

## D & C Lesson 10

### “THIS IS MY VOICE UNTO ALL”

Prepared by Duane S. Crowther, March 2001

#### 1. Joseph Smith’s “graduation from ten years of schooling”

A. **Gordon B. Hinckley:** “This day of organization was, in effect, a day of commencement, the graduation of Joseph Smith from ten years of remarkable schooling. It had begun with the incomparable vision in the grove in the spring of 1820, when the Father and the Son appeared to the fourteen-year-old boy. It had continued with the tutoring from Moroni, with both warnings and instructions given on multiple occasions. Then there was the translation of the ancient record, and the inspiration, the knowledge, the revelation that came from that experience. There was the bestowal of divine authority, the ancient priesthood again conferred upon men by those who were its rightful possessors—John the Baptist in the case of the Aaronic Priesthood, and Peter, James, and John in the case of the Melchizedek. There were revelations, a number of them, in which the voice of God was heard again, and the channel of communication opened between man and the Creator. All of these were preliminary to that historic April 6.” [“150-Year Drama: A Personal View of Our History,” *Ensign*, April 1980, pp. 11-12]

#### 2. Details of the organizational meetings, April 6, 1830

A. On April 6, 1830, Joseph Smith met with 56 men and women [*Our Heritage*, p. 14] in the log home of Peter Whitmer, Sr. in Fayette, New York. Six men were chosen by the prophet to be the first official members of the Church, in compliance with the laws of New York. These men had all been baptized and had seen the gold plates of the Book of Mormon. They were: **Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Samuel H. Smith, Peter Whitmer, Jr., David Whitmer** and **Oliver Cowdery**.

B. See video: “Organization of the Church,” *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Video Presentations*.

C. **Joseph Smith** recorded: “Having opened the meeting by solemn prayer to our Heavenly Father, we proceeded, according to previous commandment, to call on our brethren to know whether they accepted us as their teachers in the things of the Kingdom of God, and whether they were satisfied that we should proceed and be organized as a Church according to said commandment which we had received. To these several propositions they consented by a unanimous vote.” [*History of the Church*, vol. 1, p. 78]

D. “With the consent of those present, Joseph ordained Oliver an elder of the Church and Oliver ordained the Prophet an elder as they had been directed by the Lord. The sacrament was blessed and passed to the members present. Those who had been baptized were confirmed and given the gift of the Holy Ghost. The prophet said that ‘the Holy Ghost was poured out upon us to a very great degree—some prophesied, whilst we all praised the Lord, and rejoiced exceed-ingly.’ During this meeting, Joseph received a revelation in which the Lord instructed the Church to give heed to the words of the prophet as if they came from the Lord himself (see D&C 21:4-6).” [*Our Heritage*, pp. 14-15]

E. The meeting was adjourned. The group went to a baptismal service where those who had previously been baptized were rebaptized as members of the Church. Others, including Joseph’s father and mother, were baptized. [See *Our Heritage*, p. 15.]

F. The group met in another meeting, where the new members were given the gift of the Holy Ghost. The revelation now known as D&C 21 was received, recorded and read to the Church during

the meeting. [See heading, D&C 21.]

### 3. **The name of the Church at first unrevealed; finally revealed in 1838**

A. The Church was called by various unofficial names in its earliest days, until the Lord revealed the actual name by which He desired it to be called. The name references in the early D&C sections really weren't statements of the Church's name, but rather allusions to the Church as an existing organization led by Jesus Christ. They include:

1. *General references*: the church, my church, this church, his church, thy church, etc
2. the Church of Christ [D&C 20:1,38,71,81; 21:11; 102:1,12; 107:59]
3. the church of God [D&C 70:5; 84:17; 138:55]
4. the church of the living God [D&C 70:10; 82:18]
5. the church of the Firstborn [D&C 76:54,67,71,94,102; 77:11; \*78:21; \*88:5; \*93:21-22; 107:19]

B. The name of the Church was revealed in *D&C 115:3-4* [April 26, 1838]: "For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even ***The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints***." [v. 4] That name also was used in *Official Declaration-2*.

C. But several times in the D&C the Church's name was used with the initial *the* in lower case: *D&C 115:3; 127:12; 136:2; Official Declaration-1*. The Church's name also was used with no initial *the* in *D&C 128:21*. [only a proofreader would notice this!]

D. Instructions in the current [2000] *Style Guide for Publications of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* are: "In textual matter, lowercase the word *the* preceding the name of an organization, even when it is part of the official title. Capitalize *the* only in formal contexts, such as copyright notices (see *Chicago* 7.60-61). . . . *The only exception is the full name of the Church: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. ["Names of Organizations," p. 25.]

E. See the recent *Church News* article "Proper Church name reaffirms centrality of Christ," [Church News, March 3, 2001], in which the presiding Brethren ask members and news media to use the revealed *full name* of the Church, and to avoid the use of the terms "Mormon Church," "LDS Church" or "The Church of the Latter-day Saints." They suggest that when a shortened reference is needed, the terms "the Church," or "The Church of Jesus Christ" be used. They say Church members should be referred to as "members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

### 4. **D&C 20: instructions from the Lord to Joseph Smith about organizing the Church**

A. See the verse summaries for Section 20, p. 34 of the D&C.

B. Read "*The duty of the members after they are received by baptism*," vv. 68-74, especially verse 69: "And the members shall manifest before the church, and also before the elders, by a *godly walk and conversation*, that they are worthy of it, that there may be *works and faith agreeable to the holy scriptures—walking in holiness before the Lord*."

C. See also *Mosiah 18:8-11* [Alma's words to those about to be baptized at the Waters of Mormon]; *D&C 6:6*: "Keep my commandments, and *seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion* [see *D&C 97:21*: "Let Zion rejoice, for this is *Zion—the pure in heart*.""]

### 5. **D&C 21: Receive the words of the prophet**

A. Read *D&C 21:4-9*: "His words 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*; yea, and the Lord God will *disperse the powers of darkness from before you*, and *cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory*."

### 6. **D&C 25: Counsel for daily living (to Emma Smith, but "*this is my voice unto all*")**

A. *D&C 25:15*: “Keep my commandments continuously, and *a crown of righteousness thou shalt receive*. And except thou do this, where I am you cannot come. And verily, verily, I say unto you, that *this is my voice unto all*.”

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