

Priesthood

03/06

“Whenever men can find out the will of God and find an administrator legally authorized from God, there is the kingdom of God; but where these are not, the kingdom of God is not. All the ordinances, systems, and administrations on the earth are of no use to the children of men, unless they are ordained and authorized of God; for nothing will save a man but a legal administrator; for none others will be acknowledged either by God or angels.” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 274)

Priesthood Defined

01 – “The priesthood is the power and authority of God delegated to men on earth to act in all things pertaining to the salvation of men. It is the means whereby the Lord acts through men to save souls. Without this priesthood power, men are lost.” (Spencer W. Kimball, *TSWK*, pg. 494)

02 – “If anybody wants to know what the priesthood of the Son of God is, it is the law by which the worlds are, were, and will continue for ever and ever. It is that system which brings worlds into existence and peoples them, gives them their revolutions—their days, weeks, months, years, their seasons and times and by which they are rolled up as a scroll, as it were, and go into a higher state of existence;” (Brigham Young, *JD*, 15:127-128)

03 – “The question, ‘What is Priesthood?’ has often been asked me. I answer, it is the rule and government of God, whether on earth, or in the heavens; and it is the only legitimate power, the only authority that is acknowledged by Him to rule and regulate the affairs of His kingdom. When every wrong thing shall be put right, and all usurpers shall be put down, when he whose right it is to reign shall take the dominion, then nothing but the Priesthood will bear rule; it alone will sway the scepter of authority in heaven and on earth, for this is the legitimacy of God.” (John Taylor, *JD*, 1:224)

04 – “This, then, is true Priesthood—to be images of the living God, exhibiting in our characteristic his brightness and his strength; to be girt and endowed with the purity of his nature; to be unsullied in heart and mind; to stand by the strength of redeeming, saving qualities; to bless and bless, and bless again, notwithstanding ingratitude in some, building, sustaining, and protecting all the time; to fight all spirits of division and all principles of death; to help the weak, the down-trodden, and the helpless, till helping becomes our natural food, working on all principles that yield nourishment, support, and strength, till our very presence is as the sun, cheering and blessing all. So shall God increase within us, refreshing our own spirits, and watering all around. And the characteristics of the holy Priesthood will grow out from us like the branches of a fruitful tree that yield shelter, shield, and fruit.

Let a man do this, and he shall be a Priest indeed. His authority shall be like a two-edged sword. It shall be confirmed on him for all eternity; for God shall love him and shall bless him. His heart shall increase in richness, and his mind shall grow in strength. No good thing shall be withheld from him. He shall save and gain influence over the hearts of men. He shall be as God among his own; and they shall feel the attributes that live within him, till their hearts are stolen from them and linked to him for ever. So shall he gain dominion, and increase in strength, and be really, truly, and eternally a representative of the Most High.” (E.T.L. Harrison, *Millennial Star*, 20:643-644, October 9, 1858)

Priesthood: Past - Present - Future

Premortal Priesthood - (Alma 13:2-5, 12; Jeremiah 1:5; Abraham 3:22-23; D&C 84:22)

05 – “Every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of the world was ordained to that very purpose in the Grand Council of heaven before this world was.” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 365)

06 – “We received the priesthood first in the premortal existence and then again as mortals.” (Bruce R.

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McConkie, *Ensign*, May 1982, pg. 32)

07 – “With regard to the holding of the priesthood in the preexistence, I will say that there was an organization there just as well as an organization here, and men there held authority. Men chosen to positions of trust in the spirit world held the priesthood.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *CR*, October 1966, pg. 84)

08 – “It is said that without the Melchisedek Priesthood no man can look upon the face of God and live. And yet, Joseph Smith, when a boy of fourteen years, gazed upon the Father and the Son, and it was nine years before he held the priesthood in the flesh. I once asked President Lorenzo Snow concerning this matter: ‘Why is it, if a man without the Melchisedek Priesthood cannot look God’s face and live, that Joseph Smith could see the Father and the Son, and live, when he held no priesthood at all?’ President Snow replied: ‘Joseph did hold the priesthood; he came with it into the world.’ I believed it before he said it, but I wanted him to say it first. Joseph Smith, as much as any prophet that ever lived, was ordained a prophet before he came into this mortal life. He held the Melchisedek Priesthood in the spirit, when he came here, or he could never have received what he did from God. And these men who have followed in his footsteps are spirits of the same class. The Prophet Joseph declared that every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of this earth, was ordained to that very purpose before the world was.’

Then I ask you again, brethren and sisters, can you afford to treat lightly these men, these representatives of God, these ambassadors from the courts of heaven? And I say to those who are attacking and assailing them, in what plight will you stand, at the day of judgment, when it is said unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these, my servants, ye did it unto me? Amen.” (Orson F. Whitney, *CR*, October 1905, pg. 93)

Perpetual Priesthood - (Moses 6:7; D&C 84:17)

09 – “Moreover, the Lord, of necessity, has kept authorized servants on the earth bearing the priesthood from the days of Adam to the present time; in fact, there has never been a moment from the beginning that there were not men on the earth holding the Holy Priesthood. Even in the days of apostasy, and apostasy has occurred several times, the Lord never surrendered this earth and permitted Satan to have complete control. Even when the great apostasy occurred following the death of the Savior’s apostles, our Father in heaven held control and had duly authorized servants on the earth to direct his work and to check, to some extent at least, the ravages and corruption of the evil powers. These servants were not permitted to organize the Church nor to officiate in the ordinances of the gospel, but they did check the advances of evil as far as the Lord deemed it necessary.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 2:45)

10 – “If the power of the priesthood were not upon the earth, the adversary would have freedom to roam and reign without restraint. There would be no gift of the Holy Ghost to direct and enlighten us; no prophets to speak in the name of the Lord; no temples where we could make sacred, eternal covenants; no authority to bless or baptize, to heal or comfort. Without the power of the priesthood, ‘the whole earth would be utterly wasted’. There would be no light, no hope—only darkness.” (Robert D. Hales, *Ensign*, November 1995, pg. 32)

11 – “I believe there has never been a moment of time since the creation but what there has been someone holding the priesthood on the earth to hold Satan in check.” (Joseph Fielding Smith; Harold B. Lee, CES address, The Place of the Living Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, July 8, 1964)

12 – “It is my faith that the gospel plan has always been here, that his priesthood has always been on the earth, and that it will continue to be so until the end comes.” (J. Reuben Clark; Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places*, pg. 161-162)

Ancient Patriarchs - (Moses 6:67-68; D&C 107:40-54; Abraham 1:2; D&C 84:6-16; BD 657-658)

13 – “Now with regard to the Priesthood. We have been found fault with sometimes because we profess to have the Priesthood. Let me say to this congregation that our Heavenly Father performs all His works—the creation of worlds, the redemption of worlds—by the power of the Eternal Priesthood. And no man on the earth, **from**

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the days of Father Adam to the present time, has ever had power to administer in any of the ordinances of life and salvation only by the power of the Holy Priesthood. **You will find this to be the case in the whole history of the Prophets of God.**" (Wilford Woodruff, *JD*, 24:244-245)

14 – "This, then is the nature of the, Priesthood; every man holding the Presidency of his dispensation, and one man holding the Presidency of them all, even **Adam**; and Adam receiving his Presidency and authority from the Lord..." (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 169)

15 – "The Priesthood was first given to **Adam**; he obtained the First Presidency, and held the keys of it from generation to generation. He obtained it in the Creation, before the world was formed, as in (Genesis 1:26-28). He had dominion given him over every living creature. **He is Michael the Archangel, spoken of in the Scriptures. Then to Noah, who is Gabriel: he stands next in authority to Adam in the Priesthood**; he was called of God to this office, and was the father of all living in this day, and to him was given the dominion. These men held keys first on earth, and then in heaven." (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 157)

16 – "And, again, 'By faith **Abel** offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead, yet speaketh.' (Hebrews 11:4) How doth he yet speak? Why he magnified the Priesthood which was conferred upon him, and died a righteous man, and therefore has become an angel of God by receiving his body from the dead, **holding still the keys of his dispensation**; and was sent down from heaven unto Paul to minister consoling words, and to commit unto him a knowledge of the mysteries of godliness." (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 169)

17 – "From this definite account of driving the 'nations apart, when the ancient hills did bow,' all reflecting minds may judge that man was scattered over the whole face of the earth: And with the superior knowledge of men like Noah, **Shem, (who was Melchisedec)** and Abram, the father of the faithful, three contemporaries, holding the keys of the highest order of the priesthood: connecting the creation, and fall; memorizing the righteousness of Enoch; and glorying in the construction of the ark for the salvation of a world; still retaining the model and pattern of that ark, than which a great, ah, we may say, half so great a vessel has never been built since; for another ark, be it remembered, with such a ponderous living freight will never be prepared as a vessel of mercy by command of Jehovah: That was so perfectly built as to brave the fury of the elements a year: and with the image of the tower whose peering top reached the sky in daring magnificence; and with that mighty combination of intellect, when the whole earth was of one language, and the plains of Shinar the capitol, with all these and thousands of others, — where is the man so self biased for his own age, as to wonder who peopled the ruinous cities of the south, or reared the time defying mounds of the north?" (Times and Seasons, Vol. 5, p.746) (*Ensign*, November 1973, pg. 15-16)

18 – "**You start with the Lord Jesus, and then you have Adam and Noah. Thereafter the dispensation heads. Then you step down appreciably, and come to prophets and apostles, to the elders of Israel, and to the wise and the good.... Every prophet is a witness for Christ; every dispensation head is a reveler of Christ for his day; and every other prophet or apostle who comes is a reflection and an echo and an exponent of the dispensation head. All such come to echo to the world and to expound and unfold what God has revealed through the man who was appointed for that era to give his eternal word to the world. Such is the dispensation concept.**" (Bruce R. McConkie, *CES-Sperry Symposium*, (BYU) 1984)

Present Prophets - (D&C 86:8-10; D&C 13:1; D&C 18:heading; D&C 27:5-13; Ensign June 1979, pg. 75-76)

19 – "This saying [D&C 86:8-10] does not mean that the Priesthood has come down from olden times by lineage from generation to generation, for there was a great apostasy intervening between the days of their fathers who held the Priesthood and these elders unto whom this revelation was given. But, since they were of the House of Israel, and therefore descendants of Abraham, they were lawful heirs to the Priesthood according to the covenant made with Abraham, and the Priesthood which they held had come down to them from them of old who held it." (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Church History and Modern Revelation*, 2:120-121)

20 – "**The keys of the kingdom are the power, right, and authority to preside over the kingdom of God on**

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earth (church) and to direct all of its affairs.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *MD*, pg. 411)

21 – “What is a key? It is the right or privilege which belongs to and comes with the priesthood to have communication with God!” (Joseph F. Smith, *GD*, pg. 142)

22 – “The sacrifice of animals will be done to complete the restoration when the temple spoken of is built; at the beginning of the millennium, or in the restoration, blood sacrifices will be performed long enough to complete the fulness of the restoration in this dispensation. Afterwards sacrifice will be of some other character.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *DS*, 3:94)

23 – “Offering is the book of our dead.” (Spencer W. Kimball, *Ensign*, January 1977, pg. 7)

Future Priesthood -

24 – “I say to the brethren and sisters—you have your appointment; the Lord has raised up these Elders of Israel, and I can prove from the Book of Doctrine and Covenants that you received the Priesthood from eternity, and your lives have been hid with Christ in God, and you knew it not. You are literally and lawfully heirs of the Priesthood through the lineage of your fathers, and that Priesthood will continue throughout eternity, therefore you have received your appointment.” (Wilford Woodruff, *JD*, 18:120-121)

Purposes of the Priesthood

(D&C 84:19-24)

25 – “It is called in the Scriptures, the ‘everlasting priesthood, without beginning of days or end of years,’ **and that those who have it, administer not only in this world, but in the world which is to come;** and it is the privilege of those who have it, to come, as the Scriptures say, ‘to the general assembly and Church of the first born, which are written in heaven, to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, unto Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.’ It is this principle spoken of in the Scriptures that brings life and immortality to light, that enables mankind, when living according to its laws,

1. to overcome the powers of darkness,
2. to combat successfully with the errors of the world,
3. to triumph over evil of every kind,
4. to subdue the world, the flesh and the devil, through the aid, guidance, power and spirit of God;
5. to come out triumphant and obtain an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens for those that are obedient thereto, and live according to its requirements. It is in view of this, and of the strength and power and communication with God that the Priesthood is imparted to man, and it is that which, according to the Scriptures,
6. ‘brings life and immortality to light;’
7. and men in the possession of these principles know and understand their relationship to God, unto the eternities that were and unto the eternities that are to come, bringing life and immortality to light;
8. it chaseth away darkness, confusion, mystery and doubt and uncertainty;
9. it draws aside the veil of the eternal world, enabling men, who are in possession of it to comprehend their standing and relationship to God, to each other, to the past, present and future, and to all intelligent beings that ever have existed, that now exist, or that will exist;
10. hence this principle is given to men to lead them in the paths of life,
11. to instruct and prepare them for that celestial glory where God the Father dwells, and Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and those of the holy Priesthood who have lived before in different ages, who exist

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now and who will exist throughout the eternities that are to come.

12. It places us in relationship to all these beings, and we feel that we are one with God, one with Jesus, one with the ancient Apostles, Prophets and Patriarchs, one with the men of God that have had the holy Priesthood in the different ages of time, and expect to be one with them in the eternal worlds. We should also be one in accomplishing the purposes of God pertaining to the earth whereon we live.” (John Taylor, *JD*, 19:78-79)

26 – “The Melchizedek Priesthood is the channel through which all knowledge, doctrine, the plan of salvation, and every important matter is revealed from heaven.” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 166-167)

27 – “All of the holy prophets and righteous men of old held the holy Melchizedek Priesthood. This ‘priesthood continueth in the church of God in all generations, and is without beginning of days or end of years... 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.’ God is known in and through and because of the priesthood; without it he would remain unknown. Through the priesthood the Holy Ghost is given to men, which Comforter is sent forth to bear record of the Father and the Son; also, through the priesthood men are able to progress in spiritual things until they gain personal communion with Deity. ‘Therefore, in the ordinances thereof,’ the revelation continues, ‘the power of godliness is manifest. 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.’ **That is to say, in and through the holy priesthood, including all the laws and rites that go with it, the power of godliness or in other words the power of righteousness, is brought to pass in the lives of men.** Without these priesthood laws and powers, God’s power and glory would not be revealed to man on earth. Without them they would not see the face of God, for if they did, his glory would destroy them. Sinful men cannot see the face of God and live. (JST Exodus 33:20).” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Promised Messiah*, pg. 588-589)

28 – Oath and Covenant of the Melchizedek Priesthood:

Is entered into by covenant - however no in the case of the Aaronic Priesthood
(Joseph Fielding Smith, *DS*, 3:141)

29 – Oath and Covenant of the Melchizedek Priesthood:

Oath - The part of God
Covenant - The part of Man
(Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, February 1993, pg. 9)

30 – Oath and Covenant of the Melchizedek Priesthood:

The breaking of such covenant results in the loss to the right of the Priesthood in the here after...hence exaltation, not in perdition. (Joseph Fielding Smith, *DS*, 3:141)

The stern warning to all who hold this priesthood:

1. Give diligent heed to the words of eternal life. (vs. 43)
2. Live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God. (vs. 44)

31 – “On one occasion, President Hugh B. Brown testified that President David O. McKay had been sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of his body. And, he added, ‘Some of the rest of us are better off today than we were many years ago so far as physical health is concerned—and we attribute that fact to [the Lord’s] blessing.’

Many of us have felt the influence of this ‘**renewal promise.**’ Without it, scores of our assignments might have gone unfinished.” (Carlos E. Asay, *Ensign*, November 1985, pg. 44)

32 – “I believe that is true. I think that men and boys who magnify their callings in the priesthood have a change wrought in their bodies. This morning while President Lee was talking in the welfare meeting, he told about someone, some stranger, who saw President McKay and said to him, ‘Are you a prophet of God?’ President McKay’s answer was, ‘You look into my face and get the answer.’” (Marion G. Romney, *Ensign*, July 1972, pg. 98)

Power in the Priesthood

(D&C 84:33; D&C 121: 34-36)

33 – To **magnify** one’s calling is to:

... learn what one’s duty is and then to perform the service that pertains to it. (Thomas S. Monson, *Ensign*, May 1986, pg. 38)

34 – **“We speak loosely of magnifying our priesthood, but what the revelations speak of is magnifying our callings in the priesthood...”** (Joseph Fielding Smith, *CR*, October 1970, pg. 91)

35 – **“All those who are ordained unto this priesthood are made like unto the Son of God, abiding a priest continually, that is, if they are faithful and true.”** (Joseph Smith; Joseph Fielding Smith, *CR*, October 1970, pg. 92)

36 – **“If you do not magnify your calling, God will hold you responsible for those you might have saved, had you done your duty.” “And who of us can afford to be responsible for the delay of eternal life of a human soul.”** (John Taylor, *CR*, July 7, 1878; John Taylor; Thomas S. Monson, *Ensign*, May 1990, pg. 48)

37 – **“One breaks the priesthood covenant by transgressing commandments—but also leaving undone his duties. According, to break this covenant one needs only do nothing.”** (Spencer W. Kimball, *TSWK*, pg. 498)

38 – **“I cannot see how a priesthood bearer can willfully refuse to do home teaching without violating the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood.”** (Marion G. Romney, *Ensign*, July 1988, pg. 78)

39 – **“The unmagnified calling leaves so many untouched. Someone else is sadly stranded when a calling is unmagnified: ourselves! Lucifer is not the only one who must live with what might have been.”** (Neal A. Maxwell, *Deposition of a Disciple*, pg. 95)

40 – **“Is it not enough to receive the priesthood and then sit back passively and wait until someone prods us into activity. When we receive the priesthood we have the obligation to becoming actively and anxiously engaged in promoting the cause of righteousness in the earth.”** (Ezra Taft Benson, *Improvement Era*, November 1948, pg. 760)

41 – **“It should be noted, however, that the mere fact that a man holds the priesthood isn’t enough in and of itself to give him any kind of authority.”** (M. Russell Ballard, *Our Search for Happiness*, pg. 61)

42 – **Authority = Ordination = Called**

Power = Righteousness = Chosen

(Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, November 1981, pg. 31, Joseph Fielding Smith, *CR*, October 1945, pg. 97)

43 – **“Truly, there is power in the priesthood—power to do all things!**

If the world itself was created by the power of the priesthood, surely that same power can move mountains and control the elements.

If one-third of the hosts of heaven were cast down to earth by the power of the priesthood, surely that same power can put at defiance the armies of nations or stay the fall of atomic bombs.

If all men shall be raised from mortality to immortality by the power of the priesthood, surely that same power can cure the diseased and the dying and raise the dead.

Truly there is power in the priesthood—a power which we seek to acquire to use, a power which we devoutly pray may rest upon us and upon our posterity forever.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Ensign*, May 1982, pg. 34)

Priesthood: A Call to Teach - Privilege and Responsibility

(Alma 13:6; Jacob 1:19, 2:2; D&C 103:7-11)

44 – “Priesthood and motherhood are the perfect partnership!” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Neal A. Maxwell Quote Book*, pg. 218)

45 – “After all that has been said, the greatest and most important duty is to preach the Gospel.” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 112)

46 – “Our most important responsibility” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *DS*, 2:145)

47 – “Our first responsibility is to teach.” (Erastus Snow, *JD*, 23:183)

48 – “In our preexistent state, in the day of the great council, we made a certain agreement with the Almighty. The Lord proposed a plan, conceived by him. We accepted it. Since the plan is intended for all men, we become parties to the salvation of every person under that plan. We agreed, right then and there, to be not only saviours for ourselves but measurably, saviours for the whole human family. We went into a partnership with the Lord. The working out of the plan became then not merely the Father's work, and the Saviour's work, but also our work. The least of us, the humblest, is in partnership with the Almighty in achieving the purpose of the eternal plan of salvation.” (John A. Widtsoe, *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, October 1934; Melchizedek Priesthood Personal Study Guide – A Course of Study for Priesthood Quorums, 1967:87)

49 – “The Lord has reposed in us the most sacred trust given to men. We must not fail him. We must be men of integrity. Our individual exaltation depends upon our proving to the Lord that we will at all hazards and The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that absolute integrity must precede the promise of eternal life. He said: ‘After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of sins and receives the Holy Ghost,... then let him continue to humble himself before the God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and living by every word of God, and the Lord will soon say unto him, Son, thou shalt be exalted.’ **This promise is to come, however, only after ‘the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve Him at all hazards,’**(Joseph Smith, HC, 3:380).” (Marion G. Romney, *Learning For The Eternities*, pg. 191-192)

50 – “The privilege of holding the priesthood, which is the power and authority to act in God’s name, is a great blessing and privilege and one that carries with it equally great obligations and responsibilities.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, November 1986, pg. 45)

51 – “Many of you are attempting to justify yourselves...and unfortunately there are also parents who side with you in your justification...They say, ‘My son is going to be a great lawyer, or doctor, or star athlete. He can’t interrupt his studies to be gallivanting out in the world for two years. Let someone else’s son do that. My son is special.’ If I could speak separately to each of you young men and your parents who so justify, I would say with all the power of speech I could generate; *Just who do you think you are?* What right do you have to match your wisdom with that of God, who through His prophets has issued a firm decree, a solemn mandate, that the restored gospel must be declared to all the world...*This means you!*” (William R. Bradford, *Ensign*, November 1981 pg. 50)

52 – “A mission is not a causal thing—it is not an alternate program of the church. Neither is a mission a matter of choice, any more than tithing is a choice, any more than Sacrament Meeting is a choice, any more than the Word of Wisdom is a choice. Of course, we have our agency, and the Lord has given us choices. We can do as we please. We can go on a mission or we can remain home. BUT, every normal young man is as much obligated to go on a mission as he is to pay his tithing, attend his meetings, keep the Sabbath day holy, and keep his life spotless and clean. *Can you accept that?*” (Spencer W. Kimball, *CES address*, 1975)

Priesthoods and Positions

(D&C 107:4; D&C 20:38-60)

53 – “All Priesthood is Melchizedek.” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 180)

54 – PROPER USE OF TITLES OF THE PRIESTHOOD

“There is also another point in this connection to which attention may profitably be drawn. **It is the too frequent use in the ordinary conversation of the Saints of the titles ‘Prophet, Seer and Revelator,’ ‘Apostles,’ etc. These titles are too sacred to be used indiscriminately in our common talk.** There are occasions when they are quite proper and in place, but in our every-day conversations it is sufficient honor to address any brother holding the Melchizedek Priesthood as elder. The term elder is a general one, applying to all those who hold the higher Priesthood, whether they be apostles, patriarchs, high priests or seventies; and to address a brother as Apostle So-and-So, or Patriarch Such-a-One, in the common talk of business, and the like, is using titles too sacred to be in place on such occasions.” (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, pg. 163)

55 – “The term ‘elder,’ which is applied to all holders of the Melchizedek Priesthood, means a **defender of the faith**. That is our prime responsibility and calling. Every holder of the Melchizedek Priesthood is to be a defender of the faith.” (Harold B. Lee, *Improvement Era*, June 1970, pg. 63)

Offices in the ‘Higher Priesthood’

Elder (Acts 14:23),

Seventy (Luke 10:1),

High Priest (Hebrews 5:10),

Patriarch (Ephesians 4:11),

Apostle (Ephesians 4:11); (D&C 107:5-8)

Offices in the ‘Lesser Priesthood’

Deacon (Phillippians 1:1),

Teacher (Ephesians 4:11),

Priest (Acts 6:7),

Bishop (Ephesians 4:11); (D&C 107:13-14)

Priesthood and Perdition

(JST Matthew 12:26-27; Hebrews 6:4-6; D&C 76:25-49)

56 – “Now, brethren, I will not take more of your time, but at the risk of repetition, I wanted to mention those two items again to you tonight. It is a tremendous responsibility to bear the Holy Priesthood. I wish all of you—perhaps all did not—had heard what President Joseph Fielding Smith told us yesterday, something I have long believed, and I was glad to have sanction for my belief. **He said in substance that there will be no Sons of Perdition who do not hold the Priesthood.** I have believed that for years because I do not think that the Lord in his mercy would ever condemn a man to that indescribable penalty of being put out entirely from the Kingdom and from all grace unless that man knew that Jesus was the Christ, unless he knew the power of the Christ, and he could only know that, I think by holding the Priesthood. I believe that in the main that can be said to be true—that only men who hold the Priesthood of God stand in danger of that terrible penalty of being classed as outcasts.” (Stephen L. Richards, *CR*, October 1958, pg. 86)

57 – “**I think I am safe in saying that no man can become a Son of Perdition until he has known the light. Those who have never received the light are not to become Sons of Perdition.** They will be punished if they rebel against God They will have to pay the price of their sinning, but it is only those who have the light **through the priesthood** and through the power of God and through their membership in the Church who will be banished forever from his influence into outer darkness to dwell with the devil and his angels. That is a punishment that will not come to those who have never known the truth. Bad as they may suffer, and awful as their punishment may be, they are not among that group which is to suffer the eternal death and banishment from all influence concerning the power of God.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *CR*, October 1958, pg. 21)

Particulars on Priesthood

58 – “Answer to the question, Was the Priesthood of Melchizedek taken away when Moses died? All Priesthood is Melchizedek, but there are different portions of 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 had the Melchizedek Priesthood and were ordained by God himself.” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 180-81)

59 – “**MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD ONLY AMONG NEPHITES.** The Nephites did not officiate under the authority of the Aaronic Priesthood. They were not descendants of Aaron, and there were no Levites among them. There is no evidence in the Book of Mormon that they held the Aaronic Priesthood until after the ministry of the resurrected Lord among them, but the Book of Mormon tells us definitely, in many places, that the priesthood which they held and under which they officiated was the Priesthood after the holy order, the order of the Son of God. This higher priesthood can officiate in every ordinance of the gospel, and Jacob and Joseph, for instance, were consecrated priests and teachers after this order.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *DS*, 3:86)

Patterns in the Priesthood

The Pattern from the SLC Temple

“I scarcely ever say much about revelations, of visions, but suffice to say, five years ago last July I was here, and saw in the Spirit the Temple not ten feet from where we have laid the chief corner stone. I have not inquired what kind of a Temple we should build. Why? Because it was represented before me. I have never looked upon that ground, but the vision of it was there. I see it as plainly as if it was in reality before me.” Brigham Young, Groundbreaking Ceremonies, SLC Temple Block, April 6, 1893)

- **Towers**

“There will be three towers on the east...and three towers on the west; the towers on the east representing the Melchizedek Priesthood, those on the west the Aaronic Priesthood. The center towers will be higher than those on the sides and the west tower a little lower than those on the east end.”

The subservience of the Aaronic Priesthood to the Melchizedek is portrayed by the height of the towers—the east center tower is two hundred ten feet tall; the west center tower, two hundred four feet in height. Directly below the east center tower is a row of four upright stars, as well as three stars on each of the other two towers. These stars are not found on the west towers because the Aaronic Priesthood receives its light from the Melchizedek Priesthood.

“The three towers on the east represent the President and his two counselors...” (D&C 107:22)

“There will be three towers on the east, also three similar towers on the west representing the Presiding Bishop and his two counselors.” (D&C 107:15)

All six spires feature twelve pinnacles of finials, six feet high and three feet wide at the base.

“Each tower has a spire and twelve pinnacles emblematic of the...Twelve Apostles and the High Council.”

- **Windows**

Five corner tower windows to the east suggest the five offices of the Melchizedek Priesthood—elder, seventy, high priest, patriarch, apostle.

Four corner tower windows to the west suggest the four offices of the Aaronic Priesthood—deacon, teacher, priest, bishop.

- **Ursa Major, the big dipper**

“On the west center tower may be seen Ursa Major (big dipper) with the Pointers ranging with the North Star [Stella Maris]. (The lost may find their way by aid of the priesthood.”

Seven six-pointed stars illustrate the constellation Ursa Major on the uppermost panel of the west center tower.

Priesthood

60 – “The Big Dipper, with the pointers ranging to the North Star, means that the lost may find their way by the aid of the priesthood.” (Boyd K. Packer, Ensign, August 1993, pg. 9)

“Ursa Major is a ‘witness constellation’ of the pole star; the one star in the heavens that does not appear to move; all other stars rotate around it. For centuries the North Star has been used by mariners and other travelers to fix their course. It is also a symbol recognized throughout human history as depicted the center of time and the revolution of the universe...” (Hugh Nibley, Mormonism and Early Christianity, pg. 367)

- **Number 12**

The Pattern from numbers: **Twelve (Priesthood; Government of God** [God x man 3*4])

- Apostles (Matt. 10:2-4, D&C 107:23)
- Disciples (3 Nephi 19:4)
- Priesthood Quorums (D&C 107:85-89)
- Deacons [12] Teacher [24 / 2*12]
- Priests [48 / 4*12] Elders [96 / 6*12]
- 12 High Council (D&C 107:37)
- 12 sons/tribes of Israel (Gen. 49:28)
- Witnesses of the Book of Mormon
- Government of earth [12 months in a year] (Matt 10:1)
- Witness of Christ’s Birth (Luke 2)
- Judges (Judges 2:16)
- Adam-ondi-Ahman (D&C 27:5-14)
- Spies of Moses (Num. 13:14-16)
- Sides of the Star of David