

asking for His blessings on your lives, your home, your loved ones, and your righteous desires. God will then guide you, and your daily conversations with Him will bring the peace and joy that can come from no other source. Your companionship will sweeten through the years; your love will strengthen. Your appreciation for one another will grow.

Additional references: Genesis 1:27–28; 2:18, 21–24; 1 Corinthians 11:11; Ephesians 5:22–33; Moses 2:27–28; 3:18, 21–24

*See also* Chastity; Divorce; Family; Temples; Unity

## **Melchizedek Priesthood**

“There are, in the church, two priesthoods, namely, the Melchizedek and Aaronic” (D&C 107:1). The Melchizedek Priesthood, which is “after the Order of the Son of God” (D&C 107:3), is the greater of these. It “holds the right of presidency, and has power and authority over all the offices in the church” (D&C 107:8). It also holds “the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church” (D&C 107:18). It is named after a great high priest who lived during the time of the prophet Abraham (see D&C 107:2–4; see also Alma 13:14–19).

Through the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood, Church leaders guide the Church and direct the preaching of the gospel throughout the world. In the ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood, “the power of godliness is manifest” (D&C 84:20).

This greater priesthood was given to Adam and has been on the earth whenever the Lord has revealed His gospel. It was taken from the earth during the Great Apostasy, but it was restored in May 1829, when the Apostles Peter, James, and John conferred it upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.

The offices of the Melchizedek Priesthood are Apostle, Seventy, patriarch, high priest, and elder. The President of the High Priesthood is the President of the Church (see D&C 107:64–66).

## *Mercy*

Men in the Church must be worthy Melchizedek Priesthood holders in order to receive the temple endowment and be sealed to their families for eternity. They have the authority to administer to the sick and give special blessings to family members and others. With the authorization of presiding priesthood leaders, they can bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost and ordain other worthy men to offices in the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods.

When a man receives the Melchizedek Priesthood, he enters into the oath and covenant of the priesthood. He covenants to be faithful, magnify his calling, “give diligent heed to the words of eternal life,” and “live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.” Those who keep this covenant will be sanctified by the Spirit and receive “all that [the] Father hath.” (See D&C 84:33–44.)

*See also* Aaronic Priesthood; Priesthood

## **Mercy**

Our Heavenly Father knows our weaknesses and sins. He shows mercy when He forgives us of our sins and helps us return to dwell in His presence.

Such compassion may seem to conflict with the law of justice, which requires that no unclean thing be permitted to dwell with God (see 1 Nephi 10:21). But the Atonement of Jesus Christ made it possible for God to “be a perfect, just God, and a merciful God also” (Alma 42:15).

### Receiving God’s Mercy

The Savior satisfied the demands of justice when He stood in our place and suffered the penalty for our sins. Because of this selfless act, the Father can mercifully withhold punishment from us and welcome us into His presence. To receive the Lord’s forgiveness, we must sincerely repent of our sins. As the prophet Alma taught, “Justice exerciseth