

Revelation

02/06

“Salvation cannot come without revelation.” (Joseph Smith, *HC* 3:389)

Revelation Defined

(Matthew 16:13-18)

01 – “‘What **rock?**’ Joseph Smith asked. The modern seer then answered simply: **Revelation.**” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 274)

02 – “In a theological sense the term *revelation* signifies **the making known of divine truth by communication from the heavens**. The Greek word, *apocalypsis*, which in meaning closely corresponds with our word *revelation*, expresses an uncovering or a disclosure of that which had been wholly or in part hidden—the drawing aside of a veil.” (James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, pg. 268)

NOTE - Revelation Ceases is confirmed at the Council of Trent (April 8, 1546) by Session the IV

03 – “Eighteenth—‘**Is there anything in the Bible which licenses you to believe in revelation now-a-days? Is there anything that does not authorize us to believe so? If there is, we have, as yet, not been able to find it.**’” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 121)

04 – “**The plea of many in this day is, that we have no right to receive revelations; but if we do not get revelations, we do not have the oracles of God; and if they have not the oracles of God, they are not the people of God. But say you, What will become of the world, or the various professors of religion who do not believe in revelation and the oracles of God as continued to His Church in all ages of the world, when He has a people on earth? I tell you, in the name of Jesus Christ, they will be damned; and when you get into the eternal world, you will find it will be so, they cannot escape the damnation of hell.**” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 272)

Truth

(D&C 93:24; John 8:32, 36; John 14:6)

05 – “**Conformity to fact or reality; exact accordance with that which is, or has been, or shall be.**” (Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Dictionary* - 1828, ‘truth’)

D&C 93:24 — TRUTH = תמא (Psalms 119)

(Revelation 1:8; Revelation 22:13)

א (Aleph) First Letter [Written as to reveal God’s hand on one side of the veil and man’s hand on the other, thus God is a gatekeeper - 2 Nephi 9:41](Christ is the First - 1 Corinthians 15:20, 45)

מ (Mem) Middle Letter [Written as **מ** anciently suggesting God as a protector or coverer of his people - 3 Nephi 10:4-6](Christ is the Middle - Moses 6:62)

ת (Tav) Last Letter [Written as **ת** anciently intimating the dispenser of all judgment by way of the scales of justice and mercy; made possible by his selfless sacrifice; thus the symbol of the cross - Moses 6:61](Christ is the End - John 5:22-23, 27)

Necessity of Revelation

06 – “**We can never comprehend the things of God and of heaven, but by revelation.**” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 292)

Revelation

07 – “Were I to draw a distinction in all the duties that are required of the children of men, from first to last, I would place first and foremost the duty of seeking unto the Lord our God until we open the path of communication from heaven to earth—from God to our own souls. Keep every avenue of your hearts clean and pure before him....

It was asked me by a gentleman how I guided the people by revelation. I teach them to live so that the Spirit of revelation may make plain to them their duty day by day that they are able to guide themselves. To get this revelation it is necessary that the people live so that their spirits are as pure and clean as a piece of blank paper that lies on the desk before the inciter, ready to receive any mark the writer may make upon it (Brigham Young, *JD*, 8:339; 11:240)

08 – “The single most significant act of mortality is to hear, recognize and act upon the inspiration of the Spirit and receive the sanctification that it brings.” (Rex D. Pinegar, *Stake Conference (Thatcher)*, November 1986)

Recognition of Revelation

(D&C 8:1-3; 3 Nephi 9:201 Kings 19:11-12; Helaman 5:29-48; 3 Nephi 11:3-6; 1 Samuel 3:1-10)

09 – “I cannot use any language that describes to you what a revelation is. Somebody said, ‘How can I tell if I have a revelation? I have had a feeling that such and such is true. How can I be sure?’ ...Revelation is something you experience, and the way that you start your experience is — get your first one — through the Book of Mormon. And when you get the calm, serene, assured feeling that the Book is true, and know that it comes by the power of the Spirit, then you have had a religious experience, and every subsequent religious experience that you receive can be weighed against the original experience.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Salt Lake Institute of Religion, Last Lecture Series*, January 22, 1971)

10 – “It is a voice that one feels more than one hears.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, January 1983, pg. 52)

11 – “I have come to know that inspiration comes more as a feeling than as a sound.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, November 1979, pg. 20)

12 – “You can learn now, in your youth, to be led by the Holy Ghost. As an Apostle I listen now to the same inspiration, coming from the same source, in the same way, that I listened to as a boy. The signal is much clearer now.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, November 1979, pg. 21)

13 – “Most of us have had the promptings of the Spirit and then argued with the Lord as to whether or not we ought to do what we are prompted to do...I think that happens quite often in all our lives. We get a prompting and we wrestle with the Lord as to whether or not we are going to respond to the prompting. As a member of the Council of the Twelve and after the experience of serving as a General Authority for as long as I have, I now know the voice and can tell when the Lord is prompting me to do something. I am much more obedient today in responding to those promptings....The promptings are often involved in the little things. They are little nudgings that come to you that can have a vast effect on others if you follow them.” (M. Russell Ballard, *CES address, Responding to the Promptings of the Spirit*, January 8, 1988)

14 – “The Spirit does not get our attention by shouting or shaking us with a heavy hand. Rather it whispers. It caresses so gently that if we are preoccupied we may not feel it at all...and if we do not heed the gentle feeling, the Spirit will withdraw and wait until we come seeking and listening...” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, January 1983, p 53)

15 – “You all know that the Lord never shouts; the Lord whispers. Any inspiration that we get comes with the still small voice. It comes when we’re listening; it comes when we’re pondering, when we’re praying. **We have to live so that there’s no static, so that there’s no interference.”** (A. Theodore Tuttle, *CES address, Teaching the Word to the Rising Generation*, July 1970)

16 – “The still small voice is so quiet you won’t hear it when you’re noisy inside.” (Henry B. Eyring, *BYU*

Revelation

address, October 29, 1989, pg. 13)

17 – “The world grows increasingly noisy. Clothing and grooming and conduct are looser and sloppier and more disheveled. Raucous music, with obscene lyrics blasted through amplifiers while lights flash psychedelic colors, characterizes the drug culture. Variations of these things are gaining wide acceptance and influence over our youth.

Doctors even say that our physical sense of hearing can be permanently damaged by all of this noise.

This trend to more noise, more excitement, more contention, less restraint, less dignity, less formality is not coincidental nor innocent nor harmless.

The first order issued by a commander mounting a military invasion is the jamming of the channels of communication of those he intends to conquer.

Irreverence suits the purposes of the adversary by obstructing the delicate channels of revelation in both mind and spirit.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, November 1991, pg. 21)

18 – “We must always be responsive to the whisperings of the Spirit. These promptings come most often when we are not under the pressure of appointments and when we are not caught up in the worries of day-to-day life.”(Ezra Taft Benson, *Come Unto Christ*, pg.18)

19 – “I fear this supernal gift is being obscured by programs and activities and schedules and so many meetings. There are so many places to go, so many things to do in this noisy world. We can be too busy to pay attention to the promptings of the Spirit.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, May 2000, pg. 8)

20 – “The President then took occasion to relate an experience in the life of Bishop John Wells, former member of the Presidency Bishopric. A son of Bishop Wells was killed in Emigration Canyon on a railroad track. Brother John Wells was a great detail man and prepared many of the reports we are following up now. His boy was run over by a freight train. Sister Wells was inconsolable. She mourned during the three days prior to the funeral, received no comfort at the funeral, and was in a rather serious state of mind. One day soon after the funeral services while she was lying on her bed relaxed, still mourning, she says that her son appeared to her and said, ‘Mother, do not mourn, do not cry. I am all right.’ He told her that she did not understand how the accident happened and explained that he had given the signal the engineer to move on and then made the usual effort to catch the railing on the freight train, but as he attempted to do so his foot caught on a root and failed to catch the hand rail, and his body fell under the train. It was clearly an accident. Now listen. He said that as soon as he realized that he was in another environment he tried to see his father, but he couldn’t reach him. His father was so busy with the duties in his office he could not respond to his call. Therefore, he had come to his mother. He said to her, ‘You tell father that all is well with me and I want you not to mourn anymore.’

Then the President made the statement that the point he had in mind was that when we are relaxed in a private room we are more susceptible to those things and that so far as he was concerned, his best thoughts come after he gets up in the morning and is relaxed and thinking about the duties of the day; that impressions come more clearly, as if it were to hear a voice. Those impressions are right. If we are worried about something and upset in our feelings, the inspiration does not come. If we so live that our minds are free from worry and our conscience is clear and our feelings are right toward one another, the operation of the spirit of the Lord upon our spirit is as real as when we pick up the telephone; but when they come, we must be brave enough to take the suggested actions.” (Harold B. Lee, *CES address*, July 6, 1956)

Revelation

The broad spectrum or continuum on which revelation comes:
[1-10 not any less divine—but only in a more direct manner]

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
C	G	I	B	I	V	D	V	V	D
O	I	N	L	N	O	R	I	I	I
N	F	S	E	S	I	E	S	S	E
S	T	P	S	T	C	A	I	I	T
C	S	I	S	R	E	M	O	T	Y
I		R	I	U	S	S	N	A	
E		A	N	M			S	T	
N		T	G	E				I	
C		I	S	N				O	
E		O		T				N	
		N		S				S	

— **SCRIPTURE ACCOUNTS** —

1. Moroni 7:14-18; Romans 2:12-15
2. D&C 46:7-31; Moroni 10:7-18; 1 Corinthians 12, 14
3. D&C 8:2-3; D&C 9:7-9; D&C 6:23
4. D&C 107:53; Genesis 27, 49; Deuteronomy 33;
5. D&C 17:1; Alma 37:38; Numbers 17
6. Moses 5:4, 58; Helaman 5
7. Genesis 37; Daniel 2; 1 Nephi 8
8. D&C 76; D&C 110; D&C 138
9. Luke 1; D&C 13; Abraham 1
10. JS-H 1; Matthew 17

Underlying Principles in Receiving Revelation

A. Already an Answer

21 – “And again we never inquire at the hand of God for special revelation only in case of there being no previous revelation to suit the case; and that in a council of High Priests. It is a great thing to inquire at the hands of God, or to come into His presence; and we feel fearful to approach Him on subjects that are of little or no consequence, to satisfy the queries of individuals, especially about things the knowledge of which men ought to obtain in all sincerity, before God, for themselves, in humility by the prayer of faith; and more especially a teacher or a High Priest in the Church. I speak these things not by way of reproach, but by way of instruction.” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 22)

B. Pertaining to One’s Stewardship

22 – “I will inform you that it is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or any one, to receive instruction for those in authority, higher than themselves; therefore you will see the impropriety of giving heed to them; but if any person have a vision or a visitation from a heavenly messenger, it must be for his own benefit and instruction; for the fundamental principles, government, and doctrine of the Church are vested in the keys of the kingdom.” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 21)

23 – “And the spirit of inspiration, the gift of revelation does not belong to one man solely; it is not a gift that pertains to the Presidency of the Church and the Twelve Apostles alone. It is not confined to the presiding authorities of the Church, it belongs to every individual member of the Church; and it is the right and privilege of every man, every woman, and every child who has reached the years of accountability to enjoy the spirit of revelation, and to be possessed of the spirit of inspiration in the discharge of their duties as members of the Church. It is the privilege of every individual member of the Church to have revelation for his own guidance, for the direction of his life and conduct.” (Joseph F. Smith., *CR*, April 1912, pg. 4-5)

C. Not Contrary to Doctrine

24 – “And from the time that Adam first received a communication from God, to the time that John, on the Isle of Patmos, received his communication, or Joseph Smith had the heavens opened to him, it always required new revelations, adapted to the peculiar circumstances in which the churches or individuals were placed. Adam's revelation did not instruct Noah to build his ark; nor did Noah's revelation tell Lot to forsake Sodom; nor did either of these speak of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt. These all had revelations for themselves, and so had Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Jesus, Peter, Paul, John, and Joseph. And so must we, or we shall make a shipwreck.” (John Taylor, *Millennial Star*, 9:323-324)

D. Strong Feeling ≠ Revelation

25 – “I have learned that strong, impressive spiritual experiences do not come to us very frequently. And when they do, they are generally for our own edification, instruction, or correction. Unless we are called by proper authority to do so, they do not position us to counsel or to correct others.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, January 1983, pg. 53)

26 – “**Not all revelations are from God.** Certainly we should not be interested in signs. Signs are available and anyone, I believe, can have signs who wants them. **I believe if one wants revelations enough to crave them beyond the rightness of it, that eventually he will get his revelations—but they may not come from God.** I am sure that there can be many spectacular things performed, because the devil is very responsive. He is listening and he is eager to do it. And so he gives strange experiences. I think some actually do get unusual experiences and revelations.” (Spencer W. Kimball, *TSWK*, pg. 458)

E. Greater Want → Greater Chance for Deception

27 – “It is not wise to wrestle with the revelations with such insistence as to demand immediate answers or blessings to your liking. You cannot force spiritual things. Such words as compel, coerce, constrain, pressure, demand, do not

Revelation

describe privileges with the Spirit. **You can no more force the Spirit to respond than you can force a bean to sprout, or an egg to hatch before its time.** You can create a climate to foster growth, nourish, and protect; but you cannot force or compel: you must await the growth.

Do not be impatient to gain great spiritual knowledge. Let it grow, help it grow, but do not force it or you will open the way to be misled.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, January 1983, pg. 53)

28 – “Revelations from God – the teachings and directions of the Spirit – are not constant. **We believe in continuing revelation, not continuous revelation.** We are often left to work our problems without the dictation or specific direction of the Spirit.” Citing William E. Berrett, Elder Oaks said: “Those who pray that the spirit might give them immediate guidance in every little thing throw themselves open to false spirits that seem ever ready to answer our pleas and confuse us... The people I have found most confused in this Church are those who seek personal revelations on everything (Dallin H. Oaks, *Ensign*, March 1997, pg. 14)

F. Send Me an Angel (D&C 1:24; 2 Nephi 31:3)

29 – “**If the Lord sends an angel to anyone, he sends him to perform a work that cannot be performed only by the administration of an angel.**” (Wilford Woodruff, *Deseret Weekly*, 53:642-643)

30 – “**When angels come to visit mortals, they have to condescend to and assume, more or less, the condition of mortals, they have to descend to our capacities in order to communicate with us.** [knowledge/language]” (Brigham Young, *JD* 2:314)

31 – “**You do not have to be visited by an angel every time, because when the angel comes all he does is quote the scriptures. That’s all Moroni did. that’s all Gabriel did. That’s all the angels did when they appeared to the shepherds in the fields. When an angel appears he’ll quote the scriptures.**” (Hugh Nibley, *Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, 2:459)

32 – The Doctrine of Fairness. Those who live before Christ received a greater witness of the ministration of angels than those after. (Alma 39:17-19)” (Jeffrey R. Holland, *CES address*, August 9, 1994, pg. 10-11)

33 – “My husband and I were deeply touched when our daughter, Stephanie, shared the following journal entry with us, written when she was in seventh grade. I share it with her permission:

“One day while we were reading our scriptures, we talked about how important it is for each of us to have our own knowledge and testimony—and that we must not put off asking Heavenly Father for this. That night I went to my room and shut the door. I waited until everything was very quiet. Then I knelt down by my bed and prayed. I asked Heavenly Father to please send me an angel to tell me for sure if the gospel was true. He answered that he would, and I was to get in bed and wait for the angel to come. I felt very peaceful and happy, and I waited.

“The house was very still, and I think I had dropped off to sleep. I woke up when I heard a voice. It was Mother. She was kneeling beside my bed praying. She was praying for me. I listened, and when she finished I touched her hair so she would know I was awake. She put her arms around me and held me and her face was wet. She told me I had a Father in Heaven and that he loved me. She said she was glad he had let me come to live in our family. She told me he sent his own Son here to give his life so we could return to live with him if we obeyed his commandments. She told me to always remember that the gospel had been restored, and I must live it so I could go back to my Father.

“We held each other for a while,” Stephanie continued, “and then Mother left. After she left, Father in Heaven said to my mind, **‘I sent you your angel.’**” (Joy Webb Rigby, *Ensign*, August 1984, pg. 15)

G. Sacred Silence (D&C 63:64; D&C 101:16)

34 – “**Let us be faithful and silent and if God gives you a manifestation, keep it to yourselves.**” (Joseph Smith, *HC* 2:309)

Revelation

35 – “**Should you receive a vision or revelation from the Almighty**, one that the Lord gave you concerning yourselves, or this people, but which you are not to reveal on account of your not being the proper person, or because it ought not to be known by the people at present, **you should shut it up and seal it as close, and lock it as tight as heaven is to you, and make it as secret as the grave. The Lord has not confidence in those who reveal secrets, for he cannot safely reveal himself to such persons.**” (Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, pg. 40-41)

36 – “**The reason we do not have the secrets of the Lord revealed to us is because we do not keep them but reveal them...even to our enemies...I can keep a secret till Doomsday.**” (Joseph Smith, *HC*, 6:499)

37 – “**The Lord has no confidence in those who reveal secrets, for He cannot safely reveal Himself to such persons.**” (Brigham Young, *JD*, 4:288)

Concerns Pertaining to the Receiving of Revelation

(D&C 9:7-9; D&C 129; D&C 124:39)

1. Spurious and Sensational Stories

38 – “As I say, it never ceases to amaze me how gullible some of our Church members are in broadcasting these sensational stories, or dreams, or visions, some alleged to have been given to Church leaders, past or present, supposedly from some person's private diary, without first verifying the report with proper Church authorities.” (Harold B. Lee, *Ensign*, January 1973, pg. 105)

2. False and Seducing Spirits

39 – “The adversary tries to smother this voice (the ever present voice of the Spirit) with a multitude of loud, persistent, persuasive and appealing voices:

- Murmuring voices that conjure up perceived injustices.
- Whining voices that abhor challenge and work.
- Seductive voices offering sensual enticements.
- Smoothing voices that lull us into carnal security.
- Intellectual voices that profess sophistication and superiority.
- Proud voices that rely on the arm of flesh.
- Flattering voices that puff us up with pride.
- Cynical voices that destroy hope.
- Entertaining voices that promote pleasure-seeking.
- Commercial voices that tempt us to ‘spend money for that which is of not worth and our labor for that which cannot satisfy’.
- Delirious voices that spawn the desire for a ‘high’. I refer not to drugs—or alcohol—induced high, but pursuing dangerous, death-defying experiences for nothing more than a thrill.” (James E. Faust *Young Adult Fireside*, The Voice of the Spirit, September 5, 1993)

40 – “We had a very grievous case that had to come before the high council and the stake presidency which resulted in the excommunication of a man of a family that had harmed a lovely young girl. After nearly an all-night session which resulted in that action, I went to my office rather weary the next morning to be confronted by a brother of this man whom we had had on trial the night before. This man said, ‘I want to tell you that my brother wasn’t guilty of that thing which you charged him with.’ ‘How do you know he wasn’t guilty?’ I asked. ‘Because I prayed, and the Lord told me he was innocent,’ the man answered. I asked him to come into the office and we sat down, and I asked, ‘would you mind if I asked you a few personal questions?’ and he said, ‘Certainly not.’

Revelation

'How old are you?'

'Forty seven.'

'What Priesthood do you hold?' He said he thought he was a teacher.

'Do you keep the Word of Wisdom?' and he said, 'Well, no.' He used tobacco, which was obvious.

'Do you pay your tithing?'

He said, 'No' — and he didn't intend to as long as that blankety-blank man was the bishop of the Thirty-second Ward.

I said, 'Do you attend your Priesthood meetings?'

He replied, 'No Sir!' and he didn't intend to as long as that man was bishop.

'You don't attend your sacrament meetings either?' 'No, Sir.'

'Do you have your family prayers?' and he said no.

'Do you study the scriptures?' He said well, his eyes were bad and he couldn't read very much....

'Now then,' I said, 'fifteen of the best living men in the Pioneer Stake prayed last night. They heard the evidence and every man was united in saying that your brother was guilty. Now, you, who do none of these things, you say you prayed and got an opposite answer. How do you explain that?'

Then this man gave an answer that I think was a classic. He said, 'Well President Lee, I think I must have gotten my answer from the wrong source.'" (Harold B. Lee, *BYU Speeches*, October 15, 1952)

3. The Spectacular and Dramatic

41 – “The burning bushes, the smoking mountains, the sheets of four-footed beasts, the Cumorahs, and the Kirtlands were realities; but they were the exceptions. The great volume of revelation came to Moses and to Joseph and comes to today's prophet in the less spectacular way—that of deep impressions, without spectacle or glamour or dramatic events.

Always expecting the spectacular, many may miss entirely the constant flow of revealed communication.” (Spencer W. Kimball; Rulon T. Burton, *We Believe, 'Revelation'*, ACR(Munich)1973, pg. 856)

4. 'Burning in the Bosom'

Ensign, April 1989, pg. 21-22

42 – “**This may be one of the most important and misunderstood teachings in all the Doctrine and Covenants. The teachings of the Spirit often come as feelings.** That fact is of the utmost importance, yet some misunderstand what it means. I have met persons who told me they have never had a witness from the Holy Ghost because they have never felt their bosom 'burn within' them.

What does a ' burning in the bosom' mean? Does it need to be a feeling of caloric heat, like the burning produced by combustion? If that is the meaning, I have never had a burning in the bosom. Surely, the word ' burning' in this scripture signifies a feeling of comfort and serenity. That is the witness many receive. That is the way revelation works. Truly, the still, small voice is just that, ' still' and ' small' .” (Dallin H. Oaks, *Ensign*, March 1997, pg. 13)

43 – “**Causing the bosom to burn is another way of saying that feeling is a big part of the process of revelation.**

...If I am to receive revelation from the Lord, I must be in harmony with him by keeping his commandments. Then as needed, according to his wisdom, his word will come into my mind through my thoughts, accompanied by a feeling in the region of my bosom. **It is a feeling which cannot be described, but the nearest word we have is or 'burning'.** Accompanying this always is a feeling of peace, a further witness that what one heard is right. Once one recognizes this burning, this feeling, this peace, one need never be drawn

Revelation

astray in his daily life or in the guidance he may receive. He may also know that if this revelation is in harmony with the revealed principles, that it is right, and if in disharmony, it is not from the Lord. The Lord does not contradict himself. It is vital to everybody to know that no one will ever receive revelation that is contrary to the word given to the living prophet. The application of this principle will prevent many of the frustrations experienced in daily life.” (S. Dilworth Young, *Ensign*, May 1976, pg. 22-23)

5. Always Expecting an Answer

44 – “If I ask him to give me wisdom concerning any requirement in life, or in regard to my own course, or that of my friends, my family, my children, or those that I preside over, and get no answer from him, and then do the very best that my judgment will teach me, he is bound to own and honor that transaction, and he will do so to all intents and purposes.” (Brigham Young, *JD*, 5:293)

Steps to Strengthening the Receiving of Revelation

45 – “After months of what seemed to me futile effort, I felt some desperation, much as you do when heaven seems to withhold its help in a task you know matters and is beyond you.

I somehow managed to arrange [an interview] with President Harold B. Lee. He received me in a kindly way. In my anxiety, I soon blurted out my question: 'President Lee, how do I get revelation?'

He smiled. I am glad he didn't laugh, since it was an odd question to ask. But he answered my question with a story. It was essentially this. He said that during World War II he had been part of a group studying the question 'What should the Church be doing for its members in the military service?' He said they conducted interviews at bases up and down the country. They had data gathered. They had the data analyzed. They went back for more interviews. But still, no plan emerged.

Then he gave me the lesson, which I now give to you, in about these words: ‘Hal, when we had done all we knew how to do, when we had our backs to the wall, then God gave us the revelation. Hal, if you want to get revelation, do your homework’.” (Henry B. Eyring, *BYU Speeches* 1991, pg. 16–17)

46 – “Now, about revelation. We have all been taught that revelation is available to each of us individually. The question I’m most often asked about revelation is, ‘How do I know when I have received it? I’ve prayed about it and fasted over this problem and prayed about it and prayed about it, and I still don’t quite know what to do. How can I really tell whether I’m being inspired so I won’t make a mistake?’

First, do you go to the Lord with a problem and ask Him to make your decision for you? Or do you work, read the revelations, and meditate and pray and then make a decision yourself? Measure the problem against what you know to be right and wrong, and then make the decision. Then ask Him if the decision is right or if it is wrong. Remember what He said to Oliver Cowdery about working it out in your mind.

Listen to this sentence if you don’t hear anything else: If we foolishly ask our bishop or branch president or the Lord to make a decision for us, there’s precious little self-reliance in that. Think what it costs every time you have somebody else make a decision for you.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, August 1975, pg. 89)

47 – “**A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the Spirit of revelation...**and by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation.” (Joseph Smith, *HC* 3:381)

48 – “**If you will listen to the first promptings you will get it right nine times out of ten.**” (Joseph Smith; Charles Lowell Walker, *Diary of Charles L. Walker*, [1855-1902], pg. 902)

49 – “**Reading the experience of others, or the revelation given to them, 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.” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 324-325)

50 – “**Religion is something which must be experienced.**

Revelation

I know people who can talk endlessly about religion but who have never had a religious experience. I know people who have written books about religion but who have about as much spirituality as a cedar post. Their interest in gospel doctrine is to defend their own speculative views rather than to find out what the Lord thinks about whatever is involved. Their conversations and their writings are in the realm of reason and the intellect; the Spirit of God has not touched their souls; they have not been born again and become new creatures of the Holy Ghost; they have not received revelation.

It is the right of members of the Church to receive revelation. Joseph Smith said: ‘. . . 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, pg.149].” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Ensign*, June 1971, pg. 78)

51 – “Would you like a formula to tell you how to get personal revelation? It might be written in many ways. My formula is simply this:

- 1 - Search the Scriptures
- 2 - Keep the Commandments
- 3 - Ask in Faith

(Bruce R. McConkie, *BYU-Speeches*, [How to get Personal Revelation](#), October 11, 1966)

52 – For Greater Revelation: (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, November 1979 pg. 19-21)

- 1 - Pray Always
- 2 - Live Word of Wisdom
- 3 - Read Scriptures
- 4 - Listen to Parents
- 5 - Listen to Leaders
- 6 - Develop Spiritual Capacities
- 7 - Stay Away from Places that will Interfere with Revelation
- 8 - Learn to Tune Out Static and Interference
- 9 - Avoid the Substitutions/Counterfeits
- 10 - Learn to be Inspired and Directed by the Holy Ghost

Classic Stories on Revelation

53 – “Twenty-three-year-old Tom Monson, relatively new bishop of the Sixth-Seventh Ward in the Temple View Stake, was uncharacteristically restless as the stake priesthood leadership meeting progressed. He had the distinct impression that he should leave the meeting immediately and drive to the Veterans’ Hospital high up on the Avenues of Salt Lake City. Before leaving home that night he had received a telephone call informing him that an older member of his ward was ill and had been admitted to the hospital for care. Could the bishop, the caller wondered, find a moment to go by the hospital sometime and give a blessing? The busy young leader explained that he was just on his way to a stake meeting but that he certainly would be pleased to go by the hospital as soon as the meeting was concluded.

Now the prompting was stronger than ever: ‘Leave the meeting and proceed to the hospital at once.’ But the stake president himself was speaking at the pulpit! It would be most discourteous to stand in the middle of the presiding officer’s message, make one’s way over an entire row of brethren, and then exit the building altogether. Painfully he waited out the final moments of the stake president’s message, then bolted for the door even before the benediction had been pronounced.

Running the full length of the corridor on the fourth floor of the hospital, the young bishop saw a flurry of activity outside the designated room. A nurse stopped him and said, ‘Are you Bishop Monson?’

‘Yes,’ was the anxious reply.

‘I’m sorry,’ she said. ‘The patient was calling your name just before he passed away.’

Fighting back the tears, Thomas S. Monson turned and walked back into the night. He vowed then and there that he would never again fail to act upon a prompting from the Lord. He would acknowledge the impressions of the Spirit when they came, and he would follow wherever they led him, ever to be ‘on the Lord’s errand.’”

Revelation

(Jeffrey R. Holland, *Ensign*, February 1986, 'President Thomas S. Monson: Man of Action, Man of Faith, Always 'on the Lord's Errand,'', pg. 11)

54 – “During my life I have had many experiences of being guided in what I should do and in being protected from injury and also from evil. The Lord’s protecting care has shielded me from the evil acts of others and has also protected me from surrendering to my own worst impulses. I enjoyed that protection one warm summer night on the streets of Chicago. I have never shared this experience in public. I do so now because it is a persuasive illustration of my subject.

My wife, June, had attended a ward officers’ meeting. When I came to drive her home, she was accompanied by a sister we would take home on our way. She lived in the nearby Woodlawn area, which was the territory of a gang called the Blackstone Rangers.

I parked at the curb outside this sister’s apartment house and accompanied her into the lobby and up the stairs to her door. June remained in the car on 61st Street. She locked all of the doors, and I left the keys in the ignition in case she needed to drive away. We had lived on the south side of Chicago for quite a few years and were accustomed to such precautions.

Back in the lobby, and before stepping out into the street, I looked carefully in each direction. By the light of a nearby streetlight, I could see that the street was deserted except for three young men walking by. I waited until they were out of sight and then walked quickly toward our car.

As I came to the driver’s side and paused for June to unlock the door, I saw one of these young men running back toward me. He had something in his right hand, and I knew what it would be. There was no time to get into the car and drive away before he came within range.

Fortunately, as June leaned across to open the door, she glanced through the back window and saw this fellow coming around the end of the car with a gun in his hand. Wisely, she did not unlock the door. For the next two or three minutes, which seemed like an eternity, she was a horrified spectator to an event happening at her eye level, just outside the driver’s window.

The young man pushed the gun against my stomach and said, ‘Give me your money.’ I took the wallet out of my pocket and showed him it was empty. I wasn’t even wearing a watch I could offer him because my watchband had broken earlier that day. I offered him some coins I had in my pocket, but he growled a rejection.

‘Give me your car keys,’ he demanded. ‘They are in the car,’ I told him. ‘Tell her to open the car,’ he replied. For a moment I considered the new possibilities that would present, and then refused. He was furious. He jabbed me in the stomach with his gun and said, ‘Do it, or I’ll kill you.’

Although this event happened twenty-two years ago, I remember it as clearly as if it were yesterday. I read somewhere that nothing concentrates the mind as wonderfully as having someone stand in front of you with a deadly weapon and tell you he intends to kill you.

When I refused, the young robber repeated his demands, this time emphasizing them with an angrier tone and more motion with his gun. I remember thinking that he probably wouldn’t shoot me on purpose, but if he wasn’t careful in the way he kept jabbing that gun into my stomach, he might shoot me by mistake. His gun looked like a cheap one, and I was nervous about its firing mechanism.

‘Give me your money.’ ‘I don’t have any.’ ‘Give me your car keys.’ ‘They’re in the car.’ ‘Tell her to open the car.’ ‘I won’t do it.’ ‘I’ll kill you if you don’t.’ ‘I won’t do it.’

Inside the car June couldn’t hear the conversation, but she could see the action with the gun. She agonized over what she should do. Should she unlock the door? Should she honk the horn? Should she drive away? Everything she considered seemed to have the possibility of making matters worse, so she just waited and prayed. Then a peaceful feeling came over her. She felt it would be all right.

Then, for the first time, I saw the possibility of help. From behind the robber, a city bus approached. It stopped about twenty feet away. A passenger stepped off and scurried away. The driver looked directly at me, but I could see that he was not going to offer any assistance.

While this was happening behind the young robber, out of his view, he became nervous and distracted. His gun wavered from my stomach until its barrel pointed slightly to my left. My arm was already partly raised, and

Revelation

with a quick motion I could seize the gun and struggle with him without the likelihood of being shot. I was taller and heavier than this young man, and at that time of my life was somewhat athletic. I had no doubt that I could prevail in a quick wrestling match if I could get his gun out of the contest.

Just as I was about to make my move, I had a unique experience. I did not see anything or hear anything, but I knew something. I knew what would happen if I grabbed that gun. We would struggle, and I would turn the gun into that young man's chest. It would fire, and he would die. I also understood that I must not have the blood of that young man on my conscience for the rest of my life.

I relaxed, and as the bus pulled away I followed an impulse to put my right hand on his shoulder and give him a lecture. June and I had some teenage children at that time, and giving lectures came naturally.

'Look here,' I said. 'This isn't right. What you're doing just isn't right. The next car might be a policeman, and you could get killed or sent to jail for this.'

With the gun back in my stomach, the young robber replied to my lecture by going through his demands for the third time. But this time his voice was subdued. When he offered the final threat to kill me, he didn't sound persuasive. When I refused again, he hesitated for a moment and then stuck the gun in his pocket and ran away. June unlocked the door, and we drove off, uttering a prayer of thanks. We had experienced the kind of miraculous protection illustrated in the Bible stories I had read as a boy." (Dallin H. Oaks, *Ensign*, November 1992, pg. 40)