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THE  
SEVENTIES

by

OGDEN KRAUT

1974





# THE SEVENTIES

*After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. (Luke 10:1)*

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## P R E F A C E

Little or nothing was known about the office and calling of the "Seventy" until the Gospel was restored to earth through the Prophet Joseph Smith. To most historians, scholars, and ministers, the "seventy disciples" represented only a number of disciples chosen or sent by the Lord. But, by vision and revelation to Joseph Smith, the calling of a Seventy was unveiled as an "apostle" and "special witness" of Jesus Christ. The office of Seventy was represented as one of the highest and most holy callings ever committed to mortal man.

This little volume is written to acquaint the reader with the vast range of power and authority which was once committed to the Seventy--and to disclose the gradual but effective erosion which has reduced that lofty calling into one of the least in the Church. No other office began with such magnificent potential and suffered such a striking decline.

The Seventies were once identified as Apostles, and acted in conjunction with the Twelve, but now they are the servants of bishops and stake presidents. Once they ranged over the earth as ministers of Christ, and were endowed with the spirit of revelation and prophecy; but now they are confined to minor tasks in the wards and stakes where they live.

The Seventies of the Lord have trudged through freezing snows of the North, and the sweltering heat of deserts, or sailed the stormy seas to bring the light of heaven's message to a rebellious generation. Wicked societies have opposed them, while they slept outdoors, or suffered the pangs of hunger, thirst, and poverty. Many have endured the pains of mobbings or prison, and not a few have paid the ultimate price with their lives. These are the "called and chosen" of the Lord. Obediently, they have traveled every quarter of the earth to a wayward people with the most precious thing in the world--the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This book is dedicated to those noble men who reached the full stature of Seventy and all that office represents--and to all the Seventies of today who desire to attain that fulfillment but are constrained--and to those Seventies of the future who shall stand forth with more exceeding numbers and greater powers than ever before. It will be through their efforts that the House of Israel will be gathered, and the glorious millennial reign of Christ upon the earth will be accomplished.

--The Author

## Chapter I

### SEVEN AND SEVENTY IN SCRIPTURE

The common recurrence of the number seven shows that perhaps it is the most meaningful number within the confines of the scriptures. With each mention of this number there appears to be a certain significance which one cannot overlook--as though the Lord seems to characterize it with special representative and symbolic dignities.

The frequent recurrence of certain numbers in the sacred literature of the Hebrews is obvious to the most superficial reader; but seven so far surpasses the rest, both in the frequency with which it recurs and in the importance of the objects with which it is associated, that it may fairly be termed the REPRESENTATIVE symbolic number. (*Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 607)

From the Old Testament--the canon of scripture which has mostly demonstrated its laws and ordinances with figurative implications--comes the following:

The creation of earth was in a 7-"day" period.

There were 7 days appointed to the week.

The Sabbath day was the 7th day.

There were 7 weeks between the Passover and Pentecost.

The 7th month was ushered in by the Feast of Trumpets.

The 7th year was established as the Sabbatical year.

And 7 years times 7 years was the Jubilee year.

Then there were many numerical ordinances and rites that were predicated upon this number:

- 7 victims were offered on any special occasion.
- 7 victims were used in the ratification of a treaty.
- 7 days of ceremony were necessary for consecration of Priests.
- 7 days were consecrated in the feast of the Passover.
- 7 days of ceremony were required for the Feast of Tabernacles.
- 7 lambs were offered on the Passover.

Strange procedures and occurrences were a part of the Israelite campaign of war against Jericho: the walls of Jericho fell after 7 priests, with 7 trumpets, blowing 7 times, marched 7 days around Jericho. Their victory came on the 7th day in that miraculous battle.

Israelitish history and customs are blended with a multitude of sevens:

When Noah was told by the Lord to enter the ark, he was commanded to take 7 clean beasts of every kind (Gen. 7:2); then 7 days later the rain was to begin (Gen. 7:10). After the 7th month, the ark rested on the mountain (Gen. 8:4), and Noah waited 7 days to send a dove (Gen. 8:10) and then waited 7 days to send another dove (Gen. 8:12).

Balaam told Balak to build 7 altars and sacrifice 7 oxen and 7 rams (Num. 23:1).

Samson told Delilah that he would lose his power by being bound with 7 green withs, to weave 7 locks of his hair, and shave off seven locks. (Judges 16: 7,13,19)

Job had 7 sons (Job 1:2) and 7 thousand sheep (Job 1:3). And in his affliction his friends sat with him 7 days and 7 nights (Job 2:13). Finally



after passing his test of faithfulness, his servants offered 7 bullocks and 7 rams to the Lord (Job 42:8).

Jacob served 7 years to obtain Leah and another 7 for Rachel.

The Pharaoh's dream had 7 fat oxen, 7 lean oxen; 7 full ears of corn and 7 empty ears; Joseph's interpretation was 7 bounteous years and 7 lean years.

God threatened to smite his children 7 times for the sin of disobedience, and Naaman dipped in the Jordan River 7 times.

The Jewish Golden Candlestick had 7 branches:



*The seven-branched "menorah"*

Although the number seven frequently appeared in the Old Testament, it also had the same frequent usage in the New Testament. The Apostle John's Book of Revelation was a composition of the numeral seven:

- 7 letters were written to 7 churches. (Ch. 1-3)
- 7 seals and 7 trumpets. (Ch. 4-11)
- 7 vials. (Ch. 15-16)
- 7 candlesticks. (1:2,20)
- 7 stars. (1:16,20)
- 7 angels. (1:20)
- 7 horns & 7 eyes on a lamb. (5:6)

- 7 lamps. (4:5)
- 7 thunders. (10:3,4)
- 7 heads & 7 crowns on a dragon. (12:1)
- 7 heads on leopard-like beast. (13:1)
- 7 heads on scarlet beast. (17:3,7)
- 7 mountains. (17:9)
- 7 kings. (17:10)

Then the Apostle John adds seven "blesseds" to his Book of Revelation. These have been referred to as the "Seven Beatitudes" of the Book of Revelation:

1. Blessed is he that reads this prophecy. (1:3)
2. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. (14:13)
3. Blessed is he that watches for the Lord. (16:15)
4. Blessed are those bidden to the Lamb's supper. (19:9)
5. Blessed is he that has part in first resurrection.
6. Blessed is he that keeps the words of this book.
7. Blessed are they that wash their robes. (22:14)

\* \* \*

Jesus took 7 loaves and fed thousands, after which they gathered 7 baskets full (Matt. 15:34,37). And in teaching the gospel of forgiveness, the Lord said we must forgive 7 times 70 (Matt. 18:22).

It is said that there are 7 dispensations of the gospel upon the earth, and in the 7th dispensation 7 women will take hold of one man (Isa. 4:1), and then God will usher in the 7 thousandth year-- which is the Millennial reign of Christ on the earth.

It is also interesting to note that the human body is constructed by 7 major portions and 7 greater systems. There are 7 kinds of connecting tissues, 7 epithelial tissues, 7 major functions, 7 organs essential to life, 7 functions of the nervous system and 7 layers to the skin. There are 7 basic divi-

sions of the eye and 7 in the ear. There are 7 compartments to the heart and 7 divisions of the brain. Seven parts compose the human embryo; and if a baby is born before 7 months, there is little chance to live, but after 7 months the chance is good. And, every 7 years the human body is completely renewed.

There are 7 colors in the rainbow, 7 notes in the scale of music, and 7 wonders of both the ancient and modern world.

Seven was also considered as a symbol of life to the Egyptians, and 7 is considered a sacred number by nearly every other theology; most of these religionists believe in the 7 virtues and 7 vices of morality.

One of the next most frequent numbers used in the scriptures is the number 70. There were seventy souls born to Jacob (Ex. 1:5), and King Ahab had 70 sons (2 Kings 10:1). The Lord told Moses to gather 70 faithful elders around the tabernacle (Num. 11:16), and 70 elders were chosen to go part way up Mt. Sinai to see the Lord (Ex. 24:9-10). Another 70 men were chosen of the House of Israel (Ezek. 8:11). There were 70 talents of offering in the tabernacle (Ex. 38:29), with a silver bowl that weighed 70 shekels (Num. 7:85). Jesus called His missionary disciples the Seventy (Luke 10:17). The Lord brought judgment upon Tyre after 70 years (Isa. 23:17) and a 70-year desolation upon Jerusalem (Dan. 9:2). There were 70 weeks to make an end of sins (Dan. 9:24), and the Prophet Zechariah described a special type of fast which lasted for 70 years. (Zech. 7:5)

The frequent reference, its association with sacred objects, and its use as a "representative" number, all show that seven has a special significance in God's work. From history and tradition, the numbers *seven* and *seventy* carried the meaning of

"completeness" and a "fullness" or "total unit." With such a grand display of usages, descriptions, and sacred associations, there can be little wonder why the Lord should choose 7 presidents to preside over His quorums of Seventy, to "complete" His most "sacred" work of the ministry for the salvation of mankind!

## Chapter II

### THE SEVENTIES IN HISTORY

*Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel... and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them. (Num. 11:16,17)*

#### BIBLICAL HISTORY

The earliest record associating faithful men with the title or calling of Seventy occurred in the Old Testament during the time of Moses. These "faithful" men, seventy in number, were called by revelation from the Lord to help with the burden of teaching the gospel. The task of instructing, guiding, and the work of the ministry was a burden too heavy for Moses to bear. He appealed to the Lord for help to teach the numerous hosts of Israel:

And Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers?

When should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat. I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness.

And the Lord said unto Moses, *Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel*, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: *and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them*; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone. (Num. 11:11-17)

These seventy men of Israel had a most unique calling: firstly, to be filled with the Spirit of God; secondly, to assist the Prophet of God; and thirdly, to be special witnesses of God.

The "burden" which the Seventy men of Israel were called to bear was a spiritual one. When they received their call, they were endowed from on High with the gifts and powers of the ministry.

And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the Lord, and *gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people*, and set them round about the tabernacle. And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, *they prophesied, and did not cease*. (Num. 11:24-25)

These seventy men enjoyed the spirit of the Lord and its gifts. This particular endowment and qualification has never been changed, either during the ministry of Christ while He was upon the earth, nor in these latter days. The parallel between both the numbers, and callings, are identical in the body of the Church.

*...it is fairly safe to conclude that the Seventy Elders of the two passages in question were really a quorum of the Seventy as we know it, and that perhaps the princes at the head of the Twelve Tribes of Israel may have occupied a position somewhat analogous to, if not identical with, that of the Twelve Apostles in the later church. (B. H. Roberts, *Seventies Course in Theology*, 1st year, p. 5)*

Rulon S. Wells wrote this brief history of the ancient Seventy:

The order of the Seventy is doubtless of ancient origin, as we may naturally conclude from the writings of Moses. (Ex. 24:1,9,11, and Num. 11:16,17,24,25) These references to the Seventy, however, although very significant, are nevertheless so meager that we find difficulty in determining the nature of their duties or in connecting them with the subsequent organizations of that body, either in the meridian of time or in this latter-day dispensation. This much, however, is certain, *that their calling was of high spiritual importance in the work of God during the administration of Moses, for we read in paragraph 25 above referred to, that "the Lord came down in a cloud \* \* \* and took of the spirit that was upon him (Moses) and gave it unto the Seventy Elders" and "When it rested upon them they prophesied and did not cease."*

Nor is it at all to be wondered at that subsequent references in the Old Testament are lacking (unless we assume that the institution of the "Sanhedrin" is an outgrowth or continuation of the order of the Seventy, which, to say the least, is purely speculative, and extremely doubtful), for it is made known to us in modern

revelation that the Lord in his wrath against the rebellious children of Israel "took Moses out of their midst and the Holy (Melchizedek) Priesthood also." (Doc. & Cov. 84:24,25) This, of course, included the Seventy, but the lesser Priesthood continued among the children of Israel until John and the coming of our Lord when again the Church was established on the earth and the Melchizedek Priesthood was again restored, together with the fulness of the everlasting Gospel with all of its gifts and blessings including its pristine authorities. This dispensation is marked by the personal ministry of our Savior among men and we read of his choosing the Twelve to be his special witnesses or Apostles and commanding them to "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15) This was a great undertaking for twelve men and what could be more natural than again to call the seventy to assist them? Their ministry was accompanied by wonderful spiritual manifestations so that "even the devils were subject unto them," and we are reminded of that other Seventy who were chosen to assist Moses.

Little else is recorded in the scriptures regarding the Seventy, but this is sufficient to show the nature of their calling and the important part they had in the work of the Lord. How well the Twelve carried out the command to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" is attested in holy writ and although not specifically set forth it is only reasonable to suppose that the Seventy were called to assist them in this gigantic undertaking.

Had the Church continued to exist upon the earth through the centuries which followed this



Messianic dispensation doubtless there would still be found in its organization the Twelve Apostles and the Seventy, together with the other officers which Christ set in his Church. (Eph. 4:10)

Shortly after the departure of the Apostles grievous wolves made their appearance "not sparing the flock," as was predicted by the Apostle Paul (Acts 20:29-30), and the universal apostasy or "falling away" took place as further predicted by him in his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians (II Thes. 2:3). (*Improvement Era*, April 1930, pp. 403-404)

The calling of the Seventy was not without the power of the Priesthood. Those faithful men were called to go forth and preach the gospel, heal the sick and cast out the devil. When they came back to make their report to Jesus, they seemed to be amazed at the power they possessed.

And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, *even the devils are subject to us through thy name.* And he said unto them, As lightning falleth from heaven, I beheld Satan also falling. Behold I will give unto you power over serpents and scorpions, *and over all the power of the enemy;* and nothing shall by any means hurt you. (Luke 10:17-20)

Another scriptural reference to the Seventy may apply to the Seven Presidents:

Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, lock ye out among you *seven men* of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give

ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. (Acts 6:1-8)

These Seventy, like those in the days of Moses, were not often mentioned in the scriptures. These spiritual men were never popular, and thus we may conclude that in the spiritual apostasy of the first century, they and their message had been rejected. Through persecution, opposition, and possibly death, these Seventy were not perpetuated very far. Their history, like that of their Master, existed but a short time.

The names of our Savior's apostles are sufficiently obvious to everyone, from his Gospels; but of the seventy disciples, no catalog is given anywhere. Barnabas, indeed, is said to have been one of them, of whom there is distinguished notice in the Acts of the Apostles; and also in St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. Sosthenes, who sent letters with St. Paul to the Corinthians, is said to have been one of these. Clement, in the fifth of his Hypotyposes or Institutions, in which he also mentions Cephas, of whom St. Paul also says that he came to Antioch, and 'that he withstood him to his face;'--says, that one who had the same name

with St. Peter the apostle, was one of the Seventy; and that Matthias, who was numbered with the apostles in place of Judas, and he who had been honored to be a candidate with him, are also said to have been deemed worthy of the same calling with the seventy. They also say that Thaddeus was one of them. (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Bk. 1, Ch. 12)

President B. H. Roberts indicates a possibility of many Seventies within the organization of the Church at the time of the resurrection of Jesus:

In I Cor. xv, where St. Paul described the appearances of Jesus after the resurrection, it is said "that he was seen of Cephas [St. Peter], then of the twelve, after that he was seen of about five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep." Now taking the close relationship between the twelve and the seventy, the similarity of their mission and commission, and that the fact that in the above quoted passage from St. Paul the appearances of Jesus are spoken of as being associated with St. Peter, then with the twelve, and then of five hundred brethren at once, *may it not be that those five hundred brethren were those who held similar authority with the twelve apostles, namely, the seventy, which would make, allowing for slight discrepancy and perhaps the attendance of the twelve apostles, among the five hundred, seven quorums of seventy.* (See Doc. & Cov. 107 : 95; *Seventies Course in Theology*, 1st year, p.7-8.)

#### THE SEVENTIES RESTORED IN MODERN TIMES

Then, for nearly two thousand years, there were no other callings and missions of the Seventy. Not until the restoration of the true Church of Jesus

Christ, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, did the earth have a chance to hear the gospel as taught by the Seventies of the Lord.

After the many centuries of spiritual darkness, our generation was left in ignorance as to the calling and duties of the Seventy. As Orson Pratt reflected:

And what did we know about these Seventies and their particular calling? Were there specified duties assigned to that body of men anciently, whose call by the Savior is recorded in the New Testament? No, we were ignorant. *The Prophet himself, the Twelve and all that had been called, knew nothing in relation to the duties of these Seventies until the Lord revealed what they were, and at the same time He pointed out the duties of the Presidency of the Seventies, both the duties of the seven men constituting the Presidency of all the Seventies, and also those of the seven men that were to preside over each Council of the Seventies. (J.D. 22:30-31)*

Referring to the choosing of the Twelve Apostles and Seventies in this dispensation, Brigham Young relates the following:

After we returned from Missouri, my brother, Joseph Young, and myself had been singing after preaching in a meeting; and when the meeting was dismissed, Brother Joseph Smith said, "Come, go down to my house with me." We went and sang to him a long time, and talked with him. He then opened the subject of the Twelve and Seventies for the first time I ever thought of it. He said, "Brethren, I am going to call out Twelve Apostles. I think we will get together, by and by, and select a quorum of Seventy, from

*those who have been up to Zion, out of the Camp boys."* In 1835, the last of January or in February, or about that time, we held our meetings from day to day, and Brother Joseph called out Twelve Apostles at that time. He had a revelation when we were singing to him. (J.D. 9:89)

\* \* \*

In referring to this memorable period the Prophet Joseph gave him [referring to Joseph Young] the first intimation of his call to this sacred office by saying: "The Lord has made you President of the Seventies" and further refers to his ordination in his writing. Prior to his ordination the Prophet instructed his counselor, Sidney Rigdon, to confer upon him all the Priesthood, powers, blessings, keys and authority that they themselves possessed, which was strictly observed. This was on the 28th day of February 1835, which position of President of all the Seventies he held until the day of his death. (Seventies Minute Book #1, p. 281)

The Quorum of Seventy was established on the 28th day of February, 1835. The first mention of the Seventy was made on the 14th of February when the Prophet chose the first Quorum of Twelve for the apostleship. After the Prophet chose the twelve:

He then turned to Elder Joseph Young with quite an earnestness, as though the vision of his mind was extended still further, and addressing him, said, "Brother Joseph, the Lord has made you President of the Seventies." They had heard of Moses and seventy elders of Israel, and of Jesus appointing "other Seventies," but had never heard of Twelve Apostles and of Seventies being called in this Church before. It was a strange saying, "The Lord has made you

President of the Seventies," as though it had already taken place, and it caused these brethren to marvel. (*History of the Organization of the Seventies* by Joseph Young Sen., pp. 1,2)

The choosing of the Twelve and the Seventy was done by revelation. It was the fulfilling of a "vision" which the Prophet Joseph Smith had, and undoubtedly is the one mentioned in Section 107 of the Doc. & Cov. which reads:

And it is according to the vision showing the order of the Seventy, that they should have seven presidents to preside over them, chosen out of the number of the seventy;... (v. 93)

These groups of men had not only been seen in vision, but God had specifically called for the organization to be established, and gave all of the particulars in how it should function.

President Smith then stated that the meeting had been called, because God had commanded it; and it was made known to him by vision and by the Holy Spirit. (D.H.C. 2:182)

All of the men chosen for these positions were men who had been in the Zions Camp. Joseph wrote:

On the 28th of February, the Church in council assembled, commenced selecting certain individuals to be Seventies, from the number of those who went up to Zion with me in the camp. (D.H.C. 2:201)

There was a reason for these men to have been called from out of Zions Camp. These were men who were willing to lay down their lives for the protection of the Saints in Missouri; they were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice if necessary, and many of them died on that journey. The Prophet told them:

Brethren, some of you are angry with me, because you did not fight in Missouri; but let me tell you, God did not want you to fight. He could not organize His kingdom with twelve men to open the Gospel door to the nations of the earth, and with seventy men under their direction to follow in their tracks, unless He took them from a body of men who had offered their lives, and who had made as great a sacrifice as did Abraham. Now the Lord has got His Twelve and His Seventy, and there will be other quorums of Seventies called, who will make the sacrifice, and those who have not made their sacrifices and their offerings now, will make them hereafter. (D.H.C. 2:182)

Hence, the purpose of Zions Camp was not to go into Missouri and fight their enemies--but rather to "prove" them for this high and holy call. Even those who had died on that journey were equally rewarded, for the Prophet said:

"Brethren, I have seen those men who died of the cholera in our camp; and the Lord knows, if I get a mansion as bright as theirs, I ask no more." At this relation he wept, and for some time could not speak. (D.H.C. 2:181)

#### THE SEVEN PRESIDENTS OF SEVENTIES

The Seven Presidents of the Seventies were chosen on the 28th of February, 1835, and a few of them became some of the most prominent men of the Church. The names of these seven men were

Hazen Aldrich, Joseph Young, Levi W. Hancock, Leonard Rich, Zebedee Coltrin, Lyman Sherman, and Sylvester Smith. (*Church Chronology*, p.12)

Briefly the lives of these men illustrate some of the most interesting periods of Church history. Their labors and accomplishments are a tribute to their faith.

1. JOSEPH YOUNG. Joseph Young was an elder brother of Brigham Young. He was born in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, April 7, 1797, and was converted to the restored Gospel by his brother Brigham, and was baptized April 6, 1832. A few days later he was ordained an Elder and shortly afterwards began a mission in the state of New York for a few months, after which he journeyed into Canada to preach the Gospel. After about 4 months he returned to go to Ohio with his brother Brigham and Heber C. Kimball to build up branches of the Church there. In 1834 he journeyed to Missouri as a member of Zions Camp. In 1835, as one of the Seven Presidents of Seventies, he went through New York and Massachusetts on another mission. In 1836 he went with his brother on another mission in the East, converting many of his relatives on this labor. In 1838 he went to Missouri and arrived at Haun's Mill on Oct. 28th and two days later witnessed the horrid massacre at that place, but was miraculously preserved. In the winter of 1838-39 he, with his family, was driven out of Missouri under the exterminating order of Governor Boggs. In the Spring of 1844 he went to Ohio to lay before the people Gen. Joseph Smith's views of the powers and policy of the government of the United States. While there he heard of the news of the deaths of the Prophet Joseph and Hyrum Smith. From Nauvoo, again as an exile, he departed with the Saints to find peace in the West. He travelled extensively in the Territory preaching and strengthening the Saints. In 1870 he filled a mission to the British Isles, fulfilling a prophecy of Joseph Smith that he would live to



preach the gospel "in the Old World." He died in peace and happiness July 16, 1881, still a member of the First Council of Seventy.

2. LEVI W. HANCOCK. Levi Hancock was born April 7, 1803, in Springfield, Massachusetts. Levi heard the Gospel from Parley P. Pratt, and was baptized by him in November of 1830. In June, 1831, he was called by revelation to fulfill a mission which he did in the states of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. In 1834 he was a member of Zions Camp, and in 1835 became a member of the First Quorum of Seventies. In 1838 he moved to Missouri, where he passed through the bitter persecutions which the Saints were enduring. In 1844 he was called on a mission to Vermont, after finishing a mission to Indiana. In the exodus to the West, he became a member of the Mormon Battalion. During the march a non-member requested baptism of Levi, to which he complied. After raising him from the water, he said, "If I have baptized a murderer, it will do him no good." His words had such an effect upon the stranger that he broke down and confessed that he had murdered his own brother. In the Utah Territory, he travelled extensively, and was one of the settlers of Manti, from which he was three times sent as a representative of the Utah legislature. He was a member of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies for forty-seven years, or until the day of his death on June 10, 1882.
  
3. ZEBEDEE COLTRIN. Zebedee Coltrin, born in Ovid, New York, Sept. 7, 1804, was baptized a member of the Church soon after its organization. He was a spiritual man who enjoyed many gifts, some of which are written into Church history. In 1834 it is recorded that he spoke in tongues at Kirtland, Ohio. He was a member of Zions Camp and later became a member of the First Council

of Seventy. At a meeting in Kirtland, Ohio, Jan. 28, 1836, he had a vision of "the Savior extended before him, as upon a cross, and a little after, crowned with glory upon his head, above the brightness of the sun." Then a few days later he saw the "Lord's hosts" in another vision. He, too, endured the Missouri persecutions and eventually made his abode in Illinois. An attempt was made to kidnap the Prophet Joseph Smith, and Elder Coltrin rendered a most effectual service in saving the Prophet. In 1844 he was called to a mission in Michigan which lasted until the Saints began their trek to the West. He established his home in Spanish Fork, becoming a Patriarch and finally found his rest from a life of valiant labor in July 21, 1887.

4. LEONARD RICH. Leonard Rich came into the Church at a very early date. He was also a member of Zions Camp in their long trip to Missouri, thereby proving himself worthy of a President of the Seventies. In 1835 the Prophet Joseph wrote of Brother Rich: "--I pray my Heavenly Father to bless him. And I shall ever remember him with much gratitude for his testimony of benevolence and respect." In September of 1837 during those dark days of apostasy in Kirtland, Leonard Rich was found embittered with personal fault and was on the verge of losing his Church position. Said the Prophet: "Leonard Rich and others have been in transgression, but we hope they may be humble and ere long make satisfaction to the Church; otherwise they cannot retain their standing." He was placed in the High Priests Quorum in the same year and little more can be found in history pertaining to his life.
5. LYMAN SHERMAN. Lyman Sherman came into the Church in its early days. He was another of the members of Zions March to Missouri, thereby

proving himself worthy to become a member of the First Council of Seventy. In December of 1835 he came to the Prophet Joseph and requested to have the word of the Lord revealed to him because he had been promised "that I should have a revelation which should make known my duty." In answer to his request a revelation was given, recorded in the Doctrine & Covenants, Section 108. He was made a High Priest in 1837.

6. SYLVESTER SMITH. Sylvester Smith was baptized shortly after the organization of the Church. He was called by revelation (D. & C. 75:34) to fulfill a mission on Jan. 25th, 1832. He was a member of Zions Camp, but during the journey began to manifest a quarrelsome spirit and rebelled against the Prophet Joseph on several occasions. After his return to Kirtland he was called before the High Council for his actions on the Camp. He confessed his faults and retained his standing in the Church. At a meeting in Kirtland in 1835, he was ordained one of the Seven Presidents. In a solemn meeting held in Kirtland 1836, he leaped up exclaiming that the heavens had been opened to him and said: "The horsemen of Israel and the chariots thereof." During the winter he studied Hebrew with the Prophet Joseph and others. In 1837 he was released from his office to take a place with the High Priests.
7. HAZEN ALDRICH. Hazen Aldrich was an early convert to the Church who also marched in Zions Camp. His life and work with the Church was with excellent works during the early years, but in the trials and troubles of 1837, he with a few others slipped into the spirit of apostasy. He rebelled against the Church and the Authorities and ultimately left everything to join up with the faction called the "Brewster Movement." He subsequently left Kirtland and emigrated to California where it is supposed that he died.

## TROUBLESOME TIMES

Levi W. Hancock, one of the Seven Presidents, relates some of the difficulties which he experienced in these trying times. He also mentions the grief and sorrow, through sacrifice which the Prophet Joseph had experienced.

He (Joseph Smith) needed money and so I filled his hand with all the remains of my land in Rome. He said, he would give me his note for it. I told him he was welcome to it.

The Prophet Joseph was often in trouble. If his friends gave him money, he was stripped of it all by his enemies. I know, for I did all I could do to hold up that good man. My heart would ache for him. He had to stand against thousands of his pretended friends seeking to overthrow him. It was terrible the abuse he suffered.

Bishop Whitney also was cursed by some when he did his best to hold up Joseph. He would suffer himself to be slandered to save the Prophet from trouble. All this I know, I have witnessed. (Diary of Levi Hancock, p. 72)

All the powers of the devil seemed to formulate against the Prophet and the establishment of the Church. With the organization of the Twelve and the Seventy, Lucifer knew the threat against his own kingdom, and therefore he sought to destroy the saints and the priesthood. The Prophet remarked:

The devil has made a violent attack on my brother William, and Calvin Stoddard, and the powers of darkness seem to lower over their minds, and not only over theirs, but they also cast a gloomy shade over the minds of my brethren and sisters, which prevents them from seeing things as they really are; and the powers

of earth and hell seem combined to overthrow us and the Church, by causing a division in the family; and indeed the adversary is bringing into requisition all his subtlety to prevent the Saints from being endowed, by causing a division among the Twelve, also among the Elders and the official members of the Church; and so the leaven of iniquity ferments and spreads among the members of the Church. (D.H.C. 2:352)

Despite these days of darkness, the troubles of chaos, and the despairs of both Church and Saint, it was a period of validation. It was to be a sifting of its members, like the thrashing of grain, to separate the wheat from the chaff. Those who would stand firm against the black ink of apostasy, would come forth like precious gold tried seven times by fire--righteous, honored, and worthy of a special commission by God. One of the greatest accomplishments by the First Council of Seventy was the organization and leading of the Kirtland Camp of Saints to Missouri.

When the great apostasy of Kirtland occurred in 1837, it was necessary for the Saints to leave and get re-established. The land of Missouri was designated as the gathering place for those faithful few. The Seventies met in the Temple on March 6th and 10th, 1838. At that time--

...the Spirit of the Lord came down in mighty power, and some of the Elders began to prophecy that if the quorum would go up in a body together, and go according to the commandments and revelations of God, pitching their tents by the way, that they should not want for anything on the journey.... (D.H.C. 3:88)

One of the Seven Presidents "declared that he saw a vision in which was shown a company...starting

from Kirtland and going up to Zion." The attempt by the High Council and High Priests to remove the Saints by water had previously failed. A set of rules for the camp were drawn up and in July of 1838, they left Kirtland and travelled 870 miles and arrived in Far West on October 2nd with a company of 529 starting on that journey. John Pulsipher described the journey:

On the fifth day of July 1838 we started for Missouri in the largest company of Saints that ever travelled together in this generation, and all the people in the country, towns, and cities through which we passed were surprised. It certainly was wonderful at that time to see a company of men, women and children a mile long, all traveling together in order, and pitching their tents by the way. Sometimes mobs tried to stop us and at other times men and women threw eggs at us as we passed. At one time a military force was placed ahead of us, but when we came up to the cannon's mouth, they durst not fire. We arrived safely at the city of Far West about the first of October. Joseph and Hyrum met us and were well pleased; it was a joyful meeting. (*Short Sketch of the Biography of John Pulsipher*, ms., p. 220)

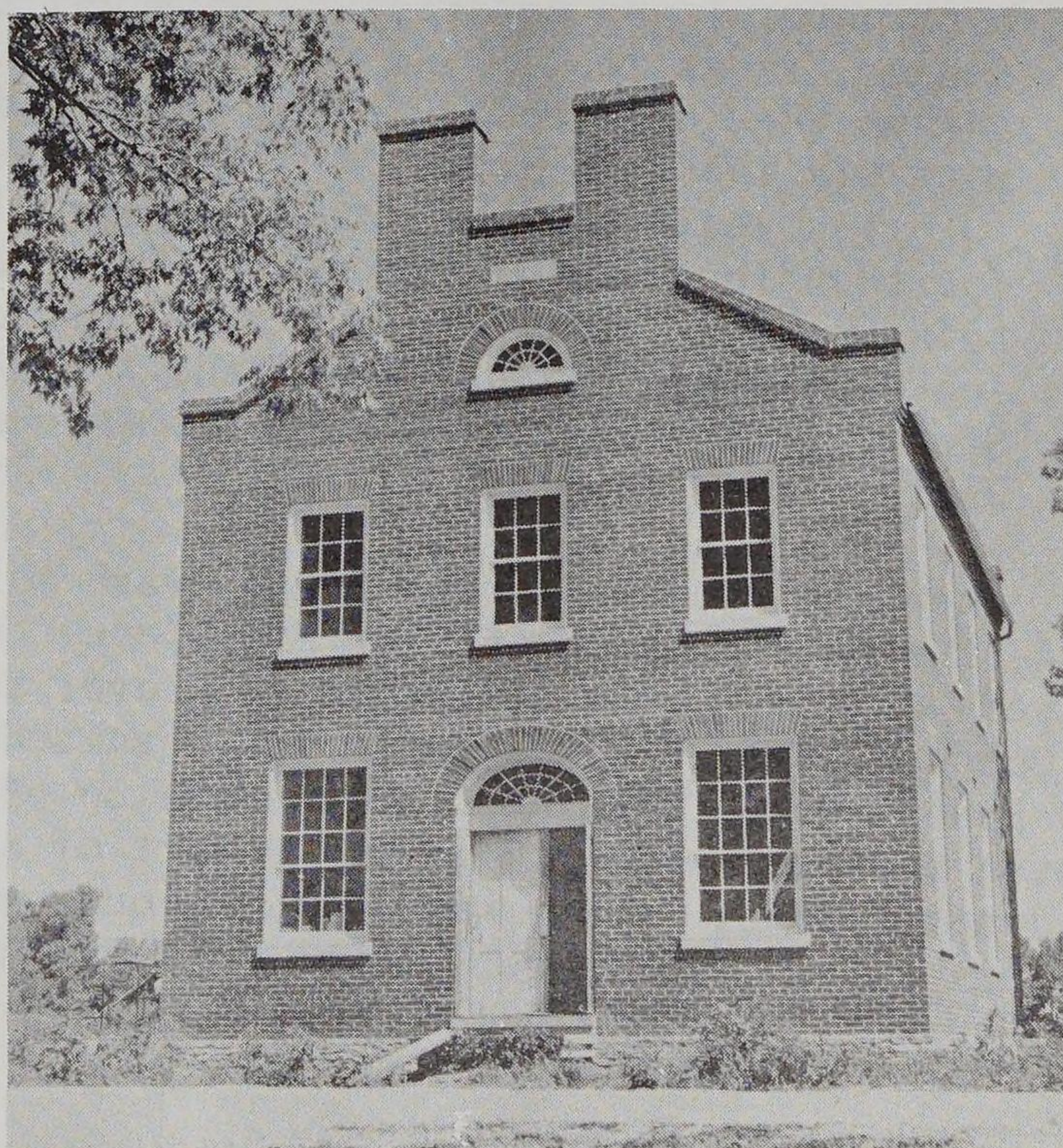
This major movement of Saints was accomplished under the direction of the Seventies. A full history of the Kirtland Camp and its journey is found in the *History of the Church*, Vol. 3, pp. 87-148.

#### BUILDINGS CONSTRUCTED BY THE SEVENTIES

In the year 1844 the Seventies began and completed construction of the Seventies Hall in Nauvoo:

Meantime the Seventies had built a large brick hall in Nauvoo, known as the "Seventies

Hall," and on the 26th of December, 1844, this building was dedicated with imposing ceremonies extending through an entire week. Most of the members of the Council of the Apostles participated in the dedicatory services. It may be of interest for the Seventies to know that the heroic hymn, "The Seer, the Seer, Joseph the Seer," by the late President John Taylor, was written for these services though dedicated by the author to President Brigham Young. (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. V, p. 767) The arrangement was made for two quorums to be in attendance at the dedication each day with their wives and children and a number of invited guests. By this time there were fifteen quorums in existence. By the 19th of January, 1846, the number of quorums had increased to thirty." (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. VI, p. 1096)



The Seventies Hall was offered for sale to the Catholics in October 1845. After the Saints left Nauvoo, the Hall was used as a school house by the Gentiles. (For more information, see *Contributor* 8:241, 272)

In 1845 the Seventies library was started which impressed the editor of the *Times and Seasons* so much that he wrote:

Among the improvements going forward in this city, none merit higher praise, than the Seventies' Library. The concern has been commenced on a footing an[d] scale, broad enough to embrace the arts and sciences, everywhere; so that the *Seventies* while travelling over the face of the globe, as the Lord's 'Regular Soldiers,' can gather all the curious things, both natural and artificial, with all the knowledge, inventions, and wonderful specimens of genius that have been gracing the world for almost six thousand years. \* \* \*

Ten years ago but one Seventy, and now fourteen (quorums of) Seventies, and the foundation for the best library in the world. It looks like old times when they had "Kirjath Sapher," the City of Books. (*Times and Seasons*, Jan. 1, 1845, Vol. 5, p. 762)

When the Prophet Joseph Smith was martyred in 1844, the Quorum of the First Presidency was dissolved and the Quorum of Twelve took over the Church. In October the Seventies were re-organized and over 400 Elders were ordained to the office of Seventy; eleven quorums were filled and a part of a twelfth. By January 1846, there were thirty quorums, making at this time, the largest quorum of Priesthood in the Church.



On January 16, 1847, the Quorum of Apostles and First Quorum of Seventy met in Winter Quarters and received the word and will of the Lord recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 136.

There were a majority of Seventies who were among the pioneers in 1847 that entered the Salt Lake Valley. In the vanguard company that entered the Salt Lake Valley there were 8 apostles, 4 bishops, 8 elders, 15 high priests and 78 Seventies.

There were also a majority of Seventies who were sent in the Mormon Battalion to Mexico.

Soon after the Saints arrived in the Great Salt Lake Valley, the Seventies again began construction. This time their building was to be called the "Seventies Hall of Science," and was built where 1st and 2nd South is now located. It was begun in 1850, and shares in the building were sold at \$25.00 each. It was dedicated December 25th, 1854, at a cost of \$3500. The building was of adobe construction, 50 x 30 feet inside. The "Hall of Science" was never fully completed because their labors were asked to be used on the Temple. Nevertheless, in 1855 the Seventies found the "Deseret Theological Institute," and in 1863 the Seventies Reading Room and Library was opened. All of these accomplishments were made while they tamed the desert, established settlements, and carried the burden of the ministry to the nations of the world.

#### THE SEVENTY--A LIFE OF SERVICE

An interesting synopsis of facts about this First Council of Seventy is collected in Baumgarten's thesis:

Henry Harriman served longest in the Council--fifty-three years--followed by Levi Edgar

Young, who has served fifty years to date. John Gould holds the record for the shortest term, and has the unique distinction of having been the only eighth member of the Seven Presidents of Seventy. Samuel O. Bennion served longest in missionary service (twenty-nine years), followed by Edward Stevenson (somewhere between twelve to twenty years), and Christian D. Fjeldsted (about fourteen years). Eighteen out of the forty-six members have been mission presidents. A few apparently did not go on any foreign missions. Only two members of the First Council of Seventy have become Apostles: Abraham H. Cannon and Richard L. Evans. One--Jedediah M. Grant--was a Second Counselor in the First Presidency, although he was not made an Apostle. The Young family has been represented in the Council from the time of its inception (except for one year and three months following the death of Joseph), by Joseph Young, Seymour Bicknell Young, Levi Edgar Young, and Seymour Dilworth Young. The latter three are the son, grandson, and great grandson of Joseph Young. ("The Role and Function of the Seventies in L.D.S. Church History," by James N. Baumgarten, Aug. 1960, B.Y.U., p. 97)

#### FOREMOST EXAMPLE--B. H. ROBERTS

However, one of the most interesting lives, and probably the foremost representative of the First Council of Seventy, is B. H. Roberts. His inspiring life story reads like a legend. Perhaps no other man since the organization of the Seventies has exemplified that office and calling as well as Roberts has. Since his life and his teachings portray the qualities of a Seventy so well, it is perhaps wise to insert a brief synopsis within these pages.



Brigham Henry Roberts was born in England in 1857 to Benjamin and Ann Roberts. Benjamin was a blacksmith by profession, and during those years their life was continual hardship and poverty. Work required his constant moving, while Ann took in sewing to help with the income. One day while she was on a delivery, she heard some Mormon missionaries preaching the Gospel. She immediately felt the truth of their message and desired to be baptized, but Benjamin was hostile. Still determined, she arose at 3:00 a.m. one morning to sneak out and become a baptized member of the Church. Benjamin finally conceded to the religion and became baptized himself. However, he later became involved with the circus, working with horses, and was gone almost constantly. Soon he indulged in gambling and drinking and had little care for his family after that. So he went his way and Ann decided to go hers. Once when he sent some money home, she gave it to the Perpetual Emigration Fund, and taking two of her children she

left for America. B.H. and his sister were left in custody of some friends. B.H. grew to the age of nine amidst some of the worst discouragements and hardships life could offer. Then he and his sister also began their trip to Zion.

From the most humble circumstances, he was destined to become internationally famous. The preface of a biography of his life begins by saying:

B.H. Roberts, member of the First Council of Seventy, outstanding missionary, defender of Church doctrine, writer of its history, eloquent orator, powerful political spokesman, soldier, statesman, striking individual personality, whose iron will enabled him to advance and succeed, made a lasting mark in varied endeavors. His range of interests religiously, historically, and politically was wider than those of the majority of his contemporaries. (*B. H. Roberts, A Biography*, by Robert H. Malan, Preface, vii.)

He and his sister walked across the plains. When they arrived in the Salt Lake Valley, he came barefoot "hatless, unkept and with all his rags fluttering in the breeze." They located their mother who had been remarried to John W. Woolley in Centerville.

Brigham took up the trades of blacksmith and cowboy. He then went to the University of Deseret.

Brigham completed the two-year normal course prescribed at the University in one year. He was graduated at the head of his class in 1878 and gave the valedictory address at the commencement exercises. (*B. H. Roberts, A Biography*, Malan, p. 19)

When he was selected to give a talk in Church, that first sermon occupied 45 minutes.

He was ordained a Seventy and began a life of constant missionary labor by a mission to Tennessee where he became mission president. He of course traveled without purse or scrip.

It was in Tennessee that a mob killed Elders Berry and Gibbs. So J. Golden Kimball, Roberts' companion, helped to disguise Roberts so he could reach the bodies and get them out.



Within a mile of the train depot, Roberts made a wrong turn and went 12 miles to the next town. This, however, was inspired for it was later learned that a mob was waiting for him at the other station.

In 1877 Roberts married Sarah Louisa Smith, daughter of William R. Smith, president of Centerville Stake.

1884--he married his plural wife, Celia Dibble, daughter of Philo Dibble. He took a job on the editorial staff of the Salt Lake Herald, but it was a time when the whole territory was in turmoil. In March of 1882 the Edmunds Law against plural marriage had begun a crusade which was to become a reign of terror. Federal persecution and prosecution was disrupting the families of all the leading elders in Israel, and caused many innocent souls to be abandoned to their fate.

1885--Roberts was on a committee to write a "Petition of Grievances and Protest to the President and the People of the United States."

He lacked material wealth and was away from his home and family a major part of the time in missionary service or "underground" to avoid prosecution. He strived continually to make his influence felt through letters, newspaper articles, in writing for publications of the Church, and in public speaking. (*B.H. Roberts, A Biography*, Malan, p. 22)

1886--(Dec.) Roberts was apprehended by the "Feds" and placed under arrest for unlawful cohabitation. It was certain that he would receive maximum penalty, so the bondsman suggested that he skip out and forfeit the bond. As a typical "minuteman," he was arrested at 6:00 p.m. By 7:00 he was bonded and by 9:00 p.m. he was on his way to England on a mission.

As associate editor of the *Millennial Star*, he was continually occupied with lectures, street meetings, debates and publishing.

1888--Roberts was released from his mission. After arriving in Utah, he was made one of the Seven Presidents of the First Council of Seventy. Although he was still in exile, he wrote many articles for the *Contributor* under the name of Horatio. He also wrote the *Life of John Taylor* and *Man's Relation to Deity and the Gospel* while in the underground.

1889--Roberts saw no chance to escape, so he pled guilty and was sentenced to four months in prison and \$200 fine. He spent five months in jail by not paying the fine.

1890--Roberts took another wife. His family consisted of three wives and 15 children. The wives bore the children and bore most of the burden of caring and providing for them. When B.H. was not away on missions, he was hiding on the underground.

1893--Roberts was selected by the Church to speak at the Parliament of Religions at the Worlds Fair. He was never called on to speak because of the unpopularity of Mormonism. He wrote a protest letter and published it in a Chicago newspaper. It was carried nationwide and Roberts said more people were exposed to Mormonism by that than if he would have spoken at the Parliament.

1895--He took a seat in the Constitutional Convention and was on the committee that framed the constitution for the State of Utah.

1892-1898--He went on missions to the West Coast, California, and Mexico. He opened the Southern California Mission, and then went on to Missouri. When he returned to Salt Lake, he became the editor with Joseph F. Smith of the new magazine called the *Improvement Era*.

1898--He became candidate for a congressional representative. He was opposed by the press and the Ministerial Association because of his plural wives. When the time came to take his seat in Congress, he was refused by the House, but was given a chance to speak in his own defense. His speech took four hours. He was voted out 268 to 50 on Jan. 25, 1900. In his conclusion he said:

I am not here begging the question; I am not here asking for favors; I am not here on my own behalf, but on behalf of my people, to demand for myself and for them our Constitutional rights. Clear your vision; look to the charter that should guide your action; find warrant in it for your proposed action of exclusion or expulsion if you can; and if you find it, I will walk out without complaint.

Some of the papers in discussing the Roberts case have said, "Brand this man with shame and send him back to his people." Mr. Speaker, I thank God that the power to brand me with shame is something quite beyond the powers of this House, great as this power is. The power to brand with shame rests with each man and nowhere else. The Almighty God has conferred it upon none else. I have lived up to this day in all good conscience in harmony with the moral teachings of the community in which I was reared, and am sensible of no act of shame in my life. Brand me or expel me, I shall leave this august chamber with head erect and brow undaunted and walk God's earth as the angels walk the clouds, with no sense of shame upon me."

(Applause from the floor, and hisses from the gallery.)

And, if in response to the sectarian clamor that has been invoked against the member from Utah, you violate the Constitution of your country, either in excluding or expelling me,



the shame that there is in this case will be left behind me and rest with this House." (Applause) ("B. H. Roberts Defense Before Congress," 1898)

1901--He was summoned to court again on the charge of unlawful cohabitation, and he justified his position by stating:

Those...who have been involved in the past in the plural marriage system once taught and sanctioned by the Church...are not wanton violators of the laws, but finding themselves in the position where the law commands them to do one thing, and moral obligations sacredly entered into under the sanction of the Mormon Church command them to do another; they are placed in a very trying situation and some few of them, including the member from Utah, have found it necessary to regard their moral obligations as more binding upon their consciences than their technical obedience to statutory law. (*Journal History of the Church*, June 11, 1907)

1908--He went to Canada on Church business.

1915--He received the political appointment by Governor of Utah as president of the State Board of Equalization for a period of two years.

1917--At the age of 60, he volunteered as chaplain in World War I, and became the oldest chaplain in the U.S. Army. He went overseas to France and nearly got to the front lines when the war was over.

1920--Roberts intended to run for governor but later decided not to.

1922--He went on a mission and business trip to New York and became president of the Eastern States Mission until 1927.

1924--He became senior member of the Council of Seventies.

1929--Roberts wrote a radio series on apostasy and restoration.

1930--(April 6) He presented at conference the 3,000-page *Comprehensive History of the Church*.

1933--He toured California and Arizona missions. Then he went to Chicago Worlds Fair to speak at the World's Parliament of Religion and to the World Fellowship of faiths. On Sept. 27, a complication of diabetes brought his life to a close at the age of 76.

\* \* \*

B. H. Roberts had the distinction of writing more books on the Gospel than any other man in the Church. He admitted that:

My labors have been almost incessant in the interest of this work...in writing books--expository books, defensive books, historical books--until I think I may say without disparagement of others at least the volume of my work in this kind...is not exceeded by any other man in that fifty years. (*B.H. Roberts, A Biography*, p. 102)

Some of his writings include:

*The Gospel*  
*Outlines of Ecclesiastical History*  
*Succession in Presidency of Church*  
*Life of John Taylor*  
*Missouri Persecutions*  
*Rise and Fall of Nauvoo*  
*Mormon Doctrine of Deity*  
*History of the Church (7 vols.)*

*Comprehensive History of the Church (6 vols.)*  
*Seventies Course in Theology (5 vols.)*  
*New Witness for God (3 vols.)*  
*Defense of the Faith and the Saints*  
*Joseph Smith, The Prophet-Teacher*  
*The Mormon Battalion, Its History and Achievements*  
*Rasha the Jew*  
*The Falling Away*  
*Seventy Correspondence Course, etc.*

Although he was a masterful historian and an outstanding writer, he was just as accomplished as an orator. Preston Nibley wrote:

Was there ever heard in this part of the country a man who could so thrill and sway an audience? He had all the accomplishments of a great orator; the voice, the gestures, the consummate art of arranging his materials into a finished speech. How often have we seen him arise and face an audience, beginning at first to talk in a modulated tone, so low that he could scarcely be heard, increasing gradually in volume, making a point here and there, and then approaching his climax with a perfect Niagara of words, that left us almost breathless, and ending finally in a voice that was again scarcely audible. There is power in oratory, and nature never lavished this gift more freely than she did on B.H. Roberts. (*Journal History of the Church*, Dec. 23, 1933)

However, one of the clearest insights into the nature and character of B.H. Roberts was written by Sterling McMurrin who said that:

Roberts belonged to the era of great Mormon oratory, and for a third of a century he was the Church's great orator, in the days when

the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City sounded and resounded with the voices of impassioned advocates and defenders, the days before the microphone and camera robbed the Mormon conferences of much of their character and vitality and inspiration, the days when the Church both valued and invited argument and debate. There was then a kind of intellectual openness about the Church which encouraged thought and discussion. Its faith and confidence were firm and it was ready and anxious to take on all comers. The Church could justifiably boast a roster of admirable talent, but Roberts was its chief exhibit and its most competent advocate.

The high value which the Church in those days placed on intellectual strength and achievement in matters pertaining to religion yielded a good return, for it gathered into its leadership a quite impressive group whose thought and writings were a permanent impress upon its character. Among these, Roberts was the recognized leader. Often in rebellion and conflict, he nevertheless commanded both the confidence and admiration of his colleagues and of the rank and file of the Church. His native intellectual powers, his wide and intelligent reading, his forensic skills, the forcefulness of his pen, his enthusiastic and even impetuous speech, and the sheer impact of his uncommon personality made him the intellectual leader of the Mormon people in the era of Mormonism's finest intellectual attainment. Since his death over thirty years ago, the Church has suffered a steady intellectual decline in matters pertaining to religion, a decline accompanied by a growth of irrationalism and anti-intellectualism from which there is now no indication of recovery. Perhaps a resurgence of interest in Roberts' work will point toward a better future. (*Joseph Smith, The Prophet-Teacher, Introduction*)

## CONCLUSION

Those champions of yesteryear left us a heritage, but even more than that, an honorable example. Those were men of courage and conviction, unyielding in principle and valiant in testimony. Such men, with such mettle, are rare in today's world. Leaders and lay members in our modern world are brainwashed into an ideology of compromise and concession, simply because that is the new standard -- the new morality. It is the only standard that is socially recognized. But in the scriptures and pioneer days rests the history of men who served the Lord before any other. Their words and their lives radiate inspiration like a beacon signal out of the midst of darkness, flashing the true course for others to follow. They were obedient to the laws of God, and they loved their Lord -- we must do the same.

## Chapter III

### THE SEVENTIES AS MISSIONARIES

*After all that has been said, the greatest and most important duty is to preach the gospel. (Joseph Smith)*

#### AMBASSADORS OF PEACE

The history of this world is a record of blood, crime, and destruction. Empires rise only to fall in the ashes of previous empires. All of man's attempts to have a peaceful world have failed. Why has the wealth of nations, the learning of the ages, and the power of mighty armies failed to bring peace? Why has this earth, which has been continually drenched in the blood of its populace, not been able to sprout the germ of peace and happiness for its citizens?

The answer is simple. The principles of peace are predicated upon the laws of heaven. Such blessings as peace, harmony, and happiness are predicated upon certain "laws irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundation of this world." None but the ambassadors of heaven can bring about a righteous city, an exalted nation or a peaceful world. So amidst the clash of arms, the perplexities of nations, and stench of crime, the true servants of heaven must be sought. And, who then, are these heavenly appointed servants? They are not the learned men of the world, for the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. Nor are they the educated theologians who know nothing of the gifts and power of God. The true servants of God come traveling through the cities and nations of the world--two by two--just as they did nearly two thousand years ago--bearing the good news of God's revelations. They offer testimony and witness of God's message from heaven to man.

Those who accept their message are blessed with the Holy Spirit which bestows that peace, which the world does not know. But that person, city, or nation who rejects their message will fall into sin and suffering.

So important is the message of these servants of God that it is valued above the wealth of nations. These missionaries hold the keys to that banner of peace and happiness--for this life and the one to come. All the complex designs of men and machines have not been able to produce that "pearl of great price:" but these messengers of heaven offer it *free* through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

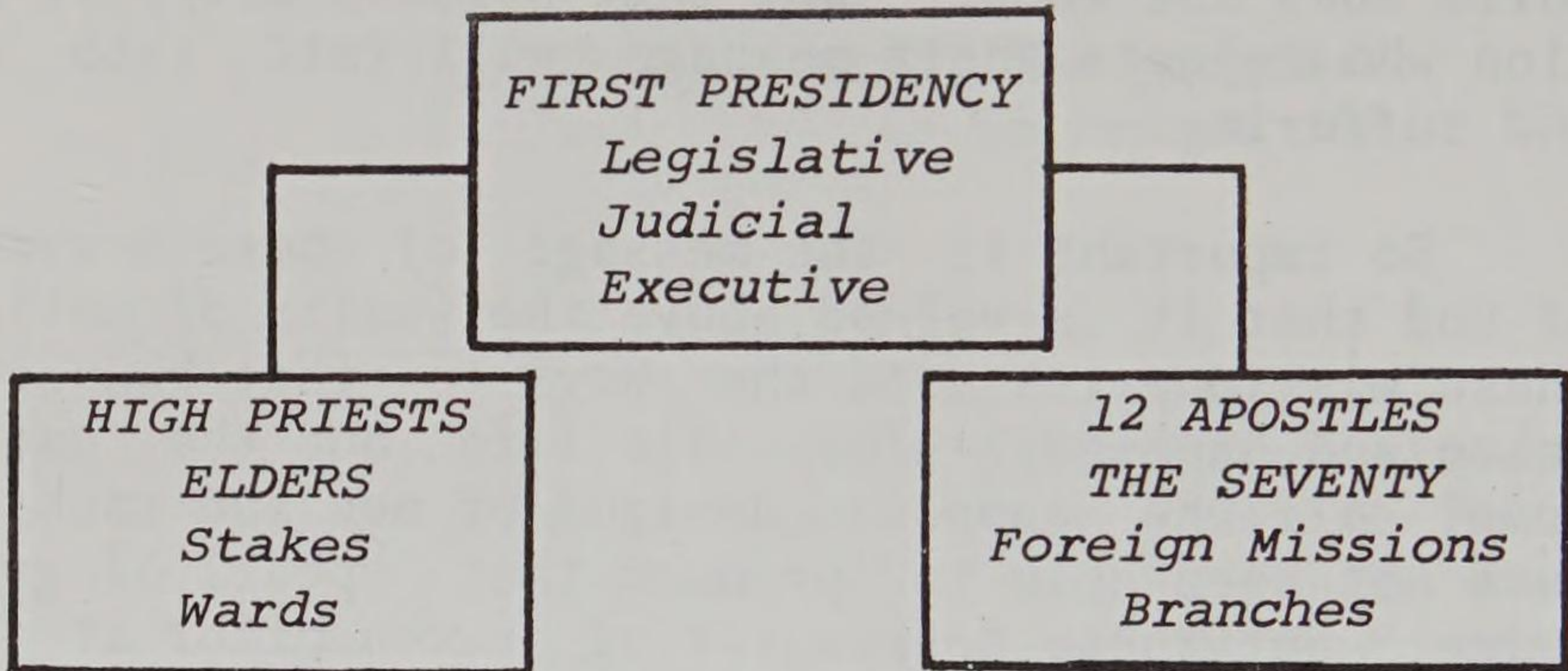
#### ORGANIZATION OF THE SEVENTIES

Before considering the Seventies as missionaries, their organization within the Church should be briefly mentioned.

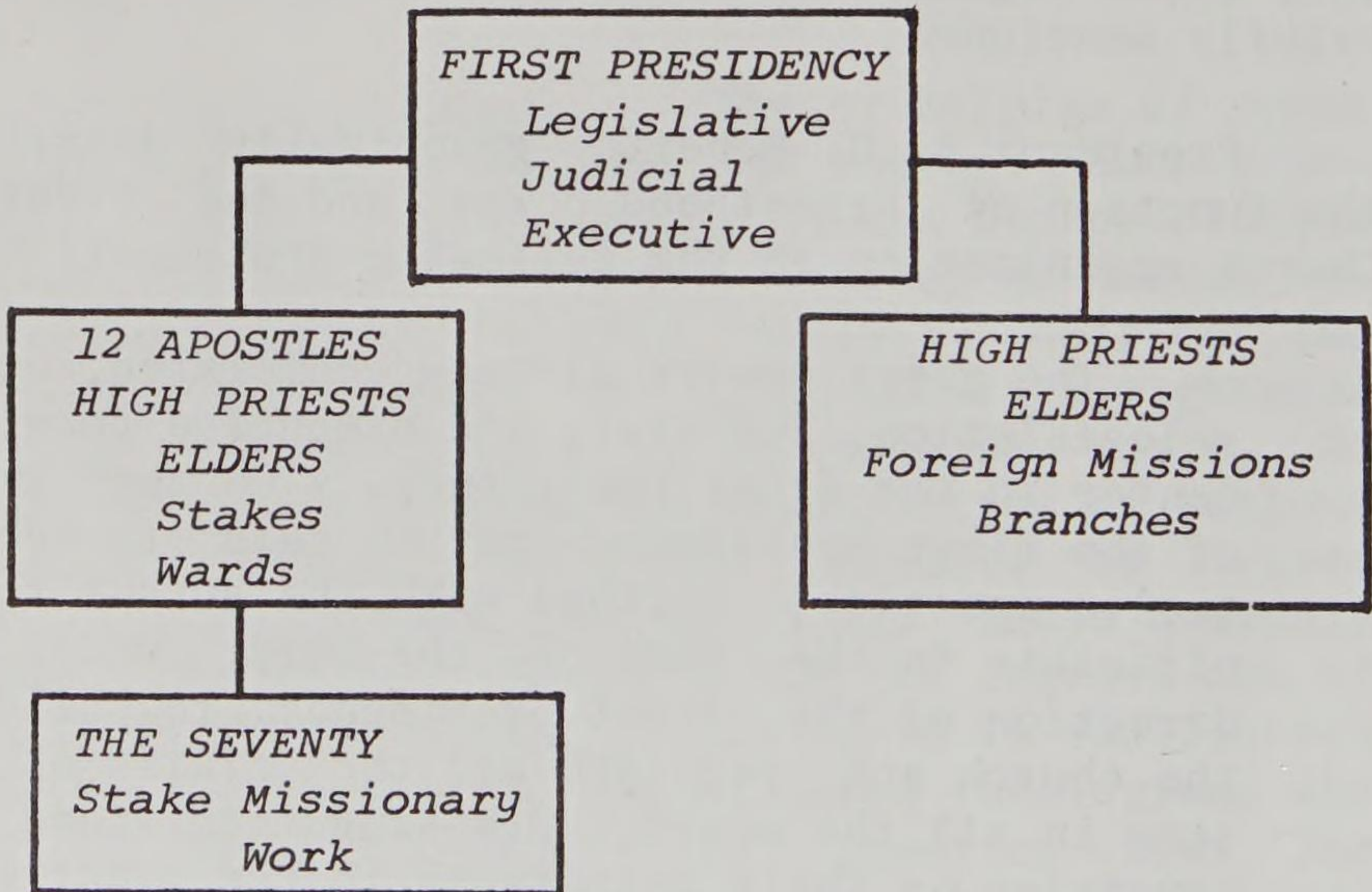
President B. H. Roberts graphically described the function of Priesthood power and the order of Church organization in the following statement:

The great powers already enumerated, then --legislation, judicial, and executive powers--center in the first presidency. On the right of the first presidency may be said to be the twelve apostles, clothed with the authority to officiate in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the first presidency, to build up the church and regulate all the affairs of the same in all the world. Flanking them stand the seventies as their assistants in the great work of the ministry assigned to them, preaching the gospel abroad--in all the world. To these quorums of the priesthood, the twelve and the seventy, more especially, is assigned the responsibility of the foreign ministry of the church. (C.H.C., Roberts, 2:370)

Roberts' explanation of Church government could be graphically represented as follows:



But today the graph has changed and could be illustrated this way:





## THE CALLING OF A SEVENTY

The Lord clearly outlined the calling of the Seventy as ministers of the gospel to the nations:

...the quorum of Seventies; which quorum is instituted for traveling elders to bear record of my name in all the world, wherever the traveling high council, mine apostles, shall send them to prepare a way before my face. (Doc. & Cov. 124:137-138)

\* \* \*

The Seventy are to act in the name of the Lord, *under the direction of the Twelve* or the traveling high council, in building up the church and regulating all the affairs of the same *in all nations*, first unto the Gentiles and then to the Jews;

It is the duty of the traveling high council to call upon the Seventy, when they need assistance, to fill the several calls for preaching and administering the gospel, instead of any others.

And these seventy are to be traveling ministers, unto the Gentiles first and also unto the Jews. (Doc. & Cov. 107:34-38, 97)

To thoroughly impress upon the minds of the Saints that missionary work is the distinct calling of the Seventy and the Twelve, the Lord made this statement:

Whereas other officers of the Church, who belong not unto the Twelve, neither to the Seventy, *are not* under the responsibility *to travel among all nations*. (Doc. & Cov. 107:96)

In other words the responsibility to travel among the nations rightfully belongs to the Twelve

and the Seventy. The Lord also described the Twelve as a "traveling high council in all nations" with the Seventy under their direction. (Doc. & Cov. 107:34)

The Prophet Joseph Smith also designated the Seventies as ambassadors to the nations:

To begin the organization of the first quorum of Seventies, according to the visions and revelations which I here received. The Seventies are to constitute traveling quorums, to go into all the earth, withersoever the Twelve Apostles shall call them. (D.H.C. 2:202)

Thus, at the very organization of the Seventy, the Prophet Joseph said the Lord had established them to be "traveling quorums" to the nations. It would be possible for whole quorums to travel if they chose to do so.

Another point to consider is the nature of the office and calling of the Seventy. The men called to become Seventies are *ordained* to that office--*not set apart* to it. Hence, every man who is ordained a Seventy is always under the responsibility and call as a missionary. Therefore, every Seventy should be considered eligible and should be willing to be called into the missionary work. Seventies should be called on many missions, and when they become too old or incapable for missionary service, they should be placed into the High Priests quorum.

Efforts to gather more numerous quorums of Seventies began during the Nauvoo period. At the October Conference in 1844:

George A. Smith moved that all in the Elder's Quorum under the age of 35 should be ordained into the Seventies, if they are in good stand-

ing and worthy, and will accept it. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously. (*Journal History*, Oct. 8, 1844, p. 2)

This was a special reorganizational effort after the martyrdom of the Prophet, to build up the quorums of Seventy.

It is evident, then, that the Seventies quorums were to be filled by gathering the best men available from among the Elders quorums.

Gather in from the Elders quorums those who have proved themselves worthy, and who have gained experience, and make Seventies of them, so that the quorum of the Seventies may be replenished; and the aged ones, whose physical condition will not permit them to do missionary work in the world, let them be ordained High Priests and patriarchs, to bless the people and to minister at home. Gather in the strong, the vigorous, the young, the able-bodied, who have the spirit of the Gospel in their hearts, to fill up the ranks of the Seventies, that we may have ministers to preach the gospel to the world. (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, p.184)

One of the most clear-cut and concise explanations for the selection and the calling of the Seventy was written in a letter by Rudger Clawson and Rulon S. Wells. This letter defines the class of men who should rank among the quorums of Seventy.

In regard to the class of men who should be recommended to the office of Seventy, we suggest that: First, only such men should be called to this office as show evidence of ability to expound the scriptures and to present in a convincing manner the saving power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A man's ability to do

this may be judged (a) by his pleasing personality; (b) by his integrity, dependability and faith; (c) by the power he possesses to express himself freely; and (d) by his manifest desire to bring the truth before others.

Second, men may be called who have already filled missions and have thereby demonstrated their worthiness and capability and who may be able to fill other missions. The fact that one has served in the Mission Field should not in itself be considered evidence that one be not retained in Seventies Quorums. Fitness for the office and ability to serve the Church as a Seventy should be the only guides in choosing men to this office.

Third, not infrequently it will be found that young men will best fit into the missionary service. When this is the case, their youth should not be a bar to their ordination.

Fourth, to all recommended to the office of Seventy, the term "Minute-Man" should have deep significance; for upon the Seventy rests the direct responsibility of preaching the Gospel, at home and abroad. All Seventies therefore, should hold themselves ever in readiness to answer the call of the Presiding Priesthood, "to be a traveling minister unto the Gentiles first and also unto the Jews."

Every man, therefore, who is recommended to be ordained a Seventy should receive personal and careful consideration as to his fitness and ability to perform the duties required of him in this important calling. (R.C. 1, August 22, 1927--COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE. (signed) Rudger Clawson, President--*First Council of Seventy*; (signed) Rulon S. Wells, One of the Presidents)

The Prophet Joseph Smith also wisely explained that it should be the caliber, not the numbers, of men who should be called into the ministry.

When they ordain a man to the holy ministry, let him be a faithful man, who is able to teach others also; that the cause of Christ suffer not. *It is not the multitude of preachers* that is to bring about the glorious millenium. But it is those who are "called, and chosen, and faithful." (TPJS, p. 42)

Joseph counseled leaders in the Church to "Be careful about sending boys to preach the gospel to the world." (TPJS, p. 43) Today the call of the missionary is often made to inexperienced lads who know little or nothing about the gospel. The Prophet Joseph Smith wanted experienced men to fill such a high and holy calling.

Too often young men are sent on missions to "straighten them out" or else to "help them gain a testimony." Such efforts are a reversal of the calling of ministers as outlined by the Lord.

Among the early resolutions concerning the calling of missionaries was the requirement that only those who have had the experience of a mission should be called to a foreign mission. At a conference at Quincy, Illinois, on the 6th of May, 1839, it was...

Resolved. 6th: That it be observed as a general rule, that those of the Seventies who have not yet preached, shall not for the future be sent on foreign missions. (D.H.C. 3:347)

#### DECLINE IN FOREIGN MISSIONS

Under the leadership of Brigham Young, the Seventies came to almost the full capacity of their

calling. He sent the bulk of all missionaries from out of the ranks of the Seventies, rather than from the quorums of Elders or High Priests. For over 50 years the Seventies carried the burden of the call as missionaries abroad. Of the total number of missionaries, the percentage of Seventies responding to missionary work continued to rise until the turn of the century.

PERCENTAGE OF SEVENTIES  
IN FOREIGN MISSIONS

1860	70%
1865	60%
1870	60%
1875	76%
1880	42%
1885	71%
1890	81%
1895	92%
1900	92%

---

However, after the turn of the century, the percentage of Seventies on missions dropped considerably. From that time on, the Seventies were never again to reach even one-third of the missionary force.

The following chart shows the decline of the Seventies in foreign missions after 1900:

1900	92%
1905	27%
1910	19%
1915	17%
1920	12%
1925	9%
1930	8%
1935	11%
1940	27%
1945	9%
1950	7%
1970	less than 1%

## CALLINGS OF SEVENTIES AND ELDERS COMPARED

To illustrate the difference between the calling of a Seventy and an Elder, the Lord makes this clear distinction:

The difference between this quorum (Seventy) and the quorum of elders is, that one *is to travel continually*, and the other is to preside over the churches from time to time; the one has the responsibility of presiding from time to time and the other has no responsibility of presiding, saith the Lord your God. (*D.H.C.* 4: 286)

But today the Elder travels into foreign missions and the Seventy is left at home. The callings of the Seventy and the Elder have been reversed.

A pertinent inquiry into the offices and callings of the Seventies and Elders was made by James N. Baumgarten in his excellent unpublished master's thesis:

The Seventies' calling is implicitly given in Scripture as missionary work abroad, to the nations, etc. It was expressed after the change in policy that the reason for the change was the inability of Seventies to go on foreign missions because of family, business, and financial responsibilities. This would be a perfectly sound reason, except for one thing: how was it done before? The Seventies before 1901 surely had the same feelings and responsibilities as those after, and they were faced with building up a wilderness as well!

It is a strange paradox that they had so much less and did so much more missionary work than the Seventies of today.

While Seventies are designated ministers of the Gospel to the nations, Elders are designated as "standing ministers" to minister at home. *Today the Elders are going to the nations, while the Seventies have been left "standing."* It appears to be a reversal of callings. No one has ever undertaken to give any reason as to why this ought to be the case.

What has led the Authorities to feel that there can be too many Seventies, but not too many High Priests or Elders?

It is said that Seventies quorums are not a part of stake organization. However, at present, the Seventies quorums have become so thoroughly integrated with the stakes and wards that only in theory are they not a part of them.

Seventies are no longer a missionary force and reserve; they appear to be a kind of senior Elders quorum. They have no function that Elders cannot perform. In the opinion of the writer this is the most serious problem of all: if the Seventies have no special function, why does the office exist?

The Seventies are still spoken of as the missionaries of the Church, but, in fact, they are not. ("Role and Function of Seventies in L.D.S. History," by James N. Baumgarten, B.Y.U. master's thesis, pp. 111-113)

Then, to add insult to injury, more girls than Seventies are being sent into the missionfield.

#### LADY MISSIONARIES

The first account of sending lady missionaries into the field was published in a *Millennial Star* in 1898:

Great interest is being manifested at the present time in the subject of sending sisters out



as missionaries, to labor in bearing testimony to the truth of the Gospel and in other directions connected with its propagation. It may, therefore, be interesting to know what is being done in this connection by those who have already been selected and set apart for missions.

By a recent letter from Great Britain, we learn that four sisters from Zion accompanied the Presidency of the European mission to Oldham, England, on Sunday, April 24th, to attend the meetings of the Manchester Conference.

Two of them, Sisters Noall and Smith, spoke in the afternoon, and in the evening Sisters Knight and Brimhall addressed a congregation of some five or six hundred souls. \*\*\*

Sisters Knight and Brimhall were set apart as missionaries; but Sisters Noall and Smith have gone to England on a visit, the former to join her husband, who presides over the Cheltenham Conference, and they are both bright, intelligent women, and no doubt with Sisters Knight and Brimhall, will make their mark in the country which they visit.

It is very gratifying to hear such good news concerning the commencement of the labors of the sisters. It seems to be the beginning of a new era in the Church for our sisters to take part in bearing testimony to the Gospel. (*Mill. Star* 60:398)

#### SPEAKING AS DIRECTED BY THE HOLY GHOST

Another change in the missionary system is in the method of preaching. The Lord has directed the Elders to speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost. This was to be the way to preach from the pulpit at their meetings and in the mission field. The Lord instructed the missionaries anciently by saying:

And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. (Matt. 10:18-20)

Then, with the restoration of the Gospel, He revealed the following instructions:

The elders are to conduct the meetings as they are led by the Holy Ghost, according to the commandments and revelations of God. (Doc. & Cov. 20:45)

\* \* \*

And it shall be given thee in the very moment what thou shalt speak and write, and they shall hear it, or I will send unto them a cursing instead of a blessing. (Doc. & Cov. 24:6)

\* \* \*

Wherefore, I call upon the weak things of the world, those who are unlearned and despised to thrash the nations by the power of my Spirit. (Doc. & Cov. 35:13)

\* \* \*

But notwithstanding those things which are written, it always has been given to the elders of my church from the beginning, and ever shall be, to conduct all meetings as they are directed and guided by the Holy Spirit. (Doc. & Cov. 46:2)

\* \* \*

Wherefore, I the Lord ask you this question --unto what were ye ordained? To preach my gospel by the Spirit, even the Comforter which was sent forth to teach the truth.

Verily I say unto you, he that is ordained of me and sent forth to preach the word of truth by the Comforter, in the Spirit of truth, doth he preach it by the Spirit of truth or some other way? And if it be by some other way it is not of God. (Doc. & Cov. 50:13,14,17,18)

\* \* \*

Therefore, I, the Lord, have suffered you to come unto this place;

Therefore, verily I say unto you, lift up your voices unto this people; speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and you shall not be confounded before men; for it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say. (Doc. & Cov. 100:5-6)

\* \* \*

But preaching by the Spirit is uncommon in the missionfield today. It has been replaced with a lesson-plan manual, entitled, "A Uniform System for Teaching." Each missionary must learn this lesson plan by memorization before attempting to teach the gospel. The 1961 booklet of 91 pages is so detailed that it even directs the method of bearing a testimony. On page 3 it instructs the missionary to:

Set your testimony apart.

- a. Pause slightly.
- b. Look contact in the eye.
- c. Bear testimony in a natural tone of voice.

The missionary of today is a salesman. This system of selling the gospel is also used by every insurance, encyclopedia, and vacuum cleaner salesman in the country. Most salesmen use a memorized question and answer plan, but such "canned pitches" for missionary work is foreign to the Lord's instructions of teaching with the "Comforter" and the "Spirit of truth." The old time religion preached the

gospel with the "spirit of prophecy and revelation," but it certainly does not characterize the modern missionary.

The early prophets and apostles spoke as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost and directed others to do the same. Some of them have said:

And the same Almighty Being who has commanded us to do these things has commanded us to take no thought beforehand what we should say; for every well-instructed scribe, we read in the New Testament, bringeth out of his heart things both new and old. \* \* \* Such a one will bring forth before his hearers things that will edify in religion to old times, and also in relation to the present and future, things both new and old. Moreover, we read that the Holy Ghost shall give you in the very hour what ye shall say.

It is most likely that an individual who has disobeyed this commandment, instead of preaching by the Holy Ghost, will preach by his own wisdom: and he will tell you about ten thousand things which the Holy Ghost never puts in his heart.... (Orson Pratt, J.D. 7:75)

\* \* \*

According to this revelation, the Elders went forth to preach the Gospel without purse or scrip; and as of old, we are told, their labors were crowned with remarkable success, some of them baptizing their thousands into the church: one man alone with whom I am personally acquainted, and who could neither read nor write, baptized over one thousand souls while upon his mission. And so liberal were these new converts, we are told, that they not only fed and clothed these Elders, but they gave

them money to send home for the support of their families to supply them also with the necessities of life. (*Mill. Star* 49:51)

This man who "could neither read nor write" would certainly be unqualified as a missionary today according to present Church regulations.

Ammon and his brethren preached by "the spirit of revelation and prophecy" and brought many "to a knowledge of the truth" by that method. And, those who were converted "never did fall away." (Alma 23:6)

Alma, Ammon, Paul or any other inspired disciple never needed a "uniform system" for teaching the gospel. Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt and all the other leading men in Israel never memorized a lesson plan. It is not necessary today. The Holy Ghost is still the best teacher. But today, since the missionary must use a memorized and authorized plan in teaching the gospel, the Holy Ghost has been replaced by education. Even the General Authorities at Conference are seen reading their messages. As one Elder stated, "The Holy Ghost is the most unemployed member of the Church today."

#### THE TRUE MISSIONARY SPIRIT

The revelations of God and the instructions of the Prophet Joseph Smith should ring as loud and clear today as they did before. Only those who prove obedient to the laws, commandments and counsels of God are qualified for the ministry. If the Prophet Joseph could speak to the missionaries of today, he would undoubtedly shout at the missionaries to get rid of their automobiles, checking accounts, radios, TV sets, and apartments. He would direct them to perform their labors without purse or scrip. Then they would have the spirit of their calling and they

would enjoy the power of God and the gifts of the Holy Ghost to attend them.

The Seventies should be the ambassadors of Jesus Christ. These are the men who must dedicate their lives to preaching the gospel to the nations of the world in the manner prescribed by the Lord.

...the main purpose of the Seventies, and the only real reason for their being brought together as an organization, is the dissemination of the Gospel, and when a man ceases to be a missionary he ceases to be a real Seventy. (Antoine R. Ivins, *Imp. Era* 35:215)

The Lord Himself designated that their labors should be "whithersoever he himself would come." Thus they are called to one of the highest appointments ever committed to mortal men. Only a few men on earth are ever called or ever attain to that lofty office in the Priesthood of God. It is a test of their integrity; it is a measure of their love for the Savior.

## Chapter IV

### WITHOUT PURSE OR SCRIP

*And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece. (Luke 9:3)*

### LABORERS FOR THE HARVEST

Jesus Christ had the most important message ever given to men on the earth. He needed laborers to deliver that message, but the "laborers were few, and the harvest was great." He chose humble servants who would go into all the world "whithersoever he himself would come," and He called and ordained them as Apostles and Seventies. His choice of disciples was not from among the "wise and prudent," but rather from among the meek and lowly. The pathway of these disciples was to be one of trials, persecution and afflictions. They were to be "hated of all men" for His sake, and only those who could endure to the end would be saved. Those who rejected their message would be cast out. Jesus taught them, led them, and became their exempliary leader. He endured all things in his ministry that it might be a pattern for his disciples. He took neither "gold nor silver" and commanded His disciples to do likewise, declaring that the "disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his Lord." Though it was a humble beginning, it was not to be a small one. His work would grow as a small acorn that blossoms into a mighty oak--and His kingdom would eventually fill the earth and every knee would bow and every tongue confess that Jesus was the Christ.

To become such a missionary was a cross too heavy for most men to bear; it was true in the days

of Jesus and it is true today. Nevertheless, the Lord commissioned His Twelve and Seventies with the Gospel of salvation and established a missionary system by which His disciples would always be known--traveling without purse or scrip.

As soon as Jesus began His ministry, He called others to assist Him. Among the first disciples to be called into His missionary work were the Twelve Apostles.

And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. (Matt. 10:1,5,9,10,12,13,14,15,42)

When these Apostles had been selected, Jesus gathered other disciples to assist the Twelve in the work of the ministry.

After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he



himself would come. Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest. Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.

#### PRIESTCRAFT--THE SALARIED MINISTRY

Even since Jesus sent disciples into the ministry, men have tried to change the method of performing that work. In almost every instance the ministry has become a means of making a living, or of seeking wealth.

Following is an excellent editorial on the subject of performing the ministry without purse or scrip, as the Lord intended it.

In sending forth His Apostles on their first mission our Lord gave explicit instructions as to where they should go, whom they should approach, what they should preach and what to expect by way of material support. They were to take neither money nor food, and even extra or superfluous clothing was forbidden. On entering any city or town they were to make reasonable inquiry for worthy or righteous citizens, and then apply for food and lodging to meet their needs. Those ancient missionaries were to travel without purse or scrip--the latter to be understood as a bag, pouch, or wallet in which it was usual in that day for travelers to carry a small supply of food. Concerning those who should receive them, because they were from Him, and minister unto their needs, this combined assurance and promise was given:

*He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.*

*He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward: and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.*

*And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.*

There was deep purpose in having these men look directly for material sustenance to those unto whom they were sent, for thereby would they be brought to realise their ultimate dependence upon divine bounty, even for their daily bread. They should have been prepared for this in large measure, for on an earlier occasion the Lord had admonished them to take no thought as to what they should eat, or drink, or wear; and the lesson had been emphasized by the trenchant question: "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" They had to be assured that their Heavenly Father knew well that they had need of food and clothing; but they were adjured to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, with the assurance that all else that was needful should be added.

For many decades of missionary service in the present dispensation the Elders of the restored Church traveled in much the same way as did the Apostles of old, depending for their support upon the people amongst whom they laboured, feeling that the Lord would move upon the hearts of the people to meet their necessities. Under such conditions missionaries are impelled to close communion with the Lord, feeling as they do their direct and absolute dependence upon Him even from meal to meal.

Throughout the many missions of the Church in all countries there is abundant demonstration of the fact that wherever the people impart of their substance to assist the missionaries, disciples are found and converts made. The Elders should be in a receptive state of mind, ready to accept the hospitality offered them, and must not fail to invoke the divine blessing upon the individual, family or household from whom they receive such aid.

This is the Lord's way. Blessings beyond all earthly reckoning await those who thus give and those who receive. Herein is prescribed a test whereby we may know who are, indeed, the Lord's disciples (J.E.T., *Mill. Star* 88:248)

The work of the ministry was appointed to the Twelve and the Seventy, without purse or scrip. The offices of the Twelve and Seventy were not to be discarded--neither was this system of missionary work.

Only the true servants of God would venture into the ministry without purse or scrip. Such a system required exceptional faith in God and would discourage frauds from making an enterprise out of it. It was a wise and precise method of sifting the dross from the genuine. The faithless, the conniving, and the unappointed, would shrink from such a call.

History has revealed that within a hundred years the gospel, and the organization of the Church, began its gradual fall into apostasy. The work of the ministry was soon transformed into a craft or an enterprising business.

The ministers of today who defend a salaried clergy are using very much the same argument--

...that once made such a stir in Ephesus, where Paul, the great Apostle, was proclaiming the

Gospel free of charge. Demetrius, the silversmith, who with others was engaged in making statuettes of Diana, perceiving that the Gospel was opposed to this trade, addressed his co-laborers as follows:

*Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people \*\*\* so that this our craft is in danger.*

That was the difficulty then, and that is the trouble anticipated as a result of the labors of the ministers of the Gospel now.

The salaried ministers and their champions need to be reminded, it seems, of the fact that no objection is raised to a minister of the Gospel receiving the necessaries of life at the hands of those to whose spiritual wants he administers. That is not the point at all. Our Savior in sending His disciples out to preach the Gospel states expressly that "a laborer is worthy of his food" (Matt. x:10, revised version), and Paul emphasizes this truth in his instructions to the churches. About this, then, there is no difference of opinion.

A great many of the ministers of the world, however, are not content with this. The preaching of the Gospel has been made a profession, a trade, a means whereby to make a living. And many look upon it in no other light than any other secular occupation. When it has come to this that a young man with no religious inclination whatever goes to college, studies theology and looks about for a chance to be appointed a preacher at a stipulated sum a month, then it

is time to raise an earnest protest. Then the Gospel is made merchandise and the sanctuary defiled to a lamentable degree. How many ministers act as if they considered the house of the Lord a market place! With them the only question is to get the most remunerative position possible. This is the objectionable feature of a stipulated salary for preachers. Were there no money in preaching, only those who were called by God and felt it a duty to obey would engage in it. Then the power of the Gospel would go with its proclamation and Christianity would be saved from being a farce. (*Mill Star* 55:298)

One of the distinguishing features of the true Church of Jesus Christ is that no one should receive a salary for preaching the gospel or laboring in the church. In the *Book of Mormon* a man named Nehor taught the Nephites that every priest and teacher ought to be supported by the people, and that priests should not labor with their own hands for their living. Alma, who was the chief judge, and a prophet of the Lord, said this was "priestcraft" and that it was opposed to the work of God.

Men called to labor in the church as "standing ministers in Zion" are required to labor with their own hands for their living. Those who are called to "the ministry abroad" as missionaries are required to "travel without purse or scrip." This is the mark of the true servants of God. Any other system is priestcraft--yet priestcraft is the most popular system of operating the churches of today.

TAKE "NO PURSE NOR SCRIP"

In July of 1830, only four months after the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Lord gave a revelation instructing

the missionaries to take "no purse nor scrip, neither two coats." (D. & C. 24:18) Two years later the Lord re-affirmed this important principle in connection with the ministry.

...it is expedient that I give unto you this commandment, that ye become even as my friends in days when I was with them, traveling to preach the gospel in my power; for I suffered them not to have purse or scrip, neither two coats. Behold, I send you out to prove the world, and the laborer is worthy of his hire.

And any man that shall go and preach this gospel of the kingdom, and fail not to continue faithful in all things, shall not be weary in mind, neither darkened, neither in body, limb, nor joint; and a hair of his head shall not fall to the ground unnoticed. And they shall not go hungry, neither athirst. Therefore, take no thought for the morrow, for what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed. (D. & C. 84:77-81)

Thus, another ancient but important principle of the gospel was revealed in this dispensation. Not only was the office of the Seventy and the Twelve restored, but also the unusual and important pattern of their doing missionary work. A very noticeable and strict emphasis is given by the Lord in this missionary allocation:

Therefore, let no man among you, for this commandment is unto all the faithful who are called of God in the church unto the ministry, from this hour take purse or scrip, that goeth forth to proclaim this gospel of the kingdom. (Doc. & Cov. 84:86)

This commandment was a new test of faith and courage for all who were called into the ministry. However, the Lord added the promise that--

...I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up. (D. & C. 84:88)

When a person depends on the Lord for his daily bread, and a place to sleep, his faith is increased. He is also brought very close to the people who administer to his wants. In addition to the necessities of food, shelter, and clothing, the missionary would need protection from mobs and persecutors. In such circumstances the missionary is brought very near to the Lord.

The Lord also added the promise that "if any man shall do my will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." Soon there were scores of missionaries bearing testimony of the Lord's protection and care.

Every young man who goes out--as in the case of our young men who are constantly going--goes without purse or script. What is the result? They have to feel after God. If they want a pair of pantaloons they have to ask God to obtain them. If they want a meal of victuals, they have to exercise faith on this account. In sending out my sons to preach the Gospel, or having them go, I would not give them one dollar to go with; and while I am on this subject I will say, the father who gives his sons money to go and preach the Gospel, does them the greatest injury he can do. I would not do it if I had millions at my disposal. I would not give them a dollar. Let them go out and feel after God, and obtain a knowledge of God, through faith and through mighty prayer. When a man is hungry; when a man is without friends; when a man has no place to sleep, he will, if he believes in God, and His gifts, be certain

to go to Him and ask Him to furnish that which he needs, and when his prayers are answered he has greater faith next time. (George Q. Cannon, J.D. 24:345-346)

John Taylor added his testimony by saying:

We used to be in the habit of going without purse or script. That is the way I have travelled hundreds and thousands of miles, but then we felt as the disciples of old did. (J.D. 12:48)

Traveling like the old apostles and disciples made them feel like them--and gave them the same spirit and faith which had characterized them. Taylor also stated:

...and I see those all around me, here in the assembly, who, as well as myself, have traveled thousands of miles--I have travelled hundreds of thousands of miles--on the same principle as the ancient apostles did, trusting in God for sustenance while proclaiming the principles of life to the people. Men do not always appreciate this; but that makes no difference, the principle is the same. (J.D. 5:285)

In 1852 President Brigham Young sent John Taylor to New York to establish a newspaper called "The Mormon" as a means of preaching the gospel in that locality. Taylor was sent there "without purse or scrip." President Young later complimented him by saying:

With regard to brother John Taylor, I will say that he has one of the strongest intellects of any man that can be found; he is a powerful man, he is a mighty man, and we may say that he is a powerful editor; but I will use a term to suit myself, and say that he is one of the



strongest editors that ever wrote. Concerning his financial abilities, I have nothing to say; those who are acquainted with the matter, know how "The Mormon" has been sustained. We sent brother Taylor, and other brethren with him, to start that paper without purse or scrip, and if they had not accomplished that object we should have known that they did not trust in their God, and did not do their duty. (J.D. 4:34)

Other missionaries gave similar testimonies to the Lord's sustaining hand. The Apostle Orson Pratt probably spent more years in the ministry, preached more sermons, and traveled more miles than any other man in the Church. His missionary labors were accomplished without purse or scrip through his child-like faith in that system. Orson declared:

This generation have been calling a long time for miracles; but one of the greatest miracles in the last days, in my estimation, is the fact that scores and hundreds of missionaries of the Latter-day Saints are traveling the globe, going from nation to nation, upon the principles that the ancient Apostles traveled--namely, without purse or scrip. Is not that a miracle? Has there any such thing happened before for many generations as people traveling over the whole earth, starting from their homes without purse or scrip?" \*\*\*

Says one, that looks rather hard. It does not look hard at all; for that same God that gave the commandment is able to bear you up; he is able to sustain you. \*\*\* The Lord will always provide some way to get along; and the faithful servant of God has nothing to fear only his own weakness and his own imperfections and follies; these things he has to fear the most. (J.D. 6:270-271)

But for some men the ministry was a great test of their faith and they failed to meet the call. Brigham Young relates one such incident:

It was at the same Council that Daniel Copley, a timid young man, who had been ordained a Priest, and required to go and preach the Gospel, was called to an account for not going on his mission. The young man said he was too weak to attempt to preach, and the Council cut him off the Church. I wonder what our missionaries now would think of so rigid a discipline as was given at that time thirty one years ago, under the immediate supervision of the Prophet. (J.D. 11:8)

On the other hand, Brigham Young was perhaps the foremost example of faithfulness in meeting such a call. Here is his testimony of the sacrifice he made to perform a mission:

I was sick and destitute when I started for England, with not a member of my family able to bring me a drink of water. When I was able to walk ten or fifteen yards to a boat, I started. For an overcoat I had a little bed-quilt my wife used to put on a trundle bed. When I landed in England I had six shillings. Who administered to me? The Lord, through good men. (J.D. 7:229)

\* \* \*

For me to travel and preach without purse or scrip, was never hard; I never saw the day, I never was in the place, nor went into a house, when I was alone, or when I would take the lead and do the talking, but what I could get all I wanted. Though I have been with those who would take the lead and be mouth, and been turned out of doors a great many times, and could not get a night's lodging. But when I was mouth I never

was turned out of doors; I could make the acquaintance of the family, and sit and sing to them and chat with them, and they would feel friendly towards me; and when they learned that I was a "Mormon" Elder, it was after I had their good feelings. (J.D. 4:34-35)

The commandments of God are not meant to be a burden on men, nor to be unbearable. They are a means of increasing a man's faith, blessing him with the Spirit and power of God, and helping him accomplish an important work. Men differ very much in their faith. Thus their response to an office or calling can be a measure of their faith. One man with sufficient faith might be able to live and travel without purse or scrip successfully, but another man might utterly fail. Nevertheless, the aim of every Priesthood holder should be to seek diligently in carrying out the commandments of the Lord. Failure can mean condemnation.

Elders who had sufficient faith in traveling without purse or scrip were not to beg too much from their hosts. The purpose of traveling without purse or scrip was for obtaining only the necessities of life. Brigham Young counseled:

If any of you take the hint, go from here without purse or scrip, unless the brethren give you something; leave all you can with your families, and do not beg creation dry. Preach the Gospel, gather the poor, and bring them home to Zion. Return naked and barefoot rather than come in carriages procured with money obtained from the poor and destitute. (J.D. 7:230)

There is danger in being a wealthy missionary. President Young warned:

The meek and lowly Jesus sent his disciples without purse or scrip; and when the honest in heart see our Elders go in the same manner that Jesus' disciples did, with the doctrine that he delivered to his disciples, and preach without purse or scrip, our Elders will find plenty of honest-hearted persons, who will receive their testimony. But when the Elders go into the great cities, hire large halls and hire carriages to ride to their pulpit in, the people say it is a speculation, and such Elders do not have much of the Spirit of the Lord to preach to the people. (J.D. 13:90)

The "speculation" that Brigham speaks of is using the gospel to get rich. Many evangelistic ministers of today have established multi-million dollar businesses out of religion. Such speculative and enterprising systems are alien to the simple system of traveling without purse or scrip as Christ commanded them to do.

President Young was emphatic upon this point and required the missionaries not to come home with any extra wealth obtained in the mission field. He said:

If you cannot by such a course come home with shoes, come home with moccassins; and if you are obliged to come barefoot, tar the bottoms of your feet; and the sand sticking in the tar will form a sole; and thank God that you have arrived here in that way rather than in a carriage. (J.D. 7:230)

President Young was not asking the Elders to do anything that he had not done. He recalled:

I used to travel without purse or scrip, and many times I have walked till my feet were sore

and the blood would run in my shoes and out of them, and fill my appointments--go into houses, ask for something to eat, sing and talk to them, and when they would commence questioning, answer them. Converse with them until they have given you what you want, bless them, and, if they wish, pray with them, and then leave, unless they wish you to stay longer. If you have an appointment, and are obliged to go here and there on your mission, go like Saints--humble before the Lord, full of faith and the power of God, and you will find the honest in heart, for the Lord is going to save a great many. (J.D. 13:89)

Such experiences were a means of accomplishing an effective missionary work. When people help the poor, they are drawn to them by the spirit of the Lord. True disciples are determined in just such a manner. In many instances God would touch the hearts of people even before the missionary arrived.

The missionary work of the Church in its early years was performed entirely according to these admonitions, and the promise of the Lord was fulfilled, as His servants who were engaged in this service can and do testify. Their way was opened up before them. God raised up friends to minister unto them. Often by dream or vision people were prepared for their coming, knew them as soon as they saw them, and supplied them with things that they needed.

By this means they obtained access to the homes of true disciples, and by personal conversation convinced them of the truth of the great latter-day work. Usually it was the poor who entertained them, gave them food and shelter, and helped them in their labors of love. (*Mill. Star* 69:88)

An example of the Lord's sustaining a worthy missionary is recorded in the Book of Mormon when Amulek met the Prophet Alma:

And the man said unto him: I am a Nephite, and I know that thou art a holy prophet of God, for thou art the man whom an angel said in a vision: Thou shalt receive. Therefore, go with me into my house and I will impart unto thee of my food; and I know that thou wilt be a blessing unto me and my house. (Alma 8:20)

When a righteous person sees needy souls--especially those who are serving the Lord in the ministry--he is impressed to give some of his substance to aid them. The man of God who has brought the message of life and salvation to the righteous will not long be permitted to suffer hunger and discomfort, much less wander about in thread-bare clothes, without a place to lay his head.

Missionaries receive good at the hands of people and they also receive the evil, but notice the spirit and influence which rested upon these Elders in this experience:

The crowd that gave us the "purse" and a Catholic neighbor having read the tracts had aroused the police and we were arrested. It was a long distance to the Catholic town where the prison stood; we were forced to retrace our steps. But O, the heavenly influence that came to us in that prison shortly after midnight; it was like the sweet influence in the Temple of the Lord.

The experiences following, however, were glorious, and all ended well. We distributed a great many tracts, bore our testimony to many who had never heard the gospel, and under conditions that they will not soon forget, left our warning with them. I can say it was the

grandest experience of my life, and I thank our Heavenly Father for it. (Julian E. Young, *Mill. Star* 64:435-436)

It is regrettable that there are so few records of the journeys and experiences of the early missionaries who filled their missions without purse or scrip. Little entries tell a very minor story, such as:

Sat. 26, 1857--Capt. Wm. G. Young's train arrived in G.S.L. City with the last of this season's immigration. Among the returning Elders in this train was A. Milton Musser, who returned home from a five years' mission to India and England, during which he had circumnavigated the globe, traveling as a missionary "without purse and scrip." (*Church Chronology*, p. 59)

The author of this book is not without experience in this method of doing missionary work. I filled a mission to Southern California from 1948 to 1950, traveling two years without purse or scrip. I can testify that this principle of missionary work can be done in our time, and that the Lord blesses and guides those who will do it. We labored for over a year in an area which had strict laws against any form of door to door soliciting; nevertheless, we discovered ways and means of accomplishing our work in the manner prescribed by the Lord.

Numerous and miraculous answers to prayers attended our labors. Many times after seeking all day for food and lodging, we would kneel down and pray--then be quickly welcomed into the next house we went to. Once after praying for a better pair of shoes, a new pair was given to us within 24 hours. After praying for better clothes, a nearly new suit was given to us that same week. Astounding blessings

came upon the people who aided us in our needs--blessings that the Lord had promised.

Testimonies were obtained by both the missionaries and the people who helped them through the principle of laboring without purse or scrip. The obedient disciples learned to live by the small still voice of the spirit--and often dreams of warning or instruction attended them.

The missionaries who have tried both systems usually agree that their labors without purse proved to be the most eventful and spiritual. A typical remark of two elders who tested both systems was made by Elders Jacob Riches and William Gibby, who wrote:

We rejoiced in our labors and felt thankful for the good treatment we had received. We are thoroughly convinced that preaching the Gospel without purse or scrip is the proper way. (*Mill. Star* 68:813)

Every missionary who has labored in the ministry learns the spiritual beauty of the gospel. Those principles reflect from them as guiding counsel to other missionaries who are just beginning in the ministry. As one apostle advised the missionaries:

Trust in the Lord in faith and you shall not be confounded; nor will He leave you destitute or friendless. Keep in view the purpose and object of your missions. Do not waste the precious moments, but employ your time to the very best possible advantage.

Search diligently for the honest in heart. Get near to them in the spirit of this ministry. Converse with them in their homes when they are willing to receive you. Do not be disputatious nor contentious. Preserve yourselves in honor, virtue and integrity. Seek



the Lord in private prayer. Bear testimony to the glad tidings of the latter-day dispensation. Be not weary in well doing. Serve the Lord with a glad heart and a cheerful countenance, with earnest zeal tempered with discretion, and the Lord will open your way, raise up friends to aid you as you need, fill your souls with joy, your minds with light, and your bodies with vigor. He will give you the victory over all who rise up against you, and return you to your homes with honor upon your heads, and, with those whom you shall bring to a knowledge of the truth, will crown you with everlasting glory in His eternal presence.

Such instructions are a guide for the caliber of men who are the Lord's disciples--and the obedient disciple can bear testimony to the truthfulness of such directions and promises.

#### SEEKING THE RIGHTEOUS AND WARNING THE WICKED

The grand purpose of missionary work is to seek out the righteous and warn the wicked. Traveling without purse or scrip is designed to easily accomplish both.

It is plain from these words of the Lord that He designed that His Elders should in this manner leave the inhabitants of the earth without excuse. But if they carried money with them, and relied upon it, would they be in a position to carry out the instructions which He gave in this revelation?

The design of the Lord, as set forth in this revelation, was to enable the Elders to find His disciples, or those who were willing to receive the message He sent. What better plan than this could be devised for accomplishing the end the Lord had in view? Who is there

among men that can suggest anything better? A man who goes without purse or scrip to preach the Gospel is compelled to be active in searching out the honest-in-heart. Necessity compels him to do this. And in doing this he reaches two important ends--he finds the disciples of the Lord, and he leaves the rest of the people who will not receive him nor administer to his wants nor listen to his testimony, in a position to be judged and condemned for rejecting the message of the Lord. \*\*\*

But when a people become so hardened as to reject the message which the Lord has sent, and close their doors against the Elders, they should be left for the Lord to send the other testimonies, in the shape of judgments, which He said should follow the testimony of His servants. If they are disciples of the Lord, they will receive His servants and administer to their wants. When they receive not the Elders the course to be pursued is plain. (*Mill. Star* 53:349-50)

Those who gave the missionaries food or lodging were blessed. Those who rejected them, or persecuted them, would receive judgment.

...and although we may not succeed in converting many to the Gospel, yet our duty is to warn them, and by this means assist the Almighty in this great latter-day work. \*\*\*

It is evident to our mind that some of the reasons that the Almighty had in view in commanding the Elders to go forth two by two without purse and scrip were, that they might the more speedily and thoroughly accomplish the work and prove the nations, that they might be left without excuse, and that He might be justified in pouring down the judgments upon them predicted by the prophets. (*Mill. Star* 48:515)

The Lord has given these warnings in conjunction with the message of salvation from his disciples.

And shake off the dust of thy feet against those who receive thee not, not in their presence, lest thou provoke them, but in secret; and wash thy feet, as a testimony against them in the day of judgment. (D. & C. 60:15)

\* \* \*

After your testimony cometh wrath and indignation upon the people. For after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes, that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand. And also cometh the testimony of the voice of thunderings, and the voice of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds. (D. & C. 88:88-90)

\* \* \*

Therefore, as I have said in a former commandment, so I the Lord say again unto my apostles; go ye alone by yourselves, whether in heat or cold and cleanse your feet in water, pure water, it matters not whether it be by the running streams, or in your closets; but leave these testimonies before the Lord and the heavenly hosts. (1880 Revelation to John Taylor)

\* \* \*

This practice of warning the nations has almost been entirely forgotten. It was even neglected during the 1880's as F. D. Richards mentioned:

But there is one ordinance that the Elders may have perhaps neglected--and I do not know but I have myself--and that is, that if we en-

ter a house and the people thereof receive us, there our peace should abide. This was the instruction of the Savior in His day; and if we enter a house and the people receive us not, then we should go away and return not again to that house, and wash our feet with pure water, as a testimony against them in the day of judgment, and thus bear witness unto the Lord that we have offered them salvation, that we have sought to preach them the Gospel of peace and desired to administer unto them a blessing. The same is applicable to a town, village, or city that rejects you. In this way you do your duty and leave them in the hands of the Lord. (J. D. 26:1)

The missionary work is intended to be a means of judgment--a blessing for the obedient and a cursing upon the disobedient. Traveling without purse or scrip is a simple means of accomplishing that purpose.

#### EROSION OF A PRINCIPLE

Since missionary work without purse or scrip is not taught or practiced by the Church today, it is necessary to review history and understand the reasons why it ceased. The inclination for missionaries to write home for money, or for the parents to send it, began to creep into the Church during the days of Brigham Young.

1870:

We have been hearing about the Latter-day Saints preaching. I think if our Elders were to go without purse or scrip and had nothing to fall back upon, and could not write home for means, but were obliged to take their valise in their hands and preach the Gospel as we used to do, they would be much more successful than they are and would find many more who would be

willing to listen to their testimonies. (Brigham Young, J.D. 13:89)

1897:

Some are of the opinion that an Elder now in going abroad must have ten or fifteen dollars a month from home to sustain him; and he desires to get some information on the subject. He quotes the 86th paragraph of the 84th Section of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, which reads as follows:

*"Therefore let no man among you (for this commandment is unto all the faithful who are called of God in the Church unto the ministry), from this hour take purse or scrip, that goeth forth to proclaim this Gospel of the kingdom."*

There is no qualification about these words of the Lord; and though the revelation in which they are contained was given in 1832, we know of no command that has changed their force since they were given. (*Mill. Star* 53:348)

1900:

"In the old days missionaries went out without purse or scrip, and depended on the Lord," he [John W. Taylor] said. "That's how my father went. That's how I went on my mission to the Southern States. And let me tell you, Nettie, after you've missed a few meals, you really get the spirit." He grinned. "No community is too hostile, no door too tightly closed, if you're hungry enough. Today," he shrugged, "Elders in the field get money from home. They come to depend on the money and not on the Lord." (*Family Kingdom*, Samuel W. Taylor, p. 79)

1903:

We are favored with another letter from President A.H. Schulthess of the German Mission, in regard to the practical work of preaching the

Gospel *without purse or scrip*. As an experiment it appears to give wonderful satisfaction, and will doubtless be increasingly practised where faith and conditions are in harmony (or can be made such) with the suggestions which emanated from the authorities in Zion. \*\*\*

I might mention that the reports of the Elders who gave this (new, yet old) method of preaching "without purse or scrip" a trial, are very encouraging. To give you an idea I will mention Brother Heppler, President of the Dresden Conference, who says, speaking of the Elders in his conference: "The brethren here have made the most pronounced success in traveling without purse or scrip. \*\*\* Elders Wilson and Jonasson of the Frankfurt Conference say: "Brother Jonasson and I made a trip in the Odenwald without purse or scrip, and met with splendid success. We were gone sixteen days and did not want for anything, besides having M.14.60 given to us. My testimony is indeed strengthened, and I realize it is the only way to preach the Gospel. Never did I feel better in my life than those few days; I am only sorry we did not start this before." Elder J. L. Woodruff, President of the Berlin Conference, and Elder W. F. Kotter of Stettin, say: "Never in our lives did we feel better than when we were out trusting in God and his promises. We were astonished at the many splendid opportunities we found to preach the Gospel, and never before did we feel the power of the Lord with us as we did then." (*Mill. Star* 62:747)

1903:

The effort is being made by two or three Elders in different conferences to travel and preach without purse or scrip. The success that has attended their efforts encourages us to hope that in every conference there will

soon be at least one Elder who is following this plan. (*Mill. Star* 62:747)

1907:

The Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who are sent out into the world as missionaries receive no pecuniary reward for their labors. They either travel on the ancient apostolic plan which Jesus gave to His Apostles, as recorded in Matthew 10:9-14, or pay their own expenses, sometimes aided by their relatives and friends at home. (C. W. Penrose, *Mill. Star* 66:88, Feb. 7, 1907)

1910:

The Lord was true to His word, and though they might be sometimes sorely tried, yet they failed not nor were suffered to perish.

This is the correct method of preaching the Gospel to the world. It is, doubtless, fraught with many difficulties and proves a trial of faith, a test of endurance and a standard to which all are not able to attain, but it affords opportunities to reach people who otherwise might never be brought to an understanding of the truth. On general principles the Lord's way is the best. In later times circumstances and conditions have changed and methods have been followed not strictly in accordance with that which we have indicated. Perhaps in many instances there has appeared to be no need to follow the old plan. Men called to go on missions have acquired means to pay their own way or have been supplied with them by their relatives. This has been more comfortable for them than traveling strictly without purse or script, but it is questionable whether these seeming advantages are really so either to the Elders or the people to whom they are sent. (*Mill. Star* 69:89)

1911:

It is very gratifying to read the reports from our elders in their various fields of labor who are traveling--as formerly commanded--"without purse or script," in which they relate many instances of the manifestation of divine favor in such signal providences, in their experiences, of the necessary supplies being provided and favors shown; coming as many of them have, from such unexpected sources.

While it is not our province, much less our purpose, to call in question the custom which seems to have become common to provide the elders in the countries of Europe as well as in some of the islands with the necessary funds for their support, it will not be out of place to mention that according to statements made, that in the main it costs from fifty cents to one dollar per day for each elder, while in some instances it reaches the sum of one dollar and fifty cents each day. (*Liahona, The Elders Journal*, Aug. 15, 1911)

1910:

And he that doeth not these things is not my disciple: by this ye may know my disciples.

How specific were these instructions that were made applicable to every man who should perform missionary labor then, or at any future time.

Heaven never, no, never at any time failed to respond to the prayer of faith offered in humility by any worthy elder for assistance in a time of actual need when out proclaiming the gospel.

Such experiences are priceless; and my sympathy goes out and partakes somewhat of pity when I learn of an elder going abroad and retiring without the choice experience of being compelled to trust alone in God and receiving direct answer to prayer in the blessings bestowed. (*Liahona* 7:523)



1921:

Now I do not say that this [referring to preaching without purse or scrip] should be done now. I believe that as circumstances change, the Lord changes his commandments to correspond therewith... So in these times conditions have changed very much from those times. (C.W. Penrose, Conference Rept., Oct. 1921)

\* \* \*

Note the spirit of compromise and lack of faith as men begin to reject the Lord's instructions. The self-justification that "the Lord changes his commandments" is totally unfounded and is certainly offered as an excuse for disobedience. The Lord did not change that commandment, and Penrose could not cite such a revelation; neither could anyone else.

There were dangers and pitfalls in allowing the gradual dissolution of traveling without purse or scrip. An excellent commentary on this was written by Dean L. Rasmussen, who wrote that:

Things are becoming institutionalized. The elders are getting used to money from home. The saints are getting used to sending it to them. The leaders are getting used to allowing it. What are they all getting used to? They are all getting used to faithlessness in an unrescinded commandment!

The whole matter hinges on whether the Lord actually revoked the commandment through His prophet, or not. If he revoked it, the church reacted in a mighty strange manner, not even informing those affected, the missionaries. If he didn't, the church is ... disobedient to the commandment. (*The Saints vs. The Saints*, Dean L. Rasmussen, p. 77)

## EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE

There are certain occasions when it has not been wise to go without any money. At one time in the days of Jesus, He counseled some of those in the ministry not to go without purse or scrip. When the lives of the missionaries are in danger, they must resort to other measures.

Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. (Luke 22:36)

This method would be unwise when mobs or police who are hostile against the true Saints of God traveling without purse or scrip would be a means of exposure. On certain occasions in some lands or cities there were laws against such a system.

There may be peculiar circumstances surrounding the servants of God in some lands. For instance, on the continent of Europe there are places where, if men travel without money on their person, they are liable to be arrested and thrown into prison, as some of our Elders have been. But even under those circumstances a faithful Elder, who has constantly in view the words of the Lord respecting the manner in which he shall travel, will be able to fulfil the requirements which the Lord has made, and at the same time be able to avoid the penalties which are inflicted upon vagrants. (*Mill. Star* 53:350)

It was under these circumstances that the principle must be temporarily averted until conditions open up for them to continue as before.

The faithful ones also gathered out, leaving the fields in many instances entirely bare, and in others so poorly represented that an Elder could scarcely get food, to say nothing about a coat, a pair of shoes, or means to help him to pay his traveling expenses. At this time, and now about 15 years ago, the word of the Lord came as of old that from that time forth those who should be called to go on missions should take their purse and scrip with them; and I well remember President John Taylor, according to President Young's instruction, preaching a powerful sermon on the subject, setting forth his reasons why it would, in the future, be necessary for the missionaries to take purse and scrip with them. (*Mill. Star* 49:51)

There is a danger in some lands of traveling without purse or scrip because the laws may classify such travelers as tramps:

In some parts of the world, it is true, an Elder traveling without visible means of support might be arrested as a tramp.\*\*\* In places where there is danger of being deprived of liberty because of being taken for paupers, sufficient money can be carried to demonstrate that they are not persons of that class. (*Mill. Star* 69:89)

Thus missionaries of today *can travel "without purse or scrip"* by depending upon the Lord and the people to sustain them with food, clothes, and lodging; *yet they can carry money with them* to prove to the law that they are not tramps.

The Lord never changed the system of traveling without purse or scrip as evidenced in a revelation to Wilford Woodruff in 1880:

Therefore, let mine Apostles and mine Elders who are faithful obey my commandments which are already written for their profit and guidance.

Thus saith the Lord unto My servant, John Taylor, and my servant Wilford Woodruff, and my servant Orson Pratt, and to all the residue of mine Apostles: Have you not gone forth in My name without purse or scrip and declared the Gospel of life and salvation unto this nation and the nations of the earth and warned them of the judgments which are to come, as you have been moved upon by the power of the Holy Ghost and the inspiration of the Lord?

You have done this year by year for the whole generation, as men count time. Therefore, your garments are clean of the blood of this generation and especially of this nation. (*Life of Wilford Woodruff*, p. 530)

The Lord infers that they should *continue* to obey the revelations and commandments "which are already written for their profit and guidance." Then He continued by commending them for their labors without purse or scrip for a "whole generation" and because of it, their garments were "clean of the blood of this generation." This revelation gives no hint to any change in that policy until "the judgments" come.

#### PROVISIONS FOR MISSIONARIES' FAMILIES

Many qualified and experienced missionaries with families were called on several missions. But while they were away it was necessary that their families be provided for. The Lord gave instructions for members of the Church to aid the families of the missionaries:

Behold, I say unto you, that it is the duty of the church to assist in supporting the families of those, and also to support the families of those who are called and must needs be sent unto the world to proclaim the gospel unto the world. (D. & C. 75:24)

President John Taylor added:

And when they are away, it is not proper that they should feel worried and concerned about their families at home; and therefore we will call upon our brethren here who preside, to see that the families of the missionaries are looked after, that they may not suffer. I hear men sometimes pray God to bless and provide for the families of those on missions, and in their prayers they are ever mindful of the poor. This is all very well so far as it goes, but it does not go very far. My feelings are, never to ask the Lord to do anything I would not do myself. If I were a woman--but then I am not, you know, and I do not know much about it--but if I were a woman, the wife of one of the missionaries abroad, I would much rather have a sack of flour, a little meat, some butter and cheese, a little firewood, or coal, and a little cloth for myself and family, than all the prayers you could offer up for me. And if you want to see these folks taken care of, you must see to it yourselves. And you sisters of the Relief Society do not give your husbands any rest until these families are all provided for. (J.D. 20:47)

Five years later in Rexburg, Idaho, President Taylor said:

I requested Brother Preston, in talking about these things, to see that in the neighborhood

of every town there should be a piece of ground set apart for the benefit of missionaries' families, because we shall be calling upon the Elders to go forth and preach the Gospel, the same as we are doing in other parts of the land of Zion. I asked Brother Preston to set a pattern here in this respect to the balance of the land of Zion, and then report to me, and I would call upon all other peoples in the land of Zion to do the same, that the families of the missionaries may have bread and other supplies and thus be sustained and looked after, and not feel in any kind of bondage. Most of the missionaries, perhaps would not be in needy circumstances, but if they should there will be something for their families and they will have no excuse to back out under these circumstances. And then we call upon the older men among the Seventies and High Priests and upon lots of the young men to attend to these matters, and thus promote the welfare of all. (J.D. 25:266-267)

The money which is usually sent to the missionary now, should be given to the families of the missionaries. The missionary in the field should be provided for by the gentiles and the converts.

#### IN SUMMARY . . .

Thus the missionary system as outlined by the Lord is as follows:

- A. Every Seventy was to continually prepare himself for the ministry. As a Seventy he is ordained to the ministry--not temporarily set apart for it.
- B. As long as a man was a Seventy he should be qualified and willing to perform missions. His life should be a living sacrifice for the ministry with many missions to his honor.

- C. Every Seventy should perform their missions without purse or scrip.
- D. Members of the Church are obligated to support the families of the Seventies while they were away on missions--not send money to the missionary.

This missionary system was a masterful plan designed to provide a way and means for every Seventy to fulfill the call to the ministry--and as many times as they may be needed.

In retrospect we find that the following particulars have occurred in regard to traveling without purse or scrip:

1. Parents and friends gradually increased financial gifts from home to the missionaries until the missionaries came to depend solely upon such means to sustain them.
2. There has never been a published order or message from the first presidency of the Church which forbid the practice of traveling without purse or scrip.
3. There has never been a revelation published which rescinded the practice of traveling without purse or scrip.
4. There has never been any given year in which that method of missionary work stopped. Even today a few missionaries somewhere will attempt it for a couple of weeks as an experiment.

For these reasons traveling without purse or scrip should be the rule for missionary work, not the exception.

Since missionaries are subject to their mission presidents and leaders of the Church, it would require only sufficient encouragement from Church lead-

ership to re-affirm this missionary system. All that is necessary for the Apostles and Seventies of today to make a success of this principle is to follow the example of those who have proved it to be workable. As Elder E. Davis wrote:

The experience which I have gained as a traveling missionary warrants me in saying, that if we will humble ourselves before the Lord and divest ourselves of all foolish pride, and seek by fasting and prayer to get the spirit of our mission upon us, and then go forth two by two in the manner commanded, without purse and scrip, that God will perform His part. He has never failed to do so yet, and never will. (*Mill. Star*, 48:514)

Consider what has happened to the missionary system by rejecting the Lord's commandment of laboring without purse or scrip.

1. Since most missionaries are required to have funds for a mission, many poor, but spiritual, missionaries are deprived of preaching the gospel.

2. Since money is required to go on a mission, it means that only the "wealthy" are called to the ministry. Making money a requirement for the ministry is a false and unwise premise.

J. Golden Kimball, speaking at October Conference in 1921, said:

I haven't heard of anyone breaking his neck to go on a mission--not lately. Now brethren, I know what the trouble is. You remember not very long ago that Brother Hyrum M. Smith, while he presided over the European Mission, sent word to us and gave the sign of distress, like all these mission presidents are doing now.



He wanted one hundred capable, efficient, competent men--just what they need in every mission in the world. So the First Council started out to get them. We made a thorough canvas, and we never dreamed but what we could get one hundred out of the councils of quorums, the presidents of seventies, without any trouble at all. We interviewed them, looked them in the face, and *we never found one single president that was not willing to go, not one that I remember, but when we looked into their financial affairs, they could not go.* They seemed to be all right spiritually, but it was their financial troubles. That is their trouble now. (J. Golden Kimball, Conference Reports, Oct., 1921, p. 84-85)

It is a most pitiful situation for the ministry of today--Seventies are willing, qualified and eager to fulfill missions, but are denied that calling because they are not wealthy. The Lord never made such demands during His ministry on the earth, nor did He require them at the time of the restoration. Without any doubt He probably does not require men to have money at the present time either. Nevertheless, this is the restriction upon the Seventies of today.

We believe that most seventies would like to be engaged in missionary service abroad, but for various reasons they are denied this honor. One of the most frequent and chief reasons is the lack of ready means. ("Creed of the 171st Quorum of Seventy," *Improvement Era*, XXI, June, 1922, p. 757)

It is not right that the hard earned money of the Saints should be spent among the gentiles by our missionaries. The Lord has ordered the Saints to keep their money in the hands of the Saints.

And let that which belongs to this people be appointed unto this people. And the money which is left unto this people--let there be an agent appointed unto this people, to take the money to provide food and raiment, according to the wants of this people. And let every man deal honestly, and be alike among this people, and receive alike, that ye may be one, even as I have commanded you. And let that which belongeth to this people not be taken and given unto that of another church. (D. & C. 51:7-10)

That was wise counsel then, and it should be observed today. It can be observed by sending the missionaries without purse or scrip.

#### EXAMPLES FROM THE PAST

Anciently the prophets and apostles of God labored in the ministry without purse or scrip. Abraham, Moses, Elijah and a host of others gained that experience. Consider Alma and his brethren in their ministry:

Now it came to pass that when Alma had said these words, that he clapped his hands upon all them who were with him. And behold as he clapped his hands upon them, they were filled with the Holy Spirit. And after that they did separate themselves one from another, taking no thought for themselves what they should eat, or what they should drink, or what they should put on. And the Lord provided for them that they should hunger not, neither should they thirst; yea, and he also gave them strength, that they should suffer no manner of afflictions, save it were swallowed up in the joy of Christ. Now this was according to the prayer of Alma; and this because he prayed in faith. (Alma 31:36-38)

Probably the most outstanding missionary of the Bible was the Apostle Paul. His life became an example of dedication and determination for missionary work, and it was accomplished without purse or scrip. Although he considered himself the least of the Apostles, his labor had accomplished more conversions than all the other apostles. (II Cor. 12:11)

The New Testament is mostly Paul's writings and his knowledge of the gospel was unexcelled. His epistle to the Romans has been acclaimed by Bible scholars as the "most profound work in existence." But more than this, Paul became uncompromising for the principles of the gospel--a foremost lesson for saints in this dispensation.

When Saul (or Paul) was converted to the gospel, the Lord said, "I will show him how many things he must suffer for My Name's sake." (Acts 9:16) The sufferings of Paul began immediately and continued in an unbroken succession for over 30 years. In Damascus they plotted to kill him (Acts 9:24), and also in Jerusalem (Acts 9:29). They drove him out of Antioch (Acts 13:50), and tried to stone him at Iconium (Acts 14:5). In Lystra they did stone him and left him for dead (Acts 14:19). In Philippi they beat him with rods and put him in stocks (Acts 16:23-24). In Thessalonica they tried to mob him (Acts 17:5), and he was driven out of Berea (Acts 17:13,14). They plotted against him in Corinth, (Acts 18:12), and in Ephesus they almost killed him (Acts 19:29). Then again in Corinth they conspired to kill him (Acts 20:3). In Jerusalem they would have put him to death if it had not been for the Roman soldiers (Acts 22). He then spent two years in prison at Caesarea and two more years in prison at Rome.

Added to all this there were numerous beatings, imprisonments, shipwrecks and many kinds of privations, for Paul wrote:

Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am sure; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. (II Cor. 11:23-28)

Paul won the title as the greatest missionary of the Bible. His life, like that of Christ, appeared to be without recognition while he lived; yet today his life is an inspiration to every man called to the ministry.

At the close of his missionary labors, Paul knew his end was near. With some comfort and nostalgia, he looked back over the years of struggles, opposition, and sufferings. As though in a valedictory address, this battle-scarred old warrior reviewed his life, and the promises of God, with soul-satisfaction and exultation, for he knew he had won the battle.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (II Tim. 4:6-8)

Paul was willing and obedient in accepting all things from the hand of the Lord. He was so filled with the spirit and calling of his mission that even in his sufferings he sang (Acts 16:25). But finally, Paul's enemies took him to Rome and executed him as a criminal.

When Jesus asked His twelve Nephite disciples on this continent what their wish was, three of them chose to remain upon the earth to preach the gospel to all nations. He told them that they "shall never taste of death; but ye shall live to behold all the doings of the Father unto the children of men." We read how they were "cast into prison and the prisons could not hold them," and how they could not "dig pits sufficient to hold them." Even "thrice they were cast into a furnace and received no harm. And twice they were cast into a den of wild beasts; and behold they did play with the beasts."

For nearly two thousand years these three missionaries have been traveling around the world teaching the gospel of Christ. The Book of Mormon said that they "will be among the Gentiles, and the Gentiles shall know them not. And behold they will also be among the Jews, and the Jews shall know them not." But Latter-day Saint history is filled with stories of their appearances, asking for a cup of water, a little food, and then bestowing great blessings upon those who aid them. Those three valiant disciples have been ministering for these many, many centuries without purse or scrip. They, with the Apostle John, have set a most valiant example in the true course of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

## CONCLUSION

Proclaiming the gospel without purse or scrip has been an established principle of the ministry. To do otherwise is priestcraft, which has been forbidden. The reasons for this type of missionary work are as follows:

1. It is a commandment from God. To disobey this law is to act in disobedience to God's commandment.
2. It is a method for obtaining a blessing; those who help the missionary in nowise lose a reward.
3. It is a means of bringing judgment upon the wicked when they refuse to aid or reject the servants of God.
4. It is a principle by which the world can easily determine who really are the servants of God.
5. Those who aid the missionary are brought closer to them and likewise the missionary to them.
6. It is a principle by which the missionaries are drawn closer to the Lord and their faith is increased.
7. It is designed to humble the missionary and fill him with the spirit of prophecy and revelation.
8. It brings members of the Church closer together by helping each other while members of their families are away on missions.
9. Since missionaries take \$100 to \$200 a month from their parents, only the "wealthy" can go on missions.
10. The principle of taking money from Zion and giving it to the gentiles makes the Mormons poor and the gentiles richer. Over 3 million dollars a month is drawn out of the hands of the Mormons and given to the gentiles.

\* \* \*

But, traveling without purse or scrip is also a test. It is a principle upon which the Lord can determine the true faith of his missionaries. It will also test the leading Elders of Zion to see if they will promote and encourage the missionaries to obey that law. Thus the Lord has said: "And he that doeth not these things is not my disciple; by this you may know my disciples." (D. & C. 84:91)

What greater triumph can man attain in this life than to know that he has been an obedient and faithful minister of Jesus Christ? Men can leave no better example to mankind or before God than to live an uncompromising life--faithful and obedient to the commandments of God. And that faithful and obedient servant who has performed his mission without purse or scrip will have an exceedingly great reason to rejoice. As the first Seventies of Christ "returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name," there was even a greater reason to rejoice, for the Lord said: "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:20)!

## Chapter V

### THE SEVENTIES AS APOSTLES

*The Seventies are Apostles; and they stand next in authority to the Twelve.*  
(Brigham Young)

In February of 1835, the Prophet Joseph Smith organized the First Quorum of Twelve Apostles and the First Quorum of Seventy Apostles. These two quorums of Apostles were set apart for the work of the ministry to the nations of the earth.

On Saturday, the 14th of February, 1835, a two days' convention or conference was convened, at which, after a week's notice, those brethren who had accompanied the Prophet to Missouri in the camp were called together, and it was announced that from their numbers would be chosen the quorum of the twelve apostles and their assistants in the work of the foreign ministry of the church, the seventy. (C.H.C. 1:371)

Through the years both the nature and office of the apostolic calling of the Seventy has become lost or forgotten. The gradual erosion of this calling has almost abolished it as an active office in the Church. Yet the Prophet Joseph Smith continually referred to this office from its inception. He wrote:

This day the Council of the Seventy met to tender an account of their travels and ministry, *since they were ordained to that Apostleship.*  
(D.H.C. 2:346)

Later when the Kirtland Temple was dedicated, the Prophet Joseph arose and said:



I then called upon the quorums and congregation of Saints to acknowledge the Twelve Apostles, who were present, as Prophets, Seers, Revelators, and special witnesses to all the nations of the earth, holding the keys of the kingdom, to unlock it, or cause it to be done among them, and uphold them by their prayers, which they assented to by rising.

I next called upon the quorums and congregation of Saints to acknowledge the presidents of Seventies, who act as their representatives, *as Apostles and special witnesses* to the nations, to assist the Twelve in opening the Gospel kingdom among all the people, and to uphold them by their prayers, which they did by rising. (D.H.C. 2:417-18)

It is interesting to note that at the first organization of the Seventy, the Prophet Joseph instructed Sidney Rigdon to confer upon Joseph Young "all the priesthood, powers, blessings, keys, and authority that they themselves possessed."

In referring to this memorable period the Prophet Joseph gave him (referring to Joseph Young) the first intimation of his call to this sacred office by saying: "The Lord has made you President of the Seventies" and further refers to his ordination in his writing. Prior to his ordination the Prophet instructed his counselor, Sidney Rigdon, to confer upon him *all the Priesthood, powers, blessings, keys and authority that they themselves possessed*, which was strictly observed. This was on the 28th day of February 1835, which position of President of all the Seventies he held until the day of his death. (From Seventies Minute Book #1, p. 281, Minutes by Robert Campbell, Historian's Office)

When Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball were ordained Apostles, they had previously been Elders. They had never been High Priests and some of the High Priests thought that it would be necessary for them to be ordained High Priests even after they were ordained to the Apostleship.

Such a suggestion made Joseph righteously angry. Said he, "My brethren, with as much as I have taught you, and as many revelations as have been given on the subject of the priesthood, that you should ask such a question! *It would be an insult to the priesthood of the Son of God to ordain a man a high priest after he had been ordained an apostle;* for the apostleship holds all the keys of the priesthood upon the face of the earth, to build up the kingdom of heaven, to sanctify the people and prepare them to enter into the presence of God the Father. Now, to say that such a man, holding this priesthood, should be ordained a high priest is an insult, and I want to hear no more about it." (Brigham Young, *Des. News*, June 6, 1877)

The calling and mission of the Seventy Apostles has always been synonymous with that of the Twelve Apostles. The distinction between the two councils is almost indiscernable since they are called to the same field of labor, as ministers of the gospel and witnesses of Christ. It is for ~~these~~ reasons they have been called "Apostles."

Notice, on the following page, the similarity between the Apostles and Seventies in both authority and calling in the revelations of the Lord:

## THE TWELVE

## THE SEVENTY

The twelve traveling counselors are called to be the Twelve Apostles, or special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world--thus differing from other officers in the church in the duties of their calling. (D.&C.107:23)

The Seventy are also called to preach the gospel, and to be especial witnesses unto the Gentiles and in all the world--thus differing from other officers in the church in the duties of their calling. (D.& C. 107:25)

And they form a quorum, equal in authority and power to the three presidents previously mentioned. (D. & C. 107:24)

And they form a quorum, equal in authority to that of the Twelve special witnesses of Apostles just named. (D.& C. 107:26)

The Twelve are a Traveling Presiding High Council, to officiate in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Presidency of the Church, agreeable to the instruction of heaven; to build up the church, and regulate all the affairs of the same in all nations, first unto the Gentiles and secondly unto the Jews. (D. & C. 107:33)

The Seventy are to act in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Twelve or the traveling high council, in building up the church and regulating all the affairs of the same in all nations, first unto the Gentiles and then to the Jews. (D.& C.107:34)

At the reorganization of the Seventies in 1844, Brigham Young said:

If an Elder wants to go preaching, let him go into the seventies. You are all apostles to the nations to carry the gospel. (*Imp. Era* 35: 215)

And Amasa Lyman spoke at the dedication of the Seventies Hall in December 1844:

After speaking of authorities in the church or kingdom of God, he observed that apostles in the primitive age of Christianity were first made witnesses to all the nations of the earth. They were afterwards made judges of that same people. Hence the saying of the Apostle, know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? That is the generation or people to whom they were sent as witnesses. (See 1st Cor. 6:2,3) Indeed they were competent to sit in judgment upon them, having had an experimental knowledge of their course of conduct and barbarous treatment towards the servants of God that were sent to establish peace among them. Many of whom they did not only reject, but tortured and slew them in a cruel manner. This was the fate of the Prophets and Apostles who vainly attempted to restore them from their wickedness, assuring them, to use the language of the scripture: As you mete out to others, so shall be it measured to you again. (*Times & Seasons*, Vol. 6, p.795-796)

In 1845 at the Nauvoo Temple, questions again arose concerning the authority of the Seventy.

A conversation then ensued on the distinctions of office or power between a President of the Seventies and a member of the High

Council or a High Priest. It arose in consequence of some of the High Council having been washed and anointed by some of the Presidents of the Seventy and inasmuch as there had been some considerable difference in the views of the Brethren in regard to the difference of authority between the High Council and the Seventies, President Young concluded it would be wisdom to have the subject understood at this early stage of business, so as to prevent any feelings or disputes arising on the subject hereafter.

He stated that *the Seventies are ordained Apostles* and when they go forth into the ministry they are sent with power to build up the Kingdom in all the world and consequently have power to ordain High Priests and also to ordain and organize a High Council.

Some of the High Priests have been ready to quarrel on the subject supposing that they had power and authority above the Seventies and some in their zeal for power have abused and trampled on the feelings of some of the Seventies. (*History of Brigham Young Manuscript, December 14, 1845.*)

Years later President Brigham Young continued to support these views by adding:

What ordination should a man receive to possess all the keys and powers of the Holy Priesthood that were delivered to the sons of Adam? He should be ordained an Apostle of Jesus Christ.... You read in the revelation alluded to that when the Twelve were called and ordained, they possessed the same power and authority as the three First Presidents; and in reading further you find that there must needs be appendages and helps growing out of this Priesthood. *The Seventies possess the same*

*power and authority; they hold the keys of establishing, building up, regulating, ordaining, and setting in order the kingdom of God in all its perfections upon the earth. We have a quorum of High Priests, and there are a great many of them. They are a local body--they tarry at home; but the Seventies travel and preach; so also do the High Priests when they are called upon. They possess precisely the same Priesthood that the Seventies, and the Twelve and the First Presidency possess; but are they ordained to officiate in all the authority, powers, and keys of this Priesthood, No, they are not; still they are High Priests of God: and if they magnify their Priesthood, they will receive at some time all the authority and power that it is possible for man to receive. (Brigham Young, J.D. 9:87-88)*

On January 25, 1846, Parley P. Pratt conversed with some brethren in the Celestial Room of the Temple on the subject of authority and Priesthood. He gave the following counsel:

He said that in case the quorum of the Twelve should by any means become disorganized, that *the Seventies held the jurisdiction and authority of Presidency of the Church* in all the world wherever it might be found. That the High Priest's duty would be the same as it is now; they have to attend to their affairs, but the authority of Presidency over the whole Church belonged to the Seventies; and if all the Seventies were killed off except one Seventy, that Seventy would not only possess the right but *would be in duty bound to stand in their place as the First Presidency of the Church.* He said that Joseph Smith the Prophet undertook to establish this idea in the minds of the brethren in Kirtland, but the jealousies

that began to arise in the minds of the High Priests prevented him doing so; he, therefore, left the matter undecided. He further stated that the difference between the authority of the Seventies and the High Priests was this: The High Priests possessed the High Priesthood, but *the Seventies possessed the High Priesthood and the Apostleship* which was the highest power on the earth or in the Church. A man might be a prophet and seer and not be in the Church or even baptized; and Joseph Smith was a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator before he was even baptized, or had any Priesthood whatever, but having proved faithful in the thing that was committed to his charge, God sent John the Baptist, to ordain him a priest after the order of Aaron; and having been faithful to this latter trust the Almighty sent Peter, James, and John unto him in due time and ordained him an Apostle and first Elder in the Church which was the highest authority of all. (Parley P. Pratt, Nauvoo Record Book B, p. 226)

To further give evidence of this calling under Brigham Young's administration, the apostleship was referred to in the ministering license of the Seventies to preach. This was an actual license over a hundred years ago:

\* \* \* \* \*

THIS CERTIFIES THAT Samuel W. Orme has been received into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, organized on the earth on the Sixth day of April, 1830, and was ordained an Apostle of the Seventies on the 20th day of April, 1857, and is a member of the Forty-Third Quorum and by virtue of his office he is authorized to preach the Gospel and officiate in all the ordinances thereof in all the world, agreeable to the authority of the Holy Priesthood vested in him.

Given under our hands at Great Salt Lake City,  
this 21st day of February, 1858.

Joseph Young, President  
Robert Campbell, Clerk.

\* \* \* \* \*

Brigham Young always spoke of the Seventies as belonging to the apostleship. Said he:

The Seventies are not called to be a local body, but *are ordained Seventy Apostles* to travel, ordain local officers, and build up and set in order the whole kingdom of God upon the earth, wherever it is necessary. (Seventies Council Hall, April 27, 1861)

\* \* \*

I have spoken of these things before, and yet some will say, "I want to know if the Seventies have as much authority as the High Priests." I say unto you, Latter-day Saints, that *the Seventies follow the Twelve Apostles*, and the Twelve Apostles follow in the wake of the First Presidency, and the First Presidency follow in the wake of Peter, James, and John. But for the Seventies and the Twelve to have equal authority in their decisions with the First Presidency they must be unanimous, as is written in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants.

In the first calling of the Seventies the Prophet Joseph ordered that every one of them be set apart to the high priesthood, which is the highest priesthood except the apostleship, and to ordain each as one of the seventy apostles. If there are those present who had my hands laid upon their heads in the Kirtland



Temple, they can testify that I am telling it just as it was. Some will treasure up these things in their heart, and will remember them just as I have done.

The Seventies are Apostles; and they stand next in authority to the Twelve.

I suppose I ordained hundreds of Seventies in early days. Brother Joseph Smith has come to us many times, saying, 'Brethren, you are going to ordain Seventies. Do not forget to confer the high priesthood upon them. Ordain each of them to the high priesthood, *and to be one of the seventy apostles.*' That was my language in the ordination of the Seventies, and that is the way I ordain them now. (*Des. News*, June 6, 1877, p. 274)

\* \* \*

One of the most significant evidences of the Apostleship is in the very nature of construction in the temples. They were so designed by the Lord as to include representation by every quorum in the church except the Apostleship. President Young elaborates on this particular phase of temple construction.

When temples are built you will not see seats provided for the Twelve, not in this temple at any rate. The upper seat on the stand in the east end of the building will be for the First Presidency; the next seat below will be for the presidency of the stake of Zion; the next seat below will be for the presidency of the High Priests Quorum. The upper stand at the west end of the temple will be for those holding the Bishopric; the next will be for the presidents of the Quorum of Priests after the order of Aaron; the next below the presidents of the

Quorum of Deacons. What, says one, no seats provided for the Twelve; is not this their home? No, their homes are all over the earth preaching the Gospel, building up the kingdom, regulating the affairs of the kingdom of God upon the earth; and we take them in as visitors. Are there places to be provided for the Seventies? No, but for the first Presidency and the local authorities and not for the traveling ministry. The Twelve and the Seventies are travelling quorums to all the inhabitants of the earth. (*Des. News*, June 6, 1877)

Today the temple construction should be built to have places for the Seventy since they are no longer under the quorum of Twelve, nor is "their home all over the earth preaching the gospel." Either the Seventy are not in their proper station or else the temples are being built incorrectly.

Since the Seventy are Apostles, they certainly should have as much or more authority than a high priest. If their calling and authority was considered as an Apostle, he would have authority to ordain men as high priests, bishops, stake presidents and patriarchs. However, they are not granted this right or recognition.

One of the last sermons delivered in the Church with proper perspective of the office of the Seventy was given in 1904 by Joseph F. Smith:

We have also in the church today, I am informed, 146 quorums of Seventy (1904). These constitute a body of elders or somewhere in the neighborhood of 10,000 men, whose special duty it is to respond to the call of the Apostles to preach the gospel, without purse or scrip, to all the nations of the earth. They are minute men. It is expected that they will be ready,

whenever they are called, to go in the world, or go out to the various organizations of the Church to fulfill missions and to perform such duties as shall be required of them, in order that the work of the Lord and the work of the ministry may be upheld and sustained and carried on in the church and throughout the world. These councils or quorums of Seventy are not always full, a full council being 70 Elders. But there are approximately 10,000 Elders who now hold that position in the Church. They are called to an Apostolic calling. They are required to be special witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is expected of this body of men that they will have burning in their souls the testimony of Jesus Christ, which is the spirit of Prophecy; that they will be enthusiastic in their calling, and in the cause of Zion, and that they will be ready at any moment, when required, to go out into the world, or anywhere throughout the Church and bear testimony of the truth, preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and set examples before the world of purity, love, honesty, uprightness, and integrity of the truth. (Conference Rept., Oct. 1904, p. 3)

The Apostleship of the Seventy was recognized until 1907. Joseph F. Smith publicly stated then that:

The Seventies are called to be assistants to the Twelve Apostles; indeed *they are Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ*, subject to the direction of the Twelve, and it is their duty to respond to the call of the Twelve, under the direction of the First Presidency of the Church, to preach the gospel to every creature, to every tongue and people under the heavens, to whom they may be sent. (Conference Rept., April 1907, p. 5)

The Apostleship of the Seventy began to decline after the 1900's until they were controlled by High Priests, subjected to home missionary work and governed by bishops and stake presidents. The Apostleship of the Seventy is seldom mentioned anymore, and certainly not understood. The Church will not fulfill its mission until the Seventies regain their authority and calling as Apostles of the Lord.

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SPECIAL NOTE:

After this publication was nearly completed, another interesting reference was discovered referring to the apostleship of the Seventies:

Know then that the apostles were Twelve and Seventy.\*\*\* It is said that each one of the Twelve and of the Seventy wrote a gospel; but in order that there might be no contention and that the number of "Acts" might not be multiplied, the apostles adopted a plan and chose two of the Seventy, Luke and Mark, and two of the Twelve, Matthew and John. (*The Book of the Bee*, the Cyraic Text, an apocryphal book by Bishop Solomon, native of Armenia, written in 1559; published by Oxford Univ., 1886; pp. 103, 114-115)

## Chapter VI

### THE SEVENTIES AS SPECIAL WITNESSES

*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. (Matt. 5:8)*

#### SPECIAL WITNESSES OF THE PAST

A "special witness" is just what the name implies. Any person who is a witness has the experience of seeing, hearing, or obtaining certain knowledge. A special witness has positive and absolute knowledge. Such a witness of Christ must have these qualifications to be considered special witnesses. But such witnesses were not confined to the time of Christ's ministry on the earth. To be a special witness of God was the requirement of every prophet in every dispensation. A vivid example of men being called as witnesses to God occurred in the dispensation of Moses.

Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And *they saw the God of Israel*: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink. (Ex. 24:9-11)

The power and authority by which these chosen men of God were able to become His "witnesses" was the Melchizedek Priesthood. This Priesthood, and the higher laws of the Priesthood, were offered to all of the Israelite men so that they too could receive that blessing. It was the laws of the Melchizedek Priesthood which were inscribed on the first set of tablets which Moses received and later des-

troyed. Most of the Israelites were unworthy of such high laws and priesthood.

Upon returning to the mountain, Moses was commanded to make another set of laws for Israel--but not as the first, for they were to be lesser laws and the lesser priesthood.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two other tables of stone, like unto the first, and I will write upon them also, the words of the law, according as they were written at the first on the tables which thou brakest; but *it shall not be according to the first, for I will take away the priesthood out of their midst; therefore my holy order, and the ordinances thereof, shall not go before them; for my presence shall not go up in their midst, lest I destroy them.* (Ex. 34:1, Ins. Ver.)

This has been verified in our own times, according to the revelations which the Lord gave to the Church in 1832:

And this *greater priesthood* administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, *even the key of the knowledge of God. For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.* Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God; but they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; \*\*\* therefore, *he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also; and the lesser priesthood continued, which priesthood holdeth the key of the ministering of angels and the preparatory gospel.* (Doc. & Cov. 84:19,22,23,25,26)

Moses was not the only person who seemed to have been taken out of the midst of Israel, because after that we read very little concerning these seventy men who saw the face of God.

Fifteen hundred years later, when Christ began His ministry, He called men into the apostleship, which was the call of being "special witnesses" of Him.

The Apostles were witnesses of Christ, not only while He lived on the earth, but also after His resurrection. Being a witness of Christ, qualifies a man to fulfill the calling of an Apostle, for the definition of the word "apostle" means "eye and ear witness."

*The first qualification for being an Apostle was to have "seen the Lord." The witnessing of those who had "seen the Lord" supplied material for the New Testament writings (Luke 1:2) and gave spirit and power to the early church (Acts 4:33). (Harper's Bible Dictionary, p. 27)*

Thus the Quorum of Twelve and the Quorum of Seventy were called as "apostles" or "witnesses" of Christ to all the world. It is written that when Christ came back after His resurrection, he appeared to his Quorum of Apostles (John 20:26; 21:14) and then He appeared to others, probably the Seventy. (Matt. 27:53)

In I Cor. xv, where St. Paul described the appearances of Jesus after the resurrection, it is said "that he was seen of Cephas [St. Peter], then of the twelve, after that he was seen of about five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep." Now taking the close

relationship between the twelve and the seventy, the similarity of their mission and commission, and that the fact that in the above quoted passage from St. Paul the appearances of Jesus are spoken of as being associated with St. Peter, then with the twelve, and then of five hundred brethren at once, may it not be that those five hundred brethren were those who held similar authority with the twelve apostles, namely, the seventy, which would make, allowing for slight discrepancy and perhaps the attendance of the twelve apostles, *among the five hundred, seven quorums of seventy.* (See Doc. & Cov. 107:95; *Seventies Course in Theology*, 1st year, p. 7-8)

#### SPECIAL WITNESSES IN THIS DISPENSATION

The calling for "witnesses" of Christ in this last dispensation has the same requirements that it did anciently. With the restoration of the Gospel came the necessity of "special witnesses." The Lord revealed that this responsibility belonged to the apostleship.

The twelve traveling councilors are called to be the Twelve Apostles, or *special witnesses* of the name of Christ in all the world--thus differing from other officers in the church in the duties of their calling. (D. & C. 107:23)

Then immediately following the calling of the Twelve came the same calling for the Seventy:

The Seventy are also called to preach the gospel, *and to be especial witnesses* unto the Gentiles and in all the world--thus differing from other officers in the church in the duties of their calling.

And they form a quorum, equal in authority to that of the Twelve special witnesses or Apostles just named. (D. & C. 107:25-26)



Then at the organization of the Apostleship, special instructions were delivered to the Twelve by Oliver Cowdery which exhorted them to become "special witnesses." In the presence of Joseph Smith and with his approval, Cowdery gave a powerful charge to the Quorum of Apostles, containing the following pertinent excerpts as recorded in Vol. 2 of the *D.H.C.*

The ancients passed through the same experience. They had this testimony--that they had seen the Savior after He rose from the dead. You must bear the same testimony; or your mission, your labor, your toil, will be in vain. You must bear the same testimony, that there is but one God, one Mediator; he that hath seen Him, will know Him, and testify of Him. (p. 193, to Parley P. Pratt)

You have been indebted to other men, in the first instance, for evidence; on that you have acted; but it is necessary that you receive a testimony from heaven for yourselves; so that you can bear testimony to the truth of the Book of Mormon, and that you have seen the face of God. That is more than the testimony of an angel. When the proper time arrives, you shall be able to bear this testimony to the world. When you bear testimony that you have seen God, this testimony God will never suffer to fall, but will bear you out; although many will not give heed, yet others will. You will therefore see the necessity of getting this testimony from heaven.

Never cease striving until you have seen God face to face. Strengthen your faith; cast off your doubts, your sins, and all your unbelief; and nothing can prevent you from coming to God. Your ordination is not full and complete till God has laid His hand upon you. We

require as much to qualify us as did those who have gone before us; God is the same. If the Savior in former days laid His hands upon His disciples, why not in latter days? \*\*\* (p.195-196)

You have our best wishes, you have our most fervent prayers, that you may be able to bear this testimony, that you have seen the face of God. Therefore call upon Him in faith in mighty prayer till you prevail, for it is your duty and your privilege to bear such testimony for yourselves. (p. 198)

It is evident that the Lord has not restricted the calling of special witnesses to just the apostles. The following quotations from the Doctrine & Covenants for the members of the Church seem to encourage every Saint who holds the Melchizedek Priesthood to anticipate and prepare for such a blessing:

And also the Lord shall have power over his saints, and shall reign in their midst, and shall come down in judgment upon Idumea, or the world. (1:36)

\* \* \*

For they will hear my voice, and shall see me, and shall not be asleep, and shall abide the day of my coming; for they shall be purified, even as I am pure. (35:21)

\* \* \*

But the day soon cometh that ye shall see me, and know that I am; for the veil of darkness shall soon be rent, and he that is not purified shall not abide the day. (38:8)

\* \* \*

And the day cometh that you shall hear my voice and see me, and know that I am. (50:45)

\* \* \*

And again, verily I say unto you that it is your privilege, and a promise I give unto you that have been ordained unto this ministry, that inasmuch as you strip yourselves from jealousies and fears, and humble yourselves before me, for ye are not sufficiently humble, the veil shall be rent and you shall see me and know that I am--not with the carnal neither natural mind, but with the spiritual. (67:10)

\* \* \*

Of whom we bear record; and the record which we bear is the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the Son, whom we saw and with whom we conversed in the heavenly vision. (76:14)

\* \* \*

And saw the holy angels, and them who are sanctified before his throne, worshiping God, and the Lamb, who worship him forever and ever. And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives! For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father-- (76:21-23)

\* \* \*

And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live. Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people

that they might behold the face of God; But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory. (84:19-24)

\* \* \*

The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not; nevertheless, the day shall come when you shall comprehend even God, being quickened in him and by him. Then shall ye know that ye have seen me, that I am, and that I am the true light that is in you, and that you are in me; otherwise ye could not abound. (88:49-50)

\* \* \*

He that seeketh me early shall find me, and shall not be forsaken. (88:83)

\* \* \*

Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am; (93:1)

\* \* \*

Yea, and my presence shall be there, for I will come into it, [Kirtland Temple] and all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God. (97:16)

\* \* \*

And seek the face of the Lord always, that in patience ye may possess your souls, and ye shall have eternal life. (101:38)

\* \* \*

Yea, I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this holy house. [Kirtland Temple] (110:8)

\* \* \*

When the Savior shall appear we shall see him as he is. We shall see that he is a man like ourselves. (130:1)

\* \* \*

And the Lord, even the Savior, shall stand in the midst of his people, and shall reign over all flesh. (133:25)

\* \* \*

The Lord would surely not give such encouraging promises to His people without expecting such things to become a reality. For a few people, these promises have been fulfilled.

#### SPECIAL WITNESSES TO SACRIFICE ALL THINGS

As previously mentioned, revelations from the Lord also require the Seventy to become "especial witnesses" to God. Such a requirement is not only a calling but a qualification. It was a qualification of a man who would sacrifice, or be willing to sacrifice, all things for the Lord. The Prophet Joseph Smith recognized this particular test for those who were to be called into that first Council of Seventy. He said that God:

...could not organize His kingdom with twelve men to open the Gospel door to the nations of the earth, and with seventy men under their direction to follow in their tracks, unless He took them from a body of men who had offered their lives, and who had made as great a sacrifice as did Abraham. Now the Lord has got His Twelve

and His Seventy, and there will be other quorums of Seventies called, who will make the sacrifice, and those who have not made their sacrifices and their offerings now, will make them hereafter. (*D.H.C.* 2:182)

It is established in this sermon that if God did not have men who had made "as great a sacrifice as Abraham," then He could "not organize His kingdom or open the gospel door to the nations." Also that those who were to follow in the callings of the Seventy and Apostles "who have not made their sacrifices and their offerings now, will make them hereafter." Thus men who are ordained to the office of Seventy would be called or expected to make "as great a sacrifice as Abraham." By doing so they could qualify for the apostleship and become "especial witnesses."

It was the principle of being willing to lay down their lives for the gospel that qualified the calling of the Apostleship of both the Twelve and the Seventy.

God had not designed all this for nothing, but he had it in remembrance yet; and it was the will of God that those who went to Zion (Missouri) with the determination to lay down their lives if necessary, should be ordained to the ministry and go forth to prune the vineyard for the last time. (*D.H.C.* 2:182)

The Prophet and revelations of the Lord infer that:

The sacrifice required of Abraham in the offering up of Isaac, shows that if a man would attain to the keys of the kingdom of an endless life, he must sacrifice all things. (*T.P.J.S.* p. 322)

And whoso is not willing to lay down his life for my sake is not my disciple. (D. & C. 103:28)

By the turn of the century this principle of self-sacrifice for the gospel had almost been lost. The Seventies and other quorums were failing to meet their callings. John Taylor rebuked them by saying:

According to your statistical report, which has been read, you have in this stake 360 Seventies; and how many of them, if they were called today, are prepared to go to the nations of the earth to preach the Gospel. You are not prepared to do it any more than the High Priests were prepared to magnify their calling. The Twelve are commanded first to call upon the Seventies, but when they do so they frequently find they are confronted with excuses. I know it is so, if you do not. (John Taylor, J.D. 22:202)

A religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things is not the true religion--and the people who are not willing to make these sacrifices are not the people of God.

Joseph Smith both lived and taught this principle of sacrifice:

Let us here observe, that a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things, never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation; for from the first existence of man, the faith necessary unto the enjoyment of life and salvation never could be obtained without the sacrifice of all earthly things; it was through this sacrifice, and this only, that God has ordained that men should enjoy eternal life; and it is through

the medium of the sacrifice of all earthly things, that men do actually know that they are doing the things that are well pleasing in the sight of God. When a man has offered in sacrifice all that he has, for the truth's sake, not even withholding his life, and believing before God that he has been called to make this sacrifice, because he seeks to do his will, he does know most assuredly, that God does and will accept his sacrifice and offering, and that *he has not nor will not seek his face in vain*. Under these circumstances, then, he can obtain the faith necessary for him to lay hold on eternal life.

It is vain for persons to fancy to themselves that they are heirs with those, or can be heirs with them, who have offered their all in sacrifice, and by this means obtained faith in God and favor with him so as to obtain eternal life, unless they in like manner offer unto him the same sacrifice, and *through that offering obtain the knowledge that they are accepted of him*. (Lecture on Faith, No. 6, p. 7-8)

This "sacrifice" as a test for qualification in the work of the ministry, was placed upon men by Jesus. One man among many who failed was the man who asked Jesus what he should do to receive eternal life. Jesus answered and said that he must keep the commandments, to which the man said, "All these have I kept from my youth up." Jesus replied, "Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich." (Luke 18:21-23)

Others come into the ministry and then fail to make their sacrifices. In our own dispensation James Covill was a minister who came into this Church and



was sent on a mission, but "the fear of persecution and the cares of the world caused him to reject the word." (D. & C. 40:2)

It is certain that men will be given their chance to make the sacrifice of Abraham--either when they accept the Gospel or sometime later. A classic example of such testing was given to Heber C. Kimball by the Lord in a revelation to Joseph.

Before he [Joseph Smith] would trust even Heber with the full secret, however, he put him to a test which few men would have been able to bear.

It was no less than a requirement for him to surrender his wife, his beloved Vilate, and give her to Joseph in marriage!

The astounding revelation well-nigh paralyzed him. \* \* \*

His heart-strings might be torn, his feelings crucified and sawn asunder, but so long as his faith in God and the Priesthood remained, heaven helping him, he would try and do as he was told. Such, now, was his superhuman resolve.

Three days he fasted and wept and prayed. Then, with a broken and a bleeding heart, but with soul self-mastered for the sacrifice, he led his darling wife to the Prophet's house and presented her to Joseph.

It was enough--the heavens accepted the sacrifice. The will for the deed was taken, and "accounted unto him for righteousness." Joseph wept at this proof of devotion, and embracing Heber, told him that was all that the Lord required. He had proved him, as a child of Abraham, that he would "do the works of Abraham," holding back nothing, but laying all upon the altar for God's glory.

The Prophet joined the hands of the heroic and devoted pair, and then and there, by virtue of the sealing power and authority of the Holy Priesthood, Heber and Vilate Kimball were made husband and wife for all eternity. (*Life of Heber C. Kimball*, Whitney, pp. 323-324)

But to some men the offering of their wife would be no test at all--they might do so with eagerness! So to each man the test is different.

It is important to understand that merely ordaining a man to an office does not necessarily make a good man out of him.

To go and preach, or to be ordained into the quorums of the Seventies does not make good men of them, if they are not so before. The ordination of a man to the High Priests' quorum does not make him a good man. (Brigham Young, J.D. 12:394)

Men who are ordained to the office of Apostle or Seventy must continue with greater perseverance than ever before to meet the full qualification of that office. Righteousness comes by self-achievement--never by ordination. Many men may be ordained to the apostleship without the qualification of that office and others may fail after being ordained.

#### SPECIAL WITNESSES TO BE TEMPTED, TRIED AND TESTED

From one of the books of the *Apocrapha* comes this appropriate bit of wisdom:

My son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation. Set thy heart aright, and constantly endure...whatsoever is brought upon thee take cheerfully, and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate.

For gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of adversity. (Eccles.2:1, 2,4,5)

Any man who fully meets the qualifications of the Apostleship will be tested and proved worthy of that office.

If ever you are brought into the presence of God, and exalted to a seat in His celestial kingdom, it will be by virtue of the Holy Priesthood; therefore you have got to be proved, not only by being tempted by the devil, but the Priesthood will try you--it will try you to the core. If one thing won't try you something else will be adopted, until you are like the passive clay in the hands of the Potter. If the Lord our God does not see fit to let the devil loose upon you, and mob you, He will employ some other means to try you as in a crucible, to prove you as gold is tried seven times in the furnace. (Jedediah M. Grant, *Truth*, May, 1947, p. 319)

The Lord must prove a man's integrity before He will bestow upon him the power and testimony of being a special witness. A good man can be proved only through trial and temptation. The test of his integrity must be applied by temptation and trial to see if he will succumb to sin, or prove obedient to higher laws. Only the strongest and most spiritual men remain true to all of the principles of the gospel. While some men fail and prove recreant to the principles of immorality, others fail by proving traitors to principles, ordinances or doctrines of the gospel. Many honest and virtuous men have become some of the worst offenders of the gospel. These are they who seek to "change the ordinances, transgress the laws, and break the everlasting covenant."

Even the righteousness of the priests and Pharisees did not exclude them from the wrath of Christ. Jesus told the "chief priests and the elders of the people" that the "publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." (Matt. 21:31) Thus, the sins of opposition to, or transgression from, the laws and ordinances was a greater sin than the sins of the harlots.

#### SPECIAL WITNESS--A RARE PRIVILEGE

Anciently, and presently, a special witness of the Lord is a very rare privilege. At the present time in the Church, none of those among the First Presidency, the Quorum of Twelve, or the First Council of Seventy have reached the full qualification of the Apostleship. None of them have borne testimony that they have been ordained under the hands of God. Nevertheless, all of the prophets of God have been obligated to this necessary qualification.

All the prophets had the Melchizedek Priesthood and were ordained by God himself. (T.P.J.S., p. 181)

One of the indications that men have had this blessing conferred upon them is their testimony of how they received their Priesthood. When it has been conferred upon them by other men, it has been commissioned. For example:

*Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." (D. & C. 20: 73)*

But when men have fulfilled their calling in the Apostleship, they bear witness of it. For example:

*Having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. (3 Nephi 11:25)*

The Nephite disciples of Jesus had seen Him and were directed to go forth witnessing and baptizing using these above words. This was because they had felt "the prints of the nails in his hands" and "did see with their eyes and did feel with their hands, and did know of a surety and did bear record, that it was he, of whom it was written by the prophets, that should come. And...they had all gone forth and had witnessed for themselves...." (3 Nephi 11:15)

Early pioneer journals show that both of these phrases were used, but only the men who had seen the Savior spoke of "having authority given me of Jesus Christ...."

B. H. Roberts was probably the last witnessing Seventy:

Some few years later this was corroborated to me by the fact that I spoke to, or had a long conversation for about four hours with, B.H. Roberts. He was then head of the Quorum of the Seventy in the Church. For two or three hours he skirted around things and didn't come quite to the point until finally he said, "Well, I am very discouraged with the Church, the officials and the way things are going and they know it because *I have told them*. But I want to say this to you--I have gone into Center-ville Canyon, and I've fasted many days by a little stream of water." Now I know what he means, because I've been lost in Centerville Canyon, in the middle of the night. And the brush at that time was very thick, and the only way to get up there at that time was to find deer trails.

Brother Roberts went on, "After many days, when I was so discouraged and I felt like I just couldn't go another day, I started out of that canyon, the Savior appeared to me, and He laid His hands upon my head, and He said, "Brother Roberts, thou shalt have a part and lot in my Kingdom!"

So, I just want to witness these things to you because it is the truth. He said, "Every man in this Church who does not receive this confirmation, has not obtained anything in this kingdom whatsoever; he must obtain this. It is one of the most necessary things in the whole gospel of Jesus Christ." ("A Discussion with Carl Jentsch," *Reminiscences* by Mark and Rhea Baird, p. 6, June 1971)

Roberts was an exception rather than the rule, yet it is a marked distinction of the Apostleship. The Prophet Joseph Smith promised that--

*...when any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him and the Lord will teach him face to face....*  
(*T.P.J.S.*, p. 151)

Such incidents are extremely rare today; however, in the near future they will be almost a common occurrence for men in the apostleship. Manifestations and power from God will excell in numbers and in power, even those that occurred in the days of Moses. Then the Church and Kingdom will be led by Joseph Smith and Jesus Christ--personally. (See Doc. & Cov. 103:20-21)

In the millennium men will not say, "Know ye the Lord," for all shall know Him in that day.

## Chapter VII

### THE SEVENTY AND HIGH PRIEST CONTROVERSY

*[Then] came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? \*\*\* Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*  
(Matt. 18:1,4)

#### INCEPTION OF THE CONTROVERSY

From the first organization of the quorum of Seventy there have been questions, argument and dissension concerning the authority and calling of High Priests and Seventies. Joseph Young records this first controversy:

It is here proper to remark, that it is natural in human beings, when assuming new fields of labor for the development of their talents and abilities, that they seek to ascertain the bounds of their prerogative. This was very forcibly illustrated by the different organizations of the priesthood at that time. Some of the High Priests and a number of the Seventies introduced a question, as to which is the greatest among them, the Seventies or the High Priests. Their discussions continued to increase, with so much warmth that it amounted to jealousy.

At length it attracted the notice of the Prophet. Both parties asserted their claims of pre-eminence to his father, who took so much interest in the question that he referred it to his son Joseph to decide, and the Prophet called a council for that purpose.

The council was called together in the month of November, 1835. After it was assembled he asked the newly-organized quorum if any of their number had been ordained to the High Priest's office, previous to their ordination as Seventies. It was not ascertained how many from the Seventies' quorums had previously been ordained High Priests; five out of the Seven Presidents, however, acknowledged that they were High Priests before they were ordained Seventies. These were Hazen Aldrich, Leonard Rich, Zebedee Coltrin, Lyman Sherman, and Sylvester Smith. Accordingly, the Prophet invited them to take their places in the High Priests' quorum again, which was complied with, thus leaving Joseph Young and Levi W. Hancock in the council. He thought that this was the best way to settle the difficulty and remove all feelings, without deciding the question as to which was the greatest. (*History of the Organization of the Seventies*, p. 4-5)

President Brigham Young commented on this re-organization. His views of Joseph's removing High Priests from the Seventies Quorum were based on jealousies and feelings of both quorums.

I know some of you might say, "Did not Brother Joseph take high priests out of the quorum of seventies and place them in the high priests' quorum and put others in their places? Yes; but what did he do this for? I can tell you--it was to satisfy the continual teasing of ignorant men who did not know what to do with authority when they got it, and I think most of those high priests who were so anxious upon this subject afterwards apostatized. You have my word for it, I believe there were none of the whisperings of the spirit suggesting that movement, and I will give you my reasons for



thinking so. They set their watch for Joseph whenever he preached on the subject. They invited him to preach at their quorum meetings on the difference between a high priest and a seventy. There had been caviling and bickering in relation to this subject; he condescended to try to do something for them. He preached upon this subject, and I say he stooped to the level of those whiners to try to do something for them. When he got through with his sermon, I thought I never heard less brought forth. I could not discern that he brought forth any light, and it was the only time in my life that I ever heard Brother Joseph speak without bringing forth light and knowledge; but I could not discern anything in this. If we enquire of the Lord, if there is one man upon the face of the earth that can get to the ears of the Lord and can get him to hearken to him, he would know how it is; for there is nothing in the Doctrine and Covenants upon which an idea can be based that the High Priests have precedence over the seventies. (*Des. News*, June 6, 1877)

The controversy between High Priests and Seventies began at the organization of the Church and still continues. Brigham Young relates that:

This dissension has come between the Seventies and the High Priests in consequence of some poor, miserable, beggarly whiners who craved after power, and who did not know what to do with the authority they already possessed. Some of these high priests would go to Joseph saying: "Brother Joseph, do you think the Twelve have any more power than we have?" "Brother Joseph, the Seventies, are they ordained to as high authority and power as the High Priests? Are the Seventies equal to the High Priests? Brother Joseph, it cannot be so, it must not

be; the High Priests must be the greater, and they are first." Now, even to this day, there is contention, and I do not know but even among the first elders of Israel there may be argument as to which should come next--if anything were to happen to the First Presidency and the Twelve--the High Priests of the Seventies. (*Des. News*, June 6, 1877, p. 274)

B. H. Roberts, in his *Documentary History of the Church*, gives a little more depth into this sticky situation. He wrote that:

It was ascertained that all but one or two of the presidents of the Seventies were High Priests, and when they had ordained and set apart any from the quorums of Elders, into the quorum of Seventies, they had conferred upon them the High Priesthood, also.\* *This was declared to be wrong, and not according to the order of heaven.* New presidents of the Seventies were accordingly ordained to fill the places of such of them as were High Priests,\*\* and the ex-officio presidents, and such of the Seventies as had been legally ordained High Priests, were directed to unite with the High Priests' quorum.

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\*That is they ordained them High Priests. Since they were Elders, however, they already possessed the High Priesthood, and hence it was only necessary to ordain them to the office of Seventy in that Priesthood; but the brethren who had immediate charge of ordaining Seventies (the first presidents of Seventies) seemed to have thought it necessary to ordain them High Priests in order for them to hold the High Priesthood, hence the correction made by the Prophet.

\*\*In the selection and ordination of the council composed of the first seven presidents (*footnote continued on following page*)

## EQUAL IN AUTHORITY; DIFFERENT IN APPOINTMENT

The subject of who had the most authority--High Priests or Seventies--was of course ridiculous. It was clearly not a question of who has most authority, but rather an issue of calling, keys, or appointment in the Priesthood. There is a specific order in regard to calling men to various positions in the Church. The Prophet Joseph said the order had been revealed to him--

And it is according to the vision, showing the order of the Seventy, that there shall be *seven Presidents to preside over them, chosen out of the number of the Seventy.* (D.H.C. 2:182)

The Prophet Joseph set the order and evidently meant that it should remain that way. His action in the matter should have established it as precedence for others to follow. History records that--

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*(footnote continued from previous page)*  
of Seventy, it had been overlooked, evidently, that the revelation on Priesthood, given March 28, 1835, specifically stated: "*And it is according to the vision, showing the order of the Seventy, that they should have seven presidents to preside over them, chosen out of the number of the Seventy.*" (D. & C. 107:93) Five of those chosen to make up the first council were High Priests; therefore to make the action of the Church conform to the word of God, these High Priests were invited by the Prophet to take their place in the High Priests' quorum, that the first council might be made up of men "chosen out of the number of the Seventy" as provided by the law of God. (D.H.C. 2:476)

The President then arose and made some remarks concerning the former presidents of the Seventies, the calling and authority of their Priesthood, etc. Voted that the old presidents of the Seventies (who were High Priests) be referred to the quorum of High Priests;...(*D.H.C.* 2:510)

In one short paragraph the Prophet explained where Seventies should be chosen from, the limitation of their authority to preside, and to whom they are to be subject.

The Seventies are also members of the same Priesthood, are a sort of traveling council or Priesthood, and may preside over a church or churches, until a High Priest can be had. The Seventies are to be taken from the quorum of Elders, *and are not to be High Priests. They are subject to the direction and dictation of the Twelve, who have the keys of the ministry.* (*T.P.J.S.*, p. 112)

The difference in the appointment of a High Priest and a Seventy was clearly marked out in a letter from Joseph Smith to Orson Hyde and John E. Page:

May 14, 1840  
Nauvoo, Illinois

In answer to your inquiry in a former letter, relative to the duty of the Seventies in regulating churches, etc., I say that the duties of the Seventies are more particularly to preach the Gospel, and build up churches, rather than regulate them, that a High Priest may take charge of them. If a High Priest should be remiss in his duty, and should lead, or suffer the church to be led astray, depart from

the ordinances of the Lord, then it is the duty of one of the Seventies, acting under the special direction of the Twelve, being duly commissioned by them with their delegated authority, to go to the church, and if agreeable to a majority of the members of said church, to proceed to regulate and put in order the same; otherwise he can have no authority to act. (D.H.C. 4:129)

Also Parley P. Pratt, in the temple at Nauvoo, explained the difference between the Seventies' calling and that of a High Priest:

He said that *in case the quorum of the Twelve should by any means become disorganized, that the Seventies held the jurisdiction and authority of Presidency of the Church in all the world wherever it might be found. That the High Priests' duty would be the same as it is now; they would have to attend to their affairs; but the authority of Presidency over the whole Church belonged to the Seventies; and if all the Seventies were killed off except one Seventy, that Seventy would not only possess the right but would be in duty bound to stand in their place as the First Presidency of the Church.* He said that Joseph Smith the Prophet undertook to establish this idea in the minds of the brethren in Kirtland, but the jealousies that began to arise in the minds of the High Priests prevented him doing so; he therefore left the matter undecided. He further stated that the difference between the authority of the Seventies and the High Priests was this: *The High Priests possessed the High Priesthood; but the Seventies possessed the High Priesthood and the Apostleship which was the highest power on the earth or in the Church.*\*\*\* H. C. Kimball also preached the same thing to the public congregation the same afternoon. (Seventies Record Nauvoo Period, Book B, Jan. 25, 1846, p. 226)

Since both the Seventies and High Priests hold the Melchizedek Priesthood, it is unnecessary to argue the point of who has the most authority. Nevertheless, by the turn of the century, it was still being argued and Joseph F. Smith aptly answered the question:

Today the question is, which is the greater--the high priest or the seventy--the seventy or the high priest? I tell you that neither of them is the greater, and neither of them is the lesser. *Their callings lie in different directions*, but they are from the same Priesthood. If it were necessary, the seventy, holding the Melchizedek Priesthood, as he does, I say if it were necessary, he could ordain a high priest; and if it were necessary for a high priest to ordain a seventy, he could do that. Why? Because both of them hold the Melchizedek Priesthood. (*Gospel Doctrine*, p. 148)

The difference between High Priests and Seventies then, is not a matter of authority, but rather of calling and appointment. Brigham Young explained:

There is authority and there are degrees of authority, and there is a difference in degrees, callings and the authority of the priesthood. If there should be one apostle left on the earth, he can regulate and set in order the whole of the church and kingdom of God. If there is one seventy left he could do so. This order is not my getting up, it is the Lord's doings; high priests may mourn over it, the Lord has said it, and I have no right to say it is not so; it is so. (*Des. News*, June 6, 1877, p. 274)

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What ordination should a man receive to possess all the keys and powers of the Holy Priesthood that were delivered to the sons of Adam? He should be ordained an Apostle of Jesus Christ.... You read in the revelation alluded to that when the Twelve were called and ordained, they possessed the same power and authority as the three First Presidents; and in reading further you find that there must needs be appendages and helps growing out of this Priesthood. The Seventies possess the same power and authority; they hold the keys of establishing, building up, regulating, ordaining, and setting in order the kingdom of God in all its perfections upon the earth. We have a Quorum of High Priests, and there are a great many of them. They are a local body--they tarry at home; but the Seventies travel and preach; so also do the High Priests when they are called upon. They possess precisely the same Priesthood that the Seventies, and the Twelve and the First Presidency possess; but are they ordained to officiate in all the authority, powers, and keys of this Priesthood? No, they are not. Still they are High Priests of God; and if they magnify their Priesthood, they will receive at some time all the authority and power that it is possible for man to receive. (Brigham Young, J.D. 9:87-88)

John Taylor also attempted to quell the feelings that were existing between the High Priests and Seventies by saying:

There has been, sometimes, a little feeling manifested between the Seventies and High Priests, as to who has the greatest authority, and some of the Seventies have manifested a desire to be united with the High Priests' Quorum, thinking thereby to obtain a greater degree of

Priesthood. This is folly, for, as I stated before, it is not the office but the magnifying of an office that makes a man honourable. But in relation to their offices, they are called to move in other spheres, and fulfill other callings, rather than possessing different power and authority. Brother Carter thought that some of the Seventies were out of their place, because they were appointed to preside over conferences, whereas they have as much right to preside, when legally appointed, as an High Priest or an Apostle. The Seventies have the High Priesthood, and many of them have received ordinances in the temple, qualifying them to build up the kingdom of God, if every other officer was dead or killed, and so have the High Priests. So far, then, as authority is concerned, they both have authority, but it is the especial business of the Seventies to preach to all the world, introduce and spread the gospel, while it is the duty of the High Priests more especially to preside; yet a High Priest is not precluded from travelling and preaching, and introducing the gospel nor a Seventy from presiding. (*Mill. Star* 9:324-5)

B. H. Roberts aptly explained the nature of authority by the equality of the commission when he wrote:

The quorum of the twelve apostles are equal in power and authority to the first presidency. *The first quorum of the seventy is equal in authority to the quorum of the twelve; and, of course, indirectly equal in authority to the first presidency, since things equal to a common thing must be equal to each other.* (*C.H.C.* 2:369)

The question of ordaining a High Priest as a Seventy again came into question in 1882:



At the October conference of 1882, Elders Abraham H. Cannon and Theodore B. Lewis were selected to fill the vacancies in the first council of the seventy; but it was learned that Elder Lewis was a High Priest, and, consequently--for the reason that these presidents are to be "chosen from among the seventy"--he was found ineligible and was not ordained. (C.H.C. 6:105)

All of this controversy, and all of the explanations of the early leaders, seem to have been to no avail. Instead of the issue being settled and order established, it ended up for the worst.

The first changes in the order of calling High Priests in place of the Seventies began near the turn of the century. Abraham Cannon records:

Sunday, April 7th, 1889: ...Apostles Moses Thatcher and Heber J. Grant in the presence of Bros. Gates and Morgan ordained two High Priests who were going on missions to be Seventies. This is an innovation, for while I believe that a Seventy holds the higher office, *there are some, even among the Twelve, who think a High Priest is higher.* This settles the matter as far as these two missionaries are concerned. (Abraham Cannon Journal)

By 1926 the changes in the calling of High Priests to do the work of Seventies had become too frequent. It was becoming so predominant that Church policy was changed to place the jurisdiction of High Priests over all the Seventies. Heber J. Grant and the quorum of Twelve were deciding to place High Priests in the First Council of Seventy. They held the opinion that Seventies did not hold enough authority to ordain High Priests, Patriarchs, set apart Bishops, Stake Presidents or to organize wards and stakes.

## ROBERTS' LETTER IN DEFENSE

No one sprang to the defense of the Seventies as did Brigham H. Roberts. He wrote a letter to the Presidency of the Church and the Quorum of Twelve to clarify what the Lord had said about the order and authority of the Church and the Seventy. His masterful letter follows:

October 25, 1926

*To the Presidency of the Church, and  
the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,  
47 East South Temple St.,  
Salt Lake City, Utah.*

Dear Brethren:

I have the pleasure of announcing that I arrived at the headquarters of the Eastern States Mission Sunday morning, October 17. The return journey was much more pleasant than I anticipated.

Placing in order my papers which had accumulated through correspondence and otherwise during my absence, I read again the letter, copy of which I obtained at the meeting of the First Council with the Presidency and Twelve at their late meeting in the Salt Lake Temple, October 7th, to consider matters pertaining to the organization and government of the Seventy's quorums. This letter bears date March 25, 1926, is addressed to President Heber J. Grant and Counselors, and is signed by Rudgar Clawson as President of the Council of the Twelve. This was the letter that came up in the aforesaid meeting, as containing the very latest recommendations of the Twelve, concerning Seventy's affairs, and while I know I had an opportunity of freely expressing my views at the aforesaid meeting, it was only in a rather general way, and not specifically addressed

to the several items of this letter. As I have just now read the letter I feel that it is my duty as one of the Council of Seventy, and especially as its senior member, to put in writing my very definite objections to the several recommendations which are therein contained, that you may have my views in hand in considering the conclusion that you no doubt will formulate when you again consider these recommendations from the Twelve.

In setting forth my views, permit me to say that I shall confine such statement to the parts of the letter as fundamentally affect the Presidency and management of the Seventy's quorums.

You will remember that I made as the basis of my remarks at the above mentioned meeting with the Presidency and the Twelve, the following passage from Section 107 of the Doctrine and Covenants:

And it is according to the vision showing the order of the Seventy, that they should have seven presidents over them, chosen out of the number of the seventy; And the seventh president of these presidents is to preside over the six; And these seven presidents are to CHOOSE other seventy besides the first seventy to whom they belong, AND ARE TO PRESIDE OVER THEM: and also other seventy, until seven times seventy, if the labor in the vineyard of necessity requires it. And these seventy are to be traveling ministers, unto the Gentiles first and also unto the Jews. Whereas other officers of the Church, who belong not unto the Twelve, neither to the Seventy, are not under the responsibility to travel among all nations, but are to travel as their circumstances shall allow, notwithstanding they may hold as high and responsible offices in the Church.

This, you will remember in my remarks at the Temple meeting, I insisted very definitely affixed the choosing and presiding over the quorums of the seventy by the First Council of Seventy. It rests with the First Council of the Seventy both to do the choosing and the presiding, and there is nowhere mentioned, nor contemplated, the bringing in of Presidents of Stakes nor of committees from High Councils to do the work of choosing and presiding. Of course, I recognize that in the choosing or selection of Seventies for ordination, it is necessary to be sure of the standing of men in the ward and stake as to their being worthy of such choosing and ordination; and, therefore, an endorsement of Bishops and Presidents of Stakes as to the standing of these candidates for ordination. Such assurance is both desirable and necessary; and it has always been the practice of the First Council to secure such recommendations.

But, now, in the face of the above very definite statement in the revelation of God about the choosing and presiding over the seventy, what is it that the Twelve recommend?

They ask that a letter be formulated to the Presidents of Stakes, advising them that the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve have had under consideration for a long time the quorums of Seventies and their work, and after conference with the First Council of Seventy have reached the following conclusions:

"A" "That the Presidencies of Stakes have the same general supervision over Quorums of Seventies within their stakes that they now exercise over other quorums of the Melchizedek Priesthood and that the Presidencies of stakes collaborate with the First Council of Seventies in choosing and setting apart presidents of the several quorums."

One only has to read this paragraph "A" to see that the proposition is to change entirely the whole genius of the Seventies organization. By the revelation of God, choosing and presiding over the Seventies, even should the number of quorums be increased to seven times seventy, and more, should the ministry require it, is lodged with the First Council of Seventy.

And now, this paragraph proposes:

It proposes, (I) to give the Presidents of Stakes the same general supervision of quorums of Seventies within their stakes that they now exercise over other quorums in the Melchizedek Priesthood; a thing not at all provided for, not contemplated in the revelations of God.

Let me urge upon your attention that these quorums of Seventy are not stake quorums; and therefore, as quorums, are not, and cannot be legally under the jurisdiction of the Stake Presidents. They are specifically general quorums of the Church, have always been held so through the seventy years of their existence; and have been numbered accordingly from one, to now, more than two hundred. They constitute a traveling ministry (D.C. 107:97) and exist in contradistinction to quorums of Elders, which are Stake quorums and are standing ministers. (Doc. & Cov. 124:137-140)

The paragraph of the apostles letter here considered, says that the Presidents of Stakes are to have the same supervision over quorums of Seventies within their stakes that they now exercise over other quorums of Melchizedek Priesthood in their Stakes. This cannot be done, unless you strike out of existence the First Council of Seventy, or strip them of all the main functions of their office--which, of course, would in effect destroy them.

The principal function of the First Council is to "choose" the Seventies, preside over them, and prepare them for their ministry.

In the supervision of the quorum of the High Priests and the several quorums of the Elders in the respective Stakes of Zion, the jurisdiction of the Presidents of Stakes over such quorums is direct, undivided, and complete--they are stake quorums and fall under the general presidency of these stake officers. But when it is proposed to place the quorums of Seventies--general Church quorums--under the same local jurisdiction--there is, at once, divided authority, and a double jurisdiction created; inevitably producing confusion and irritation as at the present time where this divided authority and double supervision is to be attempted. And that is the present cause of irritation where it exists. The Presidents of Stakes cannot have the same jurisdiction or "general supervision" over the quorums of Seventy within their respective stakes that they now exercise over other quorums of the Melchizedek Priesthood, as long as the First Council exists, and holds its appointed place by the revelation of God to "choose" and "preside" over the quorums of Seventy not in the Church, or hereafter to be organized. For even in this proposed plan by the Twelve to divide the authority between stake presidents and the First Council it would not leave the quorums of the Seventy in the same status in their relationship to stake presidents as the quorums of elders in the stakes, for in the Twelve's plan the First Council would have at least a meddling hand at supervision of the quorums of Seventy, unknown in the case of the other quorums of the High Priesthood in the Stakes of Zion. Every way, the proposition of the Twelve is turned, it violates the order that God provides for the management of these Seventy's quorums. From the very nature of their structure, these quorums refuse to become what they are not--Stake quorums.

Again in this said paragraph "A",

"It is directed that the Presidencies of stakes collaborate with the First Council of Seventies in choosing and setting apart Presidents of the several quorums."

Why? And where in the revelation of God is the authorization for this intrusion of local stake officers into the affairs of these general Church quorums. More on this a little later.

I next take up paragraph "B", and for convenience divide it into three parts:

1. "That in such supervision, viz., that 'general supervision' provided for in paragraph "A", the same supervision that Presidents of Stakes have over Elder's quorums the stake presidents are authorized, with the cooperation of Bishops, to advance brethren in the Priesthood to the office of Seventy."

Yes, but what then becomes of the word of God which says:

"And these seven Presidents (The First Council) are to CHOOSE other Seventy besides the first seventy to which they belong (all Seventies, that means) and are to preside over them."

The Twelve propose to change this direction given of God, and the Stake Presidencies are "to be authorized, with the cooperation of the Bishops, to advance brethren in the priesthood to the office of Seventy." In other words, these local officers, Stake Presidents and Bishops, are to "choose" the Seventies, instead of the Seven Presidents that are appointed of God "to choose" them and "other Seventy besides the First Seventy to whom they belong\*\*\* and also other seventy, until seven times seventy if the

labor in the vineyard requires it." The First Council is to CHOOSE all seventies, in fact.

I respectfully ask when was it that the Lord changed His mind on this subject, and where is the revelation proclaiming such change? For, surely it would require a revelation to justify such a radical change.

The next part of paragraph "B"; (see sheet #4)

11. "And also" Presidents of stakes with the cooperation of Bishops are to be authorized, "to make nominations and recommendations to the First Council of Seventies for the presidents of quorums."

That sounds all very well; but in too many cases where Presidents of Stakes have already undertaken that method of procedure it has been done in the spirit of expecting the First Council to accept out of hand those recommendations, and when we have doubted the wisdom and desirability of some of these recommendations for our work (as surely we have the right to doubt when there is reason for it) it has been the cause of irritation and sometimes ill feeling.--"to sign on the dotted line," and so, in large part would be the expectation if this proposed procedure by the Twelve, were specifically authorized. Indeed, so little would be left for the First Council to do in connection with the work of the Seventies that the First Council might as well, for all practical purposes, be absolutely abolished, and all their functions relegated to the Presidents of Stakes and ward bishops, who would doubtless perform their offices much better, since, as it might be urged that they are on the ground and in immediate contact with the men to be made Presidents of Seventies. And since the effect of all this procedure would be to reduce the Seventies quorums to Stake quorums, on the same level with the Elders quorums--why have Seventies at all? Why not abolish them?



Returning, however, to the serious part of this section of paragraph "B", and on the specific point of the Presidents of Stakes "choosing" and nominating to the First Council of Seventy, men to be "presidents of Quorums"--why are the respective quorums of Seventies to be presided over ignored? And what of the quorum council with whom the new members will serve? What has become of the principle that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and this operative as well in ecclesiastical as in civil government? Will it be enough to say that the consent of the governed can come later when nominations have been made by the Presidents of Stakes to the First Council and that Council has accepted them, then the names may be submitted to the quorums and the councils thereof to be voted upon, and thus the consent of the governed obtained? The procedure may be so, and the quorums and the councils of them thus ignored, may silently submit, the matter going on in a dull, gray, and a sullen manner; but you will have no corp de esprit in the quorums; and young men of active minds will grow restive, and either become indifferent to the organization and ignore it or leave it.

A quorum of Seventy as God has given it to the Church is the most wonderful organization of all our quorums, and is best capable of self-government, and the best calculated to resist disintegration, and can be converted into a veritable flying column to carry God's message to the world, but it would require more space to set it forth than I am here allowing myself. But since each quorum of Seventy has its own local council as the presidency of it, and usually they have been chosen with some care and are usually men of established character nearly in every instance, and ranging in age from twenty-five years to sixty, why not regard them as having some judgment, and right to have a voice in a choice in nominating those with whom they are to work, and who

are to work with them, going beyond the matter of merely giving a formal vote of acceptance after others have done all the considering, the choosing and nominating? Why are the councils of these quorums and the quorums themselves ignored by the plan of procedure proposed by the Twelve? The choice for the presidents of the quorums must be limited under Section 107 of the Doctrine and Covenants to the Seventies, it is purely a matter that pertains to the Seventy--to the respective quorums thereof, why not permit the Seventies to do the business pertaining to the Seventies, under the direction of the First Council? This suggestion, of course, does not preclude the submission of names of Seventies chosen for Presidents to both Bishops of wards and presidents of stakes for endorsement as to their good standing in the Church, and as to their standing as members in the wards where they hold their fellowship. And also, in the matter of securing members--i.e., candidates for ordination to the office of Seventy--the Seventies must and do recognize the fact that these candidates coming from quorums of Elders over which Presidents of Stakes have direct jurisdiction--being stake quorums; and that bishops have immediate watchcare over their membership in their wards, it is becoming and necessary and desirable that there should be complete agreement and understanding had between the councils of quorums, the First Council and Presidents of Stakes, and Bishops, with reference to the worthiness and desirability of making these ordinations and promotions--and it has always been the custom and the law of the First Council so to proceed; but all this does not require that the choosing and promotion of men to be Seventies should be taken out of hands of the officers where God has placed it.

In outline, the procedure under the First Council in filling vacancies in quorum councils has been:

On receiving notice of a vacancy or vacancies in a council, the First Council has advised that the quorum council consider the quorum members, and from their number recommend the names of the most desirable men to fill the vacancies; preferring that several names for each vacancy be given that the First Council might have some margin of choice from among those who would be acceptable to the quorum. Always these names, thus submitted to the First Council, to be previously submitted to the bishop and president of the stake for their endorsement as being in good standing in the ward and stake and worthy of the appointment proposed.

And this procedure has worked reasonably well and with as little friction as may be hoped for in working so large a number of quorums, and harmonizing to many interests in the respective organizations. I see no good reason for justification for departing from this procedure so long our custom.

The third part of paragraph "B" says:

III. "Seventies should be ordained in quorum meetings by the presidents of the quorums and received into the quorum by a vote of the members.

Why change from having the Seventies ordained by the First Council, or immediately under their direction at a meeting called for the purpose, and at which they were present? Why change this to their being "ordained" in a local quorum meeting by the Presidents of the local quorum? What requires it or justifies it?

"These Seven presidents (i.e., the First Council) are to choose other seventy besides the first Seventy to which they belong and also other seventy until seven times seventy, if the labor in the vineyard of necessity requires it;"

Does it now seem reasonable that this universal choosing of all the seventies by the First Council implies their ordaining them also? Or at least being ordained under their immediate supervision, and not by the local presidents alone? The choosing is so closely allied to the ordination of them that have done the "choosing" they could as well do the ordaining or directly supervise it, as the two things could about as easily be done as the one. And in any event why change? The only reason that occurs to me for the change, would be to make the Seventies quorums like the Elders quorums in this respect of their being ordained. It helps strike down the distinction between the Elders and Seventies, which seems to be the whole tendency of this plan urged by the Twelve. If that be the intent then why not go further and strike down the distinction in the presidency of these quorums? Dismiss the seven presidents over each quorum, and have the one president and two counselors as in the case of the Elders quorums? This would make for uniformity indeed! And why should Seventies have seven presidents instead of one president and two counselors? Strike out the seven and make them conform to the type of quorums generally. "What is the use of these distinctions?"

Moreover, why should they have a seeming, special presidency--the First Council of Seventy--outside of Ward and Stake organizations, and located at a distance from the quorums? The Elders and High Priests have no such presidency! Why not abolish this distant presidency, this anomaly in priesthood organization?

The Presidents of stakes or even bishops of wards could do the presiding just as well, or better. Besides, it will simplify things, make things uniform and save a lot of trouble! And when we get the Seventies quorums conformed to the same likeness as the Elders quorums, it may occur to some genius in

ecclesiastical government to suggest that since Seventies quorums are like the Elders quorums, why have the Seventies quorums at all? And indeed, why? No reason at all; except that God has placed them in the Church, as definitely as He has the Apostles, and prescribed the way in which they are to be "chosen" and presided over, which order of procedure for choosing and presiding over, the Twelve proposes to change.

Respecting paragraph "C", it is enough to say-- that making quorums proficient--passing worthy seventies to High Priests quorums--reducing the numbers of quorums in some stakes, are all matters of mere detail and are largely now in progress of operation. But why the last line of the paragraph?

"Each stake should have at least one quorum of seventies."

Why? Seventies quorums are not stake quorums. They do not function as stake quorums. There is nothing for them to do as a quorum in a stake. They are not essential in any way to a stake organization. The Seventies quorums exist and have existed throughout their duration in the Church independent of stake lines. We have had single quorums existing in several stakes, in as high as three stakes. Being general Church quorums they are not necessarily affected by stake lines, and having a local presidency in the Council of the Quorum, and a general presidency in the First Council they were and are in such cases completely officered, and can function fully in their office under these circumstances. And the stakes may be fully organized without having a quorum of Seventies at all.

At this point may be considered No. 2 of the preliminary set of propositions in this letter by the Twelve, dealing with the designation of Seventies quorums by numbers. They say:

2. "That quorums of Seventies in the Stakes of the Church be designated by specifying the number of quorums and also the numerical order of the stake where it is maintained, as for instance, the 145th being the 1st quorum of seventies in the Cache stake of Zion."

Why this double numbering of the quorums of Seventy? What is gained by it but confusion and the lumbering of things up? The Twelve have previously suggested that the ordinal numbering of the quorums of Seventy throughout the Church--"Except as to the first" (sic.) be dropped, and the seventies quorums be numbered in each stake as elders quorums are numbered. This proposition, however, met with stout opposition from the First Council, and so now we have the proposition split, or is it doubled? Anyway, the quorums are to receive a double number, one ordinal, to show their number as Church quorums, and one to show their number as stake quorums--which they are not--and which no designation by numbers can make them, number them as you may.

The fact is, these quorums of Seventy are General Church quorums, not stake quorums, and for seventy years they have been numbered as such, and there has been no mistake made in numbering them throughout the Presidencies of all previous presidential administrations of the Church. The 115th quorum of Seventies is not 115th quorum of any stake, nor the 3rd, nor the 4th of any stake of Zion, but is the 115th quorum of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and should remain so, unconfused with any stake numbering.

What is to be gained by this innovation by the Twelve's plan of numbering the Seventies quorum? It will help nothing in the stake, it is nothing but lumber not fitted to the structure. It does, however,

add comfort to those who are evidently determined that these general Church quorums shall gravitate to the status of stake quorums, and to this end it is doubtless proposed.

#### CONCLUSION

The sum of the matter is this: God has placed in His Church prophets, apostles, evangelists and pastors; also He has placed Seventies and seventies quorums in His Church, and given them their special and peculiar quorum organizations, and directed how and by whom they shall be "chosen" and presided over, and what shall be their specific duty and calling in the Church. They are to be God's special witnesses in all the world. The special calling resembles the calling of the Twelve Apostles at that particular point: That is to say, they are (1) special witnesses of the name of Christ; and (2) their calling and mission is to all the world--their mission is a universal one. This universality -- this unlimited sphere of their activities, coupled with the fact of their being special witnesses, is what gives their calling its apostolic flavor; for they are apostles. God's first great prophet of this new dispensation so designated them. Lest some of the Twelve may have overlooked the passage of history containing that designation, I quote it:

"The Seventy sustained as Apostles:"

During the dedicatory services in the Kirtland Temple, March 27, 1836, when the various officers of the Church were sustained, the Seventies were sustained as "Apostles and special witnesses to the nations to assist the Twelve," etc. I quote the passage in full. The Prophet Joseph Smith speaking:

I then called upon the quorums and congregation of Saints to acknowledge the Twelve Apostles who were present, as prophets, seers, revelators, and special witnesses to all the nations of the earth, holding the keys of the kingdom, to unlock it, or cause it to be done among them, and uphold them by their prayers which they assented to by rising. I next called upon the quorums and congregation of Saints to acknowledge the presidents of Seventies who act as their representatives, as Apostles and special witnesses to the nations, to assist the Twelve, in opening the gospel kingdoms among all the people and to uphold them by their prayers, which they did by rising. (D.H.C., Vol. II, p. 417-418)

While this action was taken with reference to the First Council of the Seventy, yet in a general way the like apostolic feature adheres to the priesthood of the Seventy generally.

Being, then, of this dignity, in their calling and office, and having received this appointment in the Church of God, it seems to me that tampering with their organization as God has given it, requires some caution; and those changes proposed by the Twelve here discussed ought not to be made.

After careful thought and reflection on these matters, I say deliberately that these proposed changes made by the Twelve do not meet with my approval. Of course, I speak for myself alone, not for the First Council or any other member of it.

All this is respectfully submitted,

Signed: B. H. Roberts

P.S. I would here call attention to the revelation given of the Lord to President John Taylor in April,



1883, and read by me and commented upon at the late Temple meeting. While not specifically naming any of the points raised by the letter of the Twelve here discussed, yet in its whole letter and spirit it contemplates allowing throughout having the business of the Seventies attended to by Seventies. I would make that revelation part of this communication. It will be found in the Seventies Course in Theology, First Year, p. 9-10.

It has been remarked by one of the Apostles that my theory as to the organization and government of the Seventy might be right, but he doubted its being practical. Believing that what was referred to as my theory of the management of the Seventies organization is what God ordained, I cannot believe that God has given us an impractical plan for such choosing and presiding over Seventies. The plan as God has given it is entirely practical if allowed to function as planned. But if changed and distorted I am sure it will not be practical. The multiplication table in mathematics works all right if allowed to stand as it is, but if you go to changing it, making it say that three times nine is twenty one, or that three times eight is sixteen and so throughout, then you will have trouble. The application of the illustration is obvious.

B.H.R.

\* \* \* \* \*

Roberts' letter carried the power of truth and scripture. Thus with the weight of evidence, backed up with scripture, and the 100 years of policy precedence, the changes were temporarily postponed.

#### ROBERTS' SUBSEQUENT LETTER TO PRES. GRANT

But by 1931 the question of authority and calling of the Seventies began to arise again, causing

confusion even within the mind of the President of the Church. In a discussion with President Grant upon this subject, President Roberts attempted to again clarify the rightful position of the Seventies, their ordinations, authority and calling. Because of this so-called "incongruity of the First Council of the Seventy," President Roberts again put into writing another letter to emphasize correct procedure. This letter was directed specifically to President Grant in hopes that he would defend the original and revealed plan of ordination. His letter is as follows:

April 27, 1931

*President Heber J. Grant  
Church Office Building*

*My dear President Grant:*

*Recalling the delightful conversations I had with you at my room on Monday last, I think, in relation to the Seventies, etc., etc., and dwelling upon its substance, impells me to write you further in regard to some of these things that were then briefly mentioned.*

*Among these was the attention you gave to the apparent incongruity of the First Council of the Seventy being unable to participate with members of the Twelve when out in conferences, when ordaining High Priests and bishop's counselors when occasion should arise. The answer to all this has been that the Presidency of the Seventies, not being High Priests, were barred from these functions; also in regard to performing marriage ceremonies, etc. Perhaps you will remember that I said I thought the decisions that had led to this policy of excluding the Seven Presidents from such functions was too tightly drawn and that if it were considered that these brethren*

have an APOSTOLIC CALLING, that calling would warrant them to do along these lines whatsoever might be necessary in the course of their ministry (as stated in Doctrine and Covenants) ... "in building up the Church and regulating all the affairs of the same in all nations, first to the gentiles and then to the Jews." (Section 107:34)

To review this matter a little further I call your attention to the fact that the Doc. & Cov. Sec. 107, given primarily on the subject of Priesthood and establishing the relationship of councils, etc., etc., says: "The Seventy are also called to preach the gospel, and to be especial witnesses unto the Gentiles and in all the world. Thus differing from other officers in the Church in the duties of their calling; and they form a quorum equal in authority to that of the Twelve special witnesses or apostles just named."

You will observe that the language making these Seventies especial witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ is practically the same as that which so designates the Twelve. Now if this quorum is "equal in authority to that of the Twelve special witnesses or Apostles just named," then it must follow that what the Apostles can do the Seventy can do when appointed to do those things, "in building up and regulating the affairs of the Church."

I trust you will not grow impatient just yet at this point, which may have become more or less trite in the consideration of this subject, for I have something further I want to add which may be of great interest to you. But, if my deductions are right so far as I have gone, then in order to get the full measure of service from the Seventy, especially from the First Council and its direct quorum (the First Quorum) "in building up the Kingdom," then there would be no need of wishing that the Presiding Council over the Seventy held the office of High Priests.

Further on in the revelation it is said: "it is according to the vision showing the order of the Seventy that they should have seven presidents to preside over them, chosen out of the number of the Seventy. And the seventh president (of course from the last ordained) of these presidents is to preside over the six. And these seven presidents are to choose other Seventy besides the first seventy to whom they belong, and are to preside over them; and also other Seventy until seven times seventy, if the labor in the vineyard of necessity required it. (Section 107:93-96) This gives to them a general presidency over all the quorums and NOT quorums of the wards or stakes.

President Joseph Smith, the Prophet, when some were being sent to ordain Seventy, said: "Brethren you are going to ordain Seventies. Do not forget to confer the High Priesthood upon them. Ordain each of them to the High Priesthood, and to be one of the Seventy Apostles." (i.e., observe "ORDAIN THEM TO THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD and TO THE APOSTLESHIP." Discourses by B. Young, May 25, 1877, *Deseret Weekly*, June 6, 1877, p. 274)

In the prophet Joseph's History, under date of December 28, 1835, he says: "This day the Council of the Seventy met to render an account of their travels and ministry, since they were ordained to that Apostleship. The meeting was interesting indeed, and my heart was made glad while listening to the relation of those who have been laboring in the vineyard of the Lord, with such marvelous success." etc. (*Hist. of Ch.*, 2:346)

There are other passages to the same effect, but being at the Hospital I cannot now lay my hands on them. But here it is clear that the Seventy were ordained to the Apostleship, and, of course, with all that that phrase means.

During the dedicatory services in the Kirtland Temple, March 27, 1836, wherein the various officers of the Church, were sustained, the Seventy were sustained as "Apostles and special witnesses to the nations to assist the Twelve, etc. I quote: "I (Joseph Smith) then called upon the quorums and congregation of Saints to acknowledge the Twelve Apostles, who were present, as Prophets, Seers, Revelators and special witnesses to all the nations of the earth, holding the keys of the kingdom, to unlock it, or cause it to be done, among them, and uphold them by their prayers, which they assented to by rising.

I next called upon the quorums and congregation of Saints to acknowledge the President of Seventies who act as their representatives as Apostles and special witnesses to the nations, to assist the Twelve in opening the gospel kingdom among all people, and to uphold them by their prayers, which they did by rising." (*History of Church*, 2:417-418)

And of course, from all the descriptions in the Doc. & Cov., their calling is an Apostolic one.

In my recent research and study of the Manuscript History of Brigham Young, I incidentally came upon what I am now going to quote you, under date of Dec. 14, 1845. Pres. Young and others of the Twelve with their wives spent that Sunday in the Nauvoo Temple, meeting in the attic story of the Temple. And now quoting Pres. B. Young: "I stated that the Seventy were ordained Apostles (i.e., according to the instructions that had been given to the Prophet Joseph respecting their ordination above) and when they went forth into the ministry they were sent with power to build up the kingdom in all the world, and consequently they have power to ordain High Priests and also to ordain a High Council. Some of the High Priests have been ready to quarrel on the subject supposing they had power and authority above the Sev-

enty and some in their zeal for power have abused and trampled on the feelings of some of the Seventy."

If Pres. Young is to be regarded as an expounder of the Priesthood, it would seem to me that this circumstance in the Temple and bearing directly upon the point of the authority of the Presidents of Seventies, should go a far way towards establishing the suggestion that I made to you, that it would not be necessary to ordain Presidents of Seventies, High Priests in order to function in all things that would become necessary "in building up the kingdom in all the world, first among the Gentiles and then among the Jews."

I trust you will not think me over persistent in the matter, but I did think that since this information had come into my hands and also is in strict harmony with the interpretation I gave with the Seventies holding an APOSTOLIC CALLING, it would authorize the First Council to do whatever the Apostles do when necessary, and when appointed to do it, should be made known to you and your counselors and to the present quorum of the Twelve; and in this spirit I submit it to your consideration.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) B. H. Roberts.

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Roberts' letter to President Grant stemmed the ever-encroaching tide of policy changes for awhile longer. However, within two years Roberts was dead, and new programs and policies began to replace the old order.

## SEVENTY CHANGES POSTPONED NO LONGER

Among one of the first changes made was that of changing the office of the assistants to the Twelve. They had been called by revelation from the Lord to be Seventies, but by 1941 they were made High Priests. The Lord had said:

It is the duty of the traveling high council *to call upon the Seventy*, when they need assistance, to fill the several calls for preaching and administering the gospel, *instead of any others.* (D. & C. 107:38)

A hundred years after the Lord gave these instructions, John A. Widtsoe announced--

The expanding church has made it difficult, if not impossible, for the Council of the Twelve to perform, to their full satisfaction, the many duties placed upon them. Therefore, *at the late General Conference five men, High Priests, were called to act as assistants to the Twelve.* This action shows the adaptability of the Church to changing, increasing conditions, without violating in the least the divinely established order and organization of the Church. (*Imp. Era*, May 1941, p. 288)

It is lamentable enough to see the change take place, but to see the men who make such changes say that they are done "without violating in the least the divinely established order and organization of the church" is pitiful. When the Lord gives a revelation pertaining to order and organization of the Church, it is no little thing to change it.

By 1956 the Seventies who had assisted the Twelve were all gone as announced in the *Improvement Era*:

All of the Assistants to the Twelve Apostles are high priests. If an elder or a seventy should be selected to be an Assistant to the Apostles, he would be ordained to the office of a high priest. (*Imp. Era*, Oct. 1956, p. 752)

A few years later another change was to make the newspaper headlines. The Seven Presidents of Seventies were to become High Priests. This change gives the inference that a Seventy who is ordained a High Priest is being "advanced."

The announcement was more of a "bomb" than a new revelation. Many of the Saints, especially the Seventies, began to question the right to change the order and organization of the Church.

But by 1961 that change was made by saying:

Recently, President McKay, acting under the inspiration of his calling, moved to enlarge the activities of the seventies, by ordaining some of the presidents of seventies to the office of high priests, with the explanation that it would make them more serviceable and more effective in their work. I was in one of the Arizona stakes, and I had one of the brethren ask, "Was it not true that the Prophet Joseph had said that it was contrary to the order of heaven that a high priest should be in that position?" I merely said to him, "Had you ever thought that what might have been contrary to the order of heaven in the early 1830's might not be contrary to the order of heaven in 1960?" (Harold B. Lee, Conf. Rept., p. 81, Sept.-Oct. 1961)

Notice that the Seventies were ordained High Priests so that they would be "more serviceable and more effective in their work." The Prophet Joseph



DESERET NEWS AND TELEGRAM, Salt Lake City,

MONDAY, JUNE 12, 1961

# Church Advances Seventy Leaders

An announcement that members of the First Council of Seventy of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had been ordained high priests to give them "power to set in order all things pertaining to the Church" as they visit among the stakes and missions was made Sunday morning in the Salt Lake Tabernacle.

It was made by President David O. McKay at the close of his remarks at the session of the 62nd annual MIA conference held under the direction of the First Presidency.

President McKay's statement on the occasion is as follows:

"There is one message I should like to speak on this occasion to the Church.

"This morning four members of the First Council of Seventy were ordained high priests, and the other members of the First Council of Seventy will be so ordained. Under the direction of the Twelve Apostles the First Council of Seventy go out in all parts of the world to reorganize stakes and the missions, to set in order the affairs of the Church. That means ordaining high priests as presidents of stakes, setting apart as presidents of stakes, setting apart high councilmen,

setting apart presidents or ordaining presidents of high priests quorums and doing everything that is necessary for the advancement of the work.

"The First Presidency and Twelve recently agreed that the First Seven Presidents of Seventy who have been appointed by the Twelve should have power to set in order all things pertaining to the Church and this is declaring that they are thus authorized to carry on the work."

Members of the First Council of Seventy are Levi Edgar Young, Antoine R. Ivins, S. Dilworth Young, Milton R. Hunter, Bruce R. McConkie, Marion D. Hanks and A. Theodore Tuttle.

never thought so. And most of the more spiritual minded Seventies would certainly know that "what might have been contrary to the order of heaven" at the time of the establishment of the Church would probably be "contrary to the order of heaven" now.

President McKay commented on the many people who questioned the change. He responded to Elder Lee's comments by saying:

I am glad that Elder Lee referred to the ordaining of members of the First Council of the Seventy as high priests. There seem to be a number of men of the priesthood in the Church who are wondering about it, because they know that the Prophet said that what was going on in the early days of making high priests of seventies, was not in accordance with the will of God.

Do you know what they were doing? Before a man was ordained a member of the First Council of the Seventy he was ordained a high priest. This practice, the Prophet said, was not in accordance with the will of the Lord. It should be sufficient for you who have the Spirit of the Lord to know that the work today is required of those members of the First Council of the Seventy which needs the High Priesthood. They do not join the high priests' quorum, but they are sent out by the Council of the Twelve Apostles to set in order the Church in the stakes and missions, and they should be given authority to set apart a president of a stake, a high councilman, a bishop of a ward, which requires the High Priesthood.

The Lord has never said, nor has the Prophet Joseph, that that is against the will of the Lord. These men are sent out now to take care of 300 and some odd stakes, and they are given the authority as members of the First

Council of the Seventy to attend to anything necessary in order to set in order the affairs of the stake and the ward, and that is in accordance with the will of the Lord.

The members of the First Council of the Seventy are now given the authority of high priests to set in order all things pertaining to the stakes and the wards, under the direction of the Twelve Apostles. (Conf.Rept., Sept.-Oct. 1961, p. 90)

Pres. McKay "advanced" the Seven Presidents of the Seventy to the office of High Priests, with the false illusion that the "Lord never said, nor has the Prophet Joseph" that such a thing could not be done. The Lord said:

And it is according to the vision showing the order of the Seventy, that they should have seven presidents to preside over them, chosen out of the number of the seventy; (D. & C. 107: 93)

And the Prophet Joseph said:

The Seventies are to be taken from the quorum of Elders, and are not to be High Priests. (T.P.J.S., p. 112)

McKay justified the change by inferring that Seventies do not have as much authority as High Priests. The Prophet Joseph Smith NEVER made such an assumption. (See chapter on "Seventies as Apostles.")

In the *Journal History of Pres. Young*, entry for December 14, 1845, we read:

I stated that the *Seventy were ordained Apostles*, and when they went forth into the

ministry they are sent with power to build up the kingdom in all the world, and consequently *they have power to ordain High Priests and also to ordain and organize a High Council.*

And again:

If, through the providences of God, the First Presidency and the Twelve were taken away, then it would be the duty of the *Seventies* to preach the gospel, *build up the Church, and ordain every officer* requisite in order to establish the Church; *to ordain high priests, bishops, high counsellors, patriarchs, and set in order the whole church* in all the world. This is according to the revelations given to us. (B. Young, *Des. Weekly*, June 6, 1877, p. 275)

The Prophet Joseph explained that it was the duty of *Seventies* to organize and establish branches and wards and then ordain High Priests to preside over them.

...the *Seventies* are not called to serve tables, or preside over churches, to settle difficulties, but are to preach the Gospel and build them up, and *set others*, who do not belong to these quorums, to preside over them, *who are High Priests.*" (T.P.J.S., p. 109)

In Nauvoo, at a special conference in 1844 held at the *Seventies* Hall, Orson Pratt spoke on the duties and callings of the High Priests and *Seventies*. The essence of the talk explained that:

The duty of a High Priest is to preside over the labors of the *Seventies* such as branches and stakes and to organize the same when necessary, *but not to preside over the Seventies or to control them in any way whatever.* (Nauvoo Period Record, Book B., p. 31)

But today High Priests have total control over the Seventies--governing and directing them in every way.

In one hundred years, the organized order of the Seventy, as established by the Lord, was redirected. The organizational function, the regulation of ordination, and their special calling has been changed. In spite of the efforts of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, B.H. Roberts, and others, to maintain the proper order of the Seventies in the Church, modern Mormonism has reversed it. That which was detected as an error in the first organization of the Seventies, has now become an established rule in the Church.

## Chapter VIII

### SEVENTIES UNDER STAKE CONTROL

*The Seventies are to constitute traveling quorums, to go into all the earth, whithersoever the Twelve Apostles shall call them. (Joseph Smith)*

The revelations of God have on numerous occasions been clearly given to explain the nature and calling of the Twelve and the Seventy. These revelations have strictly designated their labor as missionary work to the nations.

The Prophet Joseph explained that the Twelve are "to bear the keys of the Kingdom to all nations, and unlock the door of the Gospel to them, and call upon the Seventies to follow after them and assist them." (T.P.J.S., p. 109)

Then shortly after the Prophet's death in Nauvoo, a special meeting was held October 13, 1844, at the Seventies Hall:

By request of President Brigham Young, the Seventies and their Presidents met at their Hall, at early candle light.

Elder Orson Pratt addressed the conference in relation to the present organization of the Church and quorums in particular. Revelation, said he, has been given for this purpose, several years ago, that when the Testator should be removed then the Testament might be introduced and become a law unto this Church, that every member may understand precisely the duties of his office and calling. He also explained the duties of both High Priests and Seventies, which were as follows: The Seventies are called and set apart to be swift messengers to the

nations of the earth having power to introduce the gospel wherever they may be sent, holding the keys of this kingdom, acting in subordination to the Twelve. (Orson Pratt, Nauvoo Period Record, Book B, p. 31)

The revelations of the Lord and the teachings of the Prophet Joseph were confirmed and sealed at the death of the Prophet. The blood of Joseph Smith was the sealing of this testament in this dispensation. The laws and doctrines of the Church had been established and were binding upon this generation, and they were to continue unchanged.

The Seventies were appointed to travel and minister to the nations and not be confined to the wards and stakes of Zion. At the Seventies Council Hall in 1861, President Brigham Young commented that:

The Seventies are not called to be a local body, but are ordained Seventy Apostles to travel, ordain local officers, and build up and set in order the whole kingdom of God upon the earth, whenever it is necessary. (Seventies Council Hall, April 27, 1861)

Then again in 1877, President Young continued to clarify the Seventies' order of organization by saying:

The Seventies are scattered all through our settlements; we do not organize them; they are already organized in their several quorums. (*Des. Weekly*, June 6, 1877, p. 274)

The order of their ordination was written in a Church publication by Franklin Richards who answered the question:

Who has the right to ordain to the office of a Seventy?

It is the prerogative of the First Presidency, the Twelve Apostles, or the Presidency of the Quorums of Seventies (First Council),... if they shall be directed by the Holy Ghost to do so; but it is not according to the order of the Church for the presidents, or counselors of the different Quorums of Seventy, (local councils), to ordain men into the several quorums, unless instructed to do so by some one of the above mentioned authorities. (*Mill. Star* 13: 278)

As late as 1907 the Seventies were known to be subject to, and assistants to the Twelve Apostles.

*The Seventies are called to be assistants to the Twelve Apostles; indeed they are apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, subject to the direction of the Twelve, and it is their duty to respond to the call of the Twelve....* (Conf. Rept., April 1907, p. 5; Joseph F. Smith.)

B. H. Roberts, as one of the Seven Presidents of the Seventies, defended the proper order of the Seventy by saying:

The Seventies quorums are not ward organizations, nor stake organizations, but general Church quorums, having their local presidency in the councils of the respective quorums, and a general presidency in the First Council. (B.H. Roberts, "Seventy's Council Table: Excusing Seventies from Class Meetings," *Improvement Era*, XI, June 1908, p. 634)

But in that same year a significant step in ward control occurred. Up until this time when a Seventy was called to a mission, the man's name was submitted



to the bishop of his ward for *endorsement*. If the man had other responsibilities, was occupied in some special function, or if the bishop had plans already in progress for the man, the bishop had this method of checking the call. But in 1909 at a special priesthood meeting the policy changed and:

Presidents and members of the quorums of seventy will therefore understand that *requisitions* for missionary calls from their ranks will hereafter come from bishops.

The Seventies who returned from missions were always placed into High Priest and Elders quorums. This added new strength and vitality to those quorums, but it also gave the Seventies a good view of selecting men to go on missions. But now the responsibility of selecting missionaries was given to bishops. But bishops are appointed to the "temporal welfare" of the ward. What reasoning has led the General Authorities to believe that the spiritual labors of missionary work should be appointed to a man whose calling is for temporal affairs. This is clearly a situation of Church organization that is now out of order.

Soon bishops, stake presidents and General Authorities began to feel that there were too many Seventies. But for some strange reason they didn't think that there could be too many High Priests or too many Elders.

But it was in 1901 that a new program of downgrading the office of the Seventy began to occur. At a general council meeting in the Salt Lake Temple, a discussion took place in which it was recorded that:

It having been remarked that a certain brother who held the office of Seventy declined to be ordained a High Priest, President Smith

said that if the Seventies generally could be convinced that they were simply elders with a special calling as aids to the Apostles in preaching the Gospel in foreign lands, and their minds could be disabused of the idea placed there by the teachings of the late Elder Joseph Young...that the Seventies were Apostles, some of them would not perhaps feel as they now do.

Brother Cowley related a conversation he once had with the late President John Taylor, to the effect that a man holding the office of an Elder had all the authority necessary to preach the Gospel, and believing this to be true, *thought the Elders should not be ordained Seventies in a wholesale way as they were now being ordained*, but that they should be chosen according to their fitness to become aids to the Apostles.

President Snow remarked that when elders were ordained Seventies, no more Priesthood was conferred upon them, but that they were merely called to work in a special field. ("Journal History," ms., August 29, 1901, pp. 1-2)

This line of thinking--that Elders held all the authority necessary to preach the gospel--may have been true, but the Elders were not given that appointment as ministers to the nations. That call belonged to the Seventies. After this time the Elders began to take over the foreign missionary work. This was one of the first efforts toward ward and stake control over the Seventy. By taking away their foreign ministry, they are left to the control of the stakes.

J. Golden Kimball sent out a letter defending the rights of the Seventies in choosing and ordaining men for the ministry. He aptly stated:

*The choosing, ordaining and presiding over the Seventies is the special calling of the First Council, who, however, are acting under the direction of the Twelve. Therefore, they, that is, the Twelve and the First Council, are held responsible and have adopted this rule primarily to prevent the filling up of our quorums with non-missionary material. Neither do we desire to impose the details of our work upon others who usually have quite enough of their own affairs to attend to and are not at all familiar with ours. (First Council of Seventy, May 8, 1923)*

These encroachments upon the Seventies were being felt severely by the First Council of Seventy. Stake presidents and bishops were over-reaching their bounds and the Seventies felt a gradual takeover. Henry D. Moyle, one of the stake presidents in 1928, wrote to Pres. B. H. Roberts of the First Council asking questions which many bishops and stake presidents were also beginning to ask. Roberts' excellent reply is produced herewith:

*February 29, 1928*

*President Henry D. Moyle and Counselors,  
Cottonwood Stake,  
Murray, Utah.*

*Dear Brethren:*

*Your letter of February 16th addressed to the First Council of Seventy has been referred to me for answer. I regret that owing to a very crowded program the last two days, I have not been able to give attention to your communication. I am holding in mind your letters of January 2nd and also of February 7th, also my reply to those letters of February 11th, and now your present communication of February 16th.*

By the second paragraph of your later communication, I note that you say that it is your desire to be not in any manner out of harmony with those whose right it is to direct you in matters of Stake organization; and then you express your firm "opinion that the best interest of the seventies of your Stake can best be served by one quorum."

In order to get a clear understanding of the position of the First Council, permit me to say that we in no manner undertake to "direct" the Presidency of the Cottonwood Stake or any other Stake, in matters of Stake organization. It is just a matter regarding the seventies quorums in your Stake over which the First Council preside, that we are trying to come to an understanding about.

Taking up your questions in the several paragraphs that follow the above, I make answer:

In the first question you ask, "Is it hereafter to be the policy of the Church to require missionaries to be selected from the seventies quorums?"

Answering this part of the question I simply refer to the Doctrine and Covenants Section 107, verse 38, where it says: "It is the duty of the traveling high council (the twelve apostles, who hold the keys of the foreign ministry of the gospel) to call upon the seventy when they need assistance to fill the several calls for teaching and administering the gospel instead of any others." This certainly indicates that the direct and preferable assistance to the Twelve in filling the calls for preaching the gospel abroad (i.e., outside of the stakes of Zion) are to be the seventies; but in the consequence of certain conditions that exist in connection with the membership of our seventies quorums, elders and high priests have been called to this work and for sometime the great majority of missionaries

in the field have not been seventies. This in large part has arisen from the fact that as a rule men only go on one mission; it is only about two in a hundred of those who perform missions that ever go upon second missions. From a mistaken idea that has [been] obtained somewhat in the past that men ought "to win their souls" in missionary service before being ordained seventies has resulted in crowding into our seventies quorums many men who have filled missions and cannot go upon another after they become seventies. Now the present idea obtained in readjusting the quorums of seventy is to reverse this policy, and bring in younger members from the elders quorums who have not been on missions and give them training in the seventies quorums, with a view to future missionary work, so that the Twelve Apostles can do what the revelations direct shall be done; call upon the seventies to aid them in the foreign ministry "instead of any others."

In this connection I had better couple up the matter you mention in the first paragraph of your third page, namely: "(my) your recommendation that all missionaries be chosen from the seventies quorums seems hardly to be practical." Well, no, under present circumstances it would not be practical, but we have made no recommendation that all missionaries be chosen from the seventies quorums. My letter to you on that head said: "Inasmuch as an effort is being made in the church to place into the seventies quorums those who are going to undertake active preparation for mission service in the world (i.e., outside the stakes of Zion) and then draw from these seventies quorums as far as possible those who are to fill missions." I cannot see how you could read into that language the idea that we make any recommendation that ALL MISSIONARIES BE CHOSEN FROM THE SEVENTIES. We know it will not be so, but we want to make it possible just as far as we can, by getting the missionary element of our community into the

seventies quorums for training. I trust this will make the matter of our recommendation clear to you.

The second part of your first question is: "If so, i.e., if the policy of the Church is to have missionaries selected only from the seventies quorums, are those seventies to be called by the Stake Presidency?"

I answer no. The Stake Presidency are not charged with the responsibility of "calling" seventies or elders or other persons into the mission-field. That is a function that rests with the First Presidency who do the calling, but a Stake Presidency, as also other agencies, may consistently recommend men to the consideration of the First Presidency, or whatever agency they appoint.

2nd. "Is the Stake President in any way responsible for the activities of the seventies quorum?"

Naturally I would say that a stake president would have the responsibility of being interested at least in the welfare of the seventies and may do all that he may reasonably do to encourage and prosper seventies quorums; but the direct presidency over the seventies quorums rests with the First Council of Seventy, since in the revelation of God it says:

"It is according to the vision showing the order of the seventy that they should have seven presidents to preside over them, chosen out of the number of the seventy; and the seventh president (of course counting from the last ordained) is to preside over the six; and these seven presidents (i.e., the First Council of Seventy) are to choose other seventy besides the first seventy to whom they belong, and are to preside over them; and also other seventy, until seven times seventy, if the labor in the vineyard of necessity requires it; and those seventy are

to be traveling ministers, unto the Gentiles first and also unto the Jews. (D. & C. 107:93-97)

3rd. "Are the seventies amenable to the Stake President?"

Directly so as individual members of the stake, just as any two or three Apostles in his stake as members of it might be. And in all the activities they engage in as individual members of the priesthood, they are responsible to the stake presidency. They may be called and used by the stake presidency as home missionaries in this stake, or they may be assigned, as frequently they are, to undertake the preaching of the gospel to the non-members within the stake, and be called upon to make their reports and fulfill their appointments as may be required by the presidency of the stake; and are accountable to him in these labors for the faithful and efficient discharge of the duties assigned to them. They may be transferred from one piece of work to another; they may be dismissed for unfaithfulness and in all the activities they engage in within the stake they are amenable to the supervision and direction of the presidency of the stake. In the wards they may be called upon by the bishop to act as ward teachers, or as supervising auxiliary organizations, as Superintendents of Sunday Schools, or any other local office and be amenable to the Bishops for their labors in these directions. But as quorums, Brother Moyle, whatever interest presidents of stakes may develop in them as quorums, the presidency of these men in their quorum capacity directly devolves upon the First Council of the Seventy: to choose them as seventies--with the aid and recommendations of the Bishops and of the presidencies of Stakes and to preside over them as quorums. The Presidency of stakes may proceed from the beginning, and without supervision, may organize, number, and manipulate the quorums of the elders without reference to any other

presidency, but he can't proceed so with the seventies quorums, which are not stake quorums, but general church quorums--he may not proceed so with the seventies quorums, then, without consulting with and direction by the general presidency of the seventy's quorums which is the First Council.

4th. "Are the activities of the seventies to be directed by the Stake Presidency or by the first Council of Seventy?"

That is largely answered in my last paragraph above; and further answered by a statement from the First Presidency to the President of the Council of the Twelve, Elder Rudger Clawson, wherein the Presidency decided on this question that was before them, to this effect:

"The presidency and general supervision of the various quorums of the seventy of the Church remain as at present, in the First Council of Seventy."

It really amounts to this, brethren, that the seventies as members of your stake priesthood are entirely under your jurisdiction, and to be directed in their labors in the priesthood wherein you wish to employ them in the stake; but as quorums, the First Council have place as their presidents; and instructions already sent out over the signature of the Presidency of the Twelve and the senior president of the First Council of the Seventy, on this head, and addressed to the Presidents of Stakes, say:

"Your recommendations as to presidencies of the local quorums will in all cases be solicited, and your close supervision of the quorums, their meeting and activities under the instructions which will issue from the First Council of Seventy from time to time regarding the administration of the quorums, is earnestly desired."



5th. "Is the consent of the stake president necessary to the selection of elders or priests to be made seventies?"

Yes, their consent is necessary; only priests are not to be recommended to be made seventies. The membership of the seventies is to be drawn from the elders quorums, and your recommendations as to the elders is primarily to certify of their standing in their wards and the stake; but the final decision in their being chosen seventies will rest in the First Council.

6th. "Have the seventies any special work within the stake of Zion?"

No, except the seventies, even in the stakes of Zion as well as outside of them among the nations of the earth, are to be special witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ and are to testify that he is the Son of God, to witness that He is the Savior of men, that he is the resurrection and the life and the power thereof. This is their special work wherever they happen to be. Any other special work for the seventies when at home in the stakes of Zion may be appointed unto them by the presidency of the stakes, such as taking special charge of the work among the non-members of the Church, or to be home missionaries; or in the wards to be teachers or to assist in the auxiliary organizations. The special calling of the seventies is that already described from the revelation of the Lord. (Doc. & Cov. 107) But specifically they are to be "traveling ministers unto the Gentiles first and also unto the Jews," and are general quorums of the Church organized unto that end, and they may, under the direction of the Twelve, assist the Twelve in "building up the church and regulating all the affairs of the same in all nations, first unto the Gentiles and then unto the Jews." (D. & C. 107:34)

Next, "as to a quorum of seventy consisting of seventy members, no more: and it would be a violation of quorum organization to have more than that number in one quorum."

On that head you call attention to the fact that in studying conditions in surrounding stakes you learn that there are some quorums containing as high as 120 members, and then add: "If we hold ourselves strictly to the letter of the scripture each quorum must have seventy members; whereas it has been common practice to have quorums with thirty to fifty members."

In answer to this I call your attention to the fact, after some forty years of service in the management of seventies quorums, that we have never had more than seventy men in a quorum. In a quorum district there are sometimes more than seventy members but only seventy who have been recognized officially within the quorum; and the others are either regarded as being on the "waiting list," waiting for an opportunity to be brought into the regular organizations, or they are temporarily residing within the district as extra members; and both classes participate with the regular quorum organization in the district by courtesy; and this to be in harmony with the revelation to President John Taylor concerning the seventies of the church wherein it says:

"The president of quorums residing in the district where their respective quorums are organized shall have a general supervision of all the seventies residing in their district."

That is to say, of all the seventies in the district that are unattached to the quorum of the district, as well as those who make up the quorum membership. So again I say that in organizing a quorum of seventy the limitation of its membership is sev-

enty, and always has been. That is why they are called "quorums of seventy." To recognize more as constituting a quorum would destroy the significance of their title--"quorums of seventy."

As to the other end of it, in cases where less than seventy are found in a quorum, that is brought about through constant changes of moving and of death and excommunication, or else through lack of material sufficient to make up the seventy in number. It is inevitable that some times there will be less than seventy but even this is to be regarded as only an occasional and temporary condition, and the policy has always been when possible to always have at least enough to make up a majority of a quorum.

President Taylor's revelation on the organization of seventy you will find copies in the "Seventies Course of Theology," first year, beginning at page 9. You will observe that the revelation given at the close of the letter of instructions sent out by Presidents John Taylor, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith is covered and given the force of revelation where the Lord in opening that revelation says: "What ye have written is my will and is acceptable unto me," that is, what they had written concerning the seventy and their organization.

Alluding to the respective quorums of seventy being in two wards, part of the quorum in each, you say: "We have never found a spirit of true cooperation to exist between two parts of any quorum as now organized."

My own experience in such cases justified the following statement. Perhaps what you say represents the case sometime, but usually it will be found that this condition arises from the fact that the quorum is not permitted to function as a unit by the local authorities in the respective wards, as the ward

authorities require, and very often demand, that the seventies in their respective wards shall stay at the priesthood meetings of their wards rather than to allow the seventies to go part of the time from their ward priesthood meeting to the quorum meeting in another ward, and hence, being restrained in this way they fail to develop true cooperation between the two parts of their quorum. From a rather wide range of experience both as to time and territory on this point, leads me to that conclusion. In the glorious period of fifteen months some years ago when we had our seventies quorums functioning as quorums, and meeting at a time when all could attend --Sunday morning--we had no difficulty at all in getting quorums together in two, three or even four wards in quorum capacity and in perfect cooperation.

You say it is your "opinion that the stake presidency be either allowed to organize the seventies as they deem desirable in order to make them fit into the general scheme of our stake organization or be not held responsible for the activities of these quorums."

The trouble with that proposition is it is not in harmony with the revelations of God for the stake presidencies to organize the seventies as they deem desirable. The quorums of seventy are an organization under the direction of the First Council of Seventy, who, as already quoted from the revelations, are directed to "Choose the seventy, besides the first seventy to whom they belong, and are to preside over them," no matter how many quorums may be called into existence, or in how many stakes they may happen to be located. (Doc. & Cov. 107:93-96)

As to "fitting into the general scheme of our stake organization," I call attention again to the fact that the quorums of seventy are not part, as quorums, of the stake organizations. The stake or-

ganization can be complete without a seventy's quorum in it at all. Again: they are general church quorums and have their local presidencies composed of seven presidents in each quorum, and their general presidency in the First Council who are among the General Authorities of the church. Your proposition could more easily be carried out by moving that the First Council of Seventy be eliminated from the Church organization. Then all obstacles to what you propose would be removed. But the First Council has been placed in the Church of the revelations of God and given its functions and somehow or other presidents of stakes, and all other officers will be under the necessity of getting along with it as an essential part of the Church government.

You say you have carefully considered my comment on the population of your stake being sufficient to justify more than one quorum of seventy, and remark that you can "hardly see what relation need exist between population and number of seventies."

Well, brethren, the recent move in adjusting the affairs of the seventies quorums contemplates employing the seventies quorums as training classes for future missionaries, and the desire is to bring in large numbers who have not yet gone on missions, and to educate them preparatory to that work. Now to put an extreme case or purpose of illustrating the point: a stake with a population of 20,000 will certainly have in it a very much larger number of those who might be considered likely to develop the gifts of only 3,000 and therefore the stake with a 20,000 population would need a larger number of training quorums than the stake with the population of 3,000. Is that not so? That is the relation that stake population has to the need of the number of quorums within a stake.

You say further, "It appears to you that only one consideration should enter into the determination of the proper number of seventies; that is, a fitness for foreign missionary work must be the sole basis of selection."

Well, even under that suggestion a stake with 20,000 population is likely to have more who would be fit for foreign missionary work than a stake with 3,000; but if you think again over this population matter the idea is not to ordain seventies who now at this moment have the fitness for foreign missionary work, but who now give promise of having developed in them that fitness through the training to be received in the seventies quorums. We are dealing in the future, and want to make that dealing as large as possible.

You say that you have noted that in surrounding stakes the seventies have not been organized with the idea of foreign missionary work in view, but rather with the idea of keeping them active at home. That this is not in harmony with your (my) recommendation.

Well no, we have to confess that since we have been trained--meaning now the First Council--to understand that the reason that seventies quorums were called into existence for the specific purpose of preparing and training men for the foreign ministry, which is their special function in the Church, and are only to be incidentally used in activities at home in the stakes of Zion, there would be no need of ordaining seventies for this home service, since that can be abundantly as well taken care of by the high priests, and the elders quorums and the organization of the lesser priesthood.

You say that you hope no step will be taken to change the present status of the quorums in your

stake until such time as we can reach a mutual agreement in regard to the matter.

I think you may safely rely upon the fact that we shall take no such step until we can come to an understanding with you. At the same time, since a list of men have been recommended by you from seventies quorums to be ordained high priests and that others have been recommended to be ordained seventies, we see no reason why action should not be taken in relation to having the seventies recommended to be ordained high priests, ordained and the elders that have been recommended to be ordained seventies be ordained and distributed among the quorums as they now exist or in the four of the three quorums to be retained in the stake; and this if either the five quorums remain or only the four or three. But we renew our already expressed conviction that the number of quorums in your stake should not be less than three, and preferably four quorums and we have no real objection to continuing the five as at present located in their quorum districts, but reducing them to the quorum, we say again, does not meet with our approval.

Regretting again the delay in answering your communication, I have the honor to be,

Most truly your brother,

(signed) B. H. Roberts  
In behalf of the First  
Council of Seventy.

\* \* \* \* \*

In 1936 another new resolution was inaugurated in the ever-growing catalog of changes. It was to put the Seventies into stake missionary work at home. This work was supposed to be confined to the

Elders (D. & C. 124:137) as standing ministers in Zion. This new program for seventies was confined to the wards and stakes, it was under the control of the stakes, and it was to become a part of the stakes. Rather than "traveling quorums abroad," the Seventies were soon to become "standing quorums at home." Instead of being ambassadors to the nations, they were demoted to home missions. Rather than assisting the Apostles abroad, they assisted bishops and stake presidents at home.

At the Seventies conference in April, 1934, Pres. J. Golden Kimball reported that there were 182 Seventies on foreign missions and 903 on stake missions. At that session, Elder David O. McKay said:

Every Seventy in the Church can go on a mission, for those who cannot go abroad can do missionary work at home among the non-members who reside in their wards.... We had more converts in the organized stakes than in the foreign missions in 1933. This shows what can be done at home, and every stake president should call upon the Seventies for this missionary work and they will answer the call. (Journal History, ms., April 8, 1934, p. 6)

In 1936, stake missionary work was organized on a Church-wide basis, and the entire program placed under the direction of the First Council of Seventy.

Formerly President Brigham Young said that in the stakes of Zion, the Seventies should--

...meet with the high priests or with the elders as they may choose and they will always be welcome if the high priests and elders feel as they should do. (*Des. Weekly*, June 6, 1877)



But after 1936, the entire program was changed and the Seventies were organized into separate quorums with stake control.

The supervision of the Seventies, under direction of a stake committee, relates exclusively to local activities in stakes and wards, and comes rightly under their supervision, whatever plan may be adopted to make their work more effective; and does not in any way conflict with the present system of supervision of the seventies by the First Council in collaboration with the presidents of stakes.... (*Improvement Era*, XLI, Jan. 1938, p. 38)

It seems rather amusing how such changes are made in the structure of Church organization with the immediate justification that it "does not in any way conflict with the present supervision of the seventies."

The Seventies were, of course, gradually relieved of their responsibility to the nations, and confined to the stakes. It was finally confirmed by Apostle Widtsoe who wrote:

*The activities of Seventies resident in the stakes, both as to quorum and individuals, are under the supervision of stake presidents and ward bishops. (Priesthood and Church Government, p. 275)*

Other publications and Church periodicals continued to repeat what had now been established as law. General rules and policies were directed to the Seventies and they were instructed to:

1. Prepare for missionary work through study and Church activity.

2. *Participate in stake and foreign missionary work.*
  3. To assist missionaries and their families financially.
  4. To willingly accept *all* calls to *other* types of work made by *bishops and stake presidents.*
  5. To strengthen spiritually quorum members and their families.
  6. To help needy quorum members and families.
  7. To keep all of God's commandments.
- ("Melchizedek Priesthood: Seventies," *Improvement Era*, April 1955, p. 266)

The written pronouncement of the take-over of the Seventies came in 1955 in the pages of the *Improvement Era*:

Seventies may be ordained high priests without the prior approval of the First Council, unless they are serving in quorum presidencies or in the chairmanship of units. \*\*\* However, stake presidents are at liberty at any time without prior approval of the First Council to take a member of the quorum presidency, or of a unit chairmanship, if such a brother is being called to serve in a stake presidency, or a high council, or in a ward bishopric. (*Imp. Era*, May 1955, p. 353)

These new changes eventually took the Seventies away from the labors of the Twelve. They were no longer called to the same ministry, nor were they permitted to assist them. They went from a world ministry to stake missions, and from assisting the Apostles to assisting bishops and stake presidents. All this was under the direction of seven high priests. This is how the Seventies were being "advanced" and their "activities enlarged."

Hence, the Seventies Quorums were no longer looked upon as a ministry but as another stake quorum. They were to assume almost the same duties as those of the Elders. These ministers to the nations were finally reduced to the level of "junior elders," and therefore today have little difference in calling or authority.

Seventies are also now ordained by stake officers instead of by the First Council. This was a divorcement of the co-unity of the First Council with the Seventies. They have become alienated from the First Council, and the personal acquaintances and harmony have been disbanded by this new reconstruction program.

In April of 1974 the Church announced that the stake presidents would now have the authority to ordain and set apart Seventies. President Spencer W. Kimball then announced that "this should cause the Seventies to look to the stake presidents for leadership, and cause stake presidents to give more effective direction to the work of the seventies." (*Ensign*, May 1974, p. 125)

All this is a far cry from what Joseph had sought to establish because:

Joseph sought to gather the Seventies together into a body within a stake in Zion where they "could meet together when they were not laboring in the vineyard of the Lord; and also could receive counsel from the Twelve and the First Presidency in matters pertaining to their mission to the nations." (*D.H.C.* 3:87)

Then, the Seventies were one of the three primary, or general, quorums of the Church--the Twelve Apostles and the First Presidency being the others. The Seventies were not affiliated with, nor a part

of stake organization. These three groups were intended to be the converting and controlling quorums of the whole Church. But as of today, the Seventy have been cut asunder to the level of a stake auxiliary organization.

Another change in Church organization occurred which came like a final insulting blow, or "coupe de grace" to the Seventies' work abroad. It was the announcement of the 69 Regional Representatives of the Twelve. In 1967 from the *Deseret News* came this information about the new "representatives" of the Twelve.

As many of you will remember, in 1941, it became necessary for the First Presidency and the Twelve to provide for additional brethren to help with the work of overseeing and setting in order an ever-growing world - wide Church. Thus in the General Conference of April 1941, Assistants to the Twelve were named and sustained, "to be increased or otherwise from time to time as the necessity of carrying on the Lord's work seems to dictate."

Since then the world-wide demands of the Church have increased in even greater degree and it is felt by the First Presidency and the Twelve that a further provision for guidance and direction is now needed.

What, therefore, is now proposed is the calling of as many brethren as may be necessary to be known as Regional Representatives of the Twelve, each, as assigned, to be responsible in some aspects of the work to carry counsel to and to conduct instructional meetings in groups of stakes or regions as may be designated from time to time. (*Des. News*, Sept. 29, 1967)

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## CHURCH MOVES FORWARD ON WORLD-WIDE BASIS

The changes announced at the LDS General Conference just ended, implement the mission of the Church. Undoubtedly, this conference will go down as one of the most historic yet held by the Church in its 137 years of history.

The roles of local authorities have not been diminished with the appointment of the Regional Representatives of the Twelve. Indeed, local administration will be strengthened through the aid, counsel and supervision of the Regional Representatives, who are experienced and able leaders.

In the past, most of the Church members lived in Utah and Idaho. In 1910, 75 per cent lived in these two states. Today 40 per cent do. By 1985, only 25 per cent will, although there will be many more members in these two states than there are now. All of this indicates that the Church is growing regionally--that it is, indeed, becoming world-wide in nature.

The changes announced are of extraordinary impact, and will chart the course of the Church for many years to come. (*Des. News*, Mon., Oct. 2, 1967)

The idea that the Apostles need 69 High Priests to assist them seems like a humorous insult to one quorum of Seventy. The Lord clearly revealed that they have:

The Authority: "equal in authority to that of the Twelve special witnesses or Apostles!"  
(D. & C. 107:26)

The Call: "The Seventy are to act in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Twelve or the traveling high

council, in building up the church and regulating all the affairs of the same in all nations...." (D. & C. 107:34)

The Duty: "It is the duty of the traveling high council to call upon the Seventy, when they need assistance, to fill the several calls for preaching and administering the gospel, instead of any others." (D. & C. 107:38)

The calling of "Regional Representatives" from among the High Priests was not a new revelation. It had been done nearly ten years previously by the Reorganized Church, and was reported in one of their publications:

This regional representative program seems somewhat similar to the regional administrator plan initiated by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1958, when Garland Tickemyer was named regional administrator of three Texas districts. That church now includes regional administrators as part of its field personnel. (*Saints' Herald*, Nov. 15, 1967, p. 34)

All of these changes have proved to take away the authority of the Seventy, to confine their labor, to re-direct their associations with the Apostles, and to take away their responsibility to the nations of the world.

## Chapter IX

### REVELATION FOR THE SEVENTIES

*And it shall come to pass that if you build a house unto my name, and do not do the things that I say, I will not perform the oath which I make unto you, neither fulfil the promises which ye expect at my hands, saith the Lord. (D. & C. 124:47)*

Men should observe and preserve the commandments of the Lord as He reveals them, for God's instructions cannot be changed by the councils of men. If men set aside a revelation, or a law of God, they are attempting to steady the ark of God. A unanimous vote from the First Presidency of the Church, or the Quorum of Apostles, does not and cannot change the word of the Lord. Indeed, all the members of the Church, and all the nations of the world, cannot change the least of God's commandments by the power of their vote.

It is the man who defends God's laws and incorporates them into his life that carries favor with God. The scriptures teach that the "decrees of God are unalterable," yet man's basic nature is to change them. Such a thing has occurred in the office and calling of the Seventies.

The revelations of God pertaining to the Seventies in this dispensation may be categorized into three major divisions:

1. Revelations given to the Prophet Joseph Smith concerning the organization of the office of Seventy in the Church.

2. Revelations and manifestations that confirm or correct the procedures of those ordained to that office.
3. Revelations instructing men to obey certain laws which are mandatory requirements of that office.

A brief study of Church history will render a distinct picture of the blueprint for revelations that apply to the Seventies.

#### 1. ORGANIZATIONAL REVELATIONS

The first revelation to Joseph Smith showing the organization of the Seventies was given in 1835. At that time God revealed the body structure of the Church to the Prophet and He explained the order of Seventy within that organization. Joseph was shown "by vision and revelation" the office and the mission of the Seventy, and the men who would preside over that office. (See Chapter II, "The Seventies in History.")

However, the Lord may approve of certain functional changes in the methods of carrying out the duties of that calling. But changes that cannot be approved by the Lord are those in authority, basic organization, ordinances, and calling. When such changes were made in the early Christian Church, it was called apostasy. Today's leaders justify not only changes in methods and procedures, but also changes in Church organization. For instance, Senior President of the First Council of Seventies, S. Dilworth Young apparently misinterprets the meaning of revelation when he stated:

I would like to remind you though that if you get engrossed in the history and how they did things in that day, do not attempt to figure out why they do not do it the same way today. We



have what is called modern revelation which means the living prophet always is the one who tells us what we are to do, the manner in which we are to do it, the manner in which we are supposed to be organized, and the manner in which the revelation is to be interpreted. Thus, the way they interpreted the revelation in those days has no particular bearing on the way the revelations are being interpreted today. It is sad to know that many men have gone on the rocks of apostasy because they could not see that point, that principle. They have said Joseph Smith did it this way and you have to do it this way because Joseph Smith did it this way. That is not true at all. Joseph Smith did it one way for his day, and Brigham Young did it another way for his day, and John Taylor did it a third way for his day; and today we are doing it the way President Spencer W. Kimball wants it to be. We listen to him. What they did in that day does not bind us at all. If no change has been made by any living prophet, then the original method of doing things stands. You find that true with the doctrine of plural marriage, don't you? Wilford Woodruff changed the method of handling marriage and his word stood until Joseph F. Smith enlarged it. Now his word stands. No one has changed it since then so we now obey the law as Joseph F. Smith promulgated it. That is modern revelation. May I repeat? Modern revelation is what President Joseph Smith said, unless President Spencer W. Kimball says differently. (Address given at B.Y.U. Ten Stake Fireside, May 5, 1974)

Throughout the history of the world God has given two types of revelation. One is a general revelation which pertains to all mankind in every age of the world. Such revelations pertain to principles of the Gospel, Church organization and duties and laws of the Priesthood. *These revelations are eternal in their nature.*

The other type of revelation directs certain men to perform a particular task for the circumstances and conditions of the time. For instance, Noah, Nephi, and Jared were directed by revelation to build ships. David, Moses, and Nephi were commanded by revelation to kill other men. The Israelites were told by the Lord to put the blood of a lamb on the door posts of their homes. Later revelations directed the Israelites to march around the city of Jericho seven times, blowing their trumpets. Jesus told Peter to catch a fish and use the money in its mouth to pay taxes. These are circumstantial revelations and do not apply to us today. But laws, principles, ordinances, and the order of God's house are eternal and never change.

The ordinances of the kingdom of God on the earth are the same to the children of Adam from the commencement to the end of his posterity pertaining to the carnal state on this earth, and the winding up scene of this mortality. With regard to the Bible we frequently say, we believe the Bible, but circumstances alter cases, for what is now required of the people may not be required of a people that may live a hundred years hence. But I wish you to understand, with regard to the ordinances of God's house, to save the people in the Celestial kingdom of our God, there is no change from the days of Adam to the present time, neither will there be until the last of his posterity is gathered into the Kingdom of God. (Unpublished Discourse of Brigham Young, 1854)

## 2. CONFIRMATION REVELATIONS

When the Church is in order, and each office functions according to the revelations which established it, God will confirm and approve it by revelation and manifestation. The gifts of the spirit always attend the genuine work of God on the earth. When God ceases to bestow revelation and His gifts,

it is an evidence that God does not sanction or approve of that effort and something is out of order. Consider the following.

In the early days of the Church at one of the meetings, when the First Council of the Seventy were present, the following experience was recorded:

In the evening we met at the same place with the Council of the Twelve, and the Presidency of the Seventy, who were to receive this ordinance (of anointing and blessing). The High Councils of Kirtland and Zion were present also. \*\*\* I also laid my hands upon them, and pronounced many great and glorious things upon their heads. The heavens were opened, and angels ministered unto us.

The Twelve then proceeded to anoint and bless the Presidency of the Seventy, and seal upon their heads power and authority to anoint their brethren.

The heavens were opened unto Elder Sylvester Smith, and he, leaping up, exclaimed: "The horsemen of Israel and the chariots thereof."\*\*\*

President Rigdon arose to conclude the services of the evening by invoking the blessings of heaven upon the Lord's anointed, which he did in an eloquent manner; the congregation shouted a long hosanna; the gift of tongues fell upon us in mighty power, angels mingled their voices with ours, while their presence was in our midst, and unceasing praises swelled our bosoms for the space of half-an-hour. (D.H.C. 2:382-383)

B. H. Roberts records the increase in Seventy quorums, expansion of organization, and the resulting approval and confirmation by the Lord in a revelation to Pres. John Taylor in 1883:

In October, 1844, at Nauvoo, they were increased from two quorums to ten in number. The first quorum of seventy was broken up into groups of seven to preside as councils over these ten respective quorums; but they still constituted also the first quorum of seventy. During the next two years the number of quorums was greatly increased, and after arriving in Utah the multiplication of quorums went on, but without definitely districting them. The result was that a quorum was scattered to wherever its members wandered, and the only meetings that could be held were "mass meetings" in appointed districts, instead of in quorum meetings. Under the readjustment of the quorums in 1883, however, it was proposed that quorum districts be organized with the establishment of headquarters for each quorum, where its records should be kept; such districts to be distributed throughout the church territory under the direction of the first council as the number of the priesthood residing in such localities might seem to justify; and any vacancies that existed, either in the presidency or the membership, might be filled by the ordination of persons residing in the locality in which the respective quorums were located; seventies removing from one district to another could take a transfer to the one into which they moved, and thus the quorums would be kept in existence, meet in their quorum capacity, and maintain a permanent entity, as a unit in the priesthood organization.

The first quorum was to consist of the first council of the first seventy, and the senior presidents of the next sixty-three quorums. In case of the absence of any of the first quorum, thus constituted, the senior presidents of other quorums might act in their

place. In all cases where members of the quorum were called in question, a majority of their respective quorums were declared to have jurisdiction in all cases involving their standing as members of their respective quorums. Any complaints regarding the presidents of quorums were to be made to the first seven presidents of seventy, who might suspend them, if the conduct complained of seemed to justify it, pending the action of the first quorum. Any presidents or members from whom fellowship was withdrawn were to be reported to the high council having jurisdiction. These several arrangements written as instructions for the setting in order of this body of priesthood, received the sanction of formal revelations through President John Taylor, on the 13th of April, 1883, by the Lord saying: *"What ye have written is my will, and is acceptable unto me."* (C.H.C. 6:106-108)

The written instructions referred to above were included in a letter by the First Presidency of the Church, which is reproduced on the following page.

After this message was written, President Taylor inquired of the Lord concerning the Seventies by asking the question, "Show unto us thy will, O Lord, concerning the organization of the Seventies." The Lord answered by giving this revelation at Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, April 14th, 1883:

What ye have written is my will, and is acceptable unto me: and furthermore,

Thus saith the Lord unto the First Presidency, unto the Twelve, unto the Seventies and unto all my holy priesthood, let not your hearts be troubled, neither be ye concerned about the management and organization of my church and priesthood and the accomplishment of my work. *Fear me and observe my laws and I will reveal*

“Salt Lake City, U. T., April 13, 1883.

“In the organization of these quorums in October, 1844, there were ten quorums, each provided with seven presidents, which presidents constituted the First Quorum of Seventies [the Seventy], and of which the First Seven Presidents of the Seventies were members, and over which they presided. But as the seventies have greatly increased, these regulations will not apply to the present circumstances; and furthermore, the First Quorum, according to the present organization, has not acted in a quorum capacity, *but it would seem there are duties devolving upon its members, as a quorum, that may require their official action.*

The First Quorum of Seventies *may* be composed of the First Seven Presidents of the Seventies, and the senior president of the *first sixty-four quorums*. These may form the seventy referred to in the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*, and may act in an official capacity as the First Quorum of Seventies [the Seventy].

The senior presidents of other quorums, over and above the sixty-four, may meet with the First Quorum in their assemblies in any other than an official capacity; but in case of the absence of any of the members of the First Quorum, they can act, in the place of such members with the First Quorum during such absence, in any cases of importance that may arise.

The headquarters of the different quorums, and the records thereof, may be distributed throughout the various wards and stakes, under the direction of the First Seven Presidents, as the number of the priesthood residing in such localities may seem to justify and any vacancies that exist, either in the presidency or membership of the different quorums may be filled by the ordination of persons residing in the locality in which the respective quorums are organized.

Any of the members or presidents of other quorums who are in good standing may have the privilege of joining the quorum located in the district in which they reside; but in such cases they should first obtain a certificate as to their standing in the quorum from which they desire to withdraw; to obtain which it would only be necessary to procure a certificate of their good standing from the bishop of the ward to which they belong, provided their names are found upon the record of their quorum as in good standing.

*The presidents of the quorums residing in the district where their respective quorums are organized shall have a general supervision of all the seventies residing in their district.*

In all cases where *members* of quorums are called in question, a majority of their respective quorums will have jurisdiction in all cases involving their standing in the quorum, but in case there is not a majority residing in the district where the quorum is organized, or in the case of scattered members, the members present should investigate the matter and report their findings to the First Seven Presidents. Any complaints regarding the presidents of quorums should be made to the First Seven Presidents of the Seventies, [Seventy] who may suspend such presidents, if their conduct seem to justify it, *pending the action of the First Quorum*. Any presidents or members from whom fellowship has been *withdrawn* by the quorums, should be reported to the *High Council having jurisdiction*.

The seventies, when abroad, if anything should occur requiring their supervision, in the absence of other authorities, may act upon the case of any delinquent belonging to the seventies, and should report their decision to the First Seven Presidents of the Seventies [Seventy].

Your Brethren in the gospel,  
 John Taylor,  
 George Q. Cannon,  
 Joseph F. Smith,

First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

(*Seventies Course in Theology*, 1st year, pp.15-16)

*unto you, from time to time, through the channels that I have appointed, everything that shall be necessary for the future development and perfection of my church, for the adjustment and rolling forth of my kingdom, and for the building up and the establishment of my Zion. For ye are my priesthood and I am your God. Even so, Amen.*

When men fail to observe God's laws, then God ceases to manifest any further revelations of confirmation.

Such revelations and outpourings of manifestations have not attended the more drastic changes after 1900. For this reason, we have need to return to the former organization as it was established by the Lord. Former-day doctrine should override present-day innovations.

### 3. DISCIPLINARY REVELATIONS

It is God's will that His servants be obedient. Those who are placed into responsible positions in God's Church and Kingdom should comply to the laws that pertain to that office. It is the responsibility of men who preside to teach God's laws by precept and by example. Those who preside over the priesthood must obey the laws of the priesthood or they will be subject to God's judgment.

In 1882 the Lord revealed the nature of those laws which pertained to the office of the First Council of Seventy. That revelation came as a result of vacancies in the council of the twelve, one left over from the time of the organization of the first presidency, and that occasioned by the death of Orson Pratt. The last two vacancies were filled by direct, formal revelation, given on the 13th of October, 1882, through Pres. John Taylor:

Thus saith the Lord, to the Twelve, and to the Priesthood and people of my Church. Let my servants George Teasdale and Heber J. Grant be appointed to fill the vacancies in the Twelve, that you may be fully organized and prepared for the labors devolving upon you, for you have a great work to perform; and then proceed to fill up the presiding quorum of Seventies, and assist in organizing that body of my priesthood who are your co-laborers in the ministry. You may appoint Seymour B. Young to fill up the vacancy in the Presiding Quorum of Seventies, *if he will conform to my law; for it is not meet that men who will not abide my law shall preside over my priesthood.* And then proceed forthwith and call to your aid any assistance that you may require from among the Seventies to assist you in your labors in introducing and maintaining the gospel among the Lamanites through the land. And then let High Priests be selected, under the direction of the First Presidency, to preside over the various organizations that shall exist among this people. (*Life of John Taylor*, p. 349)

Notice that this revelation called Seymour B. Young to fill up the vacancy in the First Council of Seventies and that he must obey "the law" of plural marriage or else he had no right to preside.

So, in this revelation the Lord is confirming that--

1. The Seventies be "co-laborers in the ministry" with the Twelve.
2. The Seventies "assist in introducing the gospel to the Lamanites."
3. The High Priests were "to preside" over Church organizations.



4. Seymour B. Young had to "conform" to "the law" of plural marriage to qualify as a presiding authority.
5. Those who "will not abide" by the law of plural marriage should not preside over the Priesthood.

The revelation complete was published, and will be found in *L.D.S. Pamphlets*, vol. lxxv, collection in Historian's Office. See also letter of President John Taylor to Albert Carrington, *Millennial Star*, vol. xliv, pp. 732-3. According to President Taylor the revelation was submitted to the twelve apostles and accepted by them; afterwards it was submitted to the presidents of stakes, the first council of the seventy and others. (*C.H.C.* 6:105)

This revelation was also published in the European editions of the *Doctrine and Covenants*:

1. German edition, Sec. 137, Salt Lake City printing 1893, second edition; and 1903 Berlin printing, third edition.
2. Danish 6th edition, Sec. 137, Salt Lake City printing, 1900.
3. Swedish first edition, 1888, Salt Lake City printing; and 1928 second edition, Stockholm edition.

It is strange that this revelation was never added to any English editions of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Such deliberate avoidance implies a cover-up. For what reason? Undoubtedly because the Lord lays bare the fact that *no man in the First Presidency, the Quorum of Twelve, First Council of Seventies, or even stake presidents, had the right of presiding over the priesthood without obeying*

*the law of plural marriage.* Seymour B. Young's call to the First Council of Seventy apparently became the case singled out by the Lord. The Lord commands men to obey the law of plural marriage or else they were not to accept those positions.

President Woodruff made this issue clear when he stated that:

The reason why the Church and Kingdom of God cannot advance without the Patriarchal Order of Marriage is that it belongs to this dispensation, just as baptism for the dead does, or any law or ordinance that belongs to a dispensation. Without it the Church cannot progress. *The leading men of Israel who are presiding over stakes will have to obey the law of Abraham or they will have to resign.* (Wilford Woodruff, *History of His Life and Labors*, by Cowley, p. 542)

Why would it be necessary to fill the presiding offices of the Church with polygamists? Simply because they would probably be the only people who would continue to honor ALL of God's laws and defend them. Anyone else who would be weak enough to disobey the law of plural marriage would be tempted to alter, modify, or change the other laws and ordinances of the Gospel. The history of the Church is proof in itself of this fact.

God has clearly established (1) organizational, (2) confirming, and (3) disciplinary revelations for His people, and every Seventy should obtain an understanding of these revelations regarding his duties and callings. There is danger, however, in accepting men's word as justification for changing those revelations.

God's commandments are holy and undefiled like a pure stream of water that comes from the mountain. But if men add to them, they become muddied and contaminated like the merky Mississippi River. Any interpretation of God's revelations which influences men to depart from those revelations could result in apostasy. How refreshing it would be to see the Saints of God conforming to God's revelations as they were originally given. How pure and righteous Zion would then become! God would bestow His gifts and every person would be filled with the spirit and power of revelation.

## Chapter X

### CONCLUSION

*And verily I say unto you, that they who go forth, bearing these tidings unto the inhabitants of the earth, to them is power given to seal both on earth and in heaven, the unbelieving and rebellious.*  
(D. & C. 1:8)

Two major perils face the Seventies of today. The first is that too few are willing to obey or sacrifice that which the Lord has commanded them.

The Seventies' calling is implicitly given in Scripture as missionary work abroad, to the nations, etc. Many of the Church leaders have reiterated this. It was expressed after the change in policy that the reason for the change was the inability of Seventies to go on foreign missions because of family, business, and financial responsibilities. This would be a perfectly sound reason, except for one thing: how was it done before? The Seventies before 1901 surely had the same feelings and responsibilities as those after, and they were faced with building up a wilderness as well! Were they forced to go on missions? Did their families all suffer privations and hardship when they went? It is a strange paradox that they had so much less and did so much more missionary work than the Seventies of today. ("The Role and Function of the Seventies in Latter-day Saint History," James N. Baumgarten, B.Y.U. master's thesis, p. 111)

The second peril confronting the Seventy of today is that those who preside in the Church have restricted them from obeying the laws which God has

given them. The reason for this is simple. God instructed us how to become *a peculiar people* for Him, but we have sought to become *a popular people*. Instead of seeking to remain *the Lord's Church*, we are becoming *a world church*. We have bartered *principles* in exchange for *peace*. By making an excuse to obey the *laws of the land*, we have voluntarily rejected the *laws of God*. One of the major results has been the re-direction and re-location of the Seventy.

In the previous pages we have explained the nature of some of these changes. A few may be reiterated, as:

1. The foreign ministry was taken from the Seventies, and they have been confined to stakes and wards.
2. They once directed the gathering of Israel, warning the wicked in all nations and traveling without purse or scrip.
3. The Seventies called other Seventies to missionary work, but now bishops make the call.
4. They once ordained bishops, stake presidents, patriarchs, and high priests with Seven Presidents to direct them.
5. They taught by prophecy and revelation, but now teach by a memorized plan.
6. Once they were considered apostles and a part of the General Authorities of the Church, and they assisted the Quorum of Twelve.
7. Once spiritual gifts, powers, and signs followed them and they were directed by revelations, dreams, and visions.

These changes have been so overwhelming in their magnitude that it may be safe to say that no other office in the Church has been changed as much as the Seventies. Only the title remains the same.

The office, calling, and mission of the Seventy has been reversed in less than a century. Once they were Apostles in conjunction with the Presidency of the Church. Three Apostolic quorums led the Church: the First Presidency, the Quorum of Twelve, and the First Council of Seventy. But now high priests have taken their positions, and the Seventies have been excluded and demoted to stakes and wards.

At the turn of the century, when most of the laws, ordinances, and doctrines of the Church began their gradual revision, the Seventies suffered most from the onslaught of the new Church policies. The sudden withdrawal of the Seventy from foreign missions was soon followed with their takeover by High Priests. After that the right to call their own members into the ministry was relinquished to the bishops. Then to complete their demotion the Seventies were isolated into separate quorums under the rule of stake presidents and bishops.

These changes, which took away their power and authority, were executed under the guise that it was to "advance" them and "make them more serviceable." These changes were said to "increase their authority" and "enlarge their activities." Yet, with all of these drastic revisions and changes they were being told that it did "not in any way change" their appointment, but that it was designed to "make their work more effective." Probably no office in government, or in big business, has been so cleverly and subtly phased out, as the Church has done with the Seventy.

Once upon a time there were little jealousies and minor disputations between the Seventies and High Priests. The conflict grew until it concluded with a total victory for the High Priests.

Joseph Smith stated that the Seventies were "Apostles and special witnesses to the nations." (*D.H.C.* 2:418) Then later said that, "It would be an insult to the priesthood of the Son of God to ordain a man a high priest after he had been ordained an apostle." (*Des. News*, June 6, 1877) Therefore, the new program instituted in 1961 or ordaining the First Council of Seventies as High Priests was no less than "an insult to the priesthood of the Son of God."

The Seventy of today can lament their situation along with the Seventies who labored with Christ nearly two thousand years ago. Their office and mission were also soon changed and put onto another course. They had been called to "preach the gospel to every nation, kindred and tongue," but the devil soon instituted gradual changes of the gospel and of the Church. These changes marked the beginning of apostasy.

The little fellows of the Catholic Church today who wear a tunic and sandals are all that is left of those early Seventies. The monk of today was the Seventy of yesterday. Their call to "take no thought for the body, neither two coats," etc., is still continued today as they devote their lives to service, sacrifice, and a study of the scriptures. This also applies to the Seventy of today. But the devil reduced their quorums to cloisters, and their call to "teach all nations" into Trappist Monks dedicated to silence! If the Seventies of today should undergo changes as radical in the next hundred years, as they have in the past hundred, we would probably see them also dedicated to silence. It may be well for every Seventy to drive to Huntsville, Utah, and visit the little monastery there.

The jangle of discord may echo in today's world, but at the Abbey of Our Lady of the Holy

Trinity you can *listen to the silence*.

Three dozen Roman Catholic Monks, members of the Cistercian Order founded in the 12th Century, go about their work and prayers in quiet meditation.

Worship and study have a pre-eminent place in the routine of the monks, who perform their daily tasks *in silence*. (*Des. News*, June 22, 1974)

Every Seventy should visualize what gradual departures can eventually do to the Lord's Church. It is essential that the Seventy of today should realize what has come from the Lord and what has come from men. Seventies should now be more dedicated to the revelations of God than ever before. Because that which had been established by "vision and revelation," has now become changed or omitted by the "councils of men."

Blessings and judgments were the responsibilities given to the Seventies by the Lord. They were told they would be sent to the nations of the world and whosoever would give the least of these a cup of water, they would in nowise lose their reward. And again, those who rejected them or their message would incur the judgments of God. Now then, if a city or nation could suffer because they prevent a few Seventies from delivering their message, what would be the result to those, within the Church, who have almost totally curtailed the labors of the Seventies?

The elect of God must be gathered out of Babylon and brought to Zion; the wicked must be warned of God's judgments which are about to befall them. What vengeance will the Lord bring upon those who prohibit the Seventies from accomplishing that work? Altering and changing the word of God in regard to these matters is no small thing.



But, regardless of the obstacles and opposition that have come upon today's Seventies, the Lord has promised to restore order in His house. They have been promised that someday they will blossom to the full fruition of their calling. They have never yet been utilized to their full capacity, but the day of the Seventy is coming. Apostle Orson Pratt prophesied:

The day will come when the nations of Europe will have warred among themselves sufficiently long, and those despotic governments are torn down, and when the hand of oppression and tyranny has been eased up, and when principles of religious liberty have become more fully and more widely spread, that the Elders of this Church will traverse all these nations; and then we shall have use for these Seventies that have been organizing so long. They have apparently been resting on their oars, waiting to be called into the vineyard of the Lord. Then will be the time for missions and callings to be given to you. \*\*\*

What is your mission? The Book of Doctrine and Covenants tells me it is among the nations of the earth; that the Twelve are to open the doors; and wherever they cannot go, they were to send; and when they send, they shall call upon the Seventies in preference to any others, because it is more particularly their mission to go and preach to all people under heaven. You have not yet had an opportunity to magnify your calling; your great mission is still in the future among the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles. (J.D. 7:186)

Today is a day of testing. But in spite of the compromises, the altering, and the bartering away of laws and principles, there will arise a faithful

people who are determined to abide by the revelations of God. These few stalwart Saints will push spiritual things to the front, and be endowed with the spirit and power of God. Then the Seventy will again be called into the vineyard of the Lord, and shall be endowed from on High with the spirit of prophecy and revelation. Then the gifts, powers, and promised signs shall follow them. Through these rare chosen men it will be proved that when a few valiant souls remain faithful to the laws and ordinances of the priesthood, the cause of Christ shall not fail.

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