

Purposes of Revelation

Outline – Mike Baird Feb 2003

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Outline on Revelation

- Touch briefly on how of revelation – not really focus
- Purposes of revelation
- When revelation doesn't come
- Main Sources: Scriptures, Oaks, Packer, McConkie

How of Revelation (voice of the Spirit)

- visions or dreams
- words or thoughts communicated to the mind
- sudden enlightenment (aha!)
- Positive or negative feelings

Purposes of Revelation (8 – Elder Oaks)

Witness that Jesus is the Christ & Church is true

- My testimony - Holy Ghost has witnessed to my soul
 - Based on Book of Mormon
 - When I was 16

Prophecy

- President Dalton – knew he would be President of Stake before he was called
- Patriarchal Blessing
- Father's Blessings
 - Shellie's Blessing

Comfort

- Loss of loved ones
- Prophet in Liberty Jail (D&C 122:9)
 - "Thy days are known..."

Uplift

- Hymns
 - Ward Choir
 - We thank thee O God for a Prophet – President Hinckly at the Conference Center – Oct Conf 2000 with Jennifer
 - Stake Conference when I was in 6th grade with Hugh B Brown and "The Spirit of God"
 - Birth of Child

Inform

- Selected my counselors – Just knew
 - Didn't know Brother Barker before hand
- Counseling as Bishop
 - Thoughts come to my mind

Restrain from doing something

- When I went to send a calling to the stake
 - Could not send the email

Confirm course of action

- D&C 9:8-9
- Ever gone shopping for shoes?
 - Try it on in your mind
 - Relief Society President call of Marci Burnside
 - Bruce R McConkie:
"You go to work, and you use the agency and power and ability that God has given you. You use every faculty, you get all the judgment that you can centered on the problem, you make up your own mind, and then, to be sure that you don't err, you counsel with the Lord. You talk it over. You say, "This is what I think; what do you think?" And if you get the calm, sweet surety that comes only from the Holy Spirit, you know you've reached the right conclusion; but if there's anxiety and uncertainty in your

heart, then you'd better start over, because the Lord's hand is not in it, and you're not getting the ratifying seal that, as a member of the Church who has the gift of the Holy Ghost, you are entitled to receive." (Bruce R. McConkie, "Agency or Inspiration?" *New Era*, Jan. 1975, 38)

Impel to action

- Revelation comes when it is not being sought
- Nephi & Laban (1 Nephi 4)
- The Petersons
 - Felt to go to their house and invite them to be sealed in the Temple. They accepted. (Nov 2002)
- Sacrament meeting on missionary work (Feb 2003)
 - I felt so compelled to get up and speak I was shaking
- Wilford Woodruff – moved his carriage from tree
- Prophet Joseph Smith:
"A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas ... and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 151).
- We need to be able to "hear" the Spirit, not have too much "noise" so we drown it out and be listening to recognize these promptings
- We all can look at these 8 purposes and observe that we have received revelation
- Don't shy away from getting revelation
Joseph Smith:
"God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what he will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 149.)

When Revelation doesn't come

Must understand our prayers are heard

- Testify
- Why then don't we always receive revelation?

Responsibility in Revelation

- Prophet for Church
- Bishop for the Ward
- Parents for family
- You for you
- Claims outside the proper area
 - Another bishop for Cooper Mt Ward
 - For Brother Barnes family
 - Young Man to Young Women – “You are to be my wife”
- Does the Bishop receive all inspiration for the Ward?
 - Ward council
- Does the Father receive all inspiration for the Family

When we seek revelation but it doesn't come

Time

- Answers come in the Lord's time and in the Lord's way.
 - Not at our time and our way
 - You cannot force the Spirit
 - Boyd K Packer:
 - ”Remember the Lord reveals His will to us in His own due time. We should not put time constraints or demands on the Lord. I feel it would be unwise to tell the Lord "I need an answer by Thursday or I will assume the answer is no."
 - ”It is not wise to wrestle with the revelations with such insistence as to demand immediate answers or blessings to your liking. You cannot force spiritual things. You can no more force the Spirit to respond than you can force a bean to sprout, or an egg to hatch before it's time. You can create a climate to foster growth, nourish, and protect; but you cannot force or compel: you must await the growth.
 - Do not be impatient to gain great spiritual knowledge. Let it grow, help it grow, but do not force it or you will open the

way to be misled.” (Candle of the Lord, Taken from a talk given at a seminar for new mission presidents, June 25, 1982)

Sometimes we are left to our own judgment

- Why do you think??
- Purpose is to obtain experience & faith
- God will not direct us in every act, even every important act
- Example as Parent
- Boyd K Packer:
“We are expected to use the light and knowledge we already possess to work out our lives. We should not need a revelation to instruct us to be up and about our duty, for we have been told to do that already in the scriptures; nor should we expect revelation to replace the spiritual or temporal intelligence which we have already received—only to extend it. We must go about our life in an ordinary way, following the routines and rules and regulations that govern life.” (Candle of the Lord, Taken from a talk given at a seminar for new mission presidents, June 25, 1982)
- Brother of Jared
 - Built barges – no direct instruction (Ether 2:16)
 - No light and no air (Ether 2:19)
 - Lord directed on the air part how to do (v20)
 - Asked about light (Ether 2:22)
 - Lord: “What will ye that I should do?” (Ether 2:23, 25)
 - When we want someone to exercise agency & grow
 - What are you asking me for?
 - Well what do you think?
 - Made 16 molten rocks & carried them up the mountain (Ether 3:1)
 - “Touch these stones, O Lord”
 - Bruce R McConkie:
“There’s a fine balance between agency and inspiration. We’re expected to do everything in our power and then to seek an answer from the Lord, a confirming seal that we’ve reached the right conclusion; and sometimes, happily, in addition, we get added truths and knowledge that we hadn’t even supposed.” (Bruce R. McConkie, “Agency or Inspiration?” *New Era*, Jan. 1975, 38)
- Bishop Partridge (D&C 58:24-29)
 - v 24-25 - how, when, circumstances left to those called to assemble, but *counsel with the Lord*

- What does it mean to counsel with the Lord?
 - Talk things over
- Lord lets us determine what we should do but expects us to counsel with him
- v25-26
 - Learn correct principles and govern ourselves.
Make choices and present the matter to the Lord to get his approving, ratifying seal

Sometimes we haven't done our part

- Oliver Cowdry “you have not understood”
 - D&C 9:7-9
 - Bruce R McConkie:
”Now, seemingly, that’s all he’d been instructed to do, to ask in faith; but implicit in asking in faith is the precedent requirement that we do everything in our power to accomplish the goal that we seek. We use the agency with which we have been endowed. We use every faculty and capacity and ability that we possess to bring about the eventuality that may be involved. This is translating the Book of Mormon, it’s choosing a wife, it’s choosing employment, it’s doing any one of ten thousand important things that arise in our lives.”(Bruce R. McConkie, “Agency or Inspiration?” *New Era*, Jan. 1975, 38)

Sometimes no answer for things we think are important

- Prayers are heard
- Then WHY if we are in tune etc??
- One reason or other we should make without guidance of revelation
 1. Not necessarily a right and a wrong for every question
 - some only have 2 wrong or 2 right
 2. Choosing between two alternatives that are equally bad
 - “Which is the best way to get revenge?”
 - “Which R rated movie should I go see?”
 3. Choosing between two alternatives that are equally good
 - Two equal acceptable things
 - Dallin H Oaks:
”No answer is likely to come to a person who seeks guidance in choosing between two alternatives that are equally acceptable to the Lord. Thus, there are times when we can serve productively in two different fields of labor. Either answer is right.” (Dallin H. Oaks, “Revelation,” *New Era*, Sept. 1982, 38)
 4. Seeking guidance on a choice you will never have to make
 - A 3rd alternative may be made clear tomorrow
 - Nancy – Trying to choose a RS counselor
 - 1 month before I was called as Bishop
 - Couldn’t get an answer

Sometimes we pray for that which we shouldn’t or not expedient for us

- Pray for \$1M

Sometimes we pray when we really don’t want the answer – we want our answer

- “That’s not the answer I want - you don’t understand”

Trivial matters

- Dallin H Oaks:
”I once heard a young woman in testimony meeting praise the spirituality of her husband, indicating that he submitted every question to the Lord. She told how he accompanied her shopping and would not even choose between different brands of canned vegetables without making his selection a matter of prayer.” (Dallin H. Oaks, “Revelation,” *New Era*, Sept. 1982, 38)
- Dallin H Oaks:
”That strikes me as improper. I believe the Lord expects us to use

the intelligence and experience He has given us to make these kinds of choices.” (Dallin H. Oaks, “Revelation,” *New Era*, Sept. 1982, 38)

- What is trivial?
 - If it appears trivial we should proceed on our judgment
 - If choice is important for reasons unknown to us, Lord will intervene
 - Poison in vegetables
 - Need to be in tune

If in Tune Lord will guide us (Testify)