THE OATH AND COVENANT OF THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD
An Exegesis

by

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PREFACE

I began researching this article in the early 1970s and wrote a preliminary version of it in 1977, while I was a law student. In 1983 I revised it, adding some notes and changing the text for clarity. In late 1987 I prepared a shorter version for publication in Sunstone Magazine, September 1987, Vol. 11.5, p. 30-37. That published version could not, because of space considerations, contain many of the notes I had originally included, so Sunstone offered this longer version to interested readers for $10.00.

There are discrepancies between the two versions. The shorter, more recent published version contains my more mature conclusions, while the older, longer version contains a better statement of my sources, evidence, and notes.

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WHAT IS THE OATH AND COVENANT OF THE PRIESTHOOD
AND BY WHOM AND TO WHOM IS IT MADE?

To the first of these three questions, the following answers are usually given:

1. The terms "oath" and "covenant" are synonymous and refer to a two-party contract between God and an individual.

2. The terms "oath" and "covenant" are not synonymous, but refer instead to the two sides of a bilateral agreement in which a man's promise (i.e., the "covenant") is given in exchange for God's promise (i.e., the "oath")—or, perhaps, vice versa (man makes the "oath" and God makes the "covenant") it doesn't seem to matter. This contractual arrangement is entered into at the time an individual is ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood. The essence of the promises are that the man will keep all of God's commands and God will give to him priesthood power. Such a contract is entered into generally by all Melchizedek Priesthood bearers at the time they are ordained.

3. The "oath and covenant" does not refer to a contract at all. Both terms refer to a man's promise to God that he will obey all of God's commandments and thereby qualify himself to receive "all that [the] Father hath." This promise is made at the time he receives the Melchizedek Priesthood. If the man fails to keep the commandments, he is guilty of breaking the oath and covenant which he made.

4. The "oath and covenant" does not refer to a man's promise to God, but to God's promise to a man of "all that [the] Father hath": this "oath and covenant" is given on the condition of and as an inducement for a man's future obedience to God's commandments.

One of the chief purposes of this article is to demonstrate that none of these explanations of the phrase "oath and covenant" is true.

Covenants and Oaths. Oaths and covenants are not the same, either in form or purpose. An "oath" is a ritual of swearing or attestations, whereas, a covenant is usually a promise. It takes two or more promises to make a modern contract. However, under
ancient rules of English law, a person could bind himself as if
by contract by making a single, one-sided covenant or promise and
then sealing it with an oath. That is, he would make a promise
to do something or to refrain from doing something, and then he
would go through a ritual ceremony of swearing an oath that he
would keep that promise. The oath and the covenant, then, were
two separate and distinct though related formulas.

Furthermore, the idea that a "covenant" is in every case a
two-party contract is contradicted by numerous authorities. For
example, the Oxford English Dictionary defines covenant variously
as "undertaking," "mutual agreement," "compact," "contract,"
"pledge," "bargain," "promise," and "vow." Notably, however, in
its theological sense, the term "covenant" refers to "an
engagement entered into by the Divine Being with some other being
or person." The nature of this "engagement" is an important
subject of Old and New Testament study. Scholars in this field
tell us that the Hebrew word berit, from which the term
"covenant" is translated, does not refer merely to contracts in
which mutual promises are made and something of value is
bargained-for and given in exchange for something of comparable
value received in return. It refers, instead, to any of three
different types of "engagements:

(1) mutually assumed obligations that create the type
of bilateral contract already mentioned and which is common in
modern business transactions;

(2) one-sided obligations laid on the weaker party by
the stronger, as typified by the Sinai covenant in which God
(as the king or suzerain) bound Israel (God's vassal), but
did not bind himself;14 and
(3) one-sided obligations assumed by one party without expectation of return, as typified by God's covenant with Abraham, in which God bound himself to bless Abraham and his posterity without requiring Abraham to make any promises in return. 15

16 The difference between the Sinai covenant and the Abrahamic covenant is that the latter was bestowed upon a servant as a reward for faithfulness already demonstrated while the former was imposed as an inducement for future loyalty.

The question is, of these three possible arrangements, which is created by the reception of the path and covenant of the Melchizedek Priesthood?

(a) a bilateral contract between God and man?

(b) a unilateral arrangement in which God binds his servant in order to induce him to obey God's commands in the future? or

(c) a unilateral arrangement, like that between God and Abraham, in which God binds himself to bestow blessings on a loyal servant as a reward for his/her faithfulness?

Historical and scriptural writings support the third option and indicate that the first and second are untenable for the following reasons.

First, covenant relationships consisting of mutually assumed obligations, with the implication that man can make business deals with God, played no significant role in the religion of Israel. Second, the idea that man can bargain with God for the blessings of heaven on a quid-pro-quo basis is squarely contradictory to the scriptural teaching that the blessings of heaven are gifts, rather than wages for which man dicker in the cosmic marketplace. Third, any true bilateral agreement between man and God would require (1) that the parties be on a more or less
equal footing and (2) that each party bargain for and give something of value (i.e. "consideration" is the modern legal term) in exchange for something of comparable value in return. Obviously, these two latter elements, necessary in any modern bilateral contract, are impossible in any covenant arrangement between God and man, for man is neither on a parity with God nor is he able to give in return for the blessings of heaven anything of comparable value.

Moreover, as for the oath and covenant's operating to impose obligations on man as an inducement for future faithfulness, such a position has no evidentiary support. On the contrary, rather than being and incentive for future loyalty, the weight of scriptural evidence indicates that the oath and covenant of the priesthood is a reward. It is not conferred upon those who are just entering the ministry, but on those who have been faithful unto the obtaining of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods and the magnifying of their calling, individuals who have been sanctified by the spirit unto the renewing of their bodies and have become the sons of Moses and of Aaron, the seed of Abraham, the church, the kingdom, and the elect of God. In short, the oath and covenant of the priesthood is reserved for those who, as will be shown in greater detail, have demonstrated their complete loyalty to God.

The Oath and Covenant: A One-sided Promise In Which God Binds Himself To Bless A Loyal Servant. It is God who makes both the oath and covenant of the priesthood in order to confer on someone a gratuitous promise, rather than to create either a
bilateral contract or an inducement for future loyalty. This is suggested by the language of D&C 84, itself:

...all that my Father hath shall be given unto him.
And this [i.e., the giving, granting, bestowal, or disposition] is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood. 23

These verses refer to a gift, not a contract. All the "Father hath shall be given unto" to faithful priesthood bearer. Such a gratuitous promise to bestow a gift was binding and enforceable anciently only if the promise was made under oath. Such "promises under seal were binding solely by reason of the impressive formality attached to the execution...neither consideration nor subsequent action in reliance was necessary..."

D&C 84 states that the promise of "all that [the] Father hath" is to be bestowed upon faithful priesthood bearers by the Father. It is He who is to make the covenant and then, according to the ancient formula, He seals it with his own oath as a sign that, although it is but a bare, unilateral promise of a gift, He will be cursed if he breaks it.

That God would swear such an oath to keep His own promise is an unfamiliar theological concept and deserves direct scriptural support. The clearest statement of this idea occurs in the Epistle to the Hebrews:

13. For when God made promise to Abraham, because he [God] could swear by no greater, he swear by himself,
14. Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.
15. And so, after he [Abraham] had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.
16. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife.
17. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath.
18. That by two immutable things [the oath and covenant], in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. 26

Abraham, who had patiently endured his trials, was accounted a suitable candidate to receive the promise of "all that [the] Father hath." And God, wishing to show Abraham and his posterity that this promise was immutable, confirmed it by an oath. In so swearing, since God could swear by no greater person, he swore by himself thus giving Abraham and his posterity the assurance of eternal life, an endless priesthood, and joint-heirship with Christ.

Since man has no basis to bargain for or demand the blessings of heaven, they can be obtained only as a gift. This is so because no individual can pay to God, in the form of goodness, service, or devotion, anything equal to "all that [the] Father hath." However, though God's blessings cannot be earned, they must, nevertheless, be freely received. And this willingness to accept these blessings must be demonstrated by meeting the following preconditions:

(1) submission to the first principles and ordinances of the gospel which create between God and the individual a "Father/son" or "Father/daughter" relationship; 28

(2) endurance in faith and the overcoming of all opposition by the grace of Christ; 29

(3) the reception of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods; 30
(4) the reception of the endowment, marriage sealing, and all other temple ordinances; 31

(5) and the manifestation to God of a heart willing to sacrifice all earthly things in order to be made perfect in Christ Jesus. 32

After Abraham discharged these same preconditions, he obtained the Father's oath and covenant.

The Oath and Covenant Given Only To The Most Faithful. The patriarch Abraham was not the first to receive this blessing, God had previously granted it to others, e.g., Enoch and Melchizedek, and later to Abraham's son Isaac ("and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father") and to Isaac's son Jacob ("and I give thee the blessing of Abraham").

It was, evidently, the intent of God to make this oath and covenant with each descendent of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at Mount Sinai:

And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two other tables like unto the first, and I will write upon them also, the words of the law, according as they were written at the first on the tables which thou brakest; but it shall not be according to the first, for I will take away the priesthood out of their midst; therefore, my holy order, and the ordinances thereof, shall not go before them, for my presence shall not go before them in their midst, lest I destroy them.

But I will give unto them the law as at the first, but it shall be after the law of carnal commandments; for I have sworn in my wrath, that they shall not enter into my presence, into my rest, in the days of their pilgrimage... 38

As a result of unfaithfulness, the greater promises of God were withheld from the House of Israel, as a people; and the law of carnal commandments was given in place of the oath and covenant of the priesthood:
...I will write on the tables the words that were on
the first tables, which thou brakest, save the words of the
everlasting covenant of the holy priesthood, and thou shalt
put [the tables] in the ark [of the covenant].

Whatever words of promise God spoke to Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek,
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were not recorded on the second set of
stone tables Moses brought down from Sinai. In his wrath, God
kept from his people "the holy priesthood...my holy order, and
the ordinances thereof."

For this reason, the House of Israel, because of unfaithfulness,
did not generally receive the words of the everlasting oath
and covenant of the holy priesthood, nor did they become a
"kingdom of priests."

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To answer the first question posed in the article, the
oath and covenant of the priesthood is a gratuitous, unilateral
promise, made by God and sealed by an oath uttered by his own
voice out of the heavens, whereby he promises to bestow upon a
faithful servant the gift of all that He has.
II

TO WHICH PRIESTHOOD DOES THE OATH AND COVENANT BELONG?

When taken together, the available evidence demonstrates that the oath and covenant belongs not to the Melchizedek Priesthood held generally in the Church, but to the fulness of the priesthood held by those who have received all the ordinances of the House of the Lord.

Moreover, the entire context of DC 84 indicates that those who receive the oath and covenant of God are kings and priests who have been sanctified by the reception of the spirit, so that they are spiritually the sons of Moses and of Aaron, the seed of Abraham, the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.

With Which Priesthood Was the Oath and Covenant Associated Anciency? Joseph Smith, in his Inspired Translation of the Bible, included in the Book of Genesis the following passage, not found in the King James Version:

...Melchizedek lifted up his voice and blessed Abram.

Now Melchizedek was a man of faith, who wrought righteousness, and when a child he feared God, and stopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire.

And thus, having been approved of God, he was ordained an high priest after the order of the covenant God made with Enoch.

It being after the order of the Son of God; which order came not by man, nor the will of man, neither by father nor mother; neither by beginning of days nor end of years; but of God;

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

For God having sworn unto Enoch and unto his seed with an oath by himself: that everyone being ordained after this calling should have power, by faith, to break mountains, to divide seas, to dry up waters, to turn them out of their course:
To put at defiance the armies of nations, to divide the earth, to break every band, to stand in the presence of God; to do all things according to his will, according to his command, to subdue principalities and powers; and this by the will of the Son of God which was from before the foundations of the world.

"And it came to pass that God blessed Abram, and gave unto him riches, and honor, and lands for an everlasting possession, according to the covenant which he had made, and according to the blessing wherewith Melchizedek had blessed him."

Several important facts are established by this account:

1. Enoch was called to a calling in the priesthood.

2. This calling was delivered not by man, nor by the will of man, but by the calling of God's own voice.

3. God promised to Enoch by an oath and covenant that, because of his ordination to this calling, he should have power over nature.

4. God also promised to Enoch that any of Enoch's posterity who were ordained unto this calling should likewise have power over nature.

5. Melchizedek, a descendant of Enoch, was ordained unto this calling and was given power over nature.

6. Melchizedek blessed Abraham according to the covenant.

This account leaves unanswered two important questions:

(1) What was the nature of the calling Enoch received and passed down to Melchizedek? and

(2) Did Melchizedek merely bless Abraham or did he, in turn, pass this unnamed calling to him also?

Joseph Smith addressed himself to both these questions. In answering the first he said:

Abraham says to Melchizedek, I believe all that thou hast taught me concerning the priesthood and the coming of
the Son of Man; so Melchizedek ordained Abraham and sent him away. Abraham rejoiced, saying, Now I have a priesthood. 

When Melchizedek blessed Abraham according to the covenant God made with Enoch, he actually conferred upon him a priesthood.

Of this ordination the Abraham account states:

...I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge, and to be a greater follower of righteousness, and to possess a greater knowledge, and to be a father of many nations, a prince of peace, and desiring to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God, I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers.

Abraham was ordained with the right belonging to the fathers, including the right to administer to others the same blessings and authority that he had received himself.

The second question—What was the nature and calling Enoch received and passed down to Melchizedek who, in turn, ordained, Abraham?—was likewise answered by Joseph Smith:

...What was the power of Melchizedek? 'Twas not the Priesthood of Aaron which administers in outward ordinances, and the offering of sacrifices. Those holding the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood are kings and priests of the most High God, holding the keys of power and blessings.

Joseph Smith characterized Melchizedek as a king and priest, while the Inspired Translation of Genesis characterizes him as a "high priest after the order of the covenant God made with Enoch." This is not inconsistent because the term "high priest" can refer to any of three distinct priesthood offices. In the Old Testament the term designates the presiding figure of the Lesser or Aaronic Priesthood; it was the "high priest" of the Aaronic
Order who offered up sacrifices under the law of Moses. As used in the modern Church, the term refers to a member of the high priests' quorum which, President John Taylor explained, was...

instituted for the purpose of qualifying those who shall be appointed standing presidents over the different stakes scattered abroad. A sort of normal school, if you please, to prepare men to preside, to be fathers of the people.54

Brigham Young said:

We have a Quorum of High Priests, and there are a great many of them. They are a local body—they tarry at home; but the Seventies travel and preach; so also do High Priests, when they are called upon. They [i.e., the high priests] possess precisely the same Priesthood that the Seventies and the Twelve and the First Presidency possess [i.e., the Melchizedek Priesthood]; but are they ordained to officiate in all the authority, powers, and keys of this Priesthood? No, they are not. Still, they are High Priests of God; and if they magnify their Priesthood, they will receive at some time all the authority and power that it is possible for man to receive.55

According to Brigham Young, the "high priests" in the Church do not possess the status of Melchizedek because they lack the fulness of authority, power, and keys of the priesthood.

In its third sense, however, the term "high priest" refers to the fulness of the priesthood as held by Jesus, who was also called a "High Priest"... and by Melchizedek, who was a prototype of Christ and a "high priest" of the same order and who, like Christ, was given power over nature. Abraham, who was ordained by Melchizedek, explains that he, too, was ordained a "High Priest"; but far from being merely an office for the purpose of qualifying him to preside or to receive greater authority and keys at some future time, Abraham's high priesthood gave him "the
blessings of the fathers and the right whereto he might administer the same." This office constituted Abraham a "prince of peace" (the title by which Jesus was known), and a "rightful heir," holding the "right belonging to the fathers."

On October 5, 1843, Joseph Smith elaborated on the nature of Melchizedek's high priesthood, explaining that:

...There are three grand principles or orders of priesthood portrayed in this chapter [Hebrews 7].
1st Levitical, which was never able to administer a blessing, but only to bind heavy burdens which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear.
2. Abraham's patriarchal power which is the greatest yet experienced in this church.
3d. That of Melchizedek who had still greater power, even power of an endless life, of which was our Lord Jesus Christ, which also Abraham obtained by the offering of his son Isaac, which was not the power of a prophet nor apostle nor patriarch only, but of King and Priest to God, to open the windows of heaven and pour out the peace and law of endless life to man; and no man can attain to the joint heirship with Jesus Christ without being administered to by one having the same power—and authority of Melchizedek.

"What was the power of Melchizedek?" asked the Prophet rhetorically, and then he answered himself:

'Twas not the Priesthood of Aaron which administers in outward ordinances and the offering of sacrifices. Those holding the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood are kings and priests of the Most High God, holding the keys of power and blessings. In fact, that priesthood is a perfect law of theocracy, and stands as God to give laws to the people, administering endless lives unto the sons and daughters of Adam.

"King and priest" was the office Melchizedek held. It was by the keys and powers of that office that Melchizedek administered the law of the Spirit to the people of Salem and ruled as king. It was by this power that he blessed them with
endless lives. By this power they were translated into heaven to join the City of Enoch. Abraham, who was blessed and ordained by Melchizedek, was likewise raised to this calling, which held the right, belonging to the fathers, to sanctify his people and administer endless lives unto them.

It was to this—the office of king and priest—that the oath and covenant belongs. Said Joseph Smith:

...the Levitical Priesthood...[is] made without an oath; but the Priesthood of Melchizedek is [made] by an oath and covenant.

Therefore, when the Inspired Translation of the Bible speaks of Enoch's posterity being ordained "after this order and calling" by which they "should have power, by faith, to break mountains..." the "order and calling" referred to is the fulness of the priesthood. It is to these kings and priests that God promises the blessing of all that he has "according to the oath and covenant."

The scriptural accounts of God's bestowal of such an oath and covenant are few. But in those that exist, the individuals receiving the oath and covenant (e.g., Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Elijah) can usually be identified as kings and priest, either because they are so denominated or because they are said to be priests "of the holy order of God," "after the order of Enoch," or "blessed with the blessings of Abraham."

To partially answer the second question posed in this article, the oath and covenant, at least in ancient times, "belonged" to the fulness of the Melchizedek priesthood.

With Which Priesthood Is The Oath And Covenant Associated
Today? In D&C 84:35-39, there appear two vague references to "priesthood":

35. And also all they who receive this priesthood receiveth me, saith the Lord.

39. And this according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood.

The priesthood referred to in these verses is the fulness of the priesthood held by kings and priests. Evidence for this view is found in D&C 84, itself,—particularly in verses 35 to 42. But, before examining these verses more closely, it will be helpful to see how these passages fit into the larger context of the revelation containing them. The following outline sketches the contours of D&C 84:

1. Joseph Smith designated D&C 84 a "Revelation on Priesthood." 

2. The revelation was given to six elders of the Church at the time they and an additional four others were ordained to the office of high priest as it is held currently in the Church (v.1).

3. The revelation begins with a prophecy that a temple will be built at New Jerusalem and that the sons of Moses and of Aaron will be filled with God's glory (v.2-5).

4. Then there begins a long digression in which a priesthood genealogy is set forth in order to explain exactly who the sons of Moses and Aaron are (v.6-31).

(a) Part one of this digression sets forth a genealogy explaining how the greater priesthood descended down to Moses (v.18).

(b) Part two of the digression explains that a lesser priesthood was given to Aaron and his posterity (v.19-25).

(c) Part three explains the nature of the rights and powers of the greater priesthood (v.19-25).
(d) Part four explains the nature of the rights and powers of the lesser priesthood associated with Aaron and John the Baptist (v. 26-29).

(e) Part five explains that the offices of elder and bishop are necessary appendages belonging to the greater or high priesthood (v. 29).

(f) Part six of the digression explains that the offices of teacher and deacon are necessary appendages to the lesser priesthood (v. 30).

(5) At the end of the digression, the revelation continues where it left off in verse 5, with a discussion of the sons of Moses and Aaron in the temple of God, being filled with God's glory (v. 31).

(6) The revelation then explains that the sons of Moses and Aaron shall offer sacrifices in the temple (v. 31).

(7) The revelation then promises that these "sons of Moses" and "sons of Aaron" will be filled with the glory of the Lord in the Lord's house, and that these "sons" are "ye," that is, "ye" elders mentioned in the revelation, as well as any others who are sent forth to build up the Church (v. 32).

(8) At this point in the revelation come the verses, here under consideration, regarding the oath and covenant of the Melchizedek Priesthood; they are given apparently to explain how these or any other elders can become the sons of Moses and Aaron (v. 33-42).

In this context, it becomes clear, as the analysis below demonstrates, that it is the fulness of the priesthood to which the "oath and covenant" belongs.

The Two Priesthoods Spoken Of. D&C 94:33 makes reference to the "two priesthood of which I have spoken." These are the two priesthoods referred to at the beginning of the revelation: the greater priesthood (v. 6-17) and the lesser priesthood (v. 18), conferred upon Aaron and his posterity. Since the Aaronic priesthood is not associated with the oath and covenant, it will not be treated further here.

The "greater priesthood" or "Holy Priesthood" spoken of in
these verses was passed down through the following line: Jethro, Caleb, Elihu, Jeremy, Gad, and Esaias. In turn, Esaias had not only been blessed by Abraham, he had also received the priesthood under the hand of God. This reference to the blessing of Abraham, who was a king and priest, and to the reception of the priesthood under God's hand, suggest that it was the fulness of the priesthood that was passed down to Moses from the ancients through this line of kings and priests. These verses further imply that it is the fulness of the priesthood that "...administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God," and that it was the fulness of the priesthood that was taken from the children of Israel in the wilderness when they hardened their hearts against God. This implication is made explicit in Joseph Smith's Inspired Translation of Deuteronomy. Once the fulness of the priesthood was removed, the children of Israel lost the authority and power by which they could enter into the presence of God. For without the fulness of the priesthood, the complete array of temple ordinances and sealings could not be administered, and the Israelites could not enter into the Lord's rest, which is the fulness of his glory.

All this evidences that the "two priesthoods of which I have spoken..." in D&C 84:33 are (1) the Aaronic Priesthood and (2) the Melchizedek Priesthood, not only as held in part by men in the Church, but more particularly as held in fulness by such ancients as Jethro, Caleb, Elihu, Jeremy, Gad, Esaias, and Abraham.
Sanctification. Further evidence of this interpretation is found in the language of D&C 84:33 which states that those who receive the greater priesthood and magnify their calling "are sanctified by the spirit unto the renewing of their bodies."

This comports with the teaching of Alma who said, when speaking of those ordained to the "holy order of God":

Now as I said concerning the holy order of this high priesthood, there were many who were ordained and became high priests of God; and it was on account of their exceeding faith and righteousness before God, they choosing to repent and work righteousness rather than to perish;

Therefore, they were called after this holy order, and were sanctified, and their garments were washed white through the blood of the Lamb.

Now they, after being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, having their garments made white, being pure and spotless before God, could not look upon sin save it were with abhorrence; and there were many, exceeding great many, who were made pure and entered into the rest of the Lord their God.

Yea, humble yourselves even as the people in the days of Melchizedek who was also a high priest after this same order which I have spoken, who also took upon him the high priesthood forever.76

That Alma is speaking of the fulness of the priesthood is clear from his reference to Melchizedek, the king/priest of Salem, whom Alma says was "also a high priest after this same order of which I have spoken." Alma explains that many such kings and priests were ordained and were sanctified and transformed by the spirit so they" could not look upon sin save it were with abhorrence." This same teaching is mentioned in D&C 84: those obtaining and magnifying the fulness of the priesthood are sanctified unto renewal of their bodies. The association of sanctification with the priesthood in D&C 84 evidences that it is the same fulness of priesthood that is being discussed there as was discussed in Alma.
13.

The Sons Of Moses And Of Aaron. The original handwritten manuscript of D&C 84 is not identical to the current published version. In the break between verses 33 and 34, there occurs in the original a slight change that clarifies how an individual may become a son of Moses and of Aaron. There the word "that"—deleted in the modern version—connects the clauses of verses 33 and 34:

...Lord's house whose sons are ye, and also many whom I have called and set forth to build up my church for whoso is faithful unto the obtaining of these two priesthoods/of which I have spoken and the magnifying there calling are sanctified by the spirit/unto the renewing of there bodies that they become the sons of Moses and of Aaron/and the seed of Abraham and the church and kingdom and the elect of God and...79

The original version of this passage makes it clear that becoming a son of Moses and of Aaron, etc., is a direct result of the sanctification process that begins with receiving and magnifying the fulness of the priesthood. It is through sanctification by the spirit of God that an individual ordained to the fulness of 80 the priesthood truly becomes a son of Moses and of Aaron, and is welded into the chain of kings and priests leading through Moses back to Abraham, the father of the faithful.

The Seed Of Abraham. D&C 84:34 further states that one who receives the greater priesthood becomes the "seed of Abraham." The Book of Abraham equates the term "seed of Abraham" with the priesthood:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them
that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood)...shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal.81

A sanctified holder of the fulness of the priesthood is accounted the "seed" of Abraham, holding Abraham's priesthood and the right to bless the families of the earth with the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal.

The Church And Kingdom. D&C 84:34 states that a person who receives the fulness of the priesthood becomes a church and kingdom. John Taylor explained how this is possible:

Thus shall we also become legitimately and by right, through the atonement and adoption, Kings and Priests -- Priests to administer in the holy ordinances pertaining to the endowments and exaltations, and Kings, under Christ, who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, to rule and govern, according to the eternal laws of justice, and equity those who are redeemed and exalted.

All these men, having held the everlasting Priesthood on earth, still retain the power and authority conferred upon them, and stand forth as prominent examples of the perpetuity of the everlasting Priesthood, administering on the earth or in the heavens, as the purposes of God and the fulfillment of their duties render necessary.82

Joseph Smith wrote that a king and priest has the fulness of keys 83 and authority over both spiritual and temporal affairs under Christ: a church and kingdom. Jesus held such authority and could, therefore, say to the Jews: "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," referring to himself. In his parables, Jesus nearly always compared the kingdom to a man (e.g., "the kingdom of heaven is like a man going into a far country..."), never to an organization (e.g., the Roman army, or the Jewish nation). Implicit in these similes is the idea that Jesus is the
"kingdom," and that a person can, like Abraham, become a joint-heir of the "kingdom" with Christ, having power in temporal matters as well as in spiritual, including the right to administer all the ordinances and blessings of the gospel, to bind on earth and in heaven, and to loose on earth and in heaven. Such individuals are virtually "kingdoms" and "churches," for they can act as sources of both temporal and spiritual blessings for others.

The Elect Of God. D&C 84:34 states that those who receive and magnify the greater priesthood become the "elect of God."

Joseph Smith said:

...After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of his sins and receives the Holy Ghost (by the laying on of hands), which is the first comforter, then let him continue to humble himself before 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. When the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve Him at all hazards, then the man will find his calling and election sure, then it will be his privilege to receive the other Comforter, which the Lord hath promised the Saints in the testimony of St. John, in the 14th chapter, from the 12th to the 27th verses...when any man obtains the last comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and this is the state and place the ancient Saints arrived at when they had such glorious visions--Isaiah, Ezekiel, John upon the isle of Patmos, St. Paul in the three heavens, and all the Saints who held communion with the Church of the Firstborn.85

The "elect of God," are described in D&C 76 as, "they who are the Church of the Firstborn," "they into whose hands the father hath given all things." They are:
...priests and kings, who have received of his fulness and his glory;
And are priests of the Most High, after the order of Melchizedek, which was after the order of Enoch, which was after the order of the Only Begotten Son.
....
These shall dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever.86

The connection between the "elect of God" in D&C 84 and the
"priests and kings" of D&C 76 evidences again that D&C 84 is a revelation about the fulness of the priesthood and the blessings associated with that calling.

The Temple And The Fulness Of The Priesthood. D&C 84,
designated a "Revelation on Priesthood," begins with a reference to the city of the New Jerusalem and to the temple. For it is in the temple that the fulness of the priesthood is conferred.
Joseph Smith explained:

...the Church is not fully organized in its proper order and cannot be until the Temple is completed, where places will be provided for the administration of the ordinances of the Priesthood.87

It was understood among early leaders and members of the Church that Joseph Smith intended "to organize the Church in its proper order as soon as the Temple [was] completed." In further clarifying, Joseph Smith stated:

If a man gets a fulness of the priesthood of God, he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments and obeying all the ordinances of the house of the Lord.89

It was on this basis that the ancient apostles received the fulness of the priesthood. Referring to these temple ordinances, Joseph Smith explained:
Wednesday, [May] 4 [1842].—I spent the day in the upper part of the store, that is my private office (so-called because in that room I keep my sacred writings, translate ancient records, and receive revelation) and in my general business office, or ledger room (that is where the Masonic fraternity meet occasionally, for want of a better place) in council with General James Adams, of Springfield, Patriarch Hyrum Smith, Bishops Newel K. Whitney and George Miller, and President Brigham Young, and Elders Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards, instructing them in the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to washings, anointings, endowments, and the communications of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood, setting forth the order pertaining to the Ancient of Days, and all those plans and principles by which any one is enabled to secure the fulness of those blessings which have been prepared for the Church of the Firstborn, and come up and abide in the presence of the Eloheim in the eternal worlds. In this council was instituted the ancient order of things for the first time in these last days. And the communications I made to this council were of things spiritual, and to be received only by the spiritual minded: there was nothing made known to these men but what will be made known to all the Saints of the last days, so soon as they are prepared to receive, and a proper place is prepared to communicate them, even to the weakest of the Saints; therefore, let the Saints be diligent in building the Temple, and all houses which they have been, or shall hereafter be commanded of God to build; and wait their time with patience in all meekness, faith, perseverance unto the end knowing assuredly that all these things referred to in this council are always governed by the principle of revelation.91

Joseph Smith here speaks of two priesthoods: the Aaronic and the fulness of the Melchizedek, explaining that to obtain the higher one must attend to "washings, anointings, endowments, and communications of keys...and all those plans and principles by which one is enabled to secure a fulness of those blessings which have been prepared for the Church of the Firstborn." This reference to temple ordinances is made in D&C 84, where we are told that a "temple shall be reared in this generation...and a cloud shall rest upon it...even the glory of the Lord...and the
sons of Moses, according to the Priesthood...shall be filled with the glory of the Lord...in the Lord's house."

In short, the temple is the place where individuals may be endowed the fulness of the priesthood and receive the glory of the Lord. Unless D&C 84 were concerned with the fulness of the priesthood, there would be very little reason to introduce the subject of the temple at all, let alone commence the entire revelation on that head. The reference to the temple further evidences that D&C 84 is about the fulness of the priesthood.

Heirship and the Fulness of the Priesthood. D&C 84:38-39 states that whosoever receives the fulness of the priesthood, magnifies his calling therein, and is sanctified by the spirit to the renewing of his body and will inherit all that the Father has. Whenever heirship is mentioned in the scriptures, it is usually linked with the fulness of the priesthood. For example, when Abraham receives that priesthood, he accounts himself a "rightful heir." Paul declares that Abraham became the "heir of the world," and that those who suffer with Christ and are glorified with him are "heirs and joint-heirs with Christ." Joseph Smith revealed that "they who are of the Church of the Firstborn," who are priests and kings, are "they into whose hands the Father has given all things." This is evidence that those who receive "all that [the] Father hath" in D&C 84:38 are the very kings and priests of D&C 76:55-56, into whose hands the Father has given all things.

That D&C 84:33-42 is referring to the fulness of the priesthood is plausible also on grounds of probability. For it is less probable that God would unconditionally promise "all that
[the] Father hath" to those who are just embarking in the ministeries, than to those spiritually mature individuals whose willingness to endure all the Lord inflicts upon them has been demonstrated by their having magnified in the Spirit their callings as kings and priests to God.

The Penalty, D&C 84:41 states:

But whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and altogether turneth therefrom shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come.

Applied generally to the priesthood bearers of the Church, this penalty is harsh enough to deter some individuals from accepting any ordination at all. But as applied to kings and priests, the punishment is more understandable. Because their blessings are virtually absolute, the penalty affixed for their complete rebellion is commensurately great. Note that the verse states, "whosoever breaketh this covenant after he hath received it...."

However, though kings and priests may "break" the "oath and covenant," they do not make it. They "receive" it from God who makes it to them. But they can "break" the covenant by repudiating or rejecting it ("altogether turn[ing] therefrom). A complete repudiation is called the sin or blasphemy against the Holy Ghost:

The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost which shall not be forgiven in the world nor out of the world, is in that ye commit murder wherein ye shed innocent blood, and assent unto my death, after ye have received my new and everlasting covenant, saith the Lord God: and he that abideth not this law can in nowise enter into my glory, but shall be damned saith the Lord.96
A Final Distinction. The original version of D&C 84:42 is quoted below:

And we unto all those who come not unto this priesthood which ye have received, which I now confirm upon you this day, viz. the 23rd day of September AD 1832 Eleven high priests save one, by mine own voice out of the heavens; and even I have given my angels charge concerning you.97

What had begun, apparently, on September 22 as a revelation to six elders had, by September 23, become a revelation to ten high priests. This revelation was, apparently, given over a two day period, at the time these men were ordained to the church office of "high priest." It is clear that these men were not at this time elevated to the fulness of the priesthood for the following reasons:

First, the fulness of the priesthood can only be conferred (1) in the temple or someother place especially dedicated to that purpose and (2) in conjunction with the administration of certain sacred ordinances. On September 23, 1832, no dedicated place was yet in existence, and the temple ordinances had not been fully restored.

Second, a revelation given nine years later, in 1841, explicitly stated that the fulness of the priesthood had not yet been restored to the earth:

For there is not a place found on earth that he may come to restore again that which was lost unto you, or which he hath taken away, even the fulness of the priesthood.100

The priesthood conferred in 1832 upon those present at the time D&C 84 was given was the office of high priest held currently in the Church today. This is the priesthood "which ye
have received"—it the ecclesiastical priesthood of D&C 84:42, not the fulness of the priesthood "of which I have spoken" of D&C 84:33.

The fact that this ecclesiastical "high priesthood" was confirmed upon these men by God's "own voice out of the heavens" (D&C 84:42) is not to be construed as the grant to them of the "oath and covenant" of D&C 84:33. A similar confirmation was given to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery at the time they received the apostleship from Peter, James and John. Neither of these confirmatory declarations contained the promise of "all that [the] Father hath"; the oath of God mentioned in D&C 84:42 confirms only the promise of a future restoration of the fulness of the priesthood. For this reason, D&C 84:48 contains the following language:

And the Father teacheth him of the covenant which he has renewed and confirmed upon you, which is confirmed upon you for your sakes, and not for your sakes only, but for the sake of the whole world. 102

This language refers to God's promise to send Elijah to restore the fulness of the priesthood for the sake of the whole world; for without Elijah's coming "the whole world would be utterly wasted" at the second coming.

This interpretation finds further support in the language of D&C 86:

Therefore, thus saith the Lord unto you, with whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of your fathers—

For ye are lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God—

Therefore your life and the priesthood have remained, and must needs remain through you and your lineage until the
restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began.104

This passage contains three pertinent ideas. First, the priesthood (or, perhaps, the right to hold the priesthood) has continued down through the ages with the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve ancient patriarchs of Israel. Second, these descendants of the "fathers" are lawful heirs to the priesthood. And third, it will be upon such lawful heirs that the priesthood will be conferred at the time of the restoration of all things spoken of "by the mouth of all the holy prophets."

As descendants of Abraham, the ten high priests of D&C 84 were "heirs" of the fulness of the priesthood—Abraham's priesthood. The confirmation of D&C 84:42 given to them in 1832 was but a renewal of the oath made to Abraham:

I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed of the body) [through whom] all the families of the earth [shall] be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal.105

After renewing this promise, a warning is given:

And it shall come to pass that if you build a house unto my name and do not do the things that I say, I will not perform the oath which I make unto you, neither fulfill the promises which ye expect at my hands, saith the Lord.106

Unless the temple is built, the Lord will not fulfill his promise to restore the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood nor will he make the oath and covenant belonging to it.

At this point, the revelation addresses these individuals as candidates for the office of king and priest, referring to them,
as "mine apostles, even God's high priests...they whom my Father
hath given me...my friends." Nevertheless, these men were not
yet fully elected and anointed kings and priests, but only called
to be such. Their ordinations would be complete only when they
received all the ordinances of the temple, and the oath and
covenant from God himself.

Note also the change from plural to singular form that
occurs in D&C 84:33 and 35. In verse 33, reference is made to
"two priesthods":

For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two
priesthoods of which I have spoken...

but in D&C 84:35 only one priesthood is mentioned:

And also all they who receive this priesthood receive
me, saith the Lord.

"This priesthood," in verse 35, refers to the fulness of the
priesthood. The sudden change in grammatical form implies that
the greater priesthood embraces the lesser and that the fulness
of the priesthood is to be conferred in its whole, full, and
complete form, subsuming all other degrees of priesthood.

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To answer the second question posed in this article, the
evidence in these verses establishes that the greater priesthood
spoken of in D&C 84 is the fulness of the priesthood and that the
oath and covenant of "all that [the] Father hath" is associated with
this order of priesthood and not with the Melchizedek Priesthood
held generally in the Church today. Those, then, who receive the oath and covenant of the priesthood are those who have been properly constituted kings and priests (by the one and only proper authority on earth with the power to confer that office, namely, the President of the High Priesthood, who is the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) and who have been sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies and have thereby become the sons of Moses and Aaron, the seed of Abraham, the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.
III

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE OATH AND COVENANT AND THE FULNESS OF THE PRIESTHOOD?

The relationship between the fulness of the priesthood and the oath and covenant of God may be seen in the historical context of the restoration of priesthood keys in this dispensation. Joseph Smith taught that all priesthood was Melchizedek, but that there were varying 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.110

The portion taken from the children of Israel was the fulness of the priesthood, restored in Jesus time and lost again thereafter.

The Revelation of the Fulness of the Priesthood

In this dispensation, beginning in 1829, the fulness of the priesthood of God was restored to Joseph Smith by degrees. On May 15, 1829, the Aaronic Priesthood was conferred upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery by John the Baptist. A short time later, the Melchizedek Priesthood was restored when Peter, James, and John, who ordained Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to the apostleship. The restoration of these two priesthoods was followed by a period of development in which priesthood quorums, offices, and keys were defined in the growing Church organization.

This period came to a climax between 1835 and 1836, with the occurrence of two events: In February of 1835 the original Quorum of Twelve and Quorum of Seventy were organized; and a year later, in April of 1836, the Kirtland Temple was dedicated. These two
events delineate a one-year period of transition that signalled the termination of the infancy of the Church and the commencement of its more mature phase.

That the Church was coming to the end of its infant phase was announced by Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple on March 29, 1836:

I then observed to the quorums that I had now completed the organization of the Church, and we had passed through all the necessary ceremonies, that I had given them all the instruction they needed, and that they now were at liberty, after obtaining their licenses, to go forth and build up the Kingdom of God...113

Six days later, on April 3, 1836, Jesus, Moses, Elias, and Elijah appeared to Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith as they knelted in prayer behind the veils of the presidency’s pulpits in the 114 priesthood assembly room of the Kirtland Temple. In this visitation, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received keys of priesthood absolutely vital to the further development of the 115 Church.

From 1836 to the year of his death, Joseph Smith made increasingly more frequent mention of the necessity of building temples where the fulness of the priesthood could be bestowed upon the Latter-day Saints as a crowning blessing from God.

Of course, the first indication of such a restoration came long before, in 1829, in the revelation now appearing as D&C 116 2, which states that Elijah must come to reveal the priesthood and plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, so that the hearts of the children would turn to the 117 fathers. Other such allusions followed D&C 2. One of the most
important of these was made by Oliver Cowdery on the occasion of the ordination of the first modern Quorum of Twelve:

Never cease striving until you have seen God face to face. Strengthen your faith; cast off your doubts, your sins, and all your unbelief; and nothing can prevent you from coming to God. Your ordination is not full and complete till God has laid his hand upon you.118

This statement that the ordinations of the apostles were not full and complete, referred to the fact that other, greater keys would yet be restored. These were to be revealed by Elijah, the prophet. Joseph Smith remarked:

Elijah was the last Prophet that held the keys of the Priesthood...Why send Elijah? Because he holds the keys of the authority to administer in all the ordinances of the Priesthood; and without the authority is given, the ordinances could not be administered to in righteousness.119

Elijah, not Peter, James and John, was to restore the keys necessary to administer in all the ordinances of the priesthood:

Now for Elijah. The spirit, power, and calling of Elijah is, that ye have power to hold the keys of the revelations, ordinances, oracles, powers, and endowments of the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of the kingdom of God on the earth; and to receive, obtain, and perform all the ordinances belonging to the kingdom of God, even unto the turning of the hearts of the fathers unto the children, and the hearts of the children unto the fathers, even those who are in heaven.120

The purpose of Elijah’s coming was to restore the keys of the fulness of the priesthood by which every ordinance could be attended to in righteousness.

Since Elijah restored these keys to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on April 3, 1836, the apostles could not have held them
when they were called in 1835. The question is: When did Joseph impart these keys to the apostles.

Not by 1837. In a revelation dated July 23 of that year, the apostles were told that they keys of the kingdom were "youward." The neologism "youward" suggests something less than "yours" or "in your possession," something more like "toward you." At the time of this revelation, the apostles did not hold the fulness of keys and powers. A revelation given in 1841 further establishes that the fulness of priesthood had not, by that time, been passed on to other men:

...there is not a place found on earth that he may come to restore again that which was lost unto you, or which he hath taken away, even the fulness of the priesthood.

And it shall come to pass that if you build a house unto my name, and do not the things that I say, I will not perform the oath which I made unto you, neither fulfill the promises which ye expect at my hands. 122

The "house" mentioned here is the temple of God, which had to be completed before the Church was fully organized.

The preparation for the conferral of the fulness of the priesthood began on May 4, 1842, when Joseph Smith first administered the endowment. These ordinances were an extension and elaboration of the ordinances that had been administered several years before in the Kirtland Temple. The endowment was administered according to the pattern of priesthood ordination established at the visitation of John the Baptist. The President of the Priesthood was the first to administer the ordinances to others, and then those others administered them to him in return. Joseph Smith endowed certain men on May 4, 1842, and then
explained that on May 5, he and his brother Hyrum:

"received in turn from the others, the same [i.e., the
endowment] that I had communicated to them the day
previous."125

These ordinances were an initial step in the restoration of
the fulness of priesthood. But the endowment did not confer this
priesthood. On August 6, 1843, Wilford Woodruff reported that
Brigham Young,

...remarked that if any in the Church had the fulness of
the Melchizedek Priesthood, he did not know it. For any
person to have the fulness of the priesthood, he must be a
king and priest. He may have a portion of that priesthood,
the same as governors or judges of England have power from
the king to transact business; but that does not make them
kings of England. A person may be anointed king and priest
long before he receives his kingdom.126

According to Brigham Young, the fulness of the priesthood is
conferred by anointing an individual to the office of king and
priest. By August of 1843, no such anointings had taken place.
The available evidence establishes that the first such anointings
were performed in the fall and winter of 1843-44.

Apparently, Joseph Smith had hoped to administer them in the
Nauvoo Temple, but on the basis of a premonition of his death, he
went forward with them in his private office. The earliest
record of such an anointing indicates that their administration
began on or about September 28, 1843:

10 A.M. in the street going toward
printing office. 11 1/2 N.K. Wis Council over
J.S., J.T. A.L., L.W., J.M.B. -- ant [sic] at 7 eve
met at the Mansion upper room prest. with
W.L., W.M. Baurak Ale was by common
consent and unanimous voice chosen president
of the quorum. & anointed & ordn to the highest
and holiest order of the priesthood ( & companion)
Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Geo Miller, N.K. Whitney
Willard Richards, John Smith, John Taylor,
Amasa Lyman, Lucien Woodworth, J.M. Bernhisel
— Wm Law, Wm Marks, — President led in
prayers, that his days might be prolonged have dominion
over his enemies. all their households be blessed
and all the church & world.130

On this occasion, Joseph Smith, in company with his wife,
Emma Smith was anointed to the highest and holiest order of the
priesthood. Historian Andrew F. Ehat, explains that Emma had been
endowed sometime prior to September 23, 1843. On that critical
date:

...two meetings...were held. At the morning meeting,
John Taylor, John M. Bernhisel, Lucien Woodworth, John
Smith, and Amasa Lyman received their washings and
anointings from under the hands of Hyrum Smith, Newel K.
Whitney and George Miller. These five men were the first
male initiates...since...May 1842....After their initiatory
ordinances, Joseph in the upper room of the Brick Store
conducted them through the remainder of the endowment.
That evening all the above men, plus Emma Smith, Willard
Richards, William Law, and William Marks met in the front
upper room of the Mansion House at 7 p.m. First, Joseph was
"by common consent, and unanimous voice chosen president of
the quorum." His appointment to be head of the Quorum, while
voted upon, was, as he said, by command of God. The Prophet
led the group in the true order of prayer, after which,
Hyrum Smith and William Marks at his dictation "anointed and
ordn [Joseph] to the highest and holiest order of the
priesthood, viz., a king and priest unto God. After this,
Emma was anointed and ordained a queen and priestess unto
her husband.131

That this ordination was to the office of king and priest is
substantiated by the Wilford Woodruff journal for this period,
which contains the record of several anointings of leaders of the
Church to this office. Wilford Woodruff emphasized that
in the winter of 1843-44, the apostles received the fulness of
the keys and powers of the priesthood by attending to every
ordinance of the temple:
And when they [the apostles] received their endowments, [they] actually received the keys of the Kingdom of God, and the oracles of God, keys of revelation, and the pattern of heavenly things; and thus, addressing the twelve, [Joseph Smith] exclaimed, "Upon your shoulders the Kingdom rests, and you must round up your shoulders and bear it, for I have had to do it until now. But now the responsibility rests upon you. It mattereth not what becomes of me."133

Orson Hyde, in an independent account, reported that Joseph,

...conducted us [the twelve] through every ordinance of the holy priesthood, and when he had gone through with all the ordinances he rejoiced very much, and says, now if they kill me, you have got all the keys, and all the ordinances and you can confer them on others.134

It was not until 1843-44, that the apostles were given the fulness of the priesthood.

It was Joseph Smith's intention to extend these blessings to many of the Church faithful:

...we calculate to give the Elders of Israel their washings and anointings, and attend to those last and more impressive ordinances, without which we cannot obtain celestial thrones. But there must be a holy place prepared for that purpose...so that men may receive their endowments and be made kings and priests unto the Most High God, having nothing to do with temporal things.136

When planning the westward move of the Church shortly before his martyrdom, Joseph Smith wrote of the Elders of Israel who were to go west as an advance party:

I want every man that goes to be a king and a priest, when he gets on the mountains, he may want to talk with his God; when with the savage nations, have power to govern.137

Again asserting his intention to elevate all faithful Church members to the fulness of the priesthood, Joseph Smith declared
that it was God's purpose

...to make of the Church of Jesus Christ a kingdom of Priests, a holy people, a chosen generation, and as in Enoch's day, have all the gifts as illustrated to the Church in Paul's epistles...138

But notwithstanding this intent, the practice was evidently instituted of ordaining men to become kings and priests rather than actually ordaining persons to that office. This promissory and conditional ordination was referred to in an address given in the Nauvoo Temple by Heber C. Kimball:

We have come to this place and all your former covenants are of no account, and here is the place where we have to enter into a new covenant, and be sealed, and have it recorded. One reason why we bring our wives with us is that they may make a covenant with us to keep these things sacred. You have been anointed to be kings and priests, but you have not been ordained yet. And you have got to get it by being faithful. You can't sin so cheap now as you could before you came to this order. It is not for you to reproach the Lord's anointed, not to speak evil of him. You have covenanted not to do it.139

In summary, the fulness of the priesthood, whose restoration was foreshadowed as early as 1829, was revealed to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery by Elijah the Prophet in the Kirtland Temple on April 3, 1836. Preparations for the conferral of this priesthood on others began on May 4, 1842, when a small group of men were endowed in the room above Joseph's general store. The full anointings were not then given. But acting on a premonition of his death, Joseph decided to administer those anointings prior to the completion of the Nauvoo Temple. This began in the fall of 1843 and continued into the winter and spring of 1844. It was Joseph's intent to extend this priesthood to all faithful Latter-
day Saints; however, recognizing that some were spiritually immature, the practice was instituted of anointing individuals to become rather than to be kings and priests. When Joseph and Hyrum Smith were killed, the presidency of and the right to direct this Holy Order of kings and priests descended to Brigham Young, by virtue of his seniority in the Holy Order of kings and priests.

Ordination to the Office of King and Priest/Queen and Priestess

Ordination to the fulness of the priesthood is a multi-step process to which Joseph Smith referred in the King Follet funeral discourse delivered in April of 1844:

Here, then, is eternal life—to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God, the same as all Gods have done before you, namely, by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one; from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, until you attain to the resurrection of the dead, and are able to dwell in everlasting burnings, and to sit in glory, as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power. And I want you to know that God, in the last days, while certain individuals are proclaiming his name, is not trifling with you or me.142

The steps of the process of ordination to the office of king and priest (for men) and queen and priestess (for women) are outlined in the Doctrine and Covenants:

Step 1: An individual must be born again into the family of Jesus Christ and by faith in Him and by His grace must overcome all opposition.143

Step 2: A man must receive the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods available in the Church, and both men and women must be endowed and sealed in marriage in the new and everlasting covenant.144

Step 3: The married individuals must be anointed kings and
priests and queens and priestesses; and they must magnify that calling by manifesting to God that they are willing to sacrifice all earthly things in order to be made perfect in Christ Jesus.145

Step 4: They must be sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies, thereby becoming the "sons" of Moses, of Aaron, the seed of Abraham, the church, the kingdom, and the elect of God.146

Step 5: They may then receive the visitation of the angels, but eventually must obtain the visitation of the Savior (the "second Comforter" spoken of in John 14:12-27).146

Step 6: They must, through the Savior, be presented to the Father.147

Step 7: They must receive from the Father the promise or covenant of "all that [the] Father hath," and this promise the Father must seal by his own oath "out of the heavens."148

Step 8: They must receive the fulfillment of the promise of the Father by actually obtaining God's glory, by which they acquire power over nature; and must, finally, receive their appointed kingdom in the worlds to come.149

In the event these steps are not realized in mortality, they may be realized in the afterlife, for the necessary ordinances by which men and women are ordained kings and priests, queens and priestesses may be done by proxy for the dead in certain of the temples.

Obviously, these steps cannot be taken suddenly. Faith in Christ, patience in affliction, and submission to all His mystical ordinances, including the covenant of marriage, are fundamental conditions precedent to receiving this blessing. This idea is reflected throughout the scriptures. Two examples are illustrative:

Therefore, they must needs be chastened and tried, even as Abraham, who was commanded to offer up his only son. For all those who will not endure chastening, but deny
me, cannot be sanctified.

A similar teaching appears in the writings of the prophet Alma, who explained that kings and priests are those who,

...having chosen good, and exercising exceeding great faith, are called with a holy calling, yea, with that holy calling which was prepared with, and according to a preparatory redemption for such.153

The anointing to the office of king and priest/queen and priestess is conferred upon those individuals who have, first, chosen good and then exercised "exceeding great faith." These are the conditions that must precede the ordination to the same calling to which the Messiah was foreordained as a preparation for the redemption which he was to make for the whole world.

Melchizedek was not ordained a king and priest until he was first approved in faith of God:

Now Melchizedek was a man of faith, who wrought righteousness; and when a child he feared God, and stopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire. And thus, having been approved of God, he was ordained a high priest after the order of the covenant which God made with Enoch.155

Faith in Jesus Christ, then, is the necessary prerequisite to ordination to the office of king and priest/queen and priestess and to the reception of the full blessings belonging to the Melchizedek Priesthood. It is the vitality of Christian faith behind the ordinances that conditions an individual for the reception of this blessing.

The Second Anointing. The office of king and priest or queen and priestess can be conferred by the authority of the President...
of the High Priesthood, who is the President of the Church, or by one delegated by him. It may also be conferred by angels:

Q. What are we to understand by the sealing of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, out of all the tribes of Israel—twelve thousand out of every tribe?
A. We are to understand that those who are sealed are high priests, ordained unto the holy order of God, to administer the everlasting gospel, for they are they who are ordained out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people, by the angels to whom is given power over the nations of the earth, to bring as many as will come to the Church of the Firstborn.

The ordination, itself, whenever feasible, must be done in the Holy of Holies of a temple dedicated to that purpose. It is conferred jointly upon husbands and wives sealed in the new and everlasting covenant, and is accomplished by the administration of a second anointing (the first anointings are administered in the initiatory portion of the endowment), and is followed by the washing of feet and other rites. These ordinances have the effect of sealing those receiving them to exaltation in the celestial kingdom of God and of giving to them all the keys, powers, and authority of the priesthood which are possible to be conferred by one mortal on another. This authority, however, is held subordinate to that of the President of the High Priesthood, for he is not only a king and priest unto God in Israel, but a king and priest in and over Israel, in and over the whole Church, and in and over Zion.

Those anointed to the fulness of the priesthood have all authority to administer in all the ordinances of the gospel and of the priesthood, to officiate in any of the offices of the Church and kingdom of God, including the apostolic office, to
bear witness of the Father and the Son, to pray in the true order to detect the source of their revelations, to assist the President of the Holy Order of the High Priesthood in anointing other kings and priests.

The Final Component of the Second Anointing. Although it is said that holders of the "fulness of the priesthood" are those who have been called and elected and have received their second anointing (i.e., the anointing on the crown of the head followed by a washing of the feet to cleanse them "every whit") to the office of king and priest/queen and priestess, this is technically incorrect. True, such individuals hold all the keys (and in this sense they have received a "fulness of priesthood"), but as Oliver Cowdery explained to Farley P. Pratt:

"Your ordinations are not full and complete till God has laid his hand upon you."

And as Brigham Young said:

"A person may be anointed king and priest long before he receives his kingdom."

Joseph Smith made this same point in his discourse on Elias, Elijah, and Messiah:

The Spirit of Elias is first, Elijah second, and Messiah last. Elias is a forerunner to prepare the way, and the spirit and power of Elijah is to come after, holding the keys of power, building the temple to the capstone, placing the seals of the Melchizedek Priesthood upon the House of Israel, and making all things ready. Then Messiah comes to His Temple, which is last of all.

The spirit and power of Elias refers to the work associated now the Aaronic Priesthood and the Melchizedek Priesthood in the
Church—the proclaiming of faith and repentance, and the administration of baptism for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the imparting of the gift of the Holy Ghost—in short, the work of adoption into the House of Israel, the family of Jesus Christ (of whom Abraham, as father of the faithful, was but a type and shadow). After proving faithful to these necessary preliminaries, men and women will receive, under the keys of Elijah, all the blessings of the temple, including the second anointing, thereby obtaining the keys to turn (i.e., seal or bind) the hearts of the fathers to the children. It is at this point that the seals are put upon the House of Israel. Individuals so sealed and so impowered to seal others have all that can be conferred upon mortals by mortals. By bearing their crosses and magnifying their callings in the Spirit, these individuals will enjoy the visitation of the Messiah (i.e., "Messiah comes to his temple") and be ushered by him into the presence of the Father to receive the cahth and covenant that belongs to the priesthood, and thereby receive the promise of glory, power, and everlasting possession in all that the Father has. This is the capstone on the temple, "which

Anointed kings and priests/queens and priestesses are required to press forward in faith, bearing their crosses to the veil, where they must obtain the visitation of the Savior and the Father, through whom, alone, they can obtain power over nature and over death, the appointment of a heavenly kingdom, and the promise of "all that [the] Father hath."
Thus, direct contact with the Father and the Son is the final and indispensable component of the ordinance by which the fulness of the priesthood is conferred, by which the anointed ones are constituted joint-heirs with Jesus Christ and Saviors on Mount Zion. Only upon bestowal of these heavenly powers and appointments do the recipients, in fact, become fully called, elected, anointed, and crowned kings and priests/queens and priestesses—possessors of the fulness of the priesthood, whose lives are "hid with Christ in God."

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To answer the final question, the oath and covenant of the priesthood is the crowning component necessary in the bestowal of the fulness of the priesthood. For, although an anointed king and priest/queen and priestess has all the keys and authority of the priesthood that can be conferred by mortals, the powers of heaven (including the power over nature), heirship in "all that the Father hath," and the appointment to a particular kingdom in the celestial world are not granted with the anointing. They must be conferred by God's own voice out of the heavens.

It was too such individuals as these that the words of the Hymn refer:

Ye simple souls who stray
Far from the path of peace,
That lonely unfrequented way
To life and happiness.
Why will ye folly love
And throng the downward road,
And hate the wisdom from above,
And mock the sons of God?
Madness and misery
Ye count our lives beneath,
And nothing great or good can see
Or glorious in our death?
As only born to grieve,
Beneath your feet we lie,
And utterly condemned we live
And un lamented die.

So wretched and obscure.
The men whom ye despise
So foolish, impotent, and poor,
Above your scorn we rise
We through the Holy Ghost,
Can witness better things,
For he whose blood is all our boast
Has made us priests and kings.

Riches unsearchable
In Jesus' love we know,
And pleasure springing from the well
Of life our souls overflow.
The Spirit we receive
Of wisdom, grace, and power;
And though 'mid scenes of wo we live
Rejoicing evermore.

Angels our servants are
And keep in all our ways;
And in their watchful hands they bear
The sacred sons of grace;
Unto that heavenly bliss
They all our steps attend,
And God himself our Father is,
And Jesus is our Friend.

With him we walk in white;
We in his image shine;
Our robes are robes of glorious light,
Our righteousness divine.
On all the kings of earth
In pity we look down;
And claim in virtue of our birth
A never-fading crown.
CONCLUSION

The oath and covenant of the Melchizedek Priesthood does not refer to the two parts of a bilateral contract, nor to any kind of mutual contract with God.

Instead, the oath and covenant is a unilateral promise made by God, and sealed by his own oath. This promise is not extended to all priesthood bearers generally, but only to those who have faithfully received all the ordinances and ordinations of the gospel, of the Church, and of the temple, who have been called, elected, and anointed to the office of king and priest/queen and priestess, who have magnified that calling by sacrificing every worldly thing, who have received the gifts and fruits of the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies, who have spiritually become the "sons" of Moses, of Aaron, the seed of Abraham, the church, the kingdom, and the elect of God, and members of the Church of the Firstborn, and who have received the visitation of angels, and of the Father and the Son. For it is from the Father and the Son, alone, that they can receive the oath and covenant as the crowning component of their ordination to the fulness of the priesthood by which they may obtain power over nature, the appointment of a heavenly kingdom, and "all that [the] Father hath."

This highest of priesthood blessings is not conditioned upon future obedience. It is granted unconditionally as a reward for past loyalty and devotion. The covenant can be broken by the individuals receiving it, not in the sense that they can fail to keep their bargain—for they do not make any bargain—but in the
sense that they can repudiate or reject the oath and covenant after they have received it. This act of altogether turning from God by denying and rejecting his oath and covenant and the powers of the Spirit committed thereby is referred to as the sin or blasphemy against the Holy Ghost which is not forgivable in this world nor in the world to come.

Those men and women who are fully called, elected, anointed, and crowned kings and priests/queens and priestesses have passed beyond their personal judgment and have entered into their exaltation, awaiting only the time of their celestial resurrection to enjoy eternal life with Jesus Christ in the world to come.

It is to this doctrine of the fulness of the priesthood that Jesus poetically referred through St. John the Divine in the Book of Revelation:

Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

... And as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Behold I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.
NOTES

1 Copyright 1977, 1983, Paul James Toscano. This article was begun in 1975 and completed in 1977. In rewriting it for this 1983 publication, substantial editorial revisions have been made and additional note materials, incorporated.

2 Paul James Toscano is an attorney, practicing law in Orem, Utah. He is the author of the recently published book Gospel Letters to a Mormon Missionary, and of The Invisible Religion of the Public Schools, a book to be released nationally. He has authored numerous articles and has written and co-produced documentaries with KUED-TV. He is married to Margaret Ann Merrill, a teacher of Latin and Greek at BYU.

3 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith 296 (hereinafter, Teachings).

4 The original manuscript of Doctrine and Covenants, Section 84 appears in the handwriting of Frederick G. Williams, who recorded the revelations as being given "the 22 + 23? day of September AD 1832." Section 84, Revelations to Joseph Smith and Brigham Young 1829-1847, Newel Kimball Whitney Papers (1795-1850). Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

5 Doctrine and Covenants (hereinafter abbreviated D&C) 84:33-42.

6 THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, s.v. oath.

7 THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY, s.v. promise.

8 A promise sealed by an oath is a formula that goes back to the third millennium before Christ. G. Mendenhall, Covenant Forms in Israelite Tradition, 17 BIBLICAL ARCHEOLOGIST 3 at 50 (1950); hereinafter abbreviated Mendenhall.

No society compels its members to keep every promise they may make. At the same time, the good of society demands that certain promises must be followed by performance,... [for this reason each society] perfects forms and procedures by which it can guarantee those promises. Those procedures are in the beginning of law most closely connected with religion, and are known as oaths...which [are] conditional self-cursing[s],...appeal[s] to the gods to punish the promisor if he defaults....At the present time the oath is merely an 'ancient ruin still standing.'

Mendenhall 53.

Anciently, the actual oath which accompanied and upheld the promise and made it binding upon the promisor could take any of a
variety of ritual forms: eating together, the use of oil and water, or drinking from a cup. See D.R. Hillers, COVENANT: THE HISTORY OF A BIBLICAL IDEA, 40 (1969); hereinafter abbreviated Hillers.

Oath swearing might also entail an exchange of gifts, the shaking of hands, or the eating or spilling of salt. See D.J. McCarthy, OLD TESTAMENT COVENANT 4 (1972); hereinafter abbreviated McCarthy.

The most widely attested form of swearing to a covenant, however, involved cutting up an animal.

H. Cazalles has pointed out that the verb for dividing the animals is the piel of עלש [a Hebrew word that means to] 'cut three times.'

It is to be noted that the ancient practice of slaughtering animals at the time of covenant making was considered a sacrificial offering. The fact added solemnity to the occasion. See M. Weinfeld, Covenant of Grant in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East, 90 JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ORIENTAL SOCIETY 194 (1970); hereinafter abbreviated Weinfeld.

The fact that sacrifices and covenants are so closely interrelated argues for the position that covenant making was an affair of cult.

It was therefore something religious and not secular, not even legalistic and moralistic. The covenant was made, reaffirmed, and renewed in the cult.

This religious or cultic element explains why covenant making could create a mystical relationship between the parties involved. Though they may have been strangers before the covenant, afterwards their relationship might be analogous to that of a husband and wife or a father and son. See McCarthy 32-33.

The verbal formulation "I will be your God and you shall be my people" (Lev. 26:12; Ex. 7:17; cf. Deut. 29:12) is very similar to ancient marriage and adoption terminology. See Weinfeld 200.

Hence, the oath taken in conjunction with the making of covenants was not merely a legal formality, but was apparently connected with religious rituals of a sacrificial nature and was in some way related to the creation between the parties of a nuptial or familial relationship that formed the basis upon which the divine gift was transferred from God to the recipient of the oath and covenant. See Weinfeld 192-94.

McCarthy 4

THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY, s.v. COVENANT (entry #7).
Students of Biblical languages have determined that the ancient Hebrew word *berit* means an alliance, agreement, or pact. Later, the Greek word *diatheke*, which means a disposition of property or a last will and testament, was used by the translators who prepared the Septuagint Greek version of the Old Testament, as an equivalent for the Hebrew word *berit*, which never means 'last will and testament.' It is not altogether clear why they did this, though they may have meant to stress that *berit* often does refer to a one-sided disposition of things by God.

Hillers 181.

In law, the act of making such an exchange of comparable valuables is referred to as "consideration"; also the valuables themselves are referred to as "consideration" or by the Latin phrase *quid pro quo*.

McCarthy 60.

Exod. 19-20.

Abr. 2:8-14; Gen. 15; see also note 26, infra.

Some scholars have analogized the covenant that God made with Israel at Sinai (Exod. 20) to Hittite suzerainty treaties; and have even speculated that the Sinai covenant was either a Hebrew adaptation of the treaty form or was, at some time after the Sinai experience, recast in terms of the verbal formulas of the suzerainty treaties in order to give legal impetus to the Decalogue; in other words, to make the Ten Commandments respectable from a Hittite point of view. Whatever the case, it is clear that the general structure of the Sinai covenant does bear some resemblance to Hittite suzerainty treaties, although there are enough discrepancies in the formulations of each to cast real doubt upon the validity of these speculations. Nevertheless, a brief description of suzerainty treaties will, no doubt, help clarify the nature of the Sinai covenant as contradistinct from the covenant of God with Abraham.

The Hittite covenants have been very carefully analyzed by V. Korosec with the following results. The covenants are not all of a single type, but are rather classified as suzerainty treaties or parity treaties. The basic difference between the two is that in the former, only the inferior is bound by an oath—the vassal is obligated to obey the commands of the Hittite king, or suzerain. In the latter, both parties are bound to obey identical stipulations.

Mendenhall 55.

In the case of suzerainty treaties, the suzerain is the author of the covenant. He writes the words which obligate the
vassal. The vassal merely agrees to obey, to sign the dotted line. This is an ancient form of adhesion contract in which all the terms are dictated by the stronger party. At Sinai,

...the Israelites did not bind themselves to obey Moses....Instead, following the form of suzerainty treaties, they were bound to obey certain stipulations imposed by Yahweh Himself....In effect, then, each clan became a vassal of Yahweh by covenant—and at the same time bound to each other in a sacred truce.

Mendenhall 57.
The following is an outline of the verbal formulations appearing in Hittite treaties:

(1) the preamble introducing the sovereign or suzerain;
(2) the historical prologue describing previous relations between the parties;
(3) the stipulations which outline the nature of the community formed by the covenant;
(4) the document clause, providing for the presentation and regular re-reading of the treaty;
(5) the list of gods witnessing the treaty;
(6) the curse and blessing formula.

Mendenhall 63-64.
However, as both Mendenhall and McCarthy point out, there is not a strict correlation between the verbal formulation of the Decalogue given by God on Sinai and that of the Hittite treaties. Mendenhall 66 and McCarthy 72.

The Decalogue lacks the witnessing by the gods, the cursing and blessing formula, and the requirement that the covenant be re-read periodically. More importantly, in the Sinai covenant,

...God [unlike the Hittite suzerain] does not force himself and his covenant on the people...all texts...concerned with the covenant [at Sinai] are shot through with persuasion; the people are never compelled to enter into the relationship.

McCarthy 55.
Furthermore, the Sinai covenant was predicated on sacrificial rites, covenant meals, and the creation of mystical familial relationships. All of these facts indicate that there was, rather than a Hittite influence,

...a very strong cultic element in the most antique presentations of Israel’s special relationship—its covenant relationship with Yahweh. Covenant meal, sacrifice, and especially the overpowering experience of the theophany presented in the cult were certainly elements connected with and integral to the covenant....

McCarthy 72.
What is important here is not the simple fact of emphasis on the rite in covenant-making, but rather the contrast with the attitude of the treaties. These latter did not involve rites or at least a relation to cult....

McCarthy 55.
17 Gen. 15; Abr. 2:8-12.
18 Weinfeld 185.
19 The idea of contracts, or mutual covenants, may have played some role in the arena of trade and commerce, but it does not seem to have been particularly consequential in the theology of the Old or New Testaments where there is a

...relative absence of the do ut des type of religion in which man and deity are business contractors in which each agrees to confer a benefit upon the other—the sort of concept which is the foundation of legally binding contracts today.

Mendenhall 51.
20 Rom. 6:23.
21 CORPUS JURIS SECUNDUM, Covenants, Sec. 1, at 885.
22 D&C 84:33-44.
23 D&C 84:38, italics added.
24 CORPUS JURIS SECUNDUM, Covenants, Sec. 1, at 885; Corbin, CONTRACTS, Sec. 653, at 595 (1932).
25 Simpson, CONTRACTS, Sec. 63, at 121 (1965).
26 Heb. 6:13-18.
27 In Abr. 1:18-19, God promises to give Abraham the priesthood. In Abr. 2:7-13 and Joseph Smith's Inspired Translation (hereinafter abbreviated JSIT, followed by the usual Biblical reference) of Gen. 12:12, God promises (1) to bless Abraham's posterity with the right to hold the Priesthood, and (2) to give Abraham and his seed the right of adoption so that all those who accept the fulness of the Gospel, as administered by the Priesthood, would be accounted the seed of Abraham. In JSIT, Gen. 14:40 and 15:2, God confers on Abraham the blessings promised him by Melchizedek—including the blessings of honor, riches, and an everlasting possession. In JSIT, Gen. 15:21, God promises to give Canaan to Abraham's posterity as an everlasting possession. And in JSIT, Gen. 17:8-11, God promises to give to Abraham a son, Isaac, through whom will be realized all of Abraham's other blessings relating to posterity.

It is difficult to determine in exactly what sequence these
promises were made, or whether they were made sequentially at all. It is possible that all these different accounts are referring to only one covenant. But whether one or many, God, not Abraham, makes the promises. In the Gen. 15. account, God also swears to keep his promise:

It is He [God], accompanied by a smoking oven and a blazing torch... who passes between the parts [of the sacrificial animal] as though he were invoking a curse upon himself.

Weinfeld 196-97.
The torch and the oven, usually thought to be related to the theophany, may have another meaning as well:

In the sura documents we read about an oath taken by holding a torch or about the oath of the furnace, stove, etc. In the same series, we find the oath of the slaughtered sheep and the touching of its wound. It therefore stands to reason like the cutting of the animals so the torch and the oven are part of the procedure of taking the oath. A similar oath occurs in the Abba-El-Yarimlim deed where Abba-El, the donor, takes the oath by cutting the neck of a lamb... saying, 'May I be cursed' if I take back what I gave you.

Weinfeld 199.
The covenant of God with Abraham binds God alone. What makes the Gen. 15 account so "eerily impressive" is the "bold way in which it depicts" God's swearing an oath to Abraham:

Abraham makes all the preparations for a covenant; he splits up the animal and arranges the parts for the swearing of the oath. Then... Yahweh, as a smoking oven and a flaming torch, passes between the parts. The author is discreet; he does not flatly say that Yahweh invokes a curse on himself. But the version he has related makes the literal restatement unnecessary, and the imagination of the reader can supply: 'Just as this heifer is cut up, so may I....

Hillers 103.
Mendenhall observed that the covenant which God made with Abraham is

...completely different [than other Old Testament covenants]...it is clearly stated or implied that it is Yahweh Himself who swears to certain promises to be carried out in the future. It is not often enough seen that no obligations are imposed on Abraham. Circumcision is not originally an obligation, but a sign of the covenant, like the rainbow in Gen. 9. It serves to identify the recipient(s) of the covenant, as well as to give a concrete indication that a covenant exists. It is for the protection of the promisee, perhaps, like the mark on Cain of Gen. 4. The covenant [at Sinai] is almost the exact opposite. It imposes specific obligations upon the tribes or clans without
binding Yahweh [whereas the covenant of God with Abraham binds God alone].

Mendenhall 62.
28 Mosiah 5:7; Ether 3:14.
29 D&C 76:53.
30 D&C 84:33.
31 *Teachings* 308, see also text and notes at 55 and 97.
32 *infra*.
33 D&C 101:4-5.
34 Abr. 1:2.
35 JSIT Gen. 14:30.
37 Gen. 28:4. See also, Gen. 28:13-22, wherein the granting of the blessing to Jacob is presented in a way that involves a stone, a pillar, the House of God, and an anointing with oil—all symbols which have ritual ties with the granting of an everlasting priesthood: Gen. 32:24-32, wherein the bestowal by God of blessings of Jacob is associated with a theophany: "I [Jacob] have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved"; and Gen. 35:9-15, wherein the granting of the oath and covenant by God is linked with Jacob's receiving a new name—Israel—by which his descendants are known throughout history.
38 JSIT Ex. 34:1-2.
39 JSIT Deut. 10:2.
40 JSIT Ex. 34:1-2. It is to be noted that I Samuel 16:13 and Psalm 89:20-37 indicate that God did later make an oath and covenant with David, the king of Israel. Joseph Smith, however, explained that "although David was a king, he never did obtain the spirit and power of Elijah and the fulness of the Priesthood," but received something less than the full blessings given to the ancient Patriarchs. *Teachings* 339.
42 JSIT Gen. 14:25-34, 40.
And [Abraham] having found out that he had a right to the priesthood, he, therefore, sought an ordination, and he was ordained by Melchizedek to the Melchizedek Priesthood. And the Lord gave unto him certain privileges and powers that were very great.


Teachings 322.

...The keys that Elijah held were the keys of the everlasting priesthood, the keys of the sealing power, which the Lord gave unto him...

"Why send Elijah?" Now mark this. "Because he holds the keys of the authority to administer in all the ordinances of the priesthood...

Now that is significant...It makes no difference how great an office you have, what position in the Church you hold, you cannot officiate unless the keys, the sealing power is there back of it....

...Elijah was the last of the old prophets who held the fulness of the priesthood, the sealing power of the priesthood; and being the last of the prophets, it was his place to come in the dispensation of the meridian of time and confer those keys upon those who stood at the head in that dispensation....Joseph Smith was ordained under the hands of Peter, James, and John, receiving the Melchizedek Priesthood, and he went forth and built the church in his dispensation. All that he did was valid...but the binding power...had to come from Elijah...

...I do not care what office you hold in this Church, you may be an apostle, you may be a patriarch, a high priest, or anything else, and you cannot receive the fulness of the priesthood unless you go into the temple of the Lord and receive these ordinances...No man can get the fulness of the priesthood outside the temple of the Lord,...Do not think that because anybody has a higher office in this
Church than you have, that you are barred from blessings...you can get the fulness of the priesthood in the temple of the Lord...


52 JSIT Gen. 14:27.
53 Lev. 21:10; Heb. 7:11; 8:3-5.
54 JD 19:242.

And again I give unto you Don C. Smith to be a president over a quorum of high priests; which ordinance is instituted for the purpose of qualifying those who shall be appointed standing presidents or servants over different stakes scattered abroad; and they may travel also if they choose, but rather be ordained for standing presidents; this is the office of their calling, saith the Lord your God.

D&C 124:133-35.

...at the time that Bishop Partridge was called and ordained a Bishop, on the 4th of February 1831,...there were no High Priests, they were not known under that name, but well known under the name of the apostleship, etc., and hence Elders were specified to be called as Counselors [to Bishops].

Remarks of Orson Pratt in a discourse delivered in Salt Lake City on December 10, 1880. JD 22:32.

These remarks are corroborated by B.H. Roberts' notes in the History of the Church 1:176. Apparently, the office of "high priest" was first conferred at the June Conference of 1831. Those references to "high priest" appearing in the revelations given prior to this conference were either inserted in later editions of the revelations or were statements foreshadowing the time when the office of "high priest" would be established.

55 JD 9:87-88.
56 If a man gets the fulness of the priesthood of God he has to get it the same way Jesus obtained it...

*Teachings* 308.

But when Jesus came on the earth, He received the Melchizedek Priesthood, and that He might receive it in its fulness, Moses and Elias appeared to Him upon the mount of transfiguration. Jesus conferred that same Priesthood upon the Apostles. "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." That same authority that Jesus had, He conferred upon His Apostles, they conferred it upon others, as they were led by the Holy Ghost, the comforter, which Christ sent to
them after His departure.

From a discourse by Charles W. Penrose given in Salt Lake City on September 23, 1883. JD 24:306.

57 Heb. 3:1.
58 Heb. 4:14; 5:4-11; 7:14-28; 9:11-12.
59 D&C 93:17.
60 Abr. 1:2.
61 Isa. 9:6.
62 Abr. 1:2.
63 Franklin D. Richards, SCRIPTURAL ITEMS 26-27. Historical Department of the Church, MS d4409.
64 Teachings 322-23.
65 Teachings 322.
66 JSIT Gen. 14:33-34.
67 Teachings 322.
68 Teachings 323.
69 D&C 84, The Preface.
70 It is necessary to attend to certain temple ordinances in order to obtain the fulness of the keys and blessings associated with the Aaronic Priesthood. See D&C 13.
71 The 3rd is what is called the levitical Priesthood, consisting of priests to administer in outward ordinances, made without an oath; but the Priesthood of Melchizedek is [made] by an oath and covenant.

Teachings 323.
72 D&C 84:19.
73 JSIT Deut. 10:2; see also text at note 37, supra.
74 The spirit, power, and calling of Elijah is, that we have power to hold the key of the revelations, ordinances, oracles, powers and endowments of the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of the kingdom of God on the earth; and to receive, obtain, and perform all the ordinances belonging to the kingdom of God, even unto the turning of the hearts of the fathers unto the children, and the hearts of the children unto the fathers, even those who
are in heaven.

Teachings 337.

76 Alma 13:10-12, 14 (italics added).
77 Alma 13:14. Note the use in Alma of the phrase "which I have spoken"; this is identical to the phrase used in D&C 84:33.
78 Alma 13:12.
79 Section 84, Revelations to Joseph Smith and Brigham Young 1829-1847, Newel K. Whitney Papers (1795-1850), Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University. (the slashes in the passage indicate were one line ends and another begins in the manuscript).
80 D&C 84:6.
81 Abr. 2:11.
82 John Taylor, Talk On Priesthood, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.
83 Matt. 4:17.
85 Teachings 150-51.
86 D&C 76:54-57; 62.
87 Teachings 224.
88 Teachings 225.
89 Teachings 308.
90 We find the Apostles endowed with greater power than John [the Baptist]: their office was more under the spirit and power of Elijah than Elias.

Teachings 336; cf. Teachings 337.

And we are of the opinion that Peter having been taught by the Lord, and commissioned by the Lord, and endowed by the Lord, would be about as correct a counselor or ambassador as we or they could inquire of...

Teachings 236.

...when the apostles were raised up, they worked in Jerusalem, and Jesus commanded them to tarry there until
they were endowed with power from on high. . . . The endowment was to prepare the disciples for their missions to the world.

Teachings 274.

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endowed with power from on high.


Ye, verily I say unto you, I gave unto you a commandment that you should build a house, in the which house I design to endow those whom I have chosen with power from on high; for this is the promise of the Father unto you; therefore I command you to tarry even as mine apostles at Jerusalem.

D&C 95:8-9.

The word endow and endowment as used in the Church to refer to the temple ceremony is not derived from the word endow, meaning gift or bequest, but from the word endue (the same term used in Luke 24:49), which means "to lead into," "to instruct," "to introduce," "to take in," "to put on as a garment," "to clothe or cover," "to assume or take upon oneself," "to put on garments," "to overlay," "to invest with dignities, possessions, honors, etc.," "to invest with property," "to supply," and "to bestow or grant." THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY, s.v. endue; Cf. to Hebrew term berit and Greek term diaithke.

Teachings 337.

92 Abr. 1:2.

93 Rom. 4:13.

94 Rom. 8:17.

95 D&C 76:54-57.

96 D&C 132:27.

...for according to the Scriptures, if men have received the good word of God, and tasted of the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, it is impossible to renew them again, seeing they have crucified the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame; so there is a possibility of falling away; you could not be renewed again, and the power of Elijah cannot seal against this sin, for this is a reserve made in the seals and power of the Priesthood.

Teachings 339.
...the Church is not fully organized, in its proper order, and cannot be, until the Temple is completed, where places will be provided for the administration of the ordinances of the Priesthood.
Teachings 224.

116 The last words of the Old Testament and the first revelation recorded in this dispensation refer to the coming of Elijah. According to D&C 2, Elijah was to return to earth before the second coming of Jesus Christ in order to reveal a priesthood. When Latter-day Saints think of priesthood restoration, they usually think only of the comings of John the Baptist and of Peter, James and John. It is not usually understood that Elijah, too, was to come bearing the final and full degree of priesthood.

117 For example, a revelation dated May, 1831, states:

He that is ordained of God and sent forth, the same is appointed to be the greatest, notwithstanding he is the least and the servant of all. Wherefore he is possessor of all things, for all things are subject to him, both in heaven and on earth, the life and the light, the spirit and the power, sent forth by the will of the Father through Jesus Christ, his Son. But no man is possessor of all things except he be purified and cleansed from all sin. And if ye are purified and cleansed from all sin, ye shall ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus and it shall be done.

D&C 50:26-29. See also, Matt. 11:11; Luke 7:28; and Helaman 10:4-11.

An other example is found in an unpublished revelation given in July of 1832:

Verily, I say unto you, that the wisdom of man, in his fallen state, knoweth not the purposes and the privileges of my holy priesthood, but ye shall know when ye receive a fulness by reason of my holy anointing.

"The 'substance' of a revelation given in Jackson County, Missouri, July 17, 1831 and reported by William W. Phelps, giving Joseph Smith and his associates instruction upon their arrival in Missouri to dedicate the land of Zion," in Revelations Not In The Doctrine and Covenants, 1830-1843. Joseph Smith, Jr. Papers (1827-1844), Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.)

118 History of the Church 2:195-96 (hereinafter abbreviated HC).

119 Teachings 172.
120 Teachings 337.
121 D&C 112:15.
122 D&C 124:28, 47.
Teachings 306. See also text at note 86, supra.


HC 5:1-2. Although Joseph Smith received the keys of the fulness of the priesthood from Elijah on April 3, 1836, those keys were not transmitted for several years. The endowment was not given until May of 1842 and the anointing to the office king and priest did not take place until September of 1843.

The ordination to the fulness of the priesthood appears to have followed the pattern established at the time the Aaronic Priesthood was conferred on Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. On that occasion John the Baptist conferred the keys of the priesthood upon Joseph and Oliver and then commanded them to ordain one another. Pursuant to this command, Joseph ordained Oliver and then Oliver ordained Joseph to the office of priest. In this way Joseph Smith was the first to administer a priesthood office in this dispensation.

This same pattern was followed with regard to the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood by Peter, James and John. (See HC 1:39-40, 60-61.)

Was the same pattern followed with regard to the anointing to the fulness of the priesthood? It is clear that Elijah restored the keys of this authority on April 3, 1836. But it is not clear if Joseph and Oliver were anointed on that occasion by heavenly beings; and if so, it is not clear if they also anointed each other. But, there is some slight evidence that an anointing by heavenly beings occurred, for W.W. Phelps writes in his hymn "Praise to the Man" that "Jesus anointed that prophet and seer [Joseph Smith]." In any case, the keys restored by Elias, Elijah, and Messiah (D&C 110) and mentioned in D&C 112:15, were necessary to perform the endowment and confer the fulness of priesthood. See note 120, infra. Oliver’s rights and blessings were subsequently transferred to Hyrum Smith. (See D&C 124:95).

In any case, by 1842, a small group of men were endowed as a preliminary step toward their being anointed to the fulness of the priesthood. On May 4, 1842, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, Newel K. Whitney, James Adams, and George Miller were the first men to obtain their temple endowments, and on May 5, 1842, they endowed Hyrum and Joseph Smith. Within a year and a half, Hyrum Smith had been martyred; James Adams had died; George Miller had apostatized. But Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards lived on in the faith eventually to constitute the First Presidency, while Newel K. Whitney would serve under them as the Presiding Bishop. Thus, out of this small group of men endowed on May 4, 1842 came the future presidencies of the Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthoods. See text at note 90, supra.

HC 4:527.

Joseph Smith said in a discourse given October 5, 1843
that the greatest power yet experienced in the Church was Abraham's patriarchal power, for the fulness of the priesthood held by Melchizedek, up until that time, had not been given. Men had been endowed, sealed in marriage, and introduced to the true order of prayer (i.e., the patriarchal authority), but the ordination to king and priest did not occur until September of 1842.

That the patriarchal priesthood and authority refer to the endowment, marriage sealing, and the ordinance of the true order of prayer is evidenced by the statement of Joseph Smith regarding Patriarch James Adams, one of the seven men whom Joseph endowed on May 4, 1842:

I anointed him to the patriarchal power—to receive the keys of knowledge and power by revelation to himself.

*Teachings* 326; cf. D&C 124:95–97; see also Ehat *Thesis*, 84.

128

Remarks of Joseph Smith during this period indicate his intention to proceed with the administration of ordinances necessary to elevate himself and others to the fulness of the priesthood. On July 16, 1843 he preached a sermon in which he said

he would not prophecy any more, Hyrum should be prophet (did not tell them he was going to be a priest now, or a king by and by)...

*HC* 5:512. On July 23, 1843, Joseph remarked:

Last Monday morning certain men came to me and said: 'Brother Joseph, Hyrum is no prophet—he can't lead the church; you must lead the church. If you resign, all things will go wrong; you must not resign; if you do the church will be scattered.' I felt curious and said: 'Have we not learned the Priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, which includes both Prophets, priests and kings...and I will advance your Prophet to a Priest, and then to a King—not of the Kingdom of this earth, but of the Most High God...'

'Thou hast made us unto our God, Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on the earth.'

*Teachings* 318; see also note 131, infra.

129

At the excommunication trial of Sidney Rigdon, held in August of 1844, Orson Hyde of the Council of the Twelve made the following statement:

Before I went east on the 4th of April last [1844], we were in council with Brother Joseph almost every day for weeks, says Brother Joseph in one of those councils there is something going to happen; I don't know what it is, but the Lord bids me to hasten and give you your endowment before the temple is finished. He conducted us through every ordinance of the holy priesthood, and when he had gone
through with all the ordinances he rejoiced very much, and says, now if they kill me you have got all the keys, and all the ordinances and you can confer them upon others, and the hosts of Satan will not be able to tear down the kingdom, as fast as you will be able to build it up; and now says he on your shoulders will the responsibility of leading this people rest, for the Lord is going to let me rest a while. Now why did he say to the Twelve on your shoulders will this responsibility rest, why did he not mention Brother Hyrum? The Spirit knew that Hyrum would be taken with him, and hence he did not mention his name; Elder Rigdon's name was not mentioned, although he was here all the time, but he did not attend our councils.

TIMES AND SEASONS 5:651 (September 15, 1844).

130

Joseph Smith Papers, 1805-1844, Church Historical Department (see Ms/d/155/Bx: 1/fd 7); see also, Entry dated September 28, 1843, Wilford Woodruff Journal, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University. An edited account is found in HC 6:59.

It is not certain that this was the first such anointing. The pattern of ordination and administration of ordinances discussed above at note 124, supra, suggests that Joseph Smith first anointed someone else, possibly Hyrum Smith, who, in turn, anointed Joseph. If the pattern of administration is consistent, then this is a record of, perhaps, the second such anointing; although it may be that Joseph had either already been anointed at the visitation of Elijah in April of 1836, or that, on September 28, 1843, he merely directed others to anoint him by granting them, temporarily, the keys to do so without anointing them first.

131

Ehat, Thesis 94-95.

132

The following entries are found in the Wilford Woodruff Journal for 1843-44 under the dates given:

[Jan. 20, 1844]...in the evening I met with the quorum in the evening & had an interesting time H.C.K. V.K. received their second Anointing &c.

[Jan. 21, 1844]...P.P.P. received his 2d Anointing Joseph said concerning Parley P Pratt that He had no wife sealed to him for Eternity and asked if their was any harm for him to have another wife for time & Eternity as He would want a wife in the Resurrection or else his glory would be clipped many arguments He used upon this subject which were rational U consistent Br. Joseph said now what will we do with Elder P. P. Pratt He has no wife sealed to him for Eternity He has one living wife but she had a former Husband and did not wish to be sealed to Parley, for Eternity now is it not right for Parley to have another wife that can [end of entry]
can bear witness to the truth of what I now say.

Remarks of John Taylor, TIMES AND SEASONS 5:661.

I [Brigham Young] questioned him [Sidney Rigdon] till he acknowledged that they [Rigdon and his associates] ordained men to be prophets, priests and kings....

... says I, 'that tells the whole story. Brother Joseph never undertook such important business as you are engaged in, without consulting... the Twelve...'

Remarks of Brigham Young, TIMES AND SEASONS 5:648.

Elder Rigdon after he came from Pittsburg never attended council only when he could not avoid it. He has no authority only what he receives from the church, if he was one with us, why was he not in our councils? He was not in the council pertaining to the High Priesthood until just before he started for Pittsburg. Brother Phelps was the means of bringing him in, but he has not got the same authority as others; there are more than thirty men who have got higher authority than he has. Elder Rigdon intimated that if we opposed him we should have a mob on us--Brethren, if I have to be martyred for the truth, amen to it.

Remarks of Heber C. Kimball, TIMES AND SEASONS 5:663.

Brother [William] Marks says, if there are any ordained to offices equal with Elder Rigdon he don't know it. He don't know all the ordinations, nor he wont till he knows something more than the written word.

... As to a person not knowing more than the written word, let me tell you that there are keys that the written word never spoke of nor never will.

Remarks of Brigham Young, TIMES AND SEASONS 5:666. See also, Teachings 237, 326; cf. D&C 124:95-97.

This event was mentioned by Brigham Young in an address given in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, April 6, 1853:

The keys of the Eternal Priesthood, which is after the Order of the Son of God, are comprehended by being an Apostle. All the Priesthood, all the keys, all the gifts, all the endowments, and everything preparatory to entering into the presence of the Father and the Son, are in, composed of, circumscribed by or I might say incorporated within the circumference of the Apostleship.

JD 1:174. Further clarification of this point was made by George Q. Cannon:

By virtue of the ordination he received [as an
apostles], Joseph had the right and the authority to confer this Priesthood upon others. He called twelve Apostles and they were ordained under his authority by the direction of the Lord, and those twelve were endowed with the keys. Previous to his death the Prophet Joseph manifested great anxiety to see the temple completed, as most of you who were with the Church during his day will know. Hurry up the work, brethren, he used to say, let us finish the temple; the Lord has a great endowment in store for you, and I am anxious that the brethren should have their endowments and receive the fulness of the Priesthood. He urged the Saints forward continually, preaching unto them the importance of completing that building, so that therein the ordinances of life and salvation might be administered to the whole people, but especially to the quorums of the holy Priesthood; 'then' said he, 'the Kingdom will be established, and I do not care what shall become of me.'

These were his expressions oft repeated in the congregations of the Saints, telling the brethren and sisters of the Church, and the world that he rolled the Kingdom on to the Twelve, and they would have to round up their shoulders and bear it off, as he was going to rest for awhile, and many other expressions of a like nature, the full meaning of which the Saints did not realize at the time.

Prior to the completion of the Temple, he took the Twelve and certain other men, who were chosen, and bestowed upon them a holy anointing, similar to that which was received on the day of Pentecost by the Twelve, who had been told to tarry at Jerusalem. This endowment was bestowed upon the chosen few whom Joseph anointed and ordained, giving them the keys of the holy Priesthood, the power and authority which he himself held, to build up the kingdom of God in all the earth and accomplish the great purposes of our Heavenly Father; and it was by virtue of this authority, on the death of Joseph, that President Young, as President of the quorum of the Twelve, presided over the Church.

JD 13:49.

Every man who is ordained to the fulness of the Apostleship, has the power and authority to lead and guide the people of God whenever he is called upon to do it, and the responsibility rests upon him...And while it is the right of all the Twelve Apostles to receive revelation, and for each one to be a Prophet, to be a Seer, to be a Revelator, and to hold the keys in fulness, it is only the right of one man at a time to exercise that power in relation to the whole people, and to give revelation and counsel, and direct the affairs of the Church, of course, always acting in conjunction with his fellow servants.

JD 19:233.

[Joseph Smith] seemingly could not rest, he was
constantly standing up and urging the Twelve to step forward and assume the responsibility that lay upon them, and to impart to the people the knowledge that the Lord had given to him, and to bestow upon the servants of God the keys and the authority of the holy Priesthood in its fulness.

JD 19:232.

Was it necessary for the Prophet Joseph Smith to set apart Brigham or Heber or Willard, or any of the rest of the Twelve Apostles? No, for the same reason, they had received the fulness of the Holy Priesthood, the full endowment and the keys, and the authority, and the fulness of the Apostleship....The blessing of such men or by such men, would not bestow upon him any additional authority or any more keys, presuming that he had received the fulness of the Apostleship.

JD 19:235.

136 Teachings 362-63. Note that Joseph makes the endowment ceremony a necessary preparation to the conferral of the office of king and priest.
137 Teachings 333.
138 Teachings 202, 258.
139 HEBER C. KIMBALL JOURNAL, Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah (italics added), On August 2, 1883, at the School of the Prophets held in Provo, Utah, President George Q. Cannon remarked:

...in the washing that takes place in the first endowment, they are washed that they might become clean from the blood of this generation—that is, I suppose, in the same way they are ordained to become Kings and Priests—that ordination does not make them clean from the blood of this generation any more than it makes them Kings and Priests. If they fully receive of another endowment, a fulness of power, the promises are fulfilled in the bestowal of power upon them.

MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS OF 1883, Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.
140

Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

D&C 2:1.
142 Teachings 346-347.
D&C 84:33.

D&C 84:33.

In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;
And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];
And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.

D&C 131:1-3.

D&C 84:33.

D&C 84:36.

D&C 84:37.

D&C 84:38-40.


1 Tim. 5:22.

D&C 50:26-29; Ether 12:6-9; and D&C 76:53.

D&C 101:4-5.

Alma 13:3.

Heb. 5:5-6, 18-20; 6:20-27.


And as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant it was instituted for the fulness of my glory, and he that receiveth a fulness thereof must and shall abide the law, or he shall be damned, saith the Lord God.

....(and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to hold this power in the last days, and there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred).


D&C 77:11.

The despised and degraded son of the forest, who has wandered in dejection and sorrow, and suffered reproach,
shall then drop his disguise and stand forth in manly
dignity, and exclaim to the Gentiles who have envied and
sold him--'I am Joseph who was sold into Egypt. You have
hated me, and sold me, and thought I was dead; but lo! I
live and am heir to the inheritance, titles, honors,
priesthood, sceptre, crown, throne, and eternal life and
dignity of my fathers, who live forever more.'

He shall then be ordained, washed, anointed with holy
oil, and arrayed in fine linen, even in the glorious and
beautiful garments and royal robes of the priesthood, which
is after the order of the Son of God; and shall enter the
Holy of Holies, there to be crowned with authority and power
which shall never end.

MILLENIAL STAR 6:9, A Proclamation of the Twelve Apostles.
139
See note 131, supra; see note __, infra.

160

The term 'anointing' on the head of Joseph [in D&C
124:57-58] refers to the manner of blessing by the holy
anointing which is poured on the head of the recipient. If
any of his posterity prove worthy to receive that anointing
it will be placed on their heads, as all blessings which
come either by anointing or the laying on of hands
are placed, even as Jacob of old put the blessing of his son
on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his
brethren.

Charles W. Penrose, PRIESTHOOD AND PRESIDENCY, see note__.
161
See note 131, supra; cf. Gen. 49:26, 48:13-20;
162

1st key: Knowledge is the power of salvation. 2nd key:
Make you calling and election sure. 3rd key: It is one thing
to be on the mount and hear the excellent voice, etc., and
another to hear the voice declare to you, You have a part
and lot in that kingdom.

Teachings 306.

The anointing and sealing is to be called, elected and
made sure.

Teachings 325.

Four destroying angels holding power over the four
quarters of the earth until the servants of God are sealed
in their foreheads, which signifies sealing the blessing
upon their heads, meaning the everlasting covenant, thereby
making their calling and election sure. When a seal is put
upon the father and mother, it secures their posterity, so that they cannot be lost, but will be saved by virtue of the covenant of their father and mother.

-Teachings 321.

The following entry appears in the Heber C. Kimball Journal under the date December 26, 1845:

Pres. Young said when we began again he would pay no respect to quorums every man comes in is washed & anointed by good men and it makes no difference. Every man that gets his endowment, whether he is High Priest or Seventy, may go into any part of the world and build up the kingdom if he has the keys--or onto any island. We have been ordained to the Melchisedek Priesthood, which is the highest order of Priesthood, and it has many branches or offices—and those who come in here and have received their washing & anointing will be ordained Kings and Priests, and will then have received the fulness of the Priesthood, all that can be given on earth, ofr Brother Joseph said he had given us all that could be given to man on earth.

HEBER C. KIMBALL JOURNAL, Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah; see also text at note 134, supra.

164
See text at note 149, supra.

165
Rev. 1:6; 5:10; Teachings 345, 363.

166
In the Heber C. Kimball Journal, under the entry dated "Jan. 8th 1846", appears the following:

...Brigham Young proceeded to anoint Br. Heber C. Kimball and Vilate his wife—...we anoint the[e] a king and a Priest unto the most high God in and over the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and also Israel... Under the date "Jan. 11th 1846", Heber C. Kimball recorded:

...Br. H.C.K. proceeded to anoint and consecrate B.Y. a King and Priest unto the most high God over the Church of Jesus Christ of L.D.S. and ever the whole house of Israel...

HEBER C. KIMBALL JOURNAL, Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.

167
Franklin D. Richards noted the following:

Soon after 8. p.m. Prests Taylor & Cannon met the seven of the 12 first named [E. Snow, F.D. Richards, A. Carrington, F.M. Lyman, H.J> Grant, John W. Taylor] at End[owment] house Secretaries Geo. Reynolds and L. John Nuttall were present. After listening to some current items of news, President Taylor stated the object of the Council.
directed Br. Nuttall to read a Revelation which he said he received more than a year ago requiring him to be anointed & set apart as a King Priest and Ruler over Israel on the Earth—over Zion & the Kingdom under Christ our King of kings. He also read some extracts from minutes of the Council of the Kingdom after which the President called for any remarks when several spoke their mind and F.M.L. motioned that we proceed to obey the requirement of the Revelation. Then we clothed in our Priestly attire. E. Snow offered prayer, when after the usual ceremony F. M. Lyman prayed in the circle. L. Snow consecrated a bottle oil. Counselor Cannon anointed President John Taylor and we all laid hands on the Prst. Geo. Q sealed the anointing according to a written form which had been prepared.

The Franklin D. Richards Miscellaneous Papers, #318, Reel 12, at the Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah, contain the following entry dated Wednesday, February 4th, 1885.

In the April Conference of 1970, President Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr. explained:

I do not care what office you hold in the Church—you may be an apostle, you may be a patriarch, a high priest, or anything else—but you cannot receive the fulness of eternal reward unless you receive the ordinances of the house of the Lord; and when you receive these ordinances, the door is then open so you can obtain all the blessings which any man can gain.

Do not think because someone has a higher office in the Church than you have that you are barred from receiving the fulness of the Lord’s blessings. You can have them sealed upon you as an elder, if you are faithful; and when you receive them, and live faithfully and keep these covenants, you then have all that any man can get.

There is no exaltation in the kingdom of God without the fulness of the priesthood, and every man who receives the Melchizedek Priesthood does so with an oath and covenant that he shall be exalted.


169 Teachings 337.

170D&C 107:1-10; see note 135, upca.

171 D&C 84:63-64.

172 D&C 124:95-97; see also Pearl of Great Price, Facsimile No. 2, "Explanation of the Forgoing Cut," Fig. 3.

On October 9, 1843, Joseph Smith reported that he had anointed James Adams "to the patriarchal power—to receive the keys of knowledge and power, by revelation to himself." HC 6:51-52.

Note also the remarks of Amasa Lyman (to a group who had
just been endowed), recorded in the Heber C. Kimball Journal under the date "21 December 1845":

You have now learned how to pray. You have been taught how to approach God, and be recognized. This is the principle by which the Church has been kept together, and not the power of arms.

HEBER C. KIMBALL JOURNAL, Church Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.

173
See note 159, supra.
174
HC 2:195-96.
175
HC 5:527.

...you have got to learn to be Gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God...by going from one small degree to another...from exaltation to exaltation... --you must go on until you have learned all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil before you will have learned them.

Teachings 346, 348.
176
Teachings, p. 340.
177
Teachings, p. 335: D&C 75:54-60; Ether 3:14.
178
Teachings 330.
179

O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteous. Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name.

2 Ne. 9:41
180
1 Cor. 3:17.
181
D&C 101:4-5.

Men have to suffer that they may come upon Mount Zion and be exalted above the heavens.

Teachings 323.

Let us here observe, that a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power
sufficient to produce the faith necessary into life and salvation....It was through sacrifice, and this only, that God has ordained that men should enjoy eternal life...

LECTURES ON FAITH, Lecture Sixth, Paragraph 7.

D&C 84:35-36; see also text at note __, supra; John 14:16, 20-21, 23.

A DIAGRAM OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

The above diagram shows the order and unity of the kingdom of God. The eternal Father sits at the head, crowned King of kings and and Lord of lords. Wherever the other lines meet, there sits and king and a priest unto God, bearing rule, authority, and dominion under the Father. He is one with the Father, because his kingdom is joined to his Father's and becomes part of it.

The most eminent and distinguished prophets who have laid down their lives for their testimony (Jesus among the rest), will be crowned at the head of the largest kingdoms under the Father, and will be one with Christ as Christ is one with his Father; and their kingdoms are all joined together, and such as do the will of the Father, the same are his mothers, sisters, and brothers. He that has been faithful over a few things, will be made ruler over many things; and he that has been faithful over ten talents, shall have dominion over ten cities, and he that has been faithful over five talents, shall have dominion over five cities, and to every man will be given a kingdom and a
dominion, according to his merit, powers, and abilities to govern and control. It will be seen by the above diagram that there are kingdoms of all sizes, an infinite variety to suit all grades of merit and ability. The chosen vessels unto God are the kings and priests that are placed at the head of these kingdoms. These have received their washings and anointings in the temple of God on this earth; they have been chosen, ordained, and anointed kings and priests, to reign as such in the resurrection of the just. Such as have not received the fulness of the priesthood, (for the fulness of the priesthood includes the authority of both king and priest) and have not been anointed and ordained in the temple of the Most High, may obtain salvation in the celestial kingdom, but not a celestial crown. Many are called to enjoy a celestial glory, yet few are chosen to wear a celestial crown, or rather, to be rulers in the celestial kingdom.

While this portion of eternity that we now live in, called time, continues, and while the other portions of eternity that we may hereafter dwell in, continue, those lines in the foregoing diagram, representing kingdoms, will continue to extend and be lengthened out; and thus, the increase of our kingdoms will increase the kingdom of our God, even as Daniel hath said: "Of the increase of his kingdom and government there shall be no end." All these kingdoms are one kingdom, and there is a King over kings, and a Lord over lords. There are Lords many, and Gods many, for they are called Gods to whom the word of God comes, and the word of God comes to all these kings and prists. But to our branch of the kingdom there is but one God, to whom we all owe the most perfect submission and loyalty; yet our God is just as subject to still higher intelligences, as we should be to him.

The great fault of all nations has been, that they would worship more Gods than one. They well knew that there was more than one God, and vainly sought to worship all they imagined. We will know that there are more sovereigns than one over the kingdoms of this world, but would it not be folly in the extreme for an Englishman to attempt to serve other kings and rulers, while a subject of her Majesty, and living within her dominions? Most certainly it would: his Queen would be jealous of him, but if there was no other power to serve, she never would be jealous; there would be no room for fear or suspicion. If there was only one man on earth, that one man would never be jealous of his wife. Our God says that he is a jealous God; but how could he be jealous if he were the only God. These kingdoms, which are one kingdom, are designed to extend till they not only embrace this world, but every other planet that rolls in the blue vault of heaven. Thus will all things be gathered in one during the dispensation of the fulness of times, and the Saints will not only possess the earth, but all things else, for, says Paul, "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are
Christ's, and Christ is God's.

MILLENIAL STAR 9:23.
184
JSIT, Deut. 10:1-2; JSIT, Ex. 34:1-2.
185
On Sunday, January 21, 1844, Joseph Smith remarked:

But how are they to become saviors on Mount Zion? By
building their temples, erecting their baptismal fonts, and
going forth and receiving all the ordinances, baptisms,
confirmations, washings, anointings, ordinations and sealing
powers upon their heads, in behalf of all their progenitors
who are dead, and redeem them that they may come forth in
the first resurrection and be exalted to thrones of glory
with them; and herein is the chain that binds the hearts of
the fathers to the children, and the children to the
fathers, which fulfills the mission of Elijah. And I would
to God that this temple was now done, that we might go into
it, and go to work and improve our time, and make use of
the seals while they are on earth.

HC 6:184. On Sunday, May 12, 1844, Joseph said:

Just at the time when some men think that I have no
right to the keys of the Priesthood—just at that time I
have the greatest right...There will be 144,000 saviors on
Mount Zion, and with them an innumerable host that no man
can number.

HC 6:364-65.
186
D&C 86:8-9; cf 101:39-42; 103:9-10; and Matt. 5:15.
187

Behold, thou art Nephi, and I am God. Behold, I declare
it unto thee in the presence of mine angels, that ye shall
have power over this people, and shall smite the earth with
famine, and with pestilence, and destruction, according to
the wickedness of this people.

Behold, I give unto you power, that whatsoever ye shall
seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever ye
shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; and thus
shall ye have power among this people.

And thus, if ye shall say unto this temple it shall be
rent in twain, it shall be done.

And if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou cast
down and become smooth, it shall be done.

And behold, if ye shall say that God shall smite this
people, it shall come to pass.

Helaman 10:6-10; see also JSIT Gen. 14:30-31.
Thus we behold the keys of this Priesthood consisted in obtaining the voice of Jehovah...

Teachings, 171.
189
HYMNS 289.
190
191
Rev. 3:11-12, 19-21.