



REVELATION

TO THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH—AND TO YOU

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Think of all the amazing things that Joseph Smith accomplished: translating the Book of Mormon, organizing the Church, receiving the priesthood, building temples, teaching the restored gospel, sending out missionaries. And it's all the more amazing that he did those things at such a young age.

How did he know how to do those things? Fortunately, he didn't have to guess—he was guided by revelation. Through these revelations, many of which are now contained in the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord taught him doctrine, guided him in organizing the Church, and answered important questions. Here are just a few examples.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY REVELATION

- Who has authority to baptize? On May 15, 1829, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery prayed about baptism. John the Baptist appeared and gave them the Aaronic Priesthood and commanded them to baptize one another. (See Doctrine and Covenants 13.)
- Is it OK to use tobacco? Chewing and smoking tobacco were common practices in Joseph Smith's

day. In 1833 he prayed for guidance on the topic and received the revelation known as the Word of Wisdom, which states that “tobacco is not for the body” (see Doctrine and Covenants 89).

- Why do we do temple work for the dead? Under the Prophet Joseph Smith's leadership, Church members built the Kirtland Temple and then the Nauvoo Temple, where they could perform baptisms and other temple ordinances. Doctrine and Covenants 128 explains that “we without them [the dead] cannot be made perfect; neither can they without us be made perfect” (verse 18).

You too can have the Lord guide your life and answer your questions through personal revelation. Sometimes those answers will come from the scriptures or from inspiration you feel in your heart and mind. And sometimes you move ahead in faith, not knowing exactly how things will turn out but trying your best to be obedient.

It usually takes time to find the inspiration and guidance you need. Like the Prophet Joseph, you can learn the Lord's will “line upon line, precept upon precept” (Doctrine and Covenants 98:12). As the Prophet did, begin with prayer. Ask Heavenly

Father for inspiration from the Holy Ghost. Search the scriptures and teachings of modern prophets. Make your decision and then ask if it's right (see Doctrine Covenants 9).

LEARNING OVER TIME

Take a look at this map, and you'll see where Joseph Smith was when he received these revelations from the Lord. The revelations came when and where Joseph Smith needed them, according to the Lord's will.

Joseph received 46 revelations in Kirtland, Ohio, but he didn't have to



The Doctrine and Covenants shows how revelation guided the Prophet Joseph Smith and gives a pattern for how inspiration can guide your life.

stay there to continue being guided by the Lord. He also received revelations in Pennsylvania, New York, Missouri, and Illinois.

These revelations came over a period of many years. Wouldn't it have been nice if the Lord had revealed everything Joseph Smith needed to know about the priesthood in one revelation? Instead, the Lord gave the Prophet revelations about the priesthood in 1829, 1830, 1832, 1835, 1841,

and so on (see, for example, Doctrine and Covenants 13; 20; 84; 107; 124).

Your gospel knowledge will grow over time too. As you learn the gospel with the help of the Holy Ghost—through the scriptures, general conference, Church meetings, seminary, and so on—your understanding will grow over time, just as Joseph Smith's did. **NE**



● Number of Doctrine and Covenants revelations Joseph Smith received at a particular location



ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT A YOUNG AGE

“[Joseph Smith] was 14 at the First Vision and 17 at the first visit from the angel Moroni. He was 21 when he received the golden plates and just 23 when he finished translating the Book of Mormon (in less than 60 working days). Over half of the revelations in our Doctrine and Covenants were given through the Prophet while he was 25 or younger.”

President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, Apr. 1996 general conference.