

August 18–24: Doctrine and Covenants 89–92 “A Principle With Promise”

Historical Background

During the winter of 1833, the School of the Prophets frequently met to discuss the affairs of the Church; as was the custom of the time, many of the brethren chewed or smoked tobacco. As Brigham Young recalled, Joseph Smith became concerned at having to instruct the school “in a cloud of tobacco smoke,” and Emma complained at having to clean the room after the brethren. This caused the Prophet to inquire of the Lord concerning the use of tobacco. In answer he received the revelation now known as the Word of Wisdom.

Word of Wisdom

The section header states: “The first three verses were originally written as an inspired introduction and description by the Prophet.”

D&C 89:1-3

1 A WORD OF WISDOM, for the benefit of the council of high priests, assembled in Kirtland, and the church, and also the saints in Zion—

2 To be sent greeting; not by commandment or constraint, but by revelation and the word of wisdom, showing forth the order and will of God in the temporal salvation of all saints in the last days—

3 Given for a principle with promise, adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all saints, who are or can be called saints.

Why do you think that this revelation was given as “a word of wisdom” and “not by commandment or constraint”?

Joseph F. Smith

“If [the Word of Wisdom] had been given as a commandment it would have brought every man, addicted to the use of these noxious things, under condemnation; so the Lord was merciful and gave them a chance to overcome, before He brought them under the law.” (CR, Oct. 1913)

Boyd K. Packer

“While the revelation came first as a “greeting; not by commandment or constraint” when members of the Church had had time to be taught the import of the revelation, succeeding Presidents of the Church declared it to be a commandment. And it was accepted by the Church as such.” (CR, April 1996)

How do you think the Word of Wisdom serves as a “temporal salvation of all saints in the last days”?

Boyd K. Packer

“I have come to know ... that a fundamental purpose of the Word of Wisdom has to do with revelation....

“If someone ‘under the influence’ can hardly listen to plain talk, how can they respond to spiritual promptings that touch their most delicate feelings?

“As valuable as the Word of Wisdom is as a law of health, it may be much more valuable to you spiritually than it is physically.” (CR, Oct. 1979)

What do you think it means that the Word of Wisdom is “given for a principle with promise, adapted to the capacity of the... weakest of all saints”?

Boyd K. Packer

“Members write in asking if this thing or that is against the Word of Wisdom. It’s well known that tea, coffee, liquor, and tobacco are against it. It has not been spelled out in more detail. Rather, we teach the principle together with the promised blessings. There are many habit-forming, addictive things that one can drink or chew or inhale or inject which injure both body and spirit which are not mentioned in the revelation.” (CR, April 1996)

D&C 89:4

4 Behold, verily, thus saith the Lord unto you: In consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days, I have warned you, and forewarn you, by giving unto you this word of wisdom by revelation—

How do you think the Word of Wisdom helps protect us from the “consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men”?

Ezra Taft Benson

“The Lord foresaw the situation of today when motives for money would cause men to conspire to entice others to take noxious substances into their bodies. Advertisements which promote beer, wine, liquors, coffee, tobacco, and other harmful substances are examples of what the Lord foresaw.....

“Satan and his emissaries will strive to entice you to use harmful substances, because they well know if you partake, your spiritual powers will be inhibited and you will be in their evil power.” (CR, April 1983)

Revelation

D&C 90:1-5

1 Thus saith the Lord, verily, verily I say unto you my son, thy sins are forgiven thee, according to thy petition, for thy prayers and the prayers of thy brethren have come up into my ears.

2 Therefore, thou art blessed from henceforth that bear the keys of the kingdom

given unto you; which kingdom is coming forth for the last time.

3 Verily I say unto you, the keys of this kingdom shall never be taken from you, while thou art in the world, neither in the world to come;

4 Nevertheless, through you shall the oracles be given to another, yea, even unto the church.

5 And all they who receive the oracles of God, let them beware how they hold them lest they are accounted as a light thing, and are brought under condemnation thereby, and stumble and fall when the storms descend, and the winds blow, and the rains descend, and beat upon their house.

Why is it import for us to know that the “keys of the kingdom” received by Joseph Smith will “be given to another... even unto the church”?

D. Todd Christofferson

“In the authority of these keys, the Church’s priesthood officers preserve the purity of the Savior’s doctrine and the integrity of His saving ordinances. They help prepare those who wish to receive them, judge the qualification and worthiness of those who apply, and then perform them.

“With the keys of the kingdom, the Lord’s servants can identify both truth and falsehood and once again authoritatively state, ‘Thus saith the Lord.’... It is a surpassing blessing to receive a ‘knowledge of things as they [truly] are, and as they were, and as they are to come’ (D&C 93:24) insofar as the Lord wills to reveal it.” (CR, Oct. 2015)

The promise that the keys will continue thru the priesthood leaders assures that the world will be ready for the second coming

D&C 90:9-11,36-37

9 That through your administration they may receive the word, and through their administration the word may go forth unto the ends of the earth, unto the Gentiles first, and then, behold, and lo, they shall turn unto the Jews.

10 And then cometh the day when the arm of the Lord shall be revealed in power in convincing the nations, the heathen nations, the house of Joseph, of the gospel of their salvation.

11 For it shall come to pass in that day, that every man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language, through those who are ordained unto this power, by the administration of the Comforter, shed forth upon them for the revelation of Jesus Christ.

36 But verily I say unto you, that I, the Lord, will contend with Zion, and plead with her strong ones, and chasten her until she overcomes and is clean before me.

37 For she shall not be removed out of her place. I, the Lord, have spoken it. Amen.

What do we learn from these verses about how the gospel will progress thru the last days?

(the word may go forth unto the ends of the earth
the Gentiles first, and then... they shall turn unto the Jews.
every man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue
Zion... clean before me
she shall not be removed out of her place)

Gerrit W. Gong

“The Book of Mormon [has] been published in 112 languages. Book of Mormon translations are also widely available digitally. Current Book of Mormon translations include most of the 23 world languages spoken by 50 million people or more, collectively the native tongues of some 4.1 billion people.” (CR, Oct. 2020)

D&C 90:24

24 Search diligently, pray always, and be believing, and all things shall work together for your good, if ye walk uprightly and remember the covenant wherewith ye have covenanted one with another.

What do you think the Lord means when He promises that “all things shall work together for your good”?

Neill F. Marriott

“This doesn’t mean all things are good, but for the meek and faithful, things—both positive and negative—work together for good, and the timing is the Lord’s. We wait on Him, sometimes like Job in his suffering, knowing that God ‘maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole’ (Job 5:18). A meek heart accepts the trial and the waiting for that time of healing and wholeness to come.” (CR, Oct. 2015)

What does He ask us to do in order to receive this great blessing?

(Search diligently, pray always, and be believing
walk uprightly and remember the covenant)

The Lord answers a question about translating apocryphal writings

D&C 91:3-6

3 Verily, I say unto you, that it is not needful that the Apocrypha should be translated.

4 Therefore, whoso readeth it, let him understand, for the Spirit manifesteth truth;

5 And whoso is enlightened by the Spirit shall obtain benefit therefrom;

6 And whoso receiveth not by the Spirit, cannot be benefited. Therefore it is not needful that it should be translated. Amen.

Using the Apocrypha as an example;

What do these verses teach us about how we come to an understanding of the

truth about the things we study?

(the Spirit manifesteth truth
whoso is enlightened by the Spirit shall obtain benefit
whoso receiveth not by the Spirit, cannot be benefited)