

264.1: Continuing Revelation (D&C Gospel Doctrine Lesson 42, Updated)

[Continuing Revelation to Latter-day Prophets](#)

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We all want an instruction manual for life... what do we do? How do we access wisdom greater than our own? Both personal and institutional revelation are urgent (balanced by the fact a key purpose of life is to help us learn to make decisions on our own).

The lessons on Revelation are some of my favorite (link to them). This lesson is not only about prophetic revelation, but \*continuing\*, so recent, prophetic revelation.

Hard to do this topic justice, tangled up in complex cultural and human issues.

Discussion of new resources

[Lesson 42: Continuing Revelation to Latter-day Prophets](#)

- [“Witnessing the Faithfulness”](#): This article tells selected stories of how Official Declaration 2 changed the lives of Latter-day Saints in the United States, Brazil, and Ghana. I respect the way that this essay grapples with the real stories and consequences of black members of the Church before 1978.
- [“Race and the Priesthood”](#): This Gospel Topics essay gives historical context for the priesthood restriction and discusses the Church’s position on some past theories about it. I think this is one of the most important Gospel Topics essays because of the way it frankly acknowledges that racism played a role, leaders are limited and influenced by cultural context (also see the “mythbusters” link below on some inaccuracies in this essay)

- [“A Personal Essay on Race and the Priesthood”](#): In a four-part essay, Ahmad Corbitt gives his perspective on race and the priesthood.
- [“Ministry of David O. McKay: Church Correlation”](#): This two-minute video discusses the early stages of Church correlation.
- [“Ministry of Harold B. Lee: The Purposes of Priesthood Correlation”](#): This one-minute video highlights President Lee’s teachings on correlation and families. I appreciate the emphasis that everything in the Church exists to support healthy family life.
- [“Ministry of Spencer W. Kimball: The Priesthood to All Worthy Men”](#): This two-minute video discusses Official Declaration 2. Listen for President Hinckley’s description of receiving the revelation.

[https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/bruce-r-mcconkie\\_alike-unto-god-2/](https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/bruce-r-mcconkie_alike-unto-god-2/)

I would like to say something about the new revelation relative to the priesthood going to those of all nations and races. “He [meaning Christ, who is the Lord God] inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile” (2 Nephi 26:33).

These words have now taken on a new meaning. We have caught a new vision of their true significance. This also applies to a great number of other passages in the revelations. Since the Lord gave this revelation on the priesthood, our understanding of many passages has expanded. Many of us never imagined or supposed that they had the extensive and broad meaning that they do have.

We have revelations that tell us that the gospel is to go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people before the Second Coming of the Son of Man. And we have revelations which recite that when the Lord comes he will find those who speak every tongue and are members of every nation and kindred, who will be kings and priests, who will live and reign on earth with him a thousand years. That means, as you know, that people from all nations will have the blessings of the house of the Lord before the Second Coming.

We have read these passages and their associated passages for many years. We have seen what the words say and have said to ourselves, “Yes, it says that, but we must read out of it the taking of the gospel and the blessings of the temple to the Negro people, because they are denied certain things.” There are statements in our literature by the early Brethren which we have interpreted to mean that the Negroes would not receive the priesthood in mortality. I have said the same things, and people write me letters and say, “You said such and such, and how is it now that we do such and such?” And all I can say to that is that it is time disbelieving people repented and got in line and believed in a living, modern prophet. Forget everything that I have said, or what President Brigham Young or President George Q. Cannon or whomsoever has said in days past that is contrary to the present revelation. We spoke with a limited understanding and without the light and knowledge that now has come into the world.

We get our truth and our light line upon line and precept upon precept. We have now had added a new flood of intelligence and light on this particular subject, and it erases all the darkness and all the views and all the thoughts of the past. They don't matter any more.

This has powerful implications for all sorts of beliefs and practices and policies we have in the Church. Where are we in the revelatory process? Which present elements "won't matter any more" in the future?

<http://mormonhistoryguy.com/2017/10/31/mythbusters-official-declaration-2-edition/>

Detailed discussion of myths around the policy of racial exclusion.

attempt to cultivate an environment in which the conversation can be simultaneously candid *and* charitable.

For example, Brigham Young initially supported blacks having the priesthood, but was influenced by community rage relating to interracial relationships, which Young believed was a crime against humanity. Young also told other apostles that blacks were not eligible for the priesthood because they were descendants of Cain.

## **Productive Sunday School**

Continuing Revelation in theory (the potential of the doctrine)

Continuing Revelation in context

We all, including our prophets, are human and limited. This is one of the most important takeaways of the 1978 revelation! The prophets very clearly said "We were wrong, and we have received further light and knowledge on this topic." It raises the question, which side of 1978 are we on with any given issue?

This has to do with how the Church works doctrinally/theologically and how the Church works socially

Get into how humans adapt, once we get to our 20s most of us are pretty baked and set.

Continuing Revelation in practice

Revelation in the early Mormon Church (especially Joseph, Mormonism does have amazing, distinctive doctrines and practices)

But in the past hundred years, seems to be mostly administrative

Correlation

1978

Small temples

Lowering missionary ages

Proclamation to the family

Exclusion policy

Hopeful conclusion (However things are, there is always hope for change, and not just change, but RAPID change when needed. We can turn the whole church around in a moment, and we are primed to accept new revelation and act on it)

Full episode:

- The way continuing revelation is discussed in the Church
- The approach to continuing revelation in the Community of Christ tradition
- Pretend you were an investigator: What would be on your wishlist of topics on which to hear God's will?
- How do we balance prophetic revelation and our personal revelation and gifts?
- What role do the inspiring statements of other religious leaders play?