
Revelation on Priesthood

D&C 84: Introduction

Between September 1832 and December 1833, sixteen revelations were received by the Prophet Joseph Smith in Kirtland, Ohio (D&C 84–98, 101). Of these revelations, D&C 84 has been quoted the most, the reason being it is a revelation on priesthood.

The Prophet Joseph Smith said of the priesthood, “The Priesthood is an everlasting principle, and existed with God from eternity, and will to eternity, without beginning of days or end of years.”¹ By being ordained to the priesthood, a man accepts the covenant of the priesthood and commits to “live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God” (D&C 84:44). The “oath of the priesthood” is the Lord’s solemn promise that “if man does as he promises, then all that the Father hath shall be given unto him.”²

The Lord promises “any man that shall go and preach this gospel of the kingdom and fail not to continue faithful in all things shall not be weary in mind, neither darkened, neither in body, limb, nor joint, and a hair of his head shall not fall to the ground unnoticed. And they shall not go hungry, neither athirst” (D&C 84:80).

Sister Gayle M. Clegg, in her October 2004 general conference address, shared the story of a relative who honored his priesthood by moving forward:

My husband’s great-grandfather Henry Clegg Jr. was a finisher. He joined the Church with his family when the first LDS missionaries went to Preston, England. Henry had a view of his destination in his mind as he and his wife, Hannah, and their two young boys immigrated to Utah.

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¹ Discourse, between circa 26 June and circa 4 August 1839–A, as Reported by Willard Richards, 63. Joseph Smith Papers.

² Joseph Fielding Smith, “Magnifying Our Callings in the Priesthood,” in Conference Report, April 1970, 58–59.

While crossing the plains, Hannah contracted cholera and died. She was laid to rest in an unmarked grave. The company then moved on, and at six in the evening, Henry's youngest son also died. Henry retraced his steps to Hannah's grave, placed his young son in his wife's arms, and reburied the two of them together. Henry then had to return to the wagon train, now five miles away. Suffering from cholera himself, Henry described his condition as being at death's door while realizing he still had a thousand miles to walk. Amazingly he continued forward, putting one foot in front of the other. He stopped writing in his journal for several weeks after losing his dear Hannah and little son. I was struck with the words he used when he did start writing again: "Still moving."³

³ Sister Gayle M. Clegg, "The Finished Story," *Ensign*, May 2004.