet also said: “The nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin; and like the ancients, arrives at that point of faith where he is wrapped in the power and glory of his Maker and is caught up to dwell with Him.” (*TPJS*, p. 51.)

In these brief moments we have glimpsed a few of the principles relative to revelation and consequent salvation. These principles are true. Some may not believe them; others may feel they are expressed too strongly. So be it. But remember that God is the Judge and some day all of us will stand before his bar and be judged by how fully we have believed and how strictly we have lived his law. And I for one am a witness that he speaks today and reveals his mind, his will, and his purposes to every living soul who abides the law which enables him to commune with the Infinite.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.