DATE: 06 October 1844  
            Nauvoo, Illinois  
  
SOURCE:     Addresses/BY  
            HC 7:284-288  
  
  
conference  am                                                    
      This day will be devoted to preaching and instruction, and we will attend to business tomorrow.  If the Twelve could have had their desires when they returned home, they would have set their houses in order, and devoted themselves to fasting and prayer.  It has not been the Twelve who desired to have business which pertains to this conference transacted previous, it was others who urged it on.  Some elders who have known the organization of the church from the beginning, have faltered and become darkened. We feel to give the necessary instruction pertaining to the church, and how it has been led, etc.  It is necessary that the saints should also be instructed relative to building the Temple, and spreading the principles of truth from sea to sea, and from land to land until it shall have been preached to all nations, and then according to the testimony of the ancients, the end will come.  When the Lord commences to work upon the earth he always does it by revealing his will to some man on the earth, and he to others.  The church is built up by revelation, given from day to day according to the requirements of the people.  The Lord will not cease to give revelations to the people, unless, the people trample on his laws and forsake and reject him.  I request that the Latter-day Saints may pray that we may have the outpouring of the Spirit that we may hear, and I wish them to pray for me that I may have strength, and that I may make every principle I speak upon so perfectly plain, that we may all understand as quick as when we talk together upon our daily matters.

      This church has been led by revelation, and unless we forsake the Lord entirely, so that the priesthood is taken from us, it will be led by revelation all the time.  The question arises with some who has the right to revelation?  I will not ascend any higher than a priest, and ask the priest what is your right?  You have the right to receive the administration of angels.  If an angel was to come to you and tell you what the Lord was going to do in this day, you would say you had a revelation.  The president of the priests has a right to the Urim and Thummim, which gives revelation.  He has the right of receiving visits from angels.  Every priest then in the church has the right of receiving revelations.  Every member has the right of receiving revelations for themselves, both male and female. It is the very life of the church of the living God, in all ages of the world.  The Spirit of Truth is sent forth into all the world to reprove the world of sin and unrighteousness, and of a judgment to come. If we were here today and had never heard this gospel, and a man was to come bounding into our midst, saying, he had come to preach the gospel, to tell us that God was about to restore the priesthood, and save the people, etc., it would be your privilege, and my privilege to ask God in the name of Jesus Christ, as individuals, concerning this thing, whether it was of God, and get a testimony from God that it was true, and this would be revelation. Let us take some of these old fathers for an example, they have heard the gospel, they have been baptized, etc., had hands laid on them for the gift of the Holy Ghost©©he has got a family of children, he has been led all his days by his own spirit, but now begins to come to understand he has the right to bow before the Lord and receive instruction from God, from day to day, how to manage his family, his farm, his merchandise, and to govern all the affairs of his house.  I will take some of my younger brethren who have received the gospel, they have been ordained an elder to hold the keys, etc.  What is your privilege? It is your privilege to go and preach the gospel to the world, and to go by the power of the Holy Ghost, and you have no right to go without it.  You have been ordained to go forth and build up the kingdom to a certain extent. No man ever preached a gospel discourse, nor ever will, unless he does it by revelation.  You will do it by the Holy Ghost, or when you tell the history of the gospel, the gospel will not be there.  It has got to be done by revelation or the gospel you have not got, and when you preach, the people will still be without the gospel.  There never was a prophet on the earth that dictated to the people, but he dictated their temporal affairs as well as spiritual.  It is the right of an individual to get revelations to guide himself.  It is the right of an elder when he has built up a church to get revelations to guide and lead that people until he leads them and delivers them up to his superiors.  An elder will always be a little in advance of those whom he has raised up if he is faithful.

      He [President Young] next showed how the saints are delivered up in their progress from those who give them up to the high council, and from the high council to the prophet, and from the prophet to the son, the elder brother, and from the son to his father.  (Then continued) --

      Are the keys of the kingdom taken from Joseph?  Oh no; well then he still lives.  He that believes in Jesus as Joseph did, they will never die.  They may lay down their lives, but they still hold the keys.  You are not going to be led without revelation.  The Prophet has stepped behind the veil and you have the right to obtain revelations for your own salvation.  Who stood next to the Prophet when he was here.  You have all acknowledged that the Twelve were the Presidents of the whole church when Joseph was not; and now he has stepped behind the veil, he is not here, and the Twelve are the Presidents of the whole church.  When did Joseph become a Prophet?  I can tell you, when he became an Apostle.\* Years and years before he had the right of holding the keys of the Aaronic priesthood, he was a Prophet,

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      \* This remark is a bit confusing because as a matter of fact Joseph Smith did not receive the Apostleship before he was baptized, for he was baptized on the visit of John the Baptist who restored the keys of the Aaronic priesthood May 15, 1829; and the restoration of the Apostleship came to him and Oliver Cowdery somewhat later, most likely sometime in June, 1829.  But President Young had in mind the fact of Joseph Smith becoming a Prophet from the time when he received his First Vision of God the Father and of the Son, early in the spring of 1820 and this constituted him a witness for God and likewise a Prophet; but he did not become authoritatively a Prophet to the church until he had been made an Apostle; for as stated by St. Paul, the order of these officers in the church is©ª"God hath set some in the church first apostles, secondarily prophets." etc. (I Cor 12:28) [BHR]

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even before he was baptized.  There has been a perfect flood of revelation poured from this stand all the time and you did not know it.  Every spirit that confesses that Joseph Smith is a Prophet, that he lived and died a Prophet and that the Book of Mormon is true, is of God, and every spirit that does not is of anti-Christ.

      It is the test of our fellowship to believe and confess that Joseph lived and died a Prophet of God in good standing; and I don't want anyone to fellowship the Twelve who says that Joseph is fallen.  If you don't know whose right it is to give revelations, I will tell you, It is I.  There never has a man stood between Joseph and the Twelve, and unless we apostatize there never will.  If Hyrum had lived he would not have stood between Joseph and the Twelve, but he would have stood for Joseph. -- Did Joseph ordain any man to take his place?  He did.  Who was it?  It was Hyrum, but Hyrum fell a martyr before Joseph did.  If Hyrum had lived he would have acted for Joseph\*, and then when we had gone up, the Twelve would have sat down at Joseph's right hand, and Hyrum on the left hand.  The Bible says God hath set in the church, first Apostles, then comes Prophets, afterwards, because the keys and power of the.Apostleship are greater than that of the Prophets.  Sidney Rigdon cannot hold the keys without Joseph, if he had held the keys with Joseph and been faithful he would have been with us.  If the Twelve do not apostatize they carry the keys of this kingdom wherever they go.

      He [President Young] concluded by requesting all the brethren to tarry with us until all the business is through.

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\* Brigham later corrected this statement as follows:  "It is a mistake with regard to Joseph ever saying that Hyrum would be his successor.  He ordained him a Prophet and Seer.  There may be millions of Prophets and Seers and Revelators, but none can hold the keys of presidency over the Church and Kingdom of God in all the world without the apostleship.  They must hold the keys of apostleship to do this." Unpublished sermon of October 8, 1866.