

## D & C Lesson 37

### “WE THANK THEE, O GOD, FOR A PROPHET”

Prepared by Duane S. Crowther, October 2001

1. **Video: “Watchmen on the Tower.”** [*Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History, For Use in Homes and Gospel Doctrine Classes*, © 1999 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc.]

#### 2. Our Need for a Living Prophet

A. Why do we need a living prophet today? “The counsel of the living prophet helps us respond to all the major problems and needs of our day.” [*Gospel Doctrine Teacher’s Manual*, 1999, p. 214]

B. **President Ezra Taft Benson:** “The most important prophet, so far as we are concerned, is the one who is living in our day and age. This is the prophet who has today’s instructions from God to us today. God’s revelation to Adam did not instruct Noah how to build the ark. Every generation has need of the ancient scripture plus the current scripture from the living prophet. Therefore, the most crucial reading and pondering which you should do is of the latest inspired words from the Lord’s mouthpiece.” [*Conference Report, Korea Area Conference 1975*, p. 2]

C. “The members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are all prophets, seers, and revelators. However, only the President of the Church is authorized to receive revelation for the entire Church and to exercise all the priesthood keys necessary to govern the Church.” [*Gospel Doctrine Teacher’s Manual*, 1999, p. 214]

#### 3. Information from the scriptures about the roles of the living prophet

##### *The prophet speaks for the Lord and reveals the Lord’s will*

A. *D&C 1:38:* “My word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, *whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.*”

B. *D&C 21:4-5:* “His word shall ye receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.”

C. *D&C 43:2:* “Ye have received a commandment for a law unto my church, *through him whom I have appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations from my hand.*”

##### *The prophet testifies of Jesus Christ and teaches the gospel*

D. *D&C 20:21-27:* “. . . all those from the beginning, . . . who believed in the words of the holy prophets, who spake as they were inspired by the gift of the Holy Ghost, who truly testified of him in all things, should have eternal life.”

E. *Mosiah 13:33:* “Did not Moses prophesy . . . concerning the coming of the Messiah, and that God should redeem his people? Yea, and even all the prophets who have prophesied ever since the world began—have they not spoken . . . concerning these things?” [*13:33-35*]

##### *The prophet is a seer*

F. “A seer is a prophet upon whom God bestows great power to know the past and the future. He can know of things that are not known or are hidden. He also can have the power to translate

ancient records.” [*Gospel Doctrine Teacher’s Manual*, 1999, p. 215]

G. *D&C 21:1*: “There shall be a record kept among you; and in it thou shalt be called a *seer*, a *translator*, a *prophet*, an *apostle of Jesus Christ*, an *elder of the church* through the will of God the Father, and the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ.”

H. *Mosiah 8:13-18*: “He has wherewith that he can look, and translate all records that are of ancient date; and it is a gift from God. . . . Whosoever is commanded to look in them, the same is called seer. . . . *A seer is a revelator and a prophet also, and a gift which is greater can no man have.* . . . A seer can know of things which are past, and also of things which are to come, and by them shall all things be revealed.”

I. *D&C 101:43-54: Parable of the watchman upon the tower* [*parable of the nobleman and the olive trees*] “The watchman upon the tower would have seen the enemy while he was yet afar off; and then ye could have made ready and kept the enemy from breaking down the hedge thereof, and saved my vineyard from the hands of the destroyer.” [101:43-54, 55-62, 63-66, 67-75]

### ***The prophet presides over the Church***

J. *D&C 107:91-92*: “The duty of the President of the office of the High Priesthood is to *preside over the whole church, and to be like unto Moses— Behold, here is wisdom; yea, to be a seer, a revelator, a translator, and a prophet*, having all the gifts of God which he bestows upon the head of the church.”

K. *D&C 107:23*: The First Presidency is to be “upheld by the confidence, faith, and prayer of the Church.”

## **4. Heeding the words of our living prophet**

A. *D&C 21:4-6*: “Wherefore, meaning the church, *thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them*, . . . 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.”

B. **President Harold B. Lee**: “*The only safety we have as members of this church is to do exactly what the Lord said to the Church in that day when the Church was organized* [see *D&C 21:4-5*] . . . . There will be some things that take patience and faith. You may not like what comes from the authority of the Church. It may contradict your political views. It may contradict your social views. It may interfere with some of your social life. But if you listen to these things, as if from the mouth of the Lord himself, with patience and faith, the promise is that ‘the gates of hell shall not prevail against you.’” [*Improvement Era*, December 1970, p. 126]

C. **President Ezra Taft Benson**: (at the close of General Conference) “For the next six months, *your conference edition of the Ensign should stand next to your standard works and be referred to frequently.*” [*Ensign*, May 1988, p. 84]

D. **Elder Harold B. Lee**: The report of the conference should “be the guide to [our] walk and talk during the next six months.” [*Conference Report*, April 1946, p. 68]

## **5. The prophet will never lead us astray**

A. **President Joseph F. Smith**: “If [the President of the Church] should become unfaithful, *God would remove him out of his place.* I testify in the name of Israel’s God that he will not suffer the head of the Church, whom he has chosen to stand at the head, to transgress his laws and apostatize; the

moment he should take a course that would in time lead to it, God would take him away.” [*Gospel Doctrine*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. [1939], pp. 44-45]

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