

## Summary Handout

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# “The Restoration of the Priesthood”

Lesson

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Summary

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**Scripture Summary:** *Doctrine and Covenants 13; Ordination of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to the Aaronic Priesthood along the bank of the Susquehanna River, near Harmony, Pennsylvania, May 15, 1829. HC 1: 39—42. The ordination was done by the hands of an angel, who announced himself as John, the same that is called John the Baptist in the New Testament. The angel explained that he was acting under the direction of Peter, James, and John, the ancient apostles, who held the keys of the higher priesthood, which was called the Priesthood of Melchizedek. The promise was given to Joseph and Oliver that in due time the Priesthood of Melchizedek would be conferred upon them. See also Section 27: 7, 8, 12. Keys and powers of Aaronic Priesthood are set forth.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 20:38—67; Revelation on Church Organization and Government, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, April 1830. HC 1: 64—70. Preceding his record of this revelation the Prophet wrote: “We obtained of him [Jesus Christ] the following, by the spirit of prophecy and revelation; which not only gave us much information, but also pointed out to us the precise day upon which, according to his will and commandment, we should proceed to organize his Church once more here upon the earth.” 38—67, Duties of elders, priests, teachers, and deacons are summarized;*

*Doctrine and Covenants 27:12—13 Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, August 1830. HC 1: 106—108. In preparation for a religious service at which the sacrament of bread and wine was to be administered, Joseph set out to procure wine for the occasion. He was met by a heavenly messenger and received this revelation, a portion of which was written at the time, and the remainder in the September following. Water is now used instead of wine in the sacramental services of the Church. 5—14, Christ and his servants from all dispensations are to partake of the sacrament;*

*Doctrine and Covenants 84:6—30 Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, September 22 and 23, 1832. HC 1: 286—295. During the month of September, elders had begun to return from their missions in the eastern states and to make reports of their labors. It was while they were together in this season of joy that the following communication was received. The Prophet designates it a revelation on priesthood. 6—17, Line of priesthood is given from Moses to Adam; 18—25, The greater priesthood administers the gospel ordinances; 26—32, The greater priesthood administers the gospel ordinances; 26—32, The lesser priesthood administers the preparatory gospel;*

*Doctrine and Covenants 107:1—20 Revelation on priesthood, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, dated March 28, 1835. HC 2: 209-217. On the date named the Twelve met in council, confessing their individual weaknesses and shortcomings, expressing repentance, and seeking the further guidance of the Lord. They were about to separate on missions to districts assigned. Although portions of this section were received on the date named, the historical records affirm that various parts were received at sundry times, some as early as November 1831. 1—6, There are two priesthoods: the Melchizedek and the Aaronic; 7—12, Those who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood have power to officiate in all offices in the Church; 13—17, The bishopric presides over the Aaronic Priesthood, which administers in outward ordinances; 18—20, The Melchizedek Priesthood holds the keys of all spiritual blessings; the Aaronic Priesthood holds the keys of the ministering of angels;*

*Doctrine and Covenants 110:11—16 Visions manifested to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery in the temple at Kirtland, Ohio, April 3, 1836. HC 2: 435—436. The occasion was that of a Sabbath day meeting. The Prophet prefaces his record of the manifestations with these words: “In the afternoon, I assisted the other Presidents in distributing the Lord’s Supper to the Church, receiving it from the Twelve, whose privilege it was to officiate at the sacred desk this day. After having performed this service to my brethren, I retired to the pulpit, the veils being dropped, and bowed myself, with Oliver Cowdery, in solemn and silent prayer. After rising from prayer, the following vision was opened to both of us.” 11—12, Moses and Elias each appear and commit their keys and dispensations; 13—16, Elijah returns and commits the keys of his dispensation as promised by Malachi.*

*Joseph Smith History 1:1—20; Joseph Smith tells of his ancestry, family members, and their early abodes—An unusual excitement about religion prevails in western New York—He determines to seek wisdom as directed by James—The Father and the Son appear and Joseph is called to his prophetic ministry. 21-26; Some preachers and other professors of religion reject account of First Vision—Persecution heaped upon Joseph Smith—He testifies of the reality of the vision.*

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### Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:

**Ancient Joseph, Prefigured the Savior’s Mission—with Authority:** Ancient Joseph was chosen by his father and then rejected by his brothers. In slavery, his identity was really unknown, yet he served and saved those around him. Later, he served and saved his brothers before identifying himself. Ancient Joseph was authorized by his father, Jacob, when Jacob laid his hands on Joseph’s head. “. . . parents place their hands on the heads of their children when they bless them. (For example, in the Bible, Jacob blessed his grandsons, Ephraim and Manasseh, by placing his hands on their heads.) Placing the hands on another person is symbolic not only of transferring blessing but also of passing on authority. In Talmudic times, scholars received their rabbinic ordination through the symbolic act of placing of the hands (known as semikhah).” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Modern Expectation of a Future Joseph:** To give “modern Joseph” a little insight to what the Jews are still anticipating, we repeat, “According to the Talmud, the Messiah will be a descendant of the House of David and will be preceded by a secondary Messiah, from the House of Joseph . . .” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Chiasmus of Ancient/Modern Joseph:** Joseph saved his family in Egypt and they did not know who he was. In the meridian of times there was “One” who saved us all and still most people don’t know it. Latter-day Joseph is saving his brothers again, (more foreign aid goes to Israel from the U.S.A., the land of Joseph, than from all other countries combined) and they don’t know that it is “Joseph.”

**Priesthood Similarities, Fasting and Fast Offerings:** “In every town where there are Jews they must appoint 'charity wardens,' men who are well-known and honest that they should collect money from the people every Sabbath eve and distribute it to the poor . . . We have never seen or heard of a Jewish community which does not have a charity fund.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*) See the similarity of young Aaronic Priesthood bearers gathering “Fast Offerings” at the beginning of the month. Monthly fasting is also an integral part of Jewish life, yet never on a Sabbath, unless it is Yom Kippur.

**Immersion, Baptism:** Religious Jews who experience repeated immersions (monthly for women and regularly for men) step into their immersion font from the east side, immerse themselves, and then exit to the west side. This could be a reminder of the Children of Israel entering into their Promised Land. Immersions are favored below ground level in flowing water that emanates from bedrock the “Rock of Salvation.” Consider that the lowest spot on the face of the earth where water that originated in bedrock flows is where the Children of Israel crossed into their homeland. Judeo/Christians agree that it is the likely spot where Jesus came to John to be immersed. “As an everlasting covenant, baptism began on this earth with Adam (Moses 6:64-67) and has continued ever since whenever the Lord has had a people on earth. (D. & C. 20:23-28; 84:26-28.) It was not a new rite introduced by John the Baptist and adopted by Christ and his followers. The Jews were baptizing their proselytes long before John, as is well attested from secular sources.” (*Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, Pg.71*)

**Sacrament, Bread and Wine (Water):** Weekly, Latter-day Saint’s “sacrament” consists of bread that is broken and blessed. Then, water (nowadays, water instead of wine) is blessed. The presiding authority partakes first and then everyone follows. This is done in *remembrance* of the greater deliverance provided by the Savior’s atonement. Weekly in a religious Jewish home, they take wine first and then bread in *anticipation* of a greater deliverance, while Christians take bread and wine in *remembrance* of that great deliverance . . . a chiasmus with the Savior’s atonement in the middle. The master of the house always pours the wine, blesses, sips first, followed by everyone else sipping. He breaks a piece of bread, blesses, eats the first piece with everyone following his example. The prayers said include a promise that in the future another deliverance would occur greater than the first Passover.

**Priesthood Government:** Priesthood restoration has been a hope of Jews since before Jesus’ time. This is reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Manual of Discipline, a sort of doctrines and covenants of religious people who left Jerusalem prior to Jesus’ coming, describes their organization including a Teacher of Righteousness and two assistants. There was also a council of twelve overseers. Their priestly system included a higher authority that connected with an order of the *Melech Zedek* (righteous king), and another of lesser authority that seemed to be connected with the Levitical, or order of Aaron.

**Jesus’ Governing System:** Jesus used the same system of government that was previously given to Moses, a system that partially continued to exist in other Jewish traditions up to and at the time of Jesus. “. . . He chose twelve, whom also he named apostles . . .” (*Luke 6:13*) “. . . appointed other seventy also . . .” (*Luke 10:1*) . . . the princes of Israel, being twelve men: each . . . for the house of his fathers.” (*Numbers 1:44*) “And he said unto Moses, Come up . . . Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel . . .” (*Exodus 24:1*)

**History Repeats:** In Jesus’ time, the size of the multitude who truly believed in the restoration of ancient covenants, as preached and administered by His Twelve and the Seventy, grew and expanded well beyond the borders of Israel. Many non-Jews also felt the true spirit and believed. Their conversions bothered some of the Jews, because the Jews wanted to hold on to past customs and social traditions. Soon, the growth of the Church became an even greater threat for the Jewish community leaders. It seems that the restoration in modern times, in a Christian society, has gone through a similar pattern.

Daniel Rona, born in Israel and living in Jerusalem has authored Old & New Testament, Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Supplement Study Materials to be used in conjunction with the weekly LDS Gospel Doctrine Lesson study. NOTE: Three versions of the supplemental study materials are available FREE at [www.HolyLandsRevealed.com](http://www.HolyLandsRevealed.com). (Just click “LDS SUPPLEMENTS”)

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