Priesthood History

Understanding the concept of the Priesthood

The most detailed reference to the priesthood comes to us from Genesis, the Apostle Paul, and Joseph Smiths translation during the time of Abraham. I will use the latter first:

[JST, Genesis 14:25](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/jst/jst-gen/14.25?lang=eng#24)

And Melchizedek lifted up his voice and blessed Abram.

Now Melchizedek was a man of faith, who wrought righteousness; and when a child he feared God, and stopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire.

And thus, having been approved of God, he was ordained an high priest after the order of the covenant which God made with Enoch,

It being after the order of the Son of God; which order came, not by man, nor the will of man; neither by father nor mother; neither by beginning of days nor end of years; but of God;

And it was delivered unto men by the calling of his own voice, according to his own will, unto as many as believed on his name.

When man is approved of God he is ordained a High Priest after the ***order*** of the covenant, which God made with Enoch. This order was after the ***order*** of the Son of God. When we consider the use of order we first think of the order in which things appear as in who comes first, second, third, and so forth. We then think of order as in the Order of the Priesthood exemplified in all Christian Churches as something like Bishop, Priest or Deacon—implying the first meaning.

Historically, the word "order" (Latin *ordo*) designated an established civil body with a hierarchy. *Ordinatio* meant legal incorporation into an *ordo*.

The word "holy" refers to the Church. In context, therefore, a holy order is set apart for ministry in the Church. This implies position of order from the highest to the least to administer the needs of the order. We have leaned two things out of the above. One is the order of leadership and the other is the Order of a civil body. When you dwell on the leadership, assume the priesthood leadership. In popular politics we use establishment. But when you dwell on the people, you mean the principles by which they believe. The above reference indicated ***a covenant which God made with Enoch.*** We know that the city of Enoch indicated an order in which the saints lived, but what does it mean to be a high priest after this order, which was also after the order of the Son of God? Does it mean the order is simply a fraternal order of high priests, an order in which the high priests administer, or an order in which the high priests live according to some covenant that God makes with them?

[JST, Genesis 14:30-31](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/jst/jst-gen/14.30?lang=eng#29)

For God having sworn unto Enoch and unto his seed with an oath by himself; that every one being ordained after this order and calling should have power, by faith, to break mountains, to divide the seas, to dry up waters, to turn them out of their course;

To put at defiance the armies of nations, to divide the earth, to break every band, to stand in the presence of God; to do all things according to his will, according to his command, subdue principalities and powers; and this by the will of the Son of God which was from before the foundation of the world.

(JST Genesis 14:31-32 compare with Genesis 14:18-20).

The covenant was with Enoch and his seed that if sufficient faith is demonstrated and everyone being ordained after this order would have power to break the mountains of central control, divide and understand the knowledge of the Lord so as to turn it out of the course of tradition, and divide the saints from every band they are under.

If you do not like the interpretation, you can create your own, but remember the literal is in likeness to that which is the spiritual. If you prefer the literal, the event never happens so you claim magic in the past the push the same into the future.

Rhe literal hides the spiritual and keeps it from corruption. Note that everyone being ordained would have this power. If all had the priesthood, how do we get a hierarchy or some order of authority?

[JST, Genesis 14:33-38](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/jst/jst-gen/14.33?lang=eng" \l "32)

 And now, Melchizedek was a priest of this order; therefore he obtained peace in Salem, and was called the Prince of peace.

And his people wrought righteousness, and obtained heaven, and sought for the city of Enoch which God had before taken, separating it from the earth, having reserved it unto the latter days, or the end of the world;

And hath said, and sworn with an oath, that the heavens and the earth should come together; and the sons of God should be tried so as by fire.

And this Melchizedek, having thus established righteousness, was called the king of heaven by his people, or, in other words, the King of peace.

And he lifted up his voice, and he blessed Abram, being the high priest, and the keeper of the storehouse of God;

Him whom God had appointed to receive tithes for the poor.

(JST Genesis 14:33-38 compare with Genesis 14:36-38).

Melchizedek and the people of Salem like unto Enoch wrought righteousness and for their faith. They obtained heaven—not an afterlife heaven, but a heaven on the planet, otherwise why mention peace in Salem? King Melchizedek set up Salem after the order of Enoch, which God had taken from the people before. It is interesting the Lord promised Enoch the city would return in the latter days. Melchizedek was not in the latter days, which would indicate the Redemption of Zion would be a fitting conclusion of this promise. The people called Melchizedek the king of heaven—another reason this is heaven on the physical planet earth. The king of heaven is also a king of peace suggesting no bonds or control by powers. Melchizedek a high priest of the order blessed Abraham who was keeper of the storehouse of God. It was Abraham specific duty to keep this storehouse for the poor. This strongly indicates that the order was economic.

[JST, Genesis 14:39-40](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/jst/jst-gen/14.39?lang=eng#38)

Wherefore, Abram paid unto him tithes of all that he had, of all the riches which he possessed, which God had given him more than that which he had need.

And it came to pass, that God blessed Abram, and gave unto him riches, and honor, and lands for an everlasting possession; according to the covenant which he had made, and according to the blessing wherewith Melchizedek had blessed him.

These last verses are enlightening because they add something tradition does not see. Abraham paid tithes to King Melchizedek from this storehouse. According to the Mosaic method, this was tithes of tithes or if the storehouse being the tithes collected from the people then Abram paid 1 percent of the total collected to the King. Abraham paid a tenth of the tithes collected. Now consider this is Joseph Smiths record and yet the Mormon Church does not practice tithes of tithes. All tithes go directly to the Church’s central treasury

Consider if in modern times each county paid a tenth of its collection to the state and the state a tenth of its collection to the Federal Government. Like the Mormon Church, the government does not follow the plan of God and thus we suffer the bonds of an abusive government in the same way the Kingdom of Iron has iron teeth. Man cannot understand the knowledge of the Lord and thus cannot free himself from these bonds. If one local community lived the order of Enoch and desired the name of the order of the Son of God, perhaps we could eventually redeem Zion and in time the constitution, if man could have such faith.

God blessed Abraham with riches more than he had need because of his faith and the faith of those in his community. Do we not want the same blessings? Before we can consider this, we need to learn more. Just because Abraham paid tithes of the tithes collected, whom did he collect from and how large was his community? If Abraham was a high priest after this order, can we assume that all the male members were high priests living the same principles?

Are Mormons or any other people thinking about this? If such is ever the considered, it will be the first sign of the redemption of Zion in America. This knowledge of the priesthood would have to fit along with a republic of quorums at every level of government. Discussion and common consent are the only way to make economic decisions. Leave is to one or a few at the top and you simply build bureaucracy that feeds idolatry.

What should be understood is that this economic system was not after the Mosaic Law, but according to Abraham and Enoch before. Not until Christ came was the higher economic law established.

[Acts 2:44](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/nt/acts/2.44?lang=eng#43)

And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

[3 Nephi 26:19](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/26.19?lang=eng#18)

And they taught, and did minister one to another; and they had all things common among them, every man dealing justly, one with another.

[4 Nephi 1:3](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/4-ne/1.3?lang=eng#2)

And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift.

The three references above are after Christ. The problem with Christian interpretation is that tradition concludes that *all things in common* is a communistic philosophy based on the tradition of the Anabaptists. Eventually the state overcomes the community and the Church of Rome overcame the local churches. The same happened to the LDS Church after they first changed the tithe from interest or property to income from one’s labor. This was a protestant interpretation based on the Mosaic Law. Even the Catholics collected tithe of property, but their corruption was a central treasury rather than each church paying to Rome a tithe of their tithes collected.

Another point to understand is that *all things in common* means the same the people in a local Church would own all property in common. It does not mean to share in common the fruits of their labor. A tithe was based on the property they possessed used, but did not own. This can be trace as far back as England when a tax was based on value of the land and the value was consider from what it would produce. It was a property tithe and not an income tithe. Even Barons would pay a tithe of his tithes collected to the king for protection.

Private property is essential to keep it out of the hands of kings and government, but it is not essential to keep it out of the hands of the community church, stake or county.

If every man was a prophet in such a way that every priesthood holder had an equal privilege to speak, decisions could be unanimous and smaller forums must elect representatives to higher forums until the highest decides in unity to the whole. This fuses the Order of Enoch into the Order of the Priesthood as one economic nation, where each local church or community owns in common, but the higher common consent bodies deal with broader things such as defense and infrastructure between individual autonomous orders.

Man by nature seeks position greater others in any order to gain control. He does not want to become servant to all. This nature thrives on a democracy of majority rule while God’s order thrives on common consent in a republic. For this reason, a republic must of simple reason come from Abraham. His economics of property tithe, and a republic of common consent has blessed all nations to one degree or another. The Mormons have a different view, but that will be in another article.

[Hebrews 7:1-3](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/nt/heb/7.1?lang=eng" \l "primary)

For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.

This compares equally with Joseph Smith. Even in the next verse except Paul uses *spoils* as a determination of tithes. Joseph used in his 14:20:

20 And Abram gave him tithes of all he had taken.

This implies *spoils.* You can speculate how Joseph was able to elaborate or come up with something missing from Genesis, but when the King of Sodom said to Abraham, *“Give me the persons and take the goods to thyself”* it was his thanks for saving the people of Sodom. Abraham said however that, *“I will not take anything that is thine.”* This does not agree with Paul’s or Joseph’s view as compered with either Genesis or the JST. This can be a problem and is not the only time Joseph was mistaken.

This is Joseph’s translation regarding Abraham’s reaction:

21 And the king of Sodom said to Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.

22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up my hand unto the Lord, the most high

God, the possessor of heaven and earth.

23 And have sworn that I will not take of thee from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, (lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abram rich;)

24 Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with

me, Ener, Eschol, and Mamre; let them take their portion

Did Abraham take *Ener, Eschol and Mamre* protion for a tithe? You can judge for yourself. I am convinced that Paul writing influenced Joseph Smith and because Paul was one who was used to the spoils of war might assume what he wrote. Even though both Genesis and the JST are clear that Abraham did not take any spoils to pay tithe, there seems to be at times when prophets make these small mistakes. If you do not know the truth, you can be led astray. Both Paul and Joseph Smith were assuming. They should have known that tithes are based on possessions and on income from labor or war.

Now back to Paul.

[Hebrews 7:5](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/nt/heb/7.5?lang=eng#4)

 5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

 6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

 7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

 8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

 9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.

 10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

 11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

 12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

I do not know of anyone that can interpret that correctly. It they attempt the assign something different between the two priesthoods than tithes. Tithes are the essential difference. Not only does the Order of Mechizedek incorporate a higher tithe, a higher priesthood administers it. With the Levitical priesthood the tithes are of a different or lesser responsibility. The difference also defines the deference between the economics of Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God—both kingdoms of which were created or designed before we were naturally in the earth.

We by nature are attracted to the earth or Kingdom of God more than the Kingdom of Heaven. Even though there is a lesser and a greater and they are not a *contradiction*, *less is blessed of the better*.

In conclusion, Paul is talking about a need to change the Law of Tithing from the Mosaic Law to that of Christ because Christ was a High Priest after the order of Enoch and not after the order of Aaron a Levite as was Moses also a Levite.

Did the Levites after Moses practice a different tithe? It was a tithe of increase off the land, while Abraham paid tithes of all he possessed. In our day, it is the difference between an income tax and a property tax. None of Christianity including the Mormon Church can state this distinction that the two priesthoods had different laws of tithing as Paul so illustrated in a basic, but somewhat nebulous way. I do not complain, because prophecy is far more nebulous. Only when we see prophecy can we see and understand Paul. Despite a prophet’s minor misunderstanding, one that can see will still see. Then again perhaps God allowed the confusion to keep the truth in darkness, otherwise God would have to judge before one has a chance to understand the difference between the two kingdoms.

Truth Regarding Moses

Israel after Moses had the lesser priesthood of a lesser order of tithe. Just as tithes are not listed with the carnal commandments, as in the Ten Commandments, Tithes are not expressed clearly in the Teachings of Christ. Rather the Kingdom of Heaven is taught as like unto something. Tithes are hidden until the faith is demonstrated. With the Mosaic Law, tithes came later.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had the higher priesthood as well as the Order of Enoch, but by the time Israel fell into bondage for many years under Egyptian rule, they lost everything. Israel needed a Moses and the power of God to bring the higher Law of Tithes back with the Order of Enoch.

[Doctrine and Covenants 84:6](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/84.6?lang=eng#5)

And the sons of Moses, according to the Holy Priesthood which he received under the hand of his father-in-law, Jethro;

It is natural to assume that Moses received the higher Priesthood. Then comes Moses on the mount. What did he receive there?

[Exodus 24:12](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/ot/ex/24.12?lang=eng#11)

And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them.

The law and commandments sound like two concepts. I maintain he received the Order of Enoch as well as the temporal commandments that the Order of Enoch fulfills. The higher or Melchizedek priesthood administers the Order of Enoch, but where came the lesser priesthood, which administered only the carnal commandments? When Moses brought instructions of the Lord, written in stone, down from the mount, he realized Israel could not live the higher commandments. In his anger, he broke the tablets.

[Exodus 32:19](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/ot/ex/32.19?lang=eng#18)

And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses’ anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.

Moses realized the Order of Enoch would be impossible because they could not receive it. As story goes:

[Exodus 24:15-16](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/ot/ex/24.15?lang=eng" \l "14)

And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount.

And the glory of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

After the Lord gave instructions over forty days for building the Arc of the Covenant included through chapter 31—seven chapters later the Lord continued…

[Exodus 31:18](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/ot/ex/31.18?lang=eng#17)

And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.

This was the second time God had written tables of stone. Jewish tradition assumes that God gave the same laws as before.

[JST, Exodus 34:1](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/jst/jst-ex/34.1?lang=eng#primary)

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.

Lest I destroy them is an interesting reason why the Higher Law is hidden and also why there is much confusion between the lesser tithe and the greater. Joseph Smith clarifies again the use of *my holy order.* This should have made it clear to the Mormons that this was the Order of Enoch, which was after the Order of the Son of God. I have never met a Mormon who understands. They attribute this holy order to the higher priesthood and temple marriage. This subject will be dealt with in a later article in this section. To better understand, remember the use of *my presence. C*ompare with Exodus 34:1–9 and note how easily it is to assume that the second tablets were the same as the former. You can also say that the Lord wanted to hide the truth and thus cause the priests to assume this in their transcribing. It is a patter for God to put into the hearts of men to do evil if it fulfills His will.

[Revelation 17:17](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/nt/rev/17.17?lang=eng#16)

For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

You will not accept this, but the prophecy explains in allegory how the Lord puts into heart of the early Mormons to blind them after receiving his Holy Order and rejecting it, otherwise God would have to *destroy them.*

[Doctrine and Covenants 84:19-21](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/84.19?lang=eng" \l "18)

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…

If the Lord did not want to destroy the saints, did He take away the Higher Priesthood as He did with Israel?

Without this higher priesthood man cannot see the face of God or endure his presence.

[Doctrine and Covenants 84:23-27](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/84.23?lang=eng" \l "22)

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.

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;

Which gospel is the gospel of repentance and of baptism, and the remission of sins, and the law of carnal commandments, which the Lord in his wrath caused to continue with the house of Aaron among the children of Israel until John, whom God raised up, being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother’s womb.

Moses had the higher priesthood and of necessity Moses was taken out of their midst and was not able to enter into the Promised Land. The Lord also took Joseph Smith from the saints of the restoration. Again, did he take the Higher Priesthood?

Heaven becomes a complete concept of the individual priesthood holder seeing the face of God—as in knowing him; loving others as himself—as in living the Order of Enoch; and becoming a prophet—as in knowing all things. These blessing follow them that have such faith. They can change the course of knowledge, raise others from darkness, and free those in bondage. As the Lord said he would restore the priesthood before the redemption of the redemption of Zion, for the redemption must come by power.

[Doctrine and Covenants 103:11-20](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/103.11?lang=eng#10)

 11 But verily I say unto you, I have decreed that your brethren which have been scattered shall return to the lands of their inheritances, and shall build up the waste places of Zion.

 12 For after much tribulation, as I have said unto you in a former commandment, cometh the blessing.

 13 Behold, this is the blessing which I have promised after your tribulations, and the tribulations of your brethren—your redemption, and the redemption of your brethren, even their restoration to the land of Zion, to be established, no more to be thrown down.

 14 Nevertheless, if they pollute their inheritances they shall be thrown down; for I will not spare them if they pollute their inheritances.

 15 Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come by power;

 16 Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.

 17 For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm.

 18 And as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be.

 19 Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence.

 20 But I say unto you: Mine angels shall go up before you, and also my presence, and in time ye shall possess the goodly land.

*My presence* is allegory for the higher priesthood. If you can accept this, then according to the above *my presence* was withheld from Israel as they entered into the Promised Land. In the latter days this Promised Land becomes the *redemption of Zion.* In this case, the saints will have *mine angels,* as did former Israel, but also *my presence,* where former Israel did not. Mine angels is allegory for priests and prophets, as before. But even though the Latter Day Saints keep the presence, the do not have the *power* or the key of knowledge regarding the redemption of Zion. The key of knowledge was given Joseph Smith, but his prophecy is clothed in sackcloth until *I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel*. This man will do it by power—meaning knowledge. In the next verse, we have:

21 Verily, verily I say unto you, that my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., is the man to whom I likened the servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable which I have given unto you.

The Lord here only likened His servant Joseph to the *servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable.* The Mormon Church avoids any other reference to prophecy regarding another servant. More is available in the section: *The Tree of Jesse.*

There is this gift and power of the priesthood that few realize. It is in obtaining the knowledge of the Lord without the hand of the Church controlling what the priesthood teaches, hears and practices.

[Doctrine and Covenants 90:7-10](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/90.7?lang=eng#6)

As also through your administration the keys of the school of the prophets, which I have commanded to be organized;

That thereby they may be perfected in their ministry for the salvation of Zion, and of the nations of Israel, and of the Gentiles, as many as will believe;

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.

 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.

This is explained *The School of the Prophets* for which the Restored Church today completely ignores. For more see *School of the Prophets.*