

# THE LORD HATH SPOKEN

By B. H. ROBERTS

Number Five

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Hear, O **heavens**, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken.  
(Isaiah 1:2.)

## The Restoration of Divine Authority to Earth

God having revealed himself and his Son Jesus Christ to the young prophet of the new-opening dispensation of these last days; and having broadened that foundation of faith in God and Jesus Christ by revelation of a New Volume of scripture-the Book of Mormon, set forth in Number Four of this series (which see) -the next step in the unfolding work of God was to restore to men *Divine Authority*. This is the holy priesthood, meaning power or authority which God bestows upon men, by which they act in God's stead, in his name-which signifies by his authority or power. It is by this authority that men become the agents or representatives of God.

As my Father hath sent me, even so I send you, said the Christ to the Apostles. Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain; they are retained. (St. John 20:21, 23.) Again: Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit. (St. John 15:16.) This is the power that Paul said no man should take unto himself, except he is "called of God, as was Aaron"; as even "the Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest, but he (God) that said unto him, Thou art my son, today have I begotten thee." (Heb. 5:2-5.) That is to say, God called even him. And hence the general principle that every priest,

or man who ministers for men in things pertaining to God, *must be called and ordained of God unto that work.* (Heb. 5:1.)

It became **necessary**, therefore, in the New Dispensation in which "God hath spoken," in these last days, that this divine authority should be given again to men, if they are to minister among men in things pertaining to God; if they are to effectually preach the gospel, baptize repentant sinners, bestow the Holy Ghost, administer the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper, organize the Church of Christ, send forth the gospel to all nations, and call men to repentance, and to the worship of the true God, "who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and fountains of waters." (Revelation 14:6-7.) Men who are going to do these things will require divine authority, and divine appointment to do them effectually.

### **The Restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood**

And this divine authority was given, and the solemn appointment came in the new dispensation in which God is speaking, under the following circumstances :

There arose a difference of view between Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery-the latter having come into the work to assist in bringing forth the Book of Mormon-on the subject of baptism; whereupon they decided to ask God for guidance in the matter and repaired to a grove adjacent to their place of lodging, for prayer. Here they were visited by an angel from heaven who announced himself to be John the Baptist, and said that he acted under the direction of the ancient apostles, Peter, James and John. Having made this explanation he laid his hands upon the heads of these two men and said unto them :

**Upon you, my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness.** (Doctrine and Covenants, Section 13.)

This angel gave the further explanation that the three ancient apostles under whose direction he acted, held **the** keys of a higher priesthood, than that which he had conferred upon them, viz., the Melchizedek priesthood, and that this at some future time would be conferred upon them. **They** had now, however, received the priesthood of the “preparatory gospel,” with authority to preach repentance and to baptize for the remission of sins. They were therefore commanded by the angel ‘each to baptize the other, which they did in the river adjacent, and thus became the first persons in the new dispensation to receive baptism by divine authority. “I shall not attempt,” wrote Oliver Cowdery afterwards of this event, “to paint . . . the **feelings** of thii heart, nor the majestic beauty and glory which surrounded us on this occasion, but you will believe me when I say that earth nor men, with the eloquence of time, cannot begin to clothe language in as interesting and sublime a manner as this holy personage. No; nor has this earth power to give the joy, to bestow the peace, or comprehend the wisdom which was contained in each sentence as it was delivered by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (History of the Church, Vol. 1, page 43, footnote.) It was on the 15th of May, 1829, when the above event took place.

### Restoration of the Melchiredek Priesthood

Not long after the above event occurred, the other promised event took place also, **viz.**, Peter, James and **John**—Apostles under the hands of the Christ-came to Joseph Smith and to Oliver Cowdery and by the **holy** ordinance of the laying on of hands, ordained them to **the Melchizedek** priesthood, which is the priesthood after **the order of the** Son of God. They were made apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, by these men who held that holy calling and priesthood under the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ; and unto one of whom the Lord Jesus had said: “I will give unto **thee** the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou

shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16:18, 19.) By these personages and by this authority, these men of the new dispensation were made apostles 'and special witnesses of the name of Jesus Christ in all the world; and unto them God committed the keys of his kingdom, "and a dispensation of the gospel for the last time : and for the fulness of times." (Doctrine and Covenants, Section 27 :13.)

By this divine power these men would act in the future. With apostolic authority they would henceforth proclaim the gospel. They, and those receiving authority through them will say now, in this day—"Hear, O heavens! And give ear, O Earth! For the Lord hath spoken ! " By that authority they will lay hands on men that they may receive the Holy Ghost—be born of God. By it and by the laying on of the hands, they will also confer the same authority they hold upon other men, until many—even thousands—shall bear that priesthood in the earth. By that divine authority they will organize the Church of Jesus Christ on the earth, with all its officers, gifts, spiritual powers, privileges, and blessings.

### **The Church** of Jesus Christ Organized

This, indeed, these men, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, proceeded to do. By the sixth of April, 1830, a number of brethren had become interested in the work—the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the developing New Dispensation of the Gospel; a number of them had been baptized for the remission of their sins, and these, with the first two, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, who by revelation had been designated as the first and second Elder, respectively, of the forthcoming Church of Christ, met together on the aforesaid sixth day of April, 1830, and effected its organization in the township of Fayette, Seneca County, 'in the state of New York.

By revelation the manner in which the organization was to be effected was given; also an outline in the fundamentals of doctrine was proclaimed; ordinances for baptism and confirmation by the laying on of hands, were established; the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was instituted, and the prayer of consecration given; officers were instituted and their respective duties designated; an outline of discipline was given ; the duties of members were designated, and a system of regular conferences for branches of the church was provided, to stabilize the new church government (see Doctrine and Covenants, Section 20).

### **The Two Great Duties of the Church**

It must not be supposed that then was accomplished the full organization of the church as later and now known. No, but a commencement in all the respects named above was effected; and it was left for a developing process to add line upon line, and precept upon precept, until the more perfect fabric should be constructed. Meantime what was there founded on the 6th day of April, 1830, was given of God, and would in time be perfected, and has been so far perfected, that at the present time the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (commonly known as the Mormon Church) consists of that same organization of officers—prophets, apostles, high priests, seventies, elders, priests, teachers, deacons, evangelists, and pastors: with the same doctrines, ordinances, sacraments, spiritual gifts, privileges and powers, known to the church whose outlines may be traced in the New Testament scriptures. With this church is deposited every revealed truth that is necessary to be believed; every principle and ordinance necessary to salvation ; every sacrament necessary to obtain and perpetuate spiritual life; all divine authority and commission to preach the gospel and administer salvation to the world—all this is with her. Also with her is continuous and ever-present revelation, by which she—the Lamb's Bride, the Church of

**the living God-will be guided by her spouse, Christ, the Lord. With her are the high duties of making proclamation of the truth of the gospel to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people in the whole earth; and then of perfecting the lives of those who accept her truth. To do these two great things is the duty of the church of God, as founded in the earth in these last days.**

**The Sum of Things God Has Revealed in the Word  
He Has Spoken**

**Meantime great and wonderful are the things God has revealed in the word he hath spoken in this new dispensation. In it he has made known in greater clearness than ever before, the true relationship between God and man. He has made it clear that men are the sons of God. That the spirits of men had an existence before they tabernacled here in this earth life. That in that pre-existence they were begotten spirits, the sons of God. Also in the new dispensation God has more clearly than ever before revealed the purposes of the earth-life of man; and his future possibilities. God has made known in more positive terms the WHENCE, the WHY of human existence, and the WHITHER-TREND of life and of things. In the new dispensation God has made more fully known the relationships and destinies of nations, of the end of them, and of the higher order of individual and national life that shall be. Also he has made known the Christ's intention to visit his creations, and has revealed the immortality and glory that shall reign in them when they shall be redeemed and made celestial kingdoms; and more especially has God revealed his purposes in respect of our own earth, when it shall be redeemed and receive its paradisiacal glory. And all this comes out of that which God hath spoken in the last days. The revelations of God containing these great things, this light and intelligence pertaining to such high things, and of so large a volume of them, he has revealed to his church through the**

head of that church, and they are contained in volumes of revelations-in the Book of Mormon, and more especially in the Doctrine and Covenants, and in the Pearl of Great Price-revelations brought forth by Joseph Smith in this day when God has spoken. And now listen, O Reader, to what God directly says to you in that word which he is sending forth to the world, and which I am trying to proclaim to you.

### God's Direct Word to the Reader

The voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated. . . . And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days. And they shall go forth and none shall stay them, for I the Lord have commanded them.

And verily, I say unto you, that they who go forth, bearing these tidings unto the inhabitants of the earth, to them is power given to seal both on earth and in heaven, the unbelieving and rebellious. . . . Wherefore the voice of the Lord is unto the ends of the earth? and all that will hear may hear: Prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh: And the anger of the Lord is kindled, and his sword is bathed in heaven, and it shall fall upon the inhabitants of the earth: And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people.

*For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant: They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own God, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxed old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.*

Wherefore I, the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments; and also gave commandments to others, that they should proclaim these things unto the world; and all this that it might be fulfilled, which was written by the prophets; the weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones, that man should not counsel his fellow man, neither trust in the arm of flesh. But that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world; that faith also might increase in the

**earth; that** mine everlasting covenant might be established; that the **ful-**ness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of 'the world, and before kings and rulers. . . .

And also those to whom these commandments were given, might have power to lay **the** foundation of this church, and to **bring** it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness, *the only true and living -church upon the face of the whole earth,* with which I, the Lord, am well pleased, speaking unto the church collectively and not individually. *For I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of '&nuance;* nevertheless, he that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven; and he that repents not, from him shall be taken even the light -which he has received, *for my Spirit shall not always strive with man,* saith the Lord of **Hosts.**

And again, verily I say unto you, O inhabitants of the earth, *I the Lord am willing to make these things known unto all flesh.* For I am no respecter of persons, and will *that all men shall know that the day speedily cometh;* the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand, *when peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion;* and also the Lord shall have power over his saints, and shall reign in their midst, and shall come down in judgment upon Idumea, or the world. . . .

What I the **Lord** have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not **pass** away, but shall be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same: For behold, and lo, the Lord is God, and the Spirit beareth record, and the record is true, and the truth abideth forever and ever. Amen. (Doctrine and Covenants, Section 1.)

**This message of God was given to his servants in the closing months of 1831. Behold, in very recent years, how the prophetic parts of it have been, and are now being fulfilled in the conditions obtaining in the world!**

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! For the Lord hath spoken !

**And it is for men to listen and heed, and obey, when God sneaks.**

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