

August 7th 2021 Fireside (v. 1.00)

“Revelation”

1. What are revelations from God? What are the sources for revelation? Are they different from scriptures? What limits the scope of these revelations/scriptures?

Ammon's thoughts:

Revelation is communication from God to His children on the earth and one of the great blessings associated with the gift and constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “The Holy Ghost is a revelator,” and “no man can receive the Holy Ghost without receiving revelations” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007], 132).

D&C 8:1-3

1 Oliver Cowdery, verily, verily, I say unto you, that assuredly as the Lord liveth, who is your God and your Redeemer, even so surely shall you receive a knowledge of whatsoever things you shall ask in faith, with an honest heart, believing that you shall receive a knowledge concerning the engravings of old records, which are ancient, which contain those parts of my scripture of which has been spoken by the manifestation of my Spirit.

2 Yea, behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart.

3 Now, behold, this is the spirit of revelation; behold, this is the spirit by which Moses brought the children of Israel through the Red Sea on dry ground.

It is his tender mercy. It is the whisperings of the Spirit in the moment I need it most. It is the clarity amid a clouded mind. It's the certainty in an uncertain world. God the Father can communicate to me through the Holy Ghost.

To me, revelation is God's way of showing me that he knows me personally as my Father and wants the best for me in life. With his perfect understanding of me, of the choices I should make and the person I should become, he is ready to guide me according to my desires to be guided.

3 Nephi 14:7-10

7 Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

8 For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, who, if his son ask bread, will give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

To better understand these scriptures I often ponder just how much my own earthly Father (and Fathers everywhere) cares about me. He would love to gift me with his counsel, to

inspire me and help resolve my problems. So how much more would our perfect Heavenly Father want to do that? Incomprehensible!! It gives me greater trust and faith in him that when I approach him for guidance, it will be received. The more I apply my trust in his ability to guide me and I recognise and follow his guidance, the more my Faith in him grows. Doubt disappears. Fear disappears. Knowledge is gained.

I have begun to develop a child-like Faith in his ability to lead me. What is a child-like Faith to me? I remember when my daughter first learnt to walk. Everything your kids learn at a young age is magical, so you tend to really focus on all the little moments. I remember one day walking to the park letting my daughter walk a few feet ahead of me and I noticed that every time she came to a curb, she would instinctively raise her hand... A curb for a 1 year old may as well be a cliff edge! If they walk into it without assistance they are going to get hurt! I noticed that she would raise her hand and keep walking straight toward the curb KNOWING that I would reach out, take her hand and lift her up. She wouldn't slow down. She wouldn't look back. She had a clear knowledge that I was always going to be there to help her up.

So how did she gain that trust in me? Over the year of her life up to that point, I had never given her a reason to doubt that I would be there to help her. When she jumped off furniture I always catch her. When I encouraged her to do things, I always made sure she felt safe. So her faith in me grew. Her doubt disappeared. Her fear disappeared. And knowledge was gained. Seeing this little girl show a perfect example of Faith to me really melted my heart. It reminded me once again that my Heavenly Father has never let me down and reinforced my Faith that he would guide and bless me as I come unto him and ask.

Funnily enough, I had a quick look at Ammon's answers before I finished my answers and found that our very first paragraph about the definition of Faith was exactly the same. So, I will leave the definition for Ammon (☺)

All people sense the need of a help beyond themselves to find the answers to the important questions and challenges of life. Unfortunately, most people go looking for answers in the wrong places. The important thing for us as Latter-day Saints is understanding what Revelation is and the sources for **true** Revelation so that when those questions and challenges come, we know where we can find the answers. We also need to be aware that our own inexperience with the **process of Revelation** may cause false expectations about how this assistance will come. This inexperience is certainly referring to myself and this is the reason I chose this subject as the topic for this Fireside – I want to understand the process of Revelation better – not because I am already good at it.

Recently, every time I pray, I ask the Lord to forgive me, to bless me with the companionship of the Holy Ghost and to give me inspiration and revelation so that I can be an instrument in his hands in whatever way he sees fit. I'm finding this to be my number one desire. I just want to be worthy and ready to actually do whatever it is he requires – Be that preparing my family or sharing the Gospel with someone or preparing for Zion.

President Nelson - "Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives" – GC April 2018 (quoting D&C 121:33)

Does God really want to speak to you? Yes! "As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course . . . as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints."

I have felt the guidance of the Holy Ghost whilst answering these questions and I have ended up in a similar predicament as to when Ammon and I prepare for our Two Brothers videos and we have TOO MUCH doctrine to share haha. A torrential downpour of doctrine. If I don't cull most of what I want to share we will be here for days.

What are the sources for revelation?

- **Personal Revelation**
- **Scriptures**
- **General Conference**
- **Patriarchal Blessings**

This is not a comprehensive list

Joseph Smith said:

“Reading the experience of others, or the revelation given to them, can never give us a comprehensive view of our condition and true relation to God. Knowledge of these things can only be obtained by experience through the ordinances of God set forth for that purpose. Could you gaze into heaven five minutes, you would know more than you would by reading all that ever was written on the subject.” (**Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 324.**)

I would therefore say Personal Revelation is the most important source of Revelation because the Lord can communicate to you directly in ways you can understand and when you are ready to receive it. The revelation can be current for your particular circumstance and therefore extremely valuable. It should be “scripture” for us and it deserves also to be recorded for our own benefit. Benjamin Franklin once wrote “God helps those who help themselves”. Personal revelation encourages us to learn as much as we can and make a determination based on the evidence that we’ve been given. It requires action on our part.

Regarding what limits the scope of personal revelation – The Church website says in the **Doctrinal Mastery Core Document 5.5** – “personal inspiration from the Lord will never contradict the revelation God gives through His prophets.” That is the line, that is the boundary. Hopefully knowing that should be enough to stop some who go down strange paths and are deceived and miss the mark. As discussed many times in this group, we should also note that we cannot receive Revelation for others outside our jurisdiction. We can receive Revelation for those over whom we hold “Keys” or parents for their Children etc but not for others.

I don't have time to cover each source but I want to cover Patriarchal Blessings. A Patriarchal Blessing provides inspired direction from the Lord. It contains personal revelation and instructions from Heavenly Father, who knows our strengths, weaknesses, and eternal potential. Patriarchal blessings may contain promises, admonitions, and warnings.

I want to share a very personal and funny story that everyone may enjoy and hopefully might learn from.

When I was 16, I received my patriarchal blessing. I was really excited, and I remember having an interview with Bishop about it and making sure I was worthy and fasting beforehand. I’m going to share something from my Patriarchal Blessing because it’s something I’ve had to learn from, and I hope my experience might benefit others and

there is also a funny story associated with this that everyone may enjoy. My Patriarchal Blessing specifically states, “you shall be called to serve a mission for your Heavenly Father, overseas in some part of the world that is in need of your expertise, your love, your kindness and your strength.” So naturally I had faith in my Patriarchal Blessing and the specifics therein. From the time I was 16 until the time I received my Mission Call I was 100% sure that I would be serving my mission overseas. I would always say to people “I don't care where I serve my mission, but I know it will be overseas” – Was this too boastful? Haha. So just keep in mind my surety that this would come to pass. The day came when I finally received my mission call. I had all my friends and family over to watch whilst I opened it. I was really excited and had been looking forward to this moment for years. I was really nervous but it was an excited nervousness – not fear. I opened my papers and was called to the Australia Sydney South mission – Greek Speaking... This obviously struck me but I was just happy to be able to Serve Heavenly Father and kind of excited about learning Greek (even though I didn't know there was a Greek speaking mission in Australia?) so I quickly got over the fact that the call was not overseas. I continued reading and came to the section about what items I need to bring on my mission – A Toga, a sundial, flippers and then I look up at my Dad and see he is laughing hysterically. He had worked with the Missionaries in our Ward to play a prank on me and created “fake” mission papers and had them looking super realistic in a big envelope and everything. He had intentionally picked a mission that was not overseas because he also was 100% confident that my “real” mission call would be somewhere overseas. So, it took me a few minutes to compose myself after that as I must admit I didn't take it too well even though I did see the humour in it. Its such an important moment that I don't know that it's a good time to pull a prank but now you get a glimpse of the nature of our Father haha. Naturally this is all on tape as well lol.

Anyway, so I finally get to my “real” mission call and I was called to Serve in the Australia Brisbane Mission. Now I'm not sure if you can empathize with what I felt but I'll tell you straight up that was a huge blow to me. Everyone was shocked, especially me. I had to walk outside away from everyone, and I cried my eyes out. I literally broke down and bawled my eyes out on the floor and this is not a common thing for me because I'm a big tough guy hahaha but that is the truthful effect it had on me. Imagine having full faith that your Patriarchal Blessing is true, especially with something so specific and then when the moment comes it just isn't? This was even a little blow to my faith. Are Patriarchal blessings not real? Have I offended the Lord and lost my right and privilege to some blessings? So anyway, I went and served my mission, and it was amazing, and I have never regretted anything about the experience and I'll cherish it forever. BUT that still happened, and I have had to try and understand and rationalize it for the past 15 years. Thankfully I have managed to do that. Firstly, before anyone jumps in on the comments and says it could be a Senior Couple mission or a calling as a Mission President – It can't be these things, it is definitely referring to my mission because in the very next sentence it says that I will return and seek out a worthy young lady and get married in the Temple.

So, what did I learn from this experience? I have come to the conclusion that it was one of 4 things.

1. It was a test for me. This to me seems like the most likely answer. Would I still have faith enough to Serve the Lord on a mission if I didn't go overseas? I'm glad to say I did.

2. It was what I needed to hear to go on a mission? I don't think this is the case because I had wanted to serve a mission forever.

3. The patriarch made a mistake. I don't believe this is the case and again I lean more toward point 1.

4. I was unworthy to receive it as prophesied. I don't think this is the case either, but I suppose I can't be sure. All I can say for sure is that the Lord is not wrong, so the answer lies elsewhere and possibly it lies squarely on myself.

Read your Patriarchal Blessing often! Things in our lives change and can cause us to read it with a different perspective and often provide guidance and answers we didn't see before.

A week ago, I was walking the dog. I had a random thought to read my patriarchal blessing and particularly the last paragraph. I read just the last paragraph and the spirit strongly testified to me of its truth. It was such a simple experience, but I really appreciated it and it really stood out to me. Particularly due to the time frame we are living in and the events we expect in our near future. The last paragraph references events of this time period and is of particular interest to people in this group. I want to share a portion of this last paragraph because I know you will all appreciate it – “During the Millennium you shall work with the Saviour to bring many souls unto Him through the waters of baptism and bring the lost tribes of Israel unto the New Jerusalem and unto Zion”.

So even after all my interesting experiences with Patriarchal Blessings I know they are true, and the spirit has testified to me as such.

In summary, revelations from God are anything that comes from God to man. We learn in Lectures on Faith that God's first aim of revelation was to reveal Himself unto man, for God knew that without an understanding of God and His characteristics and attributes, one would not be able to exercise faith in Him unto life and salvation. So the first and most important reason for revelation isn't to know what type of toothpaste to get, it isn't to know whether to get the vaccine or not, it's not to know any of those things, it is so that you can know the Father and by knowing the Father, exercise faith unto life and salvation. For without this knowledge and the internalizing of it and the experimenting upon it all other revelation is pointless, it is fruitless. Thus, men having received this knowledge were commanded by God to write them down so their children would know who to turn to and how to turn to Him for a remission of their sins. For as the Lectures on Faith also teach without human testimony the first instance of revelation would not have entered the hearts or minds of men.

Topher did a beautiful job listing off forms of revelation and scripture, for scripture is,

D&C 68:4

4 And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation.

So, scripture is anything written while under the influence of the Holy Ghost and revelation is the influence of the Holy Ghost, meaning scripture is simply written revelation.

As for what limits the scope of revelation,

President Boyd K. Packer described the scope this way: “Revelation continues in the Church: the prophet receiving it for the Church; the president for his stake, his mission, or his quorum; the bishop for his ward; the father for his family; the individual for himself.” (“We Believe All That God Has Revealed,” Ensign, May 1974, 95.)

Joseph Smith explained of the keys, “I will inform you that it is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or any one, to receive instruction for those in authority, higher than themselves; therefore you will see the impropriety of giving heed to them; but if any person have a vision or a visitation from a heavenly messenger, it must be for his own benefit and instruction; for the fundamental principles, government, and doctrine of the Church are vested in the keys of the kingdom.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 21)

Preach My Gospel in Chapter 4 under the section “A Word of Caution” says, “As you pray for inspiration, you should also confirm your feelings. For example, compare your decisions with the scriptures and the teachings of the living prophets. Be certain that the feelings are consistent with the assignment you have; for example, you will not receive revelation to tell a local bishop how he should perform in his calling.”

As Topher said the keys of the kingdom is a bit too long to go into so I would recommend people to take the time to read my paper Keys of the Kingdom, but these three quotes will give you a good starting point.

2. How do I receive personal revelation and do so more regularly? What are the prerequisites/requirements in receiving revelation and what are my roles? How do the questions I ask in prayer also directly impact the rate of revelation I personally receive?

Ammon’s thoughts:

How do I receive personal revelation? I want to get fairly specific to my own experience:

1. **When I am on the Lord’s errand, he makes up for my weaknesses.** Share experience visiting far away branch on speaking assignment 3.5 hour drive (same Stake). Sat down during the opening hymn and the Branch Pres handed me a blank sheet of paper... It was the meeting agenda and it was BLANK! During the passing of the sacrament I scrambled to ask members to share testimonies etc, wrote down hymns, assigned closing prayer and all round felt anxious. I went to stand up and give the final talk with about 40 minutes to go and as I received the pulpit I realised that I left my talk in the car! I had just an instant to decide what to do... I have developed a powerful testimony that when I am on the Lord’s errand and I am willing to give everything I have, he will make up the difference.

D&C 84:85

85 Neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say; but treasure up in your minds continually the words of life, and it shall be given you in the very hour that portion that shall be meted unto every man.

For the next 40 minutes I spoke clearer and more fluidly on the Gospel than at almost any time in my life. I remembered every scripture reference, every thought I had prepared and the spirit guided me in directions it needed me to take. Forgetting to

bring the talk and forcing me to rely on the Spirits guidance had an amazing impact on me that day. Now I study and write out my talk, then fold it up and leave it in my pocket whenever I speak.

2. **Brings all things to my remembrance.** I prayed and asked God to give me the thoughts and impressions I needed when writing responses to these fireside questions to benefit the listeners. As I wrote my responses to these questions, the Spirit gently stacked one thought behind another. Like processing something on a conveyor belt, as I'm working on something at one end, the spirit as the back of mind gently adding to the conveyor belt a list of things to consider. These thoughts that come into my mind create clarity on a topic.
3. **Answers to life's questions are found in the scriptures.** Was in a long-distance relationship and really wanted to know if the girl was right for me. If she was good for me and worth moving across the country and pursuing. I felt I needed to read the scriptures and was impressed that my answer would be found there. I opened the Book Of Mormon and the very first random scripture passage I read was as follows:

Moroni 7:13-16

13 But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God.

14 Wherefore, take heed, my beloved brethren, that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God, or that which is good and of God to be of the devil.

15 For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night.

16 For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.

I then tested that information with what I knew about Aimy. She did persuade me to do good in every way. After studying it out, I could judge for myself with a perfect knowledge that this decision was right for me.

4. Protection/Comfort/Direction.

- The Spirit whispered to me to hold onto my son when taking him from the car seat. As I looked up a car flew past. Had I not held onto him, he may have been hit. I receive revelation for my family and I.

- I had been feeling low for a while and had prayed for comfort. One morning I woke up and as clearly as I can hear my wife's voice, in my mind were spoken these words to me:

John 14:27

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Topher:

Repent. Be obedient. Ask through prayer (often). Search the scriptures. Fast. Think pure thoughts. Develop a spirit of reverence. Each one of these points could be a paper on its own.

Sincere effort and experience are required to learn to communicate with Deity.

President Joseph F. Smith - Gospel Doctrine, p.7.

“It is a wicked and adulterous generation that seeketh after a sign. Show me Latter-day Saints who have to feed upon miracles, signs and visions in order to keep them steadfast in the Church, and I will show you members of the Church who are not in good standing before God, and who are walking in slippery paths. It is not by marvelous manifestations unto us that we shall be established in the truth, but it is by humility and faithful obedience to the commandments and laws of God. When I as a boy first started out in the ministry, I would frequently go out and ask the Lord to show me some marvelous thing, in order that I might receive a testimony. But the Lord withheld marvels from me, and showed me the truth, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, until he made me to know the truth from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, and until doubt and fear had been absolutely purged from me. He did not have to send an angel from the heavens to do this, nor did he have to speak with the trump of an archangel. By the whisperings of the still small voice of the Spirit of the living God, he gave to me the testimony I possess. And by this principle and power he will give to all the children of men a knowledge of the truth that will stay with them, and it will make them to know the truth, as God knows it, and to do the will of the Father as Christ does it. And no amount of marvelous manifestations will ever accomplish this. It is obedience, humility, and submission to the requirements of heaven and to the order established in the kingdom of God upon the earth, that will establish men in the truth. Men may receive the visitation of angels; they may speak in tongues; they may heal the sick by the laying on of hands; they may have visions and dreams; but except they are faithful and pure in heart, they become an easy prey to the adversary of their souls, and he will lead them into darkness and unbelief more easily than others.”

So “obedience, humility, and submission to the requirements of heaven” (or the commandments) is a requirement to receive Revelation. Not tempting the Lord and seeking for signs and visions (like it says in Luke 11:16) – particularly if you don't have the solid foundational Testimony of the Gospel and of the Saviour already because these signs will not help keep you steadfast in the church. Interestingly enough on that Subject, many of our awesome group members have been having dreams and visions but obviously they do already have the solid foundational testimony, so they aren't seeking for signs to gain a testimony, but they have a testimony and are then therefore worthy of revelation.

I found this great talk that really sums up how I feel about Revelation and I expect there will be some listening who feel the same way.

Kevin J Worthen – “Receiving Revelation” – BYU Devotional 2018

Now I must confess that when I was about your age, admonitions about the need to receive revelation intimidated and, quite frankly, worried me more than a little bit. While some of my acquaintances would share stories about how the Spirit had given them specific directions in

dramatic ways, I could not readily recall any such personal experiences. I started wondering whether I was missing something. I began to imagine that I would get up to the judgment bar, and God would say to me, “I tried to tell you what you needed to do in life on such and such a date and again on another such date, and you just missed it.”

That feeling was compounded a bit during my mission when I had one particular companion who genuinely had a gift for knowing where to go to find people who were ready to accept the gospel. (Sounds like Micah haha) While we would be tracting, I would usually simply begin on the first street and go from one house to the next in a perfectly orderly fashion. He, on the other hand, would feel impressed to skip houses or entire streets because he felt impressed that someone way down the line had been prepared to listen to us. And more often than not, he was right. I rarely, if ever, felt such promptings. Thus, for much of my youth and young adulthood, I wondered if I had been born spiritually tone deaf. I always say I feel “spiritually dense” haha

Let me first assure you that none of us is spiritually tone deaf. Because all of us are literal spirit children of perfect Heavenly Parents, each of us has the innate potential to receive and recognize revelation. As Joseph Smith once observed:

“It is the privilege of the children of God to come to God and get revelation. . . . God is not a respecter of persons; we all have the same privilege.” (**Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith, 132**)

Moreover, God does not arbitrarily give us a limited number of specific chances to receive revelation and then judge us eternally on how we did in those particular moments. There is, thankfully, no one-time, single-question, high-stakes final exam on receiving revelation. God is infinitely more patient, infinitely more loving, and infinitely more anxious for us to succeed than we can comprehend. He will give us opportunity after opportunity after opportunity to be guided by Him. His deepest desire is to help us develop our innate capacity to receive revelation.”

Had a missionary companion who was actually one of my favourites and he said he would basically get answers to his prayers everytime he prayed either through impressions or from the still small voice. I would always wonder why I never received answers to my prayers in the same way or as often. As I’ve thought about that over the years I think one of the reasons is that as it says in D&C 58:26-28

“26 For behold, it is not meet that I should command in all things; for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant; wherefore he receiveth no reward.

27 Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness;

28 For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves. And inasmuch as men do good they shall in nowise lose their reward.”

I’m certainly not saying that my companion was a slothful servant but I think maybe I don’t necessarily need to be compelled in all things as long as I am engaged in righteous endeavours. It is also very possible that my companion had built that relationship with the Lord that much stronger than I had yet to do.

I have the tendency to overthink and overanalyze things. I worry myself about things until I’m confused. I’m writing answers for this fireside and I’m sitting here and start wracking my brain for spiritual experiences and times when I have received Revelation and worried that I

have nothing to share haha. What I'm learning is that it definitely is a process and gaining a relationship with the Lord in which he can trust you to act upon the Revelations he gives and as we do so he can give us more. This makes me think of the parable of the talents. If you are given and act. You receive more. If you don't act, it's taken away. Don't be a slothful servant. The lord gives Line up line and precept upon precept (**2 Nephi 28:30**). If we do not act on previously given revelation or guidance, he will not give us more. There is no trust. If the lord cannot trust us to act on his promptings, then he will not entrust us with them.

We hear constantly that the Spirit is a still small voice and I think I underestimate how still and how small. What I'm learning is that the Lord is actually constantly guiding my actions so simply and mildly that I don't even necessarily notice. This is why consistent gratitude to the Lord is given on my part because I know a lot of the amazing things in my life would not happen without his guiding hand.

D&C 8:2

2 Yea, behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart.

D&C 9:9

9 But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong; therefore, you cannot write that which is sacred save it be given you from me.

Some in the Church are quick to write this off and say that it does not apply to general members, it only applied to Oliver Cowdery, but such members simply showcase their ignorance to the Lectures on Faith, for God does not change neither is there any variableness to His ways. Meaning, the means by which He communicates to His children doesn't change from child to child. That would make Him a respecter of persons, which we know He is not. So this blueprint will work for any son or daughter of God seeking personal revelation.

Pray and ask a question, hold the thought in your head (a thought can be an image, words, etc), if the thought begins to expand in your mind and become clearer and your bosom begins to burn and it feels right, that is of God. If the thought disappears either slowly or quickly it is not of God or God doesn't care, it doesn't matter. I've often explained to Ashley that a thought or inspiration that comes suddenly to ones mind (once again, either an image, or words, or a voice etc) that one knows "this is not something I would naturally think or am inclined to do" it is a very good indicator that it is of God.

President Nelson described it as, "Sometimes you get an idea in your mind and you wonder where did that come from. Often it is Heavenly Father trying to teach us through the Holy Ghost something we hadn't been thinking of" (Church News, Dec 15 2019)

Another suggestion I would give to people trying to figure out if their revelation is authentic is to try to change it. For example, if you hearing a sentence try to change a word in it, if you are seeing an image, try to make a gorilla run through it etc. If it is from God you will not be able to effect it the same way.

Another huge indicator on whether you will receive revelation or not is based on the question you ask. If Joseph had gone into the grove and asked "what Church should my mother join?" the grove would have remained silent. Those that get in the habit of asking "Lord, where do

you want me to go, what do you want me to be, what do you want me to do?” will be those who seem to have periodic and regular revelation (revelation is rarely fluid, we go through long periods of nothing) while those who ask poorly worded questions will either A)not get answers or B)be led by false spirits and devils.

Moroni 10:4 gives some very important prerequisites: faith in Christ, sincere heart, real intent. Another crucial prerequisite is found in my oft quoted but ever relevant Joseph Fielding Smith quote, “We have the right to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, but we cannot have that guidance, if we wilfully refuse to consider the revelations that have been given to help us to understand and to guide us in the light and truth of the everlasting gospel. We cannot hope to have that guidance when we refuse to consider these great revelations which mean so much to us both temporally and spiritually.

Now if we find ourselves in this condition of unbelief or unwillingness to seek for the light and the knowledge which the Lord has placed within our reach, then we are liable or in danger of being deceived by evil spirits, the doctrines of devils, and the teachings of men. And when these false influences are presented before us, we will not have the distinguishing understanding by which we can segregate them and know that they are not of the Lord. And so we may become prey unto the ungodly, to the vicious, to the cunning, to the craftiness of men.” (Doctrines of Salvation, p.43)

3. What are some of our biggest obstacles in obeying personal revelations from God and how do we overcome them? What is the difference between the natural man and Satan’s influence? What does the presence of the Holy Ghost always bring with it and how would that help us discern?

Obstacles:

1. **We don’t Seek Knowledge.** The Spirit is only going to bring things to my remembrance that I ALREADY KNOW!

D&C 11: 21

21 Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men.

2. **We must gain an understanding of the process of receiving revelation.** I love the example the Lord taught Oliver Cowdery in D&C 9:

7 Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me.

8 But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.

9 But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong; therefore, you cannot write that which is sacred save it be given you from me.

3. **Fear/Doubt.** Fear and doubt cannot co-exist with Faith. Experiment upon the promptings. Trust the delicious fruit!

“This is good doctrine. It tastes good. I can taste the principles of eternal life, and so can you. They are given to me by the revelations of Jesus Christ; and I know that when I tell you these words of eternal life as they are given to me, you taste them, and I know that you believe them. You say honey is sweet, and so do I. I can also taste the spirit of eternal life. I know it is good; and when I tell you of these things which are given me by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, you are bound to receive them as sweet, and rejoice more and more.” Joseph Smith – King Follett Sermon.

The Holy Ghost always brings with it the invitation to **act** in righteousness.

Again, repent and remain worthy and ready. Remove the wedge of Sin between you and the Lord.

David A. Bednar – “The Spirit of Revelation” – April Conference 2011

“Because the Spirit whispers to us gently and delicately, it is easy to understand why we should shun inappropriate media, pornography, and harmful, addictive substances and behaviors. These tools of the adversary can impair and eventually destroy our capacity to recognize and respond to the subtle messages from God delivered by the power of His Spirit. Each of us should consider seriously and ponder prayerfully how we can reject the devil’s enticements and righteously “apply unto it,” even the spirit of revelation, in our personal lives and families.”

Don't impair our capacity to recognize and respond to the Spirit.

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said that to receive personal revelation, it is essential to have “a willingness to keep God’s commandments to keep open spiritual communication with Him.” Obeying God’s commandments qualifies us to have the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, who testifies of all truth, both secular and spiritual (**Richard G. Scott, “Truth: The Foundation of Correct Decisions,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 90**)

This is pretty self explanatory. And these essentially confirm my points from question 2.

Micah used this quote in the last fireside, and it was so good I just had to steal it and use it here:

“We want our sons and our daughters to know God’s truth and not the vagaries of the world and we want you to study those books from whence you will obtain a knowledge of the word of the Lord to us. Some of our good people read many of the books that are published today, popular fiction so-called but they haven’t time to read the Word of the Lord. Many of these books are beautiful, but often many ideas are expressed which are only pretty words, well-connected sentences or sentiments that are like flowers blooming on the stem without root. Real truth you can gain from books that have been adopted as standard works of the Church. I see too many of our people who are very much better read in the things that are written by

some of the popular authors of books than they are in the things of God. They don't know one thing about the real essence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, they don't know or comprehend one thing about the rites of the Priesthood and the principles of government that God has revealed to the children of men to maintain the kingdom of God in the earth. They know more about novels than they do about the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants—yes, far more.

It is surprising to hear the multitude of questions that are continuously sent to the Presidency, of the Church, and to others of my brethren who are in leading positions, for information upon some of the most simple things that pertain to the Gospel. Hundreds of questions, communications, and letters are sent to us from time to time asking information and instruction on matters that are so plainly written in the revelations of God—contained in the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the Bible—it seems that any one who can read should understand.

We have in the gospel the truth. If that is the case, and I bear my testimony that so it is, then it is worth our every effort to understand the truth, each for himself, and to impart it in spirit and practice to our children. ... This should be done every day, and in the home, by precept, teaching and example. ... Spend ten minutes in reading a chapter from the words of the Lord in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, before you retire, or before you go to your daily toil. Feed your spiritual selves at home, as well as in public places.”
(Chapter 5 The Inspiration and Divinity of the Scriptures, Joseph F. Smith, Teachings of the Presidents)

This is about ignorance and priorities. We can't be saved in ignorance and especially when there is no excuse for it. People are reading novels and books and can't find any time to read the scriptures. I was like “ahhh glad that's not me, I don't read books!” Then I realized it's not the activity that stops you from studying it's just whether you make the time or not. Netflix is the same as reading a book. Video games etc. Anything that steals time from improving our relationship with the Lord and his Doctrine.

I'm trying to sell my summer home in Babylon but the market is rough right now haha

What are some of the biggest obstacles? Ignorance which Ammon and Topher went over beautifully above, a second reason is fear which was also gone over beautifully above, another reason is the natural man- this is also a way to help you discern between revelation that comes from God or from the natural man, for the natural man is an enemy to God. As Ammon already quoted, things which invite to do good are from God, when you have two different thoughts come to your mind, ask yourself “which one is harder? Which one causes me the most discomfort? Which one when followed would cause me the most spiritual growth? Etc.” The things of God invite us to do and become (big signs that identify whether the point of edification has been reached or not- and we know that the spirit of the Lord always edifies); the natural man tells us to simply be or watch, it does not edify. The last big obstacle to not only obeying personal revelation but also continuing to receive personal revelation is pride and disobedience, most often reflected in disobeying the counsel and commands of the keys

President Eyring said, “But the choice not to take prophetic counsel changes the very ground upon which we stand. It becomes more dangerous. The failure to take prophetic counsel lessens our power to take inspired counsel in the future. The best time to have decided to help Noah build the ark was the first time he asked. Each time he asked after that, each failure to respond would have lessened sensitivity to the Spirit. And so each time his request would have seemed more foolish, until the rain came. And then it was too late.”

"Looking for the path to safety in the counsel of prophets makes sense to those with strong faith. When a prophet speaks, those with little faith may think that they hear only a wise man giving good advice. Then if his counsel seems comfortable and reasonable, squaring with what they want to do, they take it. If it does not, they consider it either faulty advice or they see their circumstances as justifying their being an exception to the counsel. Those without faith may think that they hear only men seeking to exert influence for some selfish motive. They may mock and deride, as did a man named Korihor..."

"Korihor was arguing, as men and women have falsely argued from the beginning of time, that to take counsel from the servants of God is to surrender God-given rights of independence. But the argument is false because it misrepresents reality. When we reject the counsel which comes from God, we do not choose to be independent of outside influence. We choose another influence. We reject the protection of a perfectly loving, all-powerful, all-knowing Father in Heaven, whose whole purpose, as that of His Beloved Son, is to give us eternal life, to give us all that He has, and to bring us home again in families to the arms of His love. In rejecting His counsel, we choose the influence of another power, whose purpose is to make us miserable and whose motive is hatred. We have moral agency as a gift of God. Rather than the right to choose to be free of influence, it is the inalienable right to submit ourselves to whichever of those powers we choose." (Henry B. Eyring, Finding Safety in Counsel, April 1997)

Satan cannot know our thoughts which makes his influence different than that of the natural man. If God puts a thought in our head, satan does not know about it to counter it. As the Church website says "Another significant limitation is that Satan does not know our thoughts unless we tell him. The Lord explained, "There is none else save God that knowest thy thoughts and the intents of thy heart" (D&C 6:16). Or as the LDS Student Manual for the Pearl of Great Price states,

Moses 4:6. Satan Does Not Know the Mind of God

Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that Satan actually "furthered the purposes of the Creator by tempting Eve; yet his design was to thwart the Lord's plan. We are definitely told that 'he knew not the mind of God, wherefore he sought to destroy the world.' [Moses 4:6.] Yet his diabolical effort, far from being the initiatory step toward destruction, contributed to the plan of man's eternal progression" (The Articles of Faith, 12th ed. [1924], 69).

And we learn in the Lectures on Faith that the Holy Ghost is the mind of God, meaning satan doesn't know what the Holy Ghost is telling you, for the Holy Ghost is telling you the mind and will of the Father. This means that what people are hearing in their heads AT THAT TIME, the moment directly after God puts a thought in our head to do something positive, is not "satan", it is "the natural man"... If you are sitting there and out of the blue bad thoughts enter you mind, such as questioning the keys, such as questioning the reality of God, that's different, but if you have random inspiration and then immediately after that you have a counter thought, it isn't satan or his minions for they don't know enough to act so precisely, it is the natural man.

4. How do I grow into the principle of revelation and why is that important? What role does

the Holy Ghost have in that process and how does it relate to intelligence, Godliness, purification, etc.?

As I mentioned earlier, we can develop that child-like Faith. Follow what you ‘feel’ is the guidance you are receiving. Your ability to receive and discern spiritual promptings and guidance improves just like strengthening muscles in a gym.

Living Virtuously through keeping the commandments and repenting make us eligible for the companionship of the Holy Ghost and the doctrines distil upon our souls:

“Most frequently, revelation comes in small increments over time and is granted according to our desire, worthiness, and preparation. Such communications from Heavenly Father gradually and gently ‘distil upon [our souls] as the dews from heaven’ (D&C 121:45).”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Spirit of Revelation,” Ensign, May 2011, 88.

****I highly recommend a study of the talk mentioned above****

BEAR TESTIMONY

President Nelson, “Revelation for the Church.” April Conference 2018

“In coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost.”

“If we are to have any hope of sifting through the myriad of voices and the philosophies of men that attack truth, we must learn to receive revelation.”

“I plead with you to increase your spiritual capacity to receive revelation. . . . Choose to do the spiritual work required to enjoy the gift of the Holy Ghost and hear the voice of the Spirit more frequently and more clearly.”

Its all about the Holy Ghost. The Spirit is the medium by which the Lord communicates with us and therefore we need to as President Nelson said, “do the spiritual work required to enjoy the gift of the Holy Ghost and hear the voice of the Spirit more frequently and more clearly.” Or it will not be possible to survive spiritually.

Howard W. Hunter said, “If prayer is only a spasmodic cry at the time of crisis, then it is utterly selfish, and we come to think of God as a repairman or a service agency to help us only in our emergencies.”

Again, reiterating the spiritual work required frequently. Praying and communicating with the Lord honestly and often with gratitude to build that relationship with him, so that when things go “south” we aren’t selfishly begging him to help us in our emergencies. He will already be with us.

Its almost another topic in itself but we should also remember that it is the Holy Ghost that purifies us. Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve taught, “The gift of the Holy Ghost . . . is the messenger of grace by which the blood of Christ is applied to take away our sins and sanctify us” (**The Power of Covenants – Ensign May 2009**).

Elder Eyring said at BYU – “As the challenges around us increase, we must commit to do more to qualify for the companionship of the Holy Ghost. Casual prayer won’t be enough.

Reading a few verses of the scripture won't be enough. Doing the minimum of what the Lord asks of us won't be enough. Hoping that we will have the Atonement work in our lives and that we will perhaps sometimes feel the influence of the Holy Ghost won't be enough. And one great burst of effort won't be enough."

("Raise the Bar" - Brigham Young University-Idaho Devotional - January 25, 2005 - Elder Henry B. Eyring)

BEAR TESTIMONY

Joseph Smith explained it thus: "The Spirit of Revelation is in connection with these blessings. A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; (i.e.,) those things that were presented unto your minds by the Spirit of God, will come to pass; and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus." (TPJS, p.151)

And it is through the Holy Ghost that our natures are changed:

"There are two Comforters spoken of. One is the Holy Ghost, the same as given on the day of Pentecost, and that all Saints receive after faith, repentance, and baptism. This first Comforter or Holy Ghost has no other effect than pure intelligence. It is more powerful in expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding, and storing the intellect with present knowledge, of a man who is of the literal seed of Abraham, than one that is a Gentile, though it may not have half as much visible effect upon the body; for as the Holy Ghost falls upon one of the literal seed of Abraham, it is calm and serene; and his whole soul and body are only exercised by the pure spirit of intelligence; while the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to purge out the old blood, and make him actually of the seed of Abraham. That man that has none of the blood of Abraham (naturally) must have a new creation by the Holy Ghost. In such a case, there may be more of a powerful effect upon the body, and visible to the eye, than upon an Israelite, while the Israelite at first might be far before the Gentile in pure intelligence. (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p.149)

The answer is very simple but following through on it seems to be anything but. When the Lord isn't speaking we need to be walking, and when the Lord says jump, we jump. When we act upon what the Lord says to us specifically or to us through the keys and we act upon those things, our intelligence is expanded and we grow into the principle of revelation. And the contrary is true, if we don't listen to revelation either directly or through the keys the revelation will be harder and harder to recognize and will be far and in between. Why is it important to become this principle of revelation? It is simple, we should all want to go back and live with our Heavenly Father and be like Him. In the Lectures on Faith we learn that the mind of God is the Holy Ghost and they both are charity. Meaning, as our intellect grows and becomes more like our Father in Heaven, His way of thinking, we become love and charity in that our minds and will are perfectly aligned with His. Brothers and Sisters, my commitment to all of you is to grow unto this principle of revelation yourselves, to get a notebook and get better at writing things down, following through on those things and then returning and reporting. For as Mormon said,

Moroni 7:43-48

43 And again, behold I say unto you that he cannot have faith and hope, save he shall be meek, and lowly of heart.

44 If so, his faith and hope is vain, for none is acceptable before God, save the meek and lowly in heart; and if a man be meek and lowly in heart, and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, he must needs have charity; for if he have not charity he is nothing; wherefore he must needs have charity.

45 And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

46 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for charity never faileth. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail—

47 But charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth forever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with him.

48 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ; that ye may become the sons of God; that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; that we may have this hope; that we may be purified even as he is pure. Amen.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.