

Doctrine & Covenants Study – D&C 84

Gospel Doctrine Sunday School, 1 Aug 2021

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Lesson Outline Questions:

The often quoted verses in Section 84 have an objective event that is consistently overlooked. It is not merely “the ordinances” of the priesthood which are of value. The “power of godliness” (D&C 84:20) is inseparably connected with these ordinances. (D&C 121:36.) Without the “power of godliness” our rites are much like the apostate world Christ condemned in His initial visit with Joseph. (JS-H 1:19.)

D&C 84:20-22 tells us about:

- Power of Godliness
- Authority of the Priesthood
- Seeing the face of God the Father

These verses do not vindicate ordinances as an end in themselves. Far from it. Instead, they commend us to reach upward. If the ordinances alone were enough, there would be no mention of “power of godliness” and “authority of the priesthood” and “seeing the face of God, even the Father.” Therefore, how ought you to view the ordinances? If they have value, what value do they have? Why do we want or need them? What should they inspire within us?

Where and how did Joseph and Sidney “receive of His fullness?” (D&C 76:20.)

Why, in speaking of “the power of godliness” and “the authority of the priesthood,” does it then connect with “seeing the face of God, even the Father?” (D&C 84:22.)

Why, in the “oath and covenant of the priesthood” (as we have taken to identifying it), does it mention “receiving Christ?” (D&C 84:36.) Is this to be taken as descriptive of receiving the priesthood, or as merely some future vague promise for the afterlife? If you read it as the afterlife, where do you find support for that reading in the revelation? Is that reading consistent with mortals having priesthood? If the priesthood is gained in mortality, why then is “receiving Christ” only post-mortality? Or, does the priesthood then become post-mortal as well?

Why does the Lord say if we “receive Him” we will also “receive His Father?” (D&C 84:37-38.) How is coming into Christ’s presence related to coming into the Father’s presence? Are these connected? How? And how does this connect with “priesthood” since that is the topic of the revelation? Is the priesthood proprietary, meaning that it belongs like a franchise to some group, institution or individuals? Or is the priesthood instead best viewed as a relationship between God and man? If a relationship between God and man, then is it based on trust? Personal trust between God and the specific man? If that is the case, what is required to receive priesthood?

Who are His “servants” He requires you to “receive?” (D&C 84:36.) How would such a servant aid you in coming to God and receiving priesthood? What is the relationship between receiving a servant, then receiving Christ, then receiving the Father? How is Joseph Smith an example of this?

Can priesthood be lost? (D&C 121:37.)

Do you have His fullness? Why not? How do the scriptures say you receive it?

Are ordinances enough? Do they testify to an underlying truth? Why receive the testimony of the ordinances and ignore the underlying truth?

No matter what we have received, retained or discarded from Joseph Smith, doesn't his entire ministry come down to affirming James 1:5? Can you ask of God also? Will He not "give liberally" to you? Then it is not lack of faith in Joseph's ministry or your personal lack of keys held by those in higher priesthood offices that keeps you apart from God. Instead it is your unwillingness to do as James instructs, and your failure to ask God in faith.

D&C 84:4-6

Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation. For verily this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house and the sons of Moses, according to the Holy Priesthood which he received under the hand of his father-in-law, Jethro.

THE BIBLE vs. Joseph Smith

<https://youtu.be/S7tyCH3rBtU>

[58:24 min] Talks about Joseph Smith's prophecy made in Sep 1832 that a temple should be built in Missouri. The interviewer (Joel Kramer) reads from D&C 84 heading, but not from the text itself.

Clearly room for confusion here. Justification for interpretation that this must clearly be referring to Zion in Missouri. But also note that God can have a way of using language in creative ways. (His definition of eternal punishment in D&C 19:10-12, for example).

It is said that the first reference to a temple in Kirtland is given in D&C 88 (Dec 1832). This is in Wikipedia article on Kirtland as well as in Rough Stone Rolling (RSR), and other places.

The first hints of a great building had been given months before in December 1832 in the revelation on the School of the Prophets, when the Saints were told to establish a "house of God." (D&C 88:119, RSR p. 215)

But here it is, right here in Section 84, if you read the words in verses 4-6, God is talking about a temple in *this* place, on the ground upon which Joseph is standing with six elders present when the revelation is given, it says "beginning at this place". To me this is the first reference that we have of the temple in Kirtland. To me this is prophecy and the prophecy is declaring a temple in Kirtland. And we can see all the elements of this prophecy fulfilled in the that temple that the revelation refers to, in Kirtland. (see also verses 31-32)

There was a house built at the place of the temple in Kirtland where a cloud rested, even the glory of the Lord, which filled the house:

"...father [Smith] anointed my head and sealed upon me the blessings of Moses, to lead Israel in the latter days even as Moses led them in days of old...

the power of the Highest rested upon us. The house was filled with the glory of God, and we shouted, Hosanna to God and the Lamb!" (See JSP, "Journal, 1835–1836," p. 135, 21 Jan 1836)

D&C 84:6

And the sons of Moses, according to the Holy Priesthood which he received under the hand of his father-in-law, Jethro;

Jethro not an Israelite

Jethro was a Midianite. He was a descendent of Midian born to Keturah. Keturah was the wife of Abraham after Sarah. After Sarah died, Keturah bore Abraham children, one of whom was Midian. The birthright had already been given to Isaac. Priesthood that descended down and came to Moses did not possess the birthright and its associated privileges. Therefore, it was not the same authority previously belonging to the Patriarchs. It was something less, something different.

Moses obtained priesthood through Jethro the Midianite, who was not even an Israelite. Midian was genealogically the same generation as Isaac (he was Isaac's half-brother). It would be Isaac's son, Jacob, who would be named Israel, and it was Israel who possessed the birthright priesthood. Therefore, Moses inherited a form of priesthood that was, by its very nature, lesser than the one tracking the birthright. It was enough, however, to bring Moses into God's presence. This is one of the reasons why the prophets of the Old Testament all had to be ordained directly by heaven in order to inherit the authority they held (see TPJS p. 180-181).

In any event, the point is only this: priesthood exists independent of Israel; it exists independent of a church; and while the church may be dependent on priesthood, priesthood is not and never has been dependent upon a church.

Ordination among fellowship of men, and again among fellowship on other side of veil

Go to Doctrine and Covenants section 107, and look at verse 48. "Enoch was twenty-five years old when he was ordained under the hand of Adam...." So he got that brotherhood when he was 25. But look at what then happened when he was 65: "...and he was sixty-five and Adam blessed him. And he saw the Lord, and he walked with him, and was before his face continually; and he walked with God three hundred and sixty-five years, making him four hundred and thirty years old when he was translated." So there is Enoch's ordination to a brotherhood here [on this side of the veil] at age 25 which allowed him to join in the one fellowship—this one was a brotherhood, association, or priesthood that involved men. Then at 65, there is another priesthood, there is another association, there is another fellowship which Enoch then joined.

Jethro, the father-in-law, ordained Moses to a brotherhood here [on this side of the veil]. D&C 84:6. "And the sons of Moses, according to the Holy Priesthood which he [that is Moses] received under the hand of his father-in-law, Jethro." Then go over to verse 21: "And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live. 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. Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also.” This is referring to the other, higher brotherhood involving those Powers beyond the veil.

If you go to Moses chapter 1, beginning at verse 1: “The words of God, which he spake unto Moses at a time when Moses was caught up into an exceedingly high mountain, And he saw God face to face, and he talked with him, and the glory of God was upon Moses; therefore Moses could endure his presence. And God spake unto Moses, saying: Behold, I am the Lord God Almighty [threefold, that is three titles], and Endless is my name; for I am without beginning of days or end of years; and is not this endless? And, behold, thou art my son....” And so Moses was first ordained by man, and he was later ordained by heaven. These are two different fellowships.

You can see it in the case of Jacob, Nephi’s younger brother. Go to 2 Nephi 5:26, “And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did consecrate Jacob and Joseph, that they should be priests and teachers over the land of my people.” This is the brotherhood among the mortals. But if you go to Jacob chapter 1, and you look at verse 17, you see Jacob saying, “Wherefore I, Jacob, gave unto them these words as I taught them in the temple, having first obtained mine errand from the Lord.” This is the second ordination, in which he joined in a brotherhood with the Lord, beyond the veil. Jacob didn't go out to commence his ministry following Nephi’s death, even to his own people over whom he had been consecrated as a priest, until he had first obtained that second ordination.

D&C 84:14

Which Abraham received the priesthood from Melchizedek, who received it through the lineage of his fathers, even till Noah;

Shem was Melchizedek

"And with the superior knowledge of men like Noah, Shem (who was Melchizedek) and Abraham, the father of of the faithful, three contemporaries, holding the keys of the highest order of the priesthood:" (Times and Seasons, Vol 5, p. 746. Nauvoo III, Dec 15, 1844)

D&C 84:16-17

And from Enoch to Abel, who was slain by the conspiracy of his brother, who received the priesthood by the commandments of God, by the hand of his father Adam, who was the first man— Which priesthood continueth in the church of God in all generations, and is without beginning of days or end of years.

Switches from talking about priesthood of Moses and Jethro to the priesthood of Enoch and Adam.

D&C 84:17-19

Which priesthood continueth in the church of God in all generations, and is without beginning of days or end of years. And the Lord confirmed a priesthood also upon Aaron and his seed, throughout all their generations, which priesthood also continueth and abideth forever with the priesthood which is after the holiest order of God. And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God.

After the holiest order of God. What is High Priesthood (as it was called in Jun 1831 conference)? Do we know what priesthood is at this point? (Alma 13).

There are two priesthoods spoken of in the scriptures, namely the Melchizedek and the Aaronic, or Levitical. Although there are two priesthoods, yet the Melchizedek Priesthood comprehends the Aaronic, or Levitical priesthood and is the grand head, and holds the highest authority which pertains to the Priesthood (JSP, "Instruction on Priesthood, circa 5 October 1840," p. 1)

All priesthood is Melchizedek, but there are different portions or degrees of it. That portion which brought Moses to speak with God face to face was taken away, but that which brought the ministry of angels remained. All the prophets [after Moses] had the Melchizedek priesthood and were ordained by God himself (TPJS, 180–181)

Joseph used the term "key(s)" in a variety of ways: for example, to mean authority, or opportunity, and in others it refers to a correct idea.

Keys are knowledge. A particular key is knowledge or instruction received from the Lord on how to do something. If one has the key, then one has the ability or power to do something. And conversely, if one is powerless to do or accomplish something (bind and loose, request ministering angels, command the elements or spirits, etc.), then they do not possess a key.

"Then knowledge through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the grand key that unlocks the glories and mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven...the key that unlocks the Heavens and puts in our possession the glories of the celestial world." (TPJS 298–299)

"There are many things which belong to the powers of the Priesthood and the keys thereof that have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world; they are hid from the wise and prudent to be revealed in the last times." (DHC, 4:209)

Now the great and grand secret of the whole matter, and the summum bonum [highest good] of the whole subject that is lying before us, consists in obtaining the powers of the holy [Order of] Priesthood. For him to whom these keys are given there is no difficulty in obtaining a knowledge of facts in relation to the salvation of the children of men, both as well for the dead as for the living (D&C 128:11-12).

Joseph Smith also used the term keys to mean understanding, the greatest key being the ability to ask God and receive an answer (See D&C 124:92,95).

D&C 84:20

Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest.

The ordinances are helps, symbols and requirements. Helps in that they establish milestones that memorialize passage from one stage of development to the next. Symbols in that they point to a deeper meaning or spiritual reality almost always grounded in the atonement of Jesus Christ. Requirements in that they mark the defined route taken by Christ as a mortal to fulfill all righteousness. The ordinances as symbols point to the real thing. The real thing is Jesus Christ and His Gospel.

When the higher priesthood is present on the earth, everything done by it is an ordinance. God ordains by His power what is to happen. God ordains — and therefore, all He does is an ordinance, whether building up or taking down.

D&C 84:22

For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.

In more ancient sources, you went to the temple to "see the face of the Lord", which has been reappointed to mean "to present yourself before the Lord".

Panel discussion at the conference "The Lady of the Temple"

<https://youtu.be/9aqNSf6AzEw>

[11:49 min] I think there was a temple worldview. There was this command to make pilgrimage three times a year, and then you would see the presence of the Lord or see the face of the Lord, and that of course has been reappointed to mean to present yourself before the Lord...

D&C 84:24

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.

God's wrath. Mormon 9:2-4.

*"There is no counselor and no successor, only myself, eternal, not made by hands. My unchanging thought is (my) counselor, and my word is (my) deed. And my eyes behold all things. **If I turn my face away, then all falls into destruction; but if I look at it, then all is stable.**" (emphasis mine, 2 Enoch (A) 33:4, Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (OTP) 1:157)*

Compare with Mosiah 2:21:

"I say unto you that if ye should serve him who has created you from the beginning, and is preserving you from day to day, by lending you breath, that ye may live and move and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another—I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants."

All it involves for God's spirit to "no longer strive with man" is for Him to withdraw His gaze.

God's rest is the fullness [completion of development] of His glory [shared intelligence].

Fullness: Completion of development. Each stage of experience has its own definition of what it means to gain a fullness. Fullness in the preexistence is not the same thing as a fullness in mortality. In turn, the fullness of mortality is not the same thing as the fullness that comes next. Each stage of development has conditions, limitations, and an agenda. Right now one is only accountable for seeking a fullness of what pertains to mortality. "We are not here to 'get exalted.' We are here to continue progression which began a long time before our current birth. At the moment, you are being 'added upon' by what you experience here (see Abraham 3:26). At some point, you will have received what you need in this sphere, and can move on to the next stage of development. When you have gained everything you need from this life, you will have received the 'fullness' from God. It is called the 'fullness' because it is all that can be obtained here. It is not possible, however, to inherit everything God ultimately offers while here."

D&C 84:29-30

And again, the offices of elder and bishop are necessary appendages belonging unto the high priesthood. And again, the offices of teacher and deacon are necessary appendages belonging to the lesser priesthood, which priesthood was confirmed upon Aaron and his sons.

Yet D&C 107:14-15 calls the priesthood of aaron (or lesser priesthood) "an appendage to the greater, or the Melchizedek Priesthood," and the "bishopric is the presidency of this priesthood."

D&C 84:33-40

For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I have spoken, 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. And also all they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord; For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me; And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father; And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him. And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood. Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved.

Hebrews 7:12-21 is also a variation of the same concept.

When God makes this oath it is after the recipient has been so thoroughly proven that God "will not repent" and remove the authority given to the recipient.

Those who receive it likewise "receive" Christ, because they know Him and have stood in His presence. After receiving Him, Christ then brings them to the Father and the Father likewise "receives" the recipient. The Father is the one who then swears to the recipient that "all He [the Father] has shall be given to the recipient" because this is God's oath to those few mortals who ever receive this priesthood. They are on a course which will lead them to become like His Son and like Himself.

Some men imagine this happens when a young man gets approval by a local congregation and some quorum leader “confers” this priesthood. That is fanciful imagination. The reality is that this is a very rare event, happening infrequently in mankind’s temporal history. God has made provision to deal with the frequent absence of this authority among men by having some linger here, as John the Beloved has agreed to do.

"The Holy Ghost has no other effect than pure intelligence. It is more powerful in expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding, and storing the intellect with present knowledge, of a man who is of the literal seed of Abraham, than one that is a Gentile, though it may not have half as much visible effect upon the body; for as the Holy Ghost falls upon one of the literal seed of Abraham, it is calm and serene; and his whole soul and body are only exercised by the pure spirit of intelligence; while the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to purge out the old blood, and make him actually of the seed of Abraham. That man that has none of the blood of Abraham (naturally) must have a new creation by the Holy Ghost. In such a case, there may be more of a powerful effect upon the body, and visible to the eye, than upon an Israelite, while the Israelite at first might be far before the Gentile in pure intelligence." TPJS p.149 (see Words of Joseph Smith, p. 4, 27 June 1839, Willard Richards Pocket Companion)

Holy Spirit of Promise

Wherefore, I now send upon you another Comforter, even upon you my friends, that it may abide in your hearts, even the Holy Spirit of promise; which other Comforter is the same that I promised unto my disciples, as is recorded in the testimony of John. (D&C 88:3)

D&C 84:41

But 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.

"But 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." This would be a very curious statement if your view of “this priesthood” is limited to the ordination you obtain in the Church, which establishes a Melchizedek priesthood holder and an elder. This is referring to nothing of the sort. This is dealing with the covenant established by God the Father, directly. If you think it applies to what the Church dispenses, then does that mean that when an elder drifts off into inactivity in the Church or apostatizes from the Church, then he is not going to have forgiveness of sins in this world or the world to come?! Of course not. It's not talking about what goes on in the Church and its brotherhoods. It's not talking about receiving an ordination and participating in an Elders Quorum. It is talking about something much higher, more directly connected with God, and therefore more holy, requiring that it be taken more seriously in fidelity to the One who sits upon the Throne.

D&C 84:42

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.

“Ordination” and “confirmation by the voice of God” are two separate events. (See notes on ordination of Moses from verse 6 above)

Gen 14:29, JST:

And it was delivered unto men by the calling of his own voice, according to his own will, unto as many as believed on his name.

D&C 84:44-48

For you shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God. For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ. And the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit. And every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father. And the Father teacheth him of the covenant which he has renewed and confirmed upon you, which is confirmed upon you for your sakes, and not for your sakes only, but for the sake of the whole world.

Hearkening to the voice of God - personal revelation. See also verse 52 below:

D&C 84:52

And whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice, and is not of me.

Whoso is not acquainted with my voice. In reference to what we just discussed last week in Elder's quorum and President Neilson's emphasis on personal revelation, you've got to know God's voice. What does it mean to know His voice? How do you know when you're hearing God's voice? What's the difference between God's voice and my own internal voice, or the voice of demons that could be infiltrating my mind? These are important questions that we won't go into in this lesson.

D&C 84:54-57

And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received— Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation. And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all. And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written

As used in the Book of Mormon, "unbelief" means one does not understand and has not accepted true doctrine. The word unbelief means to accept false doctrine or to have an incomplete and inaccurate understanding of correct doctrine. Unbelief is often used in conjunction with losing truth, forsaking doctrine, and "dwindling." The phrase dwindling in unbelief is the Book of Mormon's way to describe moving from a state of belief, with true and complete doctrine, to a state of unbelief, where the truth has been discarded. Miracles end because men dwindle in unbelief.

Even if the church remains under this condemnation, you can remove this condemnation from yourself. President Oaks, as recent as 2010, reminded us the church is still under condemnation for taking lightly the Book of Mormon. The message and warnings of Book of Mormon are directed at the audience who has it in our possession.

"Along with others, I felt the impact of this declaration of condemnation. As I studied the subject, I was relieved to find that the serious consequences of this condemnation need not be permanent. The use of this term elsewhere in modern revelation suggests that it refers to a punishment or a penalty, not to a permanent banishment (e.g., D&C 82:3). In fact, the words President Benson quoted invite the Saints to repent of their deficiencies so the condemnation can be removed." (Dallin H. Oaks, 6 Jun 1993, BYU Devotional)

D&C 84:60

Verily, verily, I say unto you who now hear my words, which are my voice, blessed are ye inasmuch as you receive these things;

See also D&C 18:34-36 and discussion notes from that lesson.

D&C 84:63

And as I said unto mine apostles, even so I say unto you, for you are mine apostles, even God's high priests; ye are they whom my Father hath given me;

Apostle: The word apostle (from the Greek *apóstolos*, *ἀπόστολος*) literally means "someone sent away," implying that someone with this title is sent to deliver a message. An English equivalent would be "messenger." There is no such thing as priesthood called "apostle." It is also an office in the various Mormon institutions (like we see with that of relief society president, primary president, or scout leader). It is only an office in the church. Before 1835, the term apostle did not mean 12 men belonging to a quorum. It meant men who were ordained to the High Priesthood who had seen Christ. The June 1, 1833 revelation (see D&C 95:17) referred to the School of the Prophets as *the school of my apostles*. The school was to *prepare mine apostles* (verse 4). However, the identity of the apostles was expansive, including the officers, or in other words, those who are called to the ministry in the church, beginning at the high priests, even down to the deacon (D&C 88:127), describing those for whom the school of the prophets was to be built. After an appearance of Christ to members of the school of the prophets, Joseph declared: Brethren now you are prepared to be the Apostles of Jesus Christ, for you have seen both the Father and the Son, and know that They exist, and that They are two separate Personages. It was not membership in a "quorum," but knowledge that originally defined the meaning of apostle when

used in all notes, minutes, revelations, and preaching before 1835. The church originally organized in 1830, like the Book of Mormon church, had offices of elders, priests and teachers. Then the term “apostle” began to be used. But the term “apostle” did not mean the same thing in institutions then that it does today. A quorum of twelve apostles did not exist in Mormonism until February 1835. Prior to that, many individuals were identified as “apostles.” The term meant someone sent with a message from God. The term was originally used to identify all the missionaries sent to preach the Book of Mormon and restoration. The revelations given through Joseph Smith specifically identified a number of men as “apostles” before the organization of a quorum of twelve apostles in 1835: Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer in 1829; Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in 1830; Sidney Rigdon, Parley Pratt and Lemam Copley in 1831. A series of revelations likewise referred to “apostles” and included admonitions, instructions, and commandments to different audiences composed of “apostles” before the organization of a quorum of twelve in 1835. The Seventy were also regarded as “apostles.” The New Testament account of what qualifies an apostle included the necessary credential of witnessing Christ’s resurrection (see Acts 1:21-26).

D&C 84:63 (cont)

ye are my friends;

What does it mean to be a friend of God? Or to be considered a friend of God.

D&C 84:76

But, verily I say unto all those to whom the kingdom has been given—from you it must be preached unto them, that they shall repent of their former evil works; for they are to be upbraided for their evil hearts of unbelief, and your brethren in Zion for their rebellion against you at the time I sent you.*

*Kingdom:

"Whenever men can find out the will of God and find an administrator legally authorized from God, there is the kingdom of God" (DHC 5:256–259)

Again, I would like to know more of who the six (or 10?) were to whom this revelation was given. They were in Missouri (referring to the reference of "brethren in Zion" and "their rebellion against you at the time I sent you.") The heading to this section in D&C referred to elders who "had begun to return from their missions in the eastern states", but makes no mention of any who were sent to Missouri.

D&C 84:81

Therefore, take ye no thought for the morrow, for what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed.

Look at 3 Ne 13:25

And now it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words he looked upon the twelve whom he had chosen, and said unto them: Remember the words which I have

spoken. For behold, ye are they whom I have chosen to minister unto this people. Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

The preceding teachings were given to all who were there. Christ changes the audience at this point, and addresses the twelve whom He had given power to baptize.

It is the chosen twelve, and not the multitude, who are told to “take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what he shall drink.” It is those who are to minister who are freed from the earthly cares of providing for their needs. Their lives are to be given over to ministering to others, and not to work for their support. The Lord intends to provide for them.

This is a very narrow group to whom this promise is made. It does not include others in the audience. For the rest, we are required to provide for our families. If we fail to provide for them by laboring for their support, we have denied the faith. (1 Tim. 5:8.) Wives are to be supported by their husband’s labor. (D&C 83:2.) Children are to be supported by their parents. (D&C 83:4.) This requires all to labor. (D&C 42:42.) But as to these twelve, their labor is the ministry and their support will come from the Lord.

Why would the Lord give this commandment to the twelve? Why would He do it publicly? What responsibility does that impose upon the twelve? What responsibility does it impose upon the audience? If the twelve today were to be supported by only food given them by believers, clothes provided by followers, material given through donations from those to whom they ministered, would it be different than the system we have in place today?

D&C 84:86-87

Therefore, let no man among you, for this commandment is unto all the faithful who are called of God in the church unto the ministry, from this hour take purse or scrip, that goeth forth to proclaim this gospel of the kingdom. Behold, I send you out to reprove the world of all their unrighteous deeds, and to teach them of a judgment which is to come.

Who is this requirement for? Does it apply to every new Elder ordained into the church?

D&C 84:92

He that receiveth you not, go away from him alone by yourselves, and cleanse your feet even with water, pure water, whether in heat or in cold, and bear testimony of it unto your Father which is in heaven, and return not again unto that man.

Any reference to cleaning feet from the blood and sins of this generation? Symbolism of the feet being covered in blood of the sacrifices from the temple representing sin. The washing of the feet by Christ of his apostles was associated with something having to do with an higher ordinance. Again, another reference to this section applying to apostles.

D&C 84:101

And she [the earth] is clothed with the glory of her God;

Look at 3 Ne 12:5

And blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

This earth abides by a Celestial Law. (D&C 88:25.) Therefore, it is destined to become a Celestial Kingdom because it will be sanctified by a Celestial Law. (D&C 88:25-29.) The destiny of the earth is glory. (D&C 84:101.) Therefore, to “inherit the earth” is to inherit a Celestial Glory.

D&C 84:114-115

Nevertheless, let the bishop go unto the city of New York, also to the city of Albany, and also to the city of Boston, and warn the people of those cities with the sound of the gospel, with a loud voice, of the desolation and utter abolishment which await them if they do reject these things. For if they do reject these things the hour of their judgment is nigh, and their house shall be left unto them desolate.

If these early apostles did as this (and verses 93-97) direct, then what will become of these cities? Is our preaching repentance in these cities today in vain? Can the curse or condemnation be reversed? It says once you wash your feet of that village or city, do not return. What of those who later do or have returned (not knowing or being aware of earlier condemning)?

Some readers may have missed the implications of the priesthood revelation. John Whitmer was most excited by the verse warning Boston, New York, and Albany of coming desolation. Those verses reflected the millenarian thinking of the gathering to Zion and constructing the New Jerusalem, which had occupied the Saints for the last two years. The part about "exaltation" - the preparation to stand in God's presence and commune with Him - did not register with Whitmer. Eager as the Saints were for spiritual gifts, not all were ready for the mysticism of the priesthood revelation. (RSR p. 204-205)

Compare this attitude with that of the sons of Mosiah:

Now they were desirous that salvation should be declared to every creature, for they could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble. (Mosiah 28:3)

This illustrates the difference between Aaronic (or Levitical) and Melchizedek priesthoods. The Aaronic priesthood is a priesthood of condemnation where the Melchizedek priesthood is to bless and can only be controlled upon principals of righteousness (D&C 121:36).

“The law was given under Aaron for the purpose of pouring out judgments and destructions.” (TPJS p. 322) So the Mosaic law was given, and the priesthood was accommodated in order to pour out judgments and destruction. This helps explain a great deal about the lower portion, or Aaronic/Levitical priesthood.

Priesthood in its highest form is an opportunity, afforded you by God, to serve and to bless others. That's not true of it in other lesser forms. But in its highest form, the priesthood is a call to service. It is a call to save, it is a call to redeem, and it is a call to rescue others from destruction. You can condemn people with very little authority. But to raise them up and offer to them salvation is a far greater work requiring a far greater authority.

God to Nephi, "And behold, if ye shall say that God shall smite this people, it shall come to pass." (Helaman 10:10) Then because he knows the nature and character of the man involved in giving this authority, God commands him to smite the people using God's word. He must go out and deliver the threatening message, "Except ye repent ye shall be smitten, even unto destruction." He didn't want to do that, because that's not the character of the person who, with unwearyingness, would go out and declare the word of God. Such holders of this form of sealing power have in their heart one and only one objective, which is the salvation of the souls of men. But Nephi was told he was required to deliver this troubling message. Yet when he delivered it, he didn't even use the authority he was given. He meekly asks the Lord if the Lord will smite. (See *ibid* p. 134)

D&C 84:117

And verily I say unto you, the rest of my servants, go ye forth as your circumstances shall permit, in your several callings, unto the great and notable cities and villages, reproving the world in righteousness of all their unrighteous and ungodly deeds, setting forth clearly and understandingly the desolation of abomination in the last days.

What is desolation of abomination? A union that renders offspring desolate?

To Conclude:

You should not look directly into the sun. Whenever you do, your eyes are unable to adjust to the intensity of the light. It is possible to even do damage to your eyes by looking directly at the sun.

Everything in mortality is a type or symbol of eternal things. All things bear testimony of Christ and His great plan. (Moses 6:63.) The sun bears testimony of the Son of God. It is a great symbol of Him.

Our approach to gaining a relationship with the Son should be like that of our enjoyment of the sun – indirect. That is, entering into His presence is a by-product. It is as a result of the way you live. It is not the "goal."

To approach Him, you must live as He did. You must "keep His commandments." You must love others. You must live the way He lived. When you are walking in the same path He walked, you will find that He is walking there still. He will come alongside you, as you are "in the way" and will open to your understanding all things which He would have you know. (Luke 24: 13-32.)