

## LESSON 8—LEARNING ABOUT: REVELATION & THE HOLY GHOST

**INTRODUCTION**—The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhood and is called variously the Holy Spirit, the Spirit, the Comforter, the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of the Lord. We know that he has a body of spirit, unlike the other two members of the Godhead who have resurrected glorified bodies. In some way that we do not fully understand, this allows him to fill his mission as a testifier and confirmer of truth to God's children. His mission is also to enlighten and teach, to comfort and heal, and to give divine power to the efforts of men and women in performance of their duties and callings. When we receive revelation of any kind, it is through the function of the Holy Ghost. "And the spirit giveth light to every man ...that hearkeneth to the voice of the spirit." D&C 84:46,47

1. Read D&C 124:97 and D&C 136:32-33. We have just finished a study on humility. What is the connection, according to these verses, between humility and receiving revelation?
  
2. Read D&C 8:1-5 and Exodus 14:1-16. This section, given to Oliver Cowdery, contains important information for all the saints.
  - a. According to these verses, how does the Holy Ghost give information to a person?
  
  - b. Section 8 says that Moses received information by this means. In Exodus what problem was Israel facing?
  
  - c. Which verse contains the specific instructions to Moses as to what he should do about the approaching Egyptians? \_\_\_\_\_
  
  - d. What part did Moses' faith and trust in God play in his being able to get revelation for the Israelites?
  
  - e. Oliver is promised that the same spirit of revelation given to Moses will be given to him. (This section was received in April, before Oliver and Joseph received the gift of the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands, which came in May.) What blessing is Oliver told that he will receive from having the gift of revelation that will help him in a way similar to the way Moses was helped?

People often identify *revelation* as the "rock" that Jesus said he would build his church upon in Matthew 16:18. We often hear of the "rock of revelation." The trouble with this interpretation is that this phrase is not found in the scriptures. The LDS online scripture search engine states: "There were no occurrences of the words ROCK and REVELATION found [in the same verse] in the text of the Scriptures." The Lord himself is the Rock, as many scriptures make abundantly clear. "That rock was Christ." 1 Cor. 10:4 "It is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation." Hel. 5:12 Then the question becomes *how* does one build upon the Rock of Christ? To do this, *revelation is necessary*. Revelation functions like the bolts that tie down a building into the bedrock. A house perched on top of a rock but not bolted down in any way to that rock, is just as likely to be swept off by floods and rains as the house built upon sand. Both individuals and the church as a whole need *revelation* to be made secure to Christ.

3. Read D&C 18:4-5, 17-18 and D&C 11:24 and D&C 50:44 and D&C 6:34.
  - a. CHALLENGE QUESTION: It seems as if some scriptures say the Rock is Jesus Christ and others state that the Gospel is the Rock. Remember that the word "gospel" is a word borrowed from the Greek words meaning "good news." In scripture it is shorthand for "the Good News of Jesus Christ's Redemption." Knowing this, how are they (*Jesus Christ* and *the Gospel of Christ*) interchangeable as the bedrock upon which we must build the "house" of our own lives?
  
  - b. Do you think it's possible to have a testimony of Jesus Christ or his gospel without some sort of revelation? Explain.
  
  - c. What do you think the words "manifest" and "expedient" mean in D&C 18:18?

d. How would having the Holy Ghost to manifest to you all things which are expedient, enable you to withstand the floods and the rains that Jesus spoke of in the Parable of the House on Rock, or the mighty storms of Helaman 5:12? In other words, what part does revelation have in being able to withstand the storms of life?

4. Read D&C 35: 1-19

a. This section, a revelation to Sidney Rigdon, an early church leader who had been a preacher before his conversion to the LDS church, begins by explaining to Sidney the difference between the work he did as a preacher in his old church, and the new work he is now called to do. What does the Lord say is the primary difference?

b. What is the power by which God's servants can do great things? Cite verse.

c. Why do you think the Lord chooses "the weak things of the earth," according to verses 13 and 17, to do his work in the earth?

d. Why is it that you can trust the Comforter, or the Holy Ghost to give you the exactly right information or comfort that you will need in any particular circumstance? Cite verse.

e. What things in your opinion keep us from tapping into this source more than we do for meeting life's challenges and doing God's work?

5. Read Galatians 5:16-26 and 2 Nephi 2:28-29. Both Paul and Lehi tell us that a person must choose to follow either "the flesh" or "the Spirit." Apparently, you can't do both.

a. What comes from choosing to follow the flesh?

b. What comes from choosing to follow the Spirit?

6. Read D&C 45:57.

a. Name the advantages or benefits that come from taking the Holy Spirit as your guide in life?

b. PERSONAL: Can you share a time when you have followed the guidance of the Holy Spirit when it seemed counter-intuitive or contrary to conventional wisdom, yet proved to be the right thing to do.

7. Read D&C 20, the following verses: 25-28, 35, 37-45, 60, and 76-79. This section is like a "constitution" for the church, establishing the structure, responsibilities of priesthood offices, and government of the new church. All throughout this section there are references to the Holy Ghost and his part in the order and functioning of the church.

a. What is the relationship of the Holy Ghost to the other members of the Godhead? Cite verse.

b. Do we believe, as a church, that there may yet be revelations that result in new scripture? Cite verse.

c. Do you know what is the last revelation added to the Doctrine and Covenants? What is it and when was it given?

- d. What function does the Holy Ghost perform for new converts to the church? Cite verse.
  - e. What does the Holy Ghost do for church leaders who have the responsibility to conduct meetings?
  - f. What is the source of power that allows a man to function in the various offices of the priesthood? Cite verse.
  - g. How does the sacrament enable us to have the influence of the Holy Ghost in our lives?
8. When Joseph Smith was asked what the difference was between our church and others, he replied that it was “the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, ..and that all other considerations were contained in the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (History of the Church, Vol. 4, p42)
- a. Read D&C 124:97. In this verse, spoken to an early church leader, how can the Holy Ghost guide a leader?
  - b. Read D&C 121:37 and D&C 63:55. What do you think it means to “grieve the Spirit”?
  - c. What things mentioned in these verses can cause this to happen?
  - d. Why are the things we watch for entertainment, and the things we listen to, and the places we go, important?
9. Read D&C 42:5-6 and 11-17. These verses deal with teaching and missionary work in the church.
- a. What part does the Holy Ghost or Comforter play in our teaching and service in the church?
  - b. How do we get his Spirit? Cite verse.
  - c. What does it mean to you that “if ye receive not the spirit ye shall not teach”?

During this time in Church history, Jackson County Missouri had been revealed as the gathering place of Zion and church members began to go there. Many members were coming to the prophet Joseph asking him to receive revelations for them and commandments from God about what exactly they were to do in relation to gathering to Zion (including how to travel there). The following verses teach us the distinction between commandments—which are given by God through his prophet and are binding on all—and counsel, which comes by the whisperings of the Spirit to individual members.

10. Read D&C 58:24-29, 38, 50, 63 and D&C 62:4-8.
- a. How were Edward Partridge and his counselors to travel to Missouri? Cite verse.
  - b. Does being “an agent unto themselves” mean being independent of God? Explain.
  - c. How does [good] “judgment” work hand in hand with “the direction of the Spirit” (62:8)?

11. Some people take Sec 58:26,27 to mean that we are to live independently of God as if figuring things out all on our own was a virtue, and involving God intimately in our lives would somehow make us “puppets.” What fundamental difference is there between a puppet and an “agent unto himself”?
12. Read D&C 46:7. a. Are there areas in our lives that we don't need God's guidance in? Explain your answer.
- b. Read John 8:29. Did Jesus consider it a good thing to be independent of his Heavenly Father? Y N
- c. How do the Sacrament prayers speak to this issue?
13. PERSONAL: Did you ever disregard a nudge or prompting of the Spirit and live to regret it, learning a lesson thereby?
14. Read D&C 42, the following verses: 1-3, 56, 61-62, 68. Then read D&C 6:6, D&C 46:9 and D&C 88:63.
- a. What is the critical step in these verses that is essential in the process of receiving revelation?
- b. Why does God wait for us to do this thing before giving us revelation and information from on high?
- c. How important is prayer in the process of receiving revelation?
15. Read D&C 50: 21-34 and D&C 3:4.
- a. Why is pride incompatible with the Spirit of truth?
- b. What should be our attitude when we receive guidance or power to do something from the Spirit of God? Cite verse.
- c. If you receive light, such as a conversion or testimony building experience, what do you have to do to receive more light?
16. What have you learned from this study about revelation and the Holy Ghost that you think will make a difference in your life from this point forward, or that was new to you?