



Guided by Modern Revelation

BY ELDER LARRY W. GIBBONS

Of the Seventy

In March 2006 my wife and I sat in the office of President Thomas S. Monson. He kindly told us the Brethren felt inspired to call us to serve in Moscow, Russia. Sensing some possible apprehension, he assured us that he knew the area well and told us that if we had any problems we could always call him. Sister Gibbons quickly responded, “What’s your phone number?”

In reality the prevailing feeling in his office that day was not one of apprehension but one of quiet calm. We knew the Lord’s inspiration was present and that wherever we were called by the Lord’s servants would be the Lord’s will. Such assurance made it easy to say, “Yes, we will go.” Matters such as geography, climate, food, separation from children and grandchildren, and concern about our ability to measure up became much less daunting.

In matters large and small, the divine guidance that comes to modern-day apostles and prophets is a magnificent blessing. Revelation moves the Church in accordance with God’s

will. Moreover, each individual may enjoy the privilege of having the Holy Ghost testify that this guidance comes from heaven and not from man.

A wonderful example of this occurred in 1978. Francis Gibbons, a relative of mine, was serving as secretary to the First Presidency. At a family gathering he related that he was present the day President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) announced to his counselors that he had received a revelation that the priesthood was to be given to all worthy males in the Church (see Official Declaration 2). Francis described how clearly and powerfully the Holy Ghost bore witness to him of the truth of the revelation. When President Kimball told the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the revelation, Francis said, the Holy Ghost again bore the same clear witness to him that the revelation was from God. Then, when President Kimball told all of the General Authorities, the powerful witness came a third time.

In May 1978, before this revelation was announced to the Church, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles met in



The Lord’s blessings come in abundance when we listen to and follow the counsel of modern-day apostles and prophets.

In your own journey to Zion, is your life organized under the direction of the apostles and prophets?

the Salt Lake Temple. At the conclusion of the meeting, Elder LeGrand Richards (1886–1983) asked if he might say a few words. He told the Brethren that during the meeting he had seen a personage sitting in an armchair above the organ. He said the personage was President Wilford Woodruff (1807–1898) and suggested that perhaps he had seen President Woodruff because he was the only one who would recognize him.¹ Elder Richards, who was six years old when he saw President Woodruff dedicate the Salt Lake Temple, was the only one in the room who had seen him alive.

Isn't it interesting that this former prophet, who himself had announced a significant revelation related to Church policy, appeared as a witness of the truth and importance of this new revelation about to be announced?

Uninterrupted Communication

Of course, revelation is not reserved for high-profile issues or matters of Church policy or doctrine. On a continuous basis the Lord speaks through His apostles and prophets to help us in our families and with our day-to-day lives. In 1977 President Kimball said in general conference:

“Expecting the spectacular, one may not be fully alerted to the constant flow of revealed communication. I say, in the deepest of humility, but also by the power and force of a burning testimony in my soul, that from the prophet of the Restoration to the prophet of our own year, the communication line is unbroken, the authority is continuous, and light, brilliant and penetrating, continues to shine. The sound of the voice of the Lord is a continuous melody

and a thunderous appeal. For nearly a century and a half there has been no interruption.”²

Recently, a blessing came to our family through obedience to counsel given by the prophet. My sister and her husband have a son who had been estranged from them for several years. When President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) counseled Church members to read the Book of Mormon in 2005,³ this son followed that counsel. As a result his heart was softened, and he sought out his parents. Differences were mended, and the family became whole and united again.

This experience shows that we too may receive revelation to guide our individual actions. In fact, we have both the opportunity and the responsibility to do so. (See D&C 14:8; 41:5; 42:61; and 76:5–10.)

Follow the Prophet

We can gauge our willingness to receive modern revelation by asking ourselves the following questions:

1. Do I read and study the conference addresses of the apostles and prophets and make them my guide for the next six months?
2. When I raise my hand to sustain the General Authorities, do I think about what I am doing and silently pledge to pray for them and uphold them in every way?
3. Am I willing to follow the counsel of the prophet even when doing so might be difficult?
4. Do I value the words of the living prophets just as I value the words of the scriptures?
5. Do I seek a confirming witness from the Holy Ghost when the prophet speaks?

On January 14, 1847, at Winter Quarters,



President Thomas S. Monson



President Henry B. Eyring



President Dieter F. Uchtdorf



President Boyd K. Packer



Elder L. Tom Perry



Elder Russell M. Nelson



Elder Dallin H. Oaks



the Lord gave President Brigham Young (1801–1877) the following instructions: “Let all the people of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints . . . be organized . . . under the direction of the Twelve Apostles” (D&C 136:2–3).

In your own journey to Zion, is your life organized under the direction of the apostles and prophets?

All of us are acutely aware that we live in perilous times. The forces of evil are attacking our homes, our communities, and our standards. How can we withstand the attack? The Lord has said:

“Wherefore, . . . thou shalt give heed unto all [the prophet’s] words and commandments. . . .

“For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.

“For by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you” (D&C 21:4–6).

What a wonderful promise of protection for our homes and families. I know that the Lord’s blessings have come in abundance in my life when I have listened to and followed the counsel of those called in our day to speak for Him. May we all listen more intently and follow counsel more fully. ■

NOTES

1. See Lucile C. Tate, *LeGrand Richards: Beloved Apostle* (1982), 291–92.
2. Spencer W. Kimball, “Revelation: The Word of the Lord to His Prophets,” *Ensign*, May 1977, 78.
3. See Gordon B. Hinckley, “A Testimony Vibrant and True,” *Ensign*, Aug. 2005, 6.

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Elder M. Russell Ballard



Elder Richard G. Scott



Elder Robert D. Hales



Elder Jeffrey R. Holland



Elder David A. Bednar



Elder Quentin L. Cook



Elder D. Todd Christofferson



Elder Neil L. Andersen