

# Priesthood

## Orders/Keys/Authorizations/Permissions

Joseph Smith Jr. tells us “all priesthood is Melchizedek, but there are different portions or degrees of it.” With a little study and the help of the heavens we can find many things, which give more detail and definition to that statement. The real name of that overall priesthood is: The Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God. Knowing this, we realize that there must be different orders of power and authority in the eternities. If there is an Order of the Son of God, then it stands to reason there would be an order of the Father, the details of which we have been told almost nothing except a small portion that pertains to earthly man and which comes to us through the authority of the Son. We have however been told some things about the orders of priesthood that can pertain to this earth.

We are told of only three orders of priesthood. The earthly performance of the Melchizedek Priesthood administers the spiritual blessings inside the church organization in furtherance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ or the gospel and ordinances of redemption and salvation. This gospel of redemption is conducted through the Melchizedek Priesthood office of apostle, which holds the power of presidency and may create subdivisions and then officiate over the organized church and earthly kingdom of God and has authority to perform ordinances across natural biological family lines so as to accept individuals into the church of Jesus Christ and to marry individuals from different families to create new family units within the church. The other order of priesthood as an appendage of the Melchizedek Priesthood within the confines of the church structure is the Aaronic or Levitical Order of Priesthood. This order officiates in the temporal or tangible blessings of those who have entered into the church and gospel of Jesus Christ. The primary office in this order is the office of Priest with the chief administrative office of Bishop. By right of birthright and bloodline this office belongs to a member of the tribe of Levi, but when a righteous and worthy Levite is not available a man holding the Melchizedek Priesthood, in the office of High Priest can officiate instead.

The final earthly order is the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood. This is the least understood because Joseph Smith was deprived of the time and attention he needed to firmly establish its organization and an operational community of patriarchs on earth and could do little more than lay its foundation and beginnings. This order of Priesthood is independent of the church organization but includes the authority to perform all the same saving ordinances as the church, as well as the higher ordinances required for exaltation. Joseph restored and established this priesthood order well enough to continue, but because it was not to be publically expounded upon and was only taught in any detail to only those whom he had ordained to this order, it remains a misunderstood part of the fullness of the gospel. This order of priesthood unlocks the path to possible exaltation where the orders of priesthood within the church unlock the possibility of salvation only.

Because some terms and phrases are used interchangeably and sometimes rather haphazardly understanding priesthood orders and priesthood keys and authorizations to use those powers can be a little confusing. Hopefully some clarity can be achieved through the following explanations. The overriding goal of this earthly creation is to end up with a permanent family structure or tree with Adam at its head under the auspices of Christ who advances to sit enthroned as the Father to this creation. This inverted family tree structure will extend through all kingdoms under Adam and under whom other exalted patriarchs will head and administer to sections of Adam's overall family organization. To that end, all people will define themselves through this earthly probation as to what kingdom they will inherit and where they will fit into this final family structure. In the continuation of this process spiritual individuals must be born into earthly families and then venture through life on their own path to find out, and define, who they are in an eternal sense. While here in mortality they may be exposed to the gospel of salvation and if not here during their natural life, then after they have passed on to the next realm, but before the final placement within the appropriate kingdom and their placement in the family structure is completed.

The originating God and Father of this creation desires as many of us as possible to go through this earthly testing experience and then return to the kingdom of His abode and reside there. To reside in God's kingdom, or any eternal kingdom, one must meet the requirements of that kingdom's law. Unfortunately, mortality is such a corrupting influence, and because we all have some intrinsic weaknesses, there is no way for us to never have broken the laws of God's kingdom and thus, we would be eternally disqualified from a final residence there. Evidently, the laws of the Father's kingdom contain a proviso that if there is someone who can go through mortality and still meet the requirements of all of God's law, then that person can define an attainable subset of the Father's law and require the rest of us to meet only that portion of the greater law along with the ability to make some mistakes if we will correct and overcome those mistakes. If we will therefore keep the Savior's law or commandments, He will advocate for us with the Father so we may eventually enter and reside in the kingdom of God. That is the gospel of Jesus Christ or the gospel of salvation or redemption from permanent death or in other words, exclusion from God's presence and is the sum of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God, no more, and no less. (3 Nephi Chapter 11)

The laws of God extend through all kingdoms and realms including this earthly realm. Certain performances are required to gain salvation. These include learning what things we should and shouldn't do and then stop doing the things we shouldn't do. This is commonly referred to as the process of repentance. We must acknowledge and accept He who is our Advocate and Savior and start living by his rules. Also, we must perform certain ritual acts conducted by those who have authority of God to administer certain saving ordinances, such as baptism, the importuning to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, marriages, naming of newborns and blessings of comfort and health. This defines the province and authority of the church and the gospel of salvation. The right to act with authority and in God's name resides in the conferral of the Holy Priesthood and that is why the church must contain the Melchizedek and Aaronic orders of priesthood although, priesthood per se exists independent of any church and is without beginning or end. This gospel of redemption over physical and spiritual death or in other words the death of

being permanently cast out of the presence of God allows us individually and singularly to be redeemed and saved in the kingdom of God.

If this singleness were the only possible arrangement then every person ever having been on earth would be directly a son or daughter in Adam's immediate family. We know from the Holy Scriptures that there are other patriarchs who will be exalted and have eternal family structures within the larger family organization under Adam so; there must be a process to achieve or become exalted to a patriarchal station and administer to a portion of this earth's family tree. This aspect of the law of eternal progression is outside the authority of the church and the gospel of redemption but the gospel of salvation and progression in the church are prerequisites to ordination in the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood and becoming an eternal patriarch. The parts of the fullness of the gospel, which require the keys of the Patriarchal Order of the Holy Priesthood, are the exalting ordinances that are beyond the saving ordinances, which are essentially those things that under normal circumstances are done inside a dedicated temple such as baptism for the dead, temple endowments with the attending ordinances and rituals. Other ordinances that may not require the sanctity of a temple if one is not available, but do require patriarchal keys are certain adoptions, as well as the giving of patriarchal blessings, the conferral of the patriarchal order of priesthood and a second anointing. These are the ordinances beyond salvation, which are outside the authority of the priesthood operating within the earthly church, to perform of their own volition.

It should be noted that after this creative cycle is completed, all things will operate under Heavenly Father's Patriarchal law and Priesthood and the need for earthly, church-based apostolic performances will cease until the next creative cycle. However, while operating on this earthly stage of action the apostolic ordinances are essential. Therefore, based on the foregoing realization, it is plain to see that the purpose for the church to exist on earth beyond its primary task of making it possible for us to return to the Father's presence after this life is to prepare and help create patriarchal families to survive in the eternities with sovereign patriarchs at their heads within Adam's final family structure.

Consequently, there are two levels of progression at work here on the earth. The

combination of these two comprises the earthly fullness of the gospel and the fullness of earthly priesthood. They are two separate levels that are to remain clearly within the boundaries of their jurisdictions. When the fullness of the gospel was restored, Joseph was instructed how to arrange things so these two orders could work together and yet remain separate. Joseph received all necessary priesthood orders, keys and authorities needed to first establish the church and perform all earthly ordinances. He organized the church and established the Melchizedek priesthood and the church offices within it so those priesthood offices could perform baptisms, marriages and blessings thus completing the restoration of the gospel of repentance and the church of Jesus Christ. He then ordained his father Joseph Smith Sr. as a patriarch in the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood and no others to stand as patriarch to the church. Why? Because the presidency and the apostles of the church had no independent authority to grant patriarchal blessings or the power to make valid the performance of the temple's exalting ordinances. They were however in possession of the authority and the means to build, maintain and protect the temple properties. To enforce the strict separation of the two major orders of priesthood it was further stipulated when Hyrum was installed as patriarch to the church that his office must go only to his direct descendants and not through any other bloodline by apostolic assignment. It is through the authority of Hyrum's line of patriarchal keys that the church is authorized to perform patriarchal blessings and the ordinances of the temple beyond what is required for the gospel of repentance.

The fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood contains all possible keys and authorities, which mortals are capable of possessing with all attendant powers. That does not mean that any man who has had the Melchizedek Priesthood conferred upon him can do all things just because he can claim a legitimate ordination. Authority to act with the power of the priesthood depends on jurisdiction, keys, and permissions. Within the priesthood are orders, offices, missions and callings. Receiving the priesthood without an office or calling, or station, allows the performance of nothing. When an office or calling is pronounced in connection with the priesthood there are implied if not specified jurisdictional boundaries and permissions. The keys, which enable the proper execution

of the office or calling must have been either given or acquired before or after the ordination. Only after the priesthood is conferred, and an office or calling pronounced with or without specific instructions and permissions, and the necessary keys granted and obtained, can one efficaciously perform the appropriate priesthood ordinances, which might be accepted by the heavens and accounted as righteousness for the sake of all those involved.

Keys are always the product of knowledge and bestowal. They consist of understanding the “how,” “what,” “why,” “who,” and “when” of priesthood law and performances and permission to conduct those interactions in conjunction with the heavens. Knowledge and authority unlocks and makes available power in the same way a physical key opens or releases a lock and grants access.

These two major divisions of the Holy Priesthood together comprise the fullness of the gospel and the fullness of the priesthood on earth. Each has its realm of operation and each has specific restrictions, which keep them separate though interdependent. The Melchizedek order within the church and under the authority of the apostleship has the authority to officiate across biological family boundaries, with the exception of legitimate patriarchal families, for the purposes of baptism and marriages and then see to the temporal needs of church members but, but has no authority to perform beyond the limits defined in Holy Scripture as the gospel of repentance. The Patriarchal Order of Priesthood contains authority to perform any and all earthly ordinances of the priesthood, but a patriarch is restricted to operating only within the confines of his own family and only to the extent of the keys he has acquired and possesses. The only exception ever made to these jurisdictional limitations in this dispensation was the patriarchal line of Hyrum Smith who was given an office in the church structure and allowed to be the source of patriarchal authority for the express purposes of allowing certain high priests to give patriarchal blessings to members of the church who were not already in patriarchal families and to conditionally delegate patriarchal authority for the performance of the ordinances of the temple beyond marriages. A Patriarch having received the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood from his natural or adoptive father, who received it from his father in

a traceable line of specific ordinances back to Joseph Smith, is a sovereign. In the church, the Melchizedek and Aaronic orders under the apostleship must be conferred in a specific way and by one already having that or a greater level of priesthood and having jurisdiction over the recipient, but they needn't be from the same family. In a similar way the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood must be bestowed by specific ordinances and wording, but must be done by, or under the direct authority of the recipient's patriarchal father. This patriarchal order of priesthood and ordination must proceed from father to son, related either by birth or by adoption, hence its name.

Another distinction between the church's orders and offices of priesthood and the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood is the way they are organized. The church is set up in levels of authority and divisions of labor. The presidency presides over and governs all the offices and operations within the church structure, within the boundaries of the gospel of repentance, and in a hierarchical arrangement with the presidency and quorum of the twelve at the top. By contrast, sovereign patriarchs are directly accountable only to the Lord. There is no hierarchical structure in the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood so; there is no such thing as a presiding patriarch outside the church and no patriarch is authorized to cross over the boundaries of another patriarch's family without the consent, permission and agreement of the other patriarch. Patriarchs may and should cooperate with one another for the blessings and temporal needs of their families, but only by agreement and delegation.

The way the kingdom of God on earth in relation to the priesthood and the church was to operate is pretty simple but quite elegant. It began to operate close to the way it was intended while Joseph was alive and working to get these things established in a clear working order, but the chaos of being driven from place to place and dealing with the fracturing of the church membership after Joseph's death along with the chaos of relocating out west as well as trying to survive in a hostile desert environment with the federal government harassing the church over polygamy, resulted in the straightforward and convenient process of progressing in the fullness of the restored gospel to be ultimately corrupted and broken into separate operations.

It is intended from the foundation of all creation that the plan or gospel of salvation be offered to all people of mortality and the exalting ordinances be available further along their path of eternal progression, worlds without end. Those who are interested in the gospel and responded to the promptings of the Holy Spirit can be taught the process of entering the legitimate gospel and church of Jesus Christ and enter the strait gate and begin on the straight and narrow path of life, which leads to redemption and salvation from death and the ability to return to the presence of God. To that end they can meet the requirements of faith and repentance and be baptized through the authority of the Holy Priesthood, confirmed a member in the body of Christ's church, and have the opportunity to receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost as a constant companion and guide through this life. While in the membership of the church a person can learn more and more about the gospel and our savior and the plan of salvation with the opportunities to put the tenets of the gospel into practice in their lives as they progress toward conquering the evils inherent within mortality.

Along the way there are opportunities for church members to be married and have the union sealed, or in other words recorded and recognized by the heavens to be included in the Savior's book of life including the naming of newborn children and receive blessings for the sick as well as blessings of comfort and guidance, all within the authority afforded by the gospel of Christ through the officiations of the Holy Priesthood within the church. Also, those within Christ's church may be exposed to the possibility of further progression and could have been introduced to the notion of the fullness of the gospel and the fullness of priesthood through access to patriarchal blessings authorized within the temples of the church through the power of the delegated patriarchal keys of Hyrum Smith's line of authority and office. In furtherance of this progression toward a fullness of blessings, beyond the gospel of repentance, the exalting ordinances of a conditional endowment, second anointing, temple marriage capable of remaining in force after this life has ended, which included plural marriage were made available again through the keys of the Hyrum Smith line of patriarchal authority. Included under this patriarchal authority and the sanctity of a dedicated temple, the proxy ordinances could be

accomplished such as baptisms for the dead, endowments for the dead, proxy sealing and recording of earthly marriages for the dead, sealing or recording earthly family connections and groupings both for the living and the departed.

This sealing power for ordinances pertaining to exaltation, which extend beyond those required for salvation are shown to reside within the authority of the patriarchal order of priesthood given to Hyrum Smith to be executed within the church through his office as chief patriarch to the church. This is made clear in the following:

D.&C. Section 124:

... that my servant Hyrum may take the office of Priesthood and Patriarch, which was appointed unto him by his father, by blessing and also by right;

92 That from henceforth he shall hold the keys of the patriarchal blessings upon the heads of all my people,

93 That whoever he blesses shall be blessed, and whoever he curses shall be cursed; that whatsoever he shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever he shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

94 And from this time forth I appoint unto him that he may be a prophet, and a seer, and a revelator unto my church, as well as my servant Joseph;

95 That he may act in concert also with my servant Joseph; and that he shall receive counsel from my servant Joseph, who shall show unto him the keys whereby he may ask and receive, and be crowned with the same blessing, and glory, and honor, and priesthood, and gifts of the priesthood, that once were put upon him that was my servant Oliver Cowdery;

Clearly this empowers Hyrum to do more in the operation of the church than simply give patriarchal blessings and oversee the ordination of stake patriarchs. Hyrum also received the apostleship and the designation as “second elder to the church, “ which before were put upon Oliver Cowdery.

D. & C. Section 124:

124 First, I give unto you Hyrum Smith to be a patriarch unto you, to hold the sealing blessings of my church, even the Holy Spirit of promise, whereby ye are

sealed up unto the day of redemption, that ye may not fall notwithstanding the hour of temptation that may come upon you.

125 I give unto you my servant Joseph to be a presiding elder over all my church, to be a translator, a revelator, a seer, and prophet.

This selection states the distinctions between the offices of Patriarch to the Church and that of President of the Church. The sealing power of the Holy Spirit of Promise by appointment and anointing was given to Hyrum and his posterity while the right to preside over the church was given to Joseph and the subsequent presidencies. In a larger context it also implies that Joseph presides over those of the Lord's church over the whole earth in this last dispensation. The power to seal on earth and in heaven and to loose on earth and in heaven for those operations, which are patriarchal or exalting in nature, is granted to the church through the office of patriarch and the keys of the Holy Spirit of Promise granted to Hyrum and his successors as patriarchs to the church. This becomes especially clear in relation to temple marriage.

D.&C. Section 132:

18 And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife, and make a covenant with her for time and for all eternity, if that covenant is not by me or by my word, which is my law, and is not sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, through him whom I have anointed and appointed unto this power, then it is not valid neither of force when they are out of the world, because they are not joined by me, saith the Lord, neither by my word; when they are out of the world it cannot be received there, because the angels and the gods are appointed there, by whom they cannot pass; they cannot, therefore, inherit my glory; for my house is a house of order, saith the Lord God.

One may refer to the following to understand who may hold the keys to the power to seal by the Holy Spirit of Promise inside the church.

D. & C. Section 132:

7 And verily I say unto you, that the conditions of this law are these: All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances,

connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by revelation and commandment through the medium of mine anointed, whom I have appointed on the earth to hold this power (and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to hold this power in the last days, and there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred), are of no efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead.

It is clearly stated that there is but one man on earth at a time who holds this power and although it is not stated it can be reasonably assumed the Lord is speaking about within the confines of the church. Further study on the subject of the Holy Spirit of Promise demonstrates that it cannot be so universally exclusive outside the church. At the time this was given, Joseph was in the church and he held preeminence in this regard, but after his death it automatically reverted to the only other person who also had been appointed and anointed to this calling who was Hyrum and his direct successors after him.

As members of the church learned to master themselves and live the gospel of repentance and redemption they could be called into the temple to receive blessings beyond the authority of the church leadership through the auspices of patriarchal authority. The leaders of the church have authority to bring members into the path of progression beyond redemption, but they do not possess the priesthood order, keys, authority and permissions to make those ordinances efficacious and acceptable to God even though they are able to perform those ordinances under the delegated authority of the Church Patriarch. They are also the guardians of the temple property and control access to the temple. Those higher ordinances are the exclusive province of patriarchal, or the Father's authority for the purpose of exaltation, beyond salvation and redemption. Redemption is the extent of the church's authority through the Son's saving gospel and its attendant priesthood offices.

Eventually after a man has lived in the gospel to become acceptable to God for inclusion in the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood, God reveals His will to a sovereign patriarch that the man chosen by the Lord should be ordained into that order of priesthood. This is only done as a result of a direct revelation from God. If the man were a direct son of a sovereign patriarch the father would simply perform the ordinance using the wording revealed to him. If a temple was available the ordinance should be performed there otherwise, a properly dedicated place will do. If the man to receive the patriarchal order is not the natural son of a sovereign patriarch and both he and the sovereign patriarch selected by the Lord received the Word of the Lord that an adoption and conferral was to take place, that adoption ordinance would precede the conferral of the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood. Once again the preferred conditions would be to perform these ordinances in the sanctity of the temple as the place already dedicated for all the higher ordinances to take place.

Once a man is inducted into the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood he is no longer under the authority of the church priesthood structure although, it was originally intended that he and his family remained members and they were to remain actively engaged in church functions with the exception that he could not exercise his patriarchal authority as a function of the church's organization. If he was ever placed in the apostleship or leadership or in any quorum of the church and performed an ordinance, patriarchal in nature, as part of his church office or church duty, he must understand that he was then acting under the delegated patriarchal keys of Hyrum Smith's line of authority and not his own unless he was acting within his own family. Inside his own family, his patriarchal keys preside. This arrangement was how things were organized and intended to operate if they had been left unmolested.

Before Joseph was assassinated but after he had firmly established the church structure, he tried to move onto the next task of establishing the patriarchy as a functioning cooperative organization of sovereign patriarchs to act in concert with the leadership and membership of the church. This gave rise to the often-referenced remark that Joseph didn't care who the members of the church sustained as their president, implying he

wanted it to be anyone other than himself. Of course he cared, but he knew he had other tasks that should occupy his attention and energies. That was not allowed by the membership. They insisted Joseph remain as the head of the church, so the orderly establishment of the patriarchy suffered.

Joseph had already begun putting qualified men into the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood under the direction of the Lord. We know of the publically divulged ordinations of Joseph Smith Sr. and Hyrum Smith, and there were others. It is probably a safe bet that some early leaders of the church were adopted to Joseph Smith and given the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood. Undoubtedly they were schooled in the proper coordination between all the priesthood orders. We have information of others who never served in the governing quorums of the church who were adopted to Joseph and given the patriarchal keys and there are suspicions that there were yet others who are commonly unknown but hinted at in various sermons and comments made by those men who had their talks recorded and their journals preserved. It was because man-to-man adoption is exclusively the province of ordained and sovereign patriarchs who hold the legitimate Patriarchal Order of the Holy Priesthood that when men of the church holding only the Melchizedek priesthood by virtue of a church ordination and office or calling having only the authority of the gospel of repentance began running around adopting men to themselves that Joseph immediately stopped the practice within the church in the most strenuous way possible.

After the church was driven to the western territory and the federal government embarked on a campaign to force the church to give up the practice of plural marriage, in defiance of the constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion, the separation of church and state, and the law of equal protection under the constitution, it became necessary under duress for the church to abandon the higher ordinance of celestial or plural marriage. Since the fullness of the gospel is to survive on the earth in this dispensation and plural marriage remains a necessary part of the fullness and is clearly embraced by the law of the priesthood, arrangements had to be made for its perpetuation outside the church. During this time, while the restored gospel was under attack, the organization of those holding

the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood slowed dramatically and that aspect of the fullness of priesthood was eclipsed entirely by the struggles of physical survival on the high deserts of the Rocky Mountains and political and legal wrangling over plural marriage.

The accommodation for the survival of the practice of plural marriage was eventually made by the president of the church, John Taylor through the establishment of a group of people outside the church with a charge to keep plural marriage alive on the earth by ensuring that at least one child be born into a plural family every calendar year. They were given the office of apostleship within the Melchizedek priesthood akin to the priesthood in the church with a specific and limiting charge and permission to accomplish that end. Marriage, including plural marriage is well within the authority of the apostolic office and has never required patriarchal keys or authority to be efficacious. This group of people was not given any patriarchal authority and consequently warned to never form a church of their own. If not specifically told, they should have realized it also included a denial to engage in any of the temple ordinances, which required patriarchal keys since the only coordination between the two major orders of priesthood on this earth, in this dispensation, was to be only between the line of Hyrum's patriarchal authority and the church established by Joseph Smith Jr. This group of people received the keys and permission only to keep plural marriage alive on the earth, nothing more. What should have happened after this group was established was that there should have been cooperation between them and the church so the children of this group could be raised in the church's embrace and progress like any other member and those in the church who were moved to enter into plural marriage could find their way to the group without relinquishing their membership in the church but take the personal responsibility for practicing plural marriage and not implicate the organization of the church. Unfortunately, it didn't evolve that way.

At one point it is understood that one of the leaders of this plural marriage group had indeed received a second anointing in the temple of the church and all that implies, early in the twentieth century. Because of his love for worthy people within the plural marriage group, he wanted them to receive those higher blessings and authorities, so he

importuned the Lord to allow him to give more of the priesthood to some of the men within that group. The Lord refused and that ended the matter. Some years later and after the passing of the man who had been refused and while a new crop of leaders of the plural marriage group were troubling the Lord for expanded authority the Lord relented to the extent that He told them they could do ordinances in addition to plural marriages that the church might abandon and cease performing. Of course, the permission they received would still only apply to the saving ordinances of the gospel of repentance, which are ordinances of the church and the Melchizedek priesthood office of apostle, which is all they ever held and not the higher, exalting, temple ordinances under Hyrum's priesthood keys. To date, plural marriage still remains the only ordinance within their legitimate authority that the church has abandoned. A while later that group claimed to hold all priesthood keys, authority and permissions on earth to exclusion of the church and its priesthood and offices and all others to include the surviving lines of the restored Patriarchal Order of Priesthood. Consequently, they built their own endowment house, began giving endowments, formed their own church, built their own temple in Mexico for giving endowments and some men in their group even began giving a second anointing under the mistaken notion that if an ordinance is received by proper authority or not, it authorizes the recipient to perform that ordinance for others just by having received it. This seems to be an inversion of logic from the often-repeated statement that one cannot perform an ordinance that has not been previously received. All these things were done without a scrap of the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood and the keys, authorities and permissions contained therein. Unfortunately, but because they lack a full understanding, there are some serious contradictions and errors, which cause the breaking of some of those covenants that arise out of the wording they impose on their followers that are within the text of the endowment they try to give.

Though wrong in practice, it is somewhat understandable why they felt they should build their own endowment house to try and seal for eternity the marriages and plural marriages they were performing because instead of coordination and cooperation between them and the church there existed for many years only ranker, hostility and mistrust. From the beginning of that group and for many years afterward their marriages had been

performed through their priesthood authority but not done after an endowment ceremony like in the church. After many years of the group's existence they undoubtedly began to feel they should be entitled to, but were being deprived of the blessings and pronouncements of the endowment. They might have avoided some mistakes if they had exercised greater faith in the Lord and His justice. They openly understood that they too had received the sealing keys of Elijah with their apostleship, which authorized them to keep records of their marriages, births, and other pertinent ordinances and that when the Lord would set His house in order they would present their records to the church and they and their records would be accepted. They likewise should have had faith that the marriages they performed, that should actually remain intact after this life, would be dealt with in the Millennium like all the rest of the temple operations and ordinances done within this earthly kingdom since all things prior to one's calling and election being made sure, whether that is done in mortality or afterward, are just conditional and therefore temporary anyway. The Lord in His righteousness will not deprive anyone the blessings they can be granted.

At least they still practice plural marriages and continue to have children under the covenant of plural marriage in every calendar year as is their commission and they probably still have the authority to do that in spite of their other mistakes. Thankfully, the making of missteps and mistakes by the Lord's mortal agents does not undo all prior priesthood conferrals and previous blessings and authorizations else this creation would have been destroyed as an utter failure long, long ago. The Lord will use everything and everyone He can within the allowances of eternal law to carry off this creation triumphant even though his servants prove to be less than perfect or even profitable in the execution of their duties and callings.

Since the church never directly had the authority to perform the higher ordinances on its own authority but just through the administration of only Hyrum Smith's patrilineal office and keys and likely because the later church leaders never saw a need to nurture a community of patriarchs, since they could not directly contribute to the operation and benefit of the church, the Patriarchal Order of Priesthood did not continue to flourish in

the embrace or in cooperation with the church. There likely are some patriarchal priesthood lines still existing on the earth that can trace back through distinct ordinances to Joseph Smith Jr. as the source, but none are now known to be within the church and none are acknowledged inside the plural marriage group.

The last known direct descendant of Hyrum Smith who served as Patriarch to the church was Eldred G. Smith. Soon after the announcement by Spencer W. Kimball as president of the church that the priesthood within the church and access to the ordinances of the temples would be afforded all worthy members regardless of race, it was rumored that the Church Patriarch was hesitant or less than enthusiastic about the change in policy. It is further rumored that because of his reluctance to quickly or easily embrace the pronouncement that relatively soon afterward Brother Smith was made emeritus and was no longer required to occupy his office. The reason for this retirement comprises the rumor part. The relegation to the status of emeritus is public record and knowledge. Hopefully, Patriarch Smith passed on his line of patriarchal priesthood keys and authority, but his son likely never received the priesthood ordinances that would allow him to occupy the office of Church Patriarch with Hyrum's Patriarchal Order of Priesthood and keys before the death of his father. It is said that upon the death of Patriarch Smith the office of patriarch to the church was eliminated by the church presidency for the stated reason that there are enough stake patriarchs giving patriarchal blessings in the church worldwide. The Lord God established and organized His Kingdom, Priesthoods, and church the precise way He wants them to be by direct revelation through Joseph Smith Jr, who was His Prophet, Seer and Revelator to mankind in this last dispensation, who is the head of this Dispensation of the Fullness of Times, so the question must be asked; Where is the revelation again from God to authorize altering the organization of His church and Priesthood structure, which carries such eternal consequences? The action that has been taken by some of the church leadership who temporarily occupied positions of administrative authority is a sad mistake for those seeking more than individual salvation. The only obvious hope and option for these people now is to seek out what is left of the legitimate patriarchy. Some years ago Church Patriarch Eldred G. Smith was visiting Missouri and was asked why he had been

made emeritus and he responded that he didn't know and said, "You would have to ask that question to the church leaders." He may have known more about his calling than they, and then again, maybe not.

The fullness of the gospel and the fullness of priesthood are still on the earth and available, but cannot be conveniently found and has never been easily pursued nor easily obtained. They have always been gained through trials and sacrifices, one careful step upon another. Now more than ever, one must be warned that there are many counterfeits at large to ensnare and sidetrack the unwary, unworthy and casually schooled. May the Lord bless all those who sincerely and righteously seek Him and the opportunities within His gospel program of eternal progression.

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