

CHAMPION OF LIBERTY

I have been asking the Lord to show me how to adjust the property of the Church, held in the name of the late President Brigham Young, so as to do justice to his estate and yet not wrong the Church, and have received the following answer:

You have asked of me, and others of the Twelve have asked of me, that wisdom might be given to you to adjust these property matters of the Church; Thus saith the Lord: Be one, be united, be honest, act upon the principles of justice and righteousness to the living and to the dead and to my Church, and I, the Lord, will sustain you and will acknowledge your labors. Amen.

Salt Lake City, Utah Terr. }  
November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1877 }

Revelation given through John Taylor at Salt Lake City, November 19, 1877. This revelation, in the handwriting of George Q. Cannon, deals with the Brigham Young estate and is the first revelation recorded by John Taylor as the senior Apostle of the Church. (Courtesy of Church History Library.)

*Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and Christopher C. Jones*

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“JOHN THE REVELATOR”:  
THE WRITTEN REVELATIONS  
OF JOHN TAYLOR

**I**N February 1879, the anti-Mormon *Salt Lake Tribune* nicknamed John Taylor “John the Revelator.”<sup>1</sup> Though meant to disparage President Taylor, this appellation echoed what many Latter-day Saints believed—that John Taylor, as the presiding Apostle of The Church of Jesus Christ, was the successor of the first two prophets, Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, and an inspired recipient of the word of God in his own right.

John Taylor believed in continuing revelation, a major principle of the restored gospel that he accepted when he joined the Church in Canada in 1836. Nearly forty years later he said, “We believe that it is necessary for man to be placed in communication with God, . . . not revelation in former times, but present and immediate revelation.”<sup>2</sup> From the time of Brigham Young’s death

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in 1877 until his own death in 1887, John Taylor led the Church by “present and immediate revelation,” proclaiming on several occasions, “Thus saith the Lord.”<sup>3</sup>

During his ministry, John Taylor often asked members of the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and other priesthood leaders to sustain his prophetic declarations and revelations.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, President Taylor published two revelations, one dated October 13, 1882, and another dated April 14, 1883.<sup>5</sup> As stake presidents, bishops, and quorum officers read these printed revelations in various meetings, Church members reacted with gratitude. Charles Lowell Walker, for example, “spoke of the satisfaction of the [April 14, 1883] Revelation lately given of the Lord [through John Taylor] concerning His Church and Priesthood. I endorsed it and testified of its truth and coming from God.”<sup>6</sup>

## THE PROCESS OF REVELATION

George Reynolds, President Taylor’s private secretary, provided insights to the revelatory process that he witnessed as John Taylor’s scribe, recording the revelations as they came through the prophet:

When I reported at the Gardo House [the President’s home and office] in the morning I would occasionally find him writing at a table either in his bed room or in the small office on the west side of the building, occupied by myself. On my arrival, he would arise, I would seat myself where he had been sitting, and he would continue the revelation he had commenced to write by dictating it to me. While so doing he generally walked backwards and forwards along the room. When the writing was finished I read it to him, generally more than once, and

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he would say, “Yes, that’s right.” On only one occasion do I remember that he made any alternation in that which was written. There was one short phrase that did not appear quite plain. I read it over to him three times, he then slightly changed it, and when I again read it, he said, “That’s right.”<sup>7</sup>

Reynolds observed, “Generally when a message is prefaced with ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ the language as well as the ideas are His, not that of the prophet.” He believed that the revelations John Taylor received were, in fact, “direct wording of the Lord.” He stated, “Two things are noticeable in the wording of [John Taylor’s] revelations,—their similarity to the revelations given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the difference between them and President Taylor’s ordinary style of speaking and writing.” Reynolds, who was familiar with President Taylor’s conversation style, said, “The President would [normally] preface his subject with a somewhat lengthy introduction or argument, working gradually to the point he wished to make.” However, Reynolds noted, “in the revelations given through him the Lord makes no preface. ‘Verily thus saith the Lord, let my servant,’ or ‘Verily thus saith the Lord, it is my will;’ the main subject is reached at once and when the message is delivered the revelation closes without peroration or argument.”<sup>8</sup>

It may be of interest to note that on several occasions, President Taylor asked Reynolds to read the revelations to Church leaders instead of reading it himself. For example, George Q. Cannon noted, “Prest. Taylor had Bro. Geo. Reynolds read to Bro. Jos F. Smith and myself the revelation [October 13, 1882; see below] he had received that morning concerning the filling of the vacancies in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and the presidency of the Seventies. The Lord designated Bros George

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Teasdale and Heber J. Grant to be Apostles, and Bro. Seymour B. Young to be Ordained to fill the vacancy in the Presidency of the Seventies.”<sup>9</sup> On the following day, the First Presidency met a group of Church leaders. Again, President Taylor asked Reynolds to read the revelation to those assembled.<sup>10</sup>

## REPOSITORY

During John Taylor’s ministry, the original revelation manuscripts were apparently kept at the Gardo House. Reynolds worked at the President’s office but moved into the home after President Taylor went on the “Mormon Underground” in an effort to keep the President’s office running effectively. Eventually, federal officers began looking for Reynolds. As a result, he moved from the President’s office in April 1885 to various locations in an effort to avoid capture. Reynolds most likely took some of the most important presidential papers with him, including the revelation collection.<sup>11</sup> In 1886, President Taylor requested Reynolds to provide a member of the Church a copy of the October 1882 revelation.<sup>12</sup>

Today, copies of John Taylor’s written revelations are found in the journals of Church leaders and lay members who treasured the words of the Lord when they recorded them in their private records.<sup>13</sup> The most important repository of John Taylor’s revelations, both the original manuscripts and copies of the revelations, is the Church History Library in Salt Lake City.

One revelation, dated November 19, 1877, is preserved in at least two copies, both of which are in the distinctive handwriting of George Q. Cannon, a counselor in the First Presidency. Both copies are found in the Church History Library. A collection of revelations is found in a small booklet (5  $\frac{2}{3}$  × 2  $\frac{2}{3}$  inches), also

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located in the Church History Library. The booklet, numbering 120 pages, contains copies of eight revelations in the handwriting of George F. Gibbs.<sup>14</sup> Gibbs was an employee of the office of the First Presidency from 1876 until 1924.<sup>15</sup> In addition to his services as a secretary to the First Presidency during this critical period, Gibbs was appointed clerk to the Council of Fifty (see discussion below) and became a member of that body in 1882.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, Gibbs served as one of the Church reporters beginning in 1876, taking down talks in shorthand for publication.<sup>17</sup>

The revelations recorded in Gibbs’s booklet are copies of the original revelations because, as noted, Reynolds was President Taylor’s scribe for many of the revelations. Later, Reynolds recalled, “It was my privilege to write from President Taylor’s dictation nearly all the revelations that he received.”<sup>18</sup>

It is impossible to know, without further information, when Gibbs prepared this booklet, but it appears that the revelations contained in the booklet were recorded in the collection around the same time. Since the eight revelations cover the period from June 1882 through December 1884, the earliest possible date for the creation of the collection is likely 1885. Gibbs may have prepared the booklet during John Taylor’s last years of service (1885–87) or during Wilford Woodruff’s ministry (1887–98). The original purpose of the booklet is unknown. Apparently, years after Wilford Woodruff’s death, his wife, Emma Smith Woodruff, gave the booklet to President Taylor’s daughter, Annie Taylor Hyde (1847–1909), in 1907. The booklet passed to Edna Hyde Ridges (1874–1943) and was found in a false drawer of a shaving kit in the attic of Edna’s home by her daughter, Jennie Ridges Farley (1901–76). Jennie’s son, Kenneth Ridges Farley, donated the booklet to the Church History Library in Salt Lake City in 1986.<sup>19</sup>

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What follows is a discussion of each of John Taylor's revelations in the order in which he received them.

### THE NOVEMBER 19, 1877, REVELATION

Apparently, John Taylor's first written revelation as the presiding Apostle in the Church is dated November 19, 1877, just a few months after Brigham Young's death in August 1877. The revelation includes a brief introduction: "I have been asking the Lord to show me how to adjust the property of the Church, held in the name of the late President Brigham Young, so as to do justice to his estate and yet not wrong the Church." The answer, in part, came: "You have asked of me . . . that wisdom might be given you to adjust these property matters of the Church. Thus saith the Lord: Be one, be united, be honest, act upon the principles of justice and righteousness to the living and to the dead and to my Church."<sup>20</sup>

The effort to settle Brigham Young's estate was challenging because it was difficult to distinguish what property belonged to the Church in Brigham Young's name and what property legitimately belonged to the surviving family members.<sup>21</sup> A few days after John Taylor received this revelation, he met with Elder Richards, who noted in his journal, "The Lord makes manifest to Bro. Taylor how & what to do for which I feel grateful to thank His Holy Name."<sup>22</sup>

Several months later, reflecting the wording and sentiment of the November 19, 1877, revelation, Wilford Woodruff noted, "This is a very important day in the history of my life and the Church. . . . After six months of hard labor we have effected a settlement with the executors of the estate, George Q. Cannon, Brigham Young [Jr.], and Albert Carrington, who have done all

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in their power to settle the business in equity and righteousness.”<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, some heirs challenged the proposed settlement, and it took another year and a half to finally satisfy all parties involved. At that time, John Taylor said, “We have now come out of a very unpleasant affair and feel somewhat relieved. I feel that the Lord has had a hand in all these things and the results will be for our good. . . . I know that the Lord will stand by us, if we will stand by him and one another—and maintain our position and integrity before God, and do right. The Lord will sustain us and His Holy Angels will guard and protect us and all will be well.”<sup>24</sup>

John Taylor chose not to publish this revelation. George Reynolds provided his insight as to why John Taylor did not publish all of his revelations: “Only a few of the revelations given through [John Taylor] have been published, as the greater portion were not addressed to the Church as a whole, or to the world, but to individuals or special bodies of brethren.”<sup>25</sup>

THE JUNE 25–26, 1882, REVELATION

John Taylor received a revelation on Sunday evening, June 25, and during the early morning of Monday, June 26—just three months after U.S. president Chester Arthur signed the Edmunds Act into law on March 22, 1882. The act began a new phase of the federal prosecution against the Church, identified as the “decisive attack on polygamy.”<sup>26</sup>

This revelation answered President Taylor’s question, “Is the law of Celestial Marriage a law given to this nation or to the world?” The answer reads in part, “No. In no other sense than as the Gospel is given, and in accordance with the laws thereof. . . . It is only those who receive the Gospel that are able to, or capable of, entering into this Covenant.” It continues to quote extensively

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from Joseph Smith's own revelation on plural marriage, now known as Doctrine and Covenants 132.

This revelation reaffirms the eternal nature of the covenant and concludes by admonishing the Saints to "abide in my law" and to "contend for your rights by every legal and constitutional method and in accordance with the institutions, laws, and Constitution of the United States." It promises the Saints that if they obey God's law, "your enemies shall be confounded, and my Kingdom shall be victorious."<sup>27</sup> The law, in this instance, was plural marriage. Again, President Taylor decided not to publish this revelation.

### THE JUNE 27, 1882, REVELATION

President Taylor received another revelation, dated June 27, 1882, during the same month. It specifically addresses the Council of Fifty, a political council established by Joseph Smith in March 1844.<sup>28</sup> President Taylor reconvened the council for the first time in nearly twelve years on April 10, 1880, two years before this revelation was received.<sup>29</sup>

In this revelation and the ones that follow, the term *Church* designates The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the term *Kingdom* designates the kingdom of God or the Council of Fifty, which has been identified by revelation as "The Kingdom of God, and His laws, with the keys and power thereof, and judgment in the hands of his servants, Ahman Christ."<sup>30</sup> This distinction between *Church* and *Kingdom* originated during the lifetime of the Prophet Joseph Smith. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, Latter-day Saints began using the terms interchangeably for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, eliminating the distinction between the ecclesiastical and

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the political organizations established by the Prophet Joseph Smith.<sup>31</sup>

This revelation affirms not only Joseph Smith’s role as the Prophet of the Restoration but also John Taylor’s place as his successor and spokesman for the Lord: “I raised up my servant Joseph Smith to introduce my Gospel, and to build up my Church and establish my Kingdom on the earth,” and “Now, behold, I speak unto you through my servant John, whom you have acknowledged and shall acknowledge as my spokesman.”<sup>32</sup>

The revelation also declared President Taylor’s rightful place as Joseph Smith’s and Brigham Young’s successor, both as the prophetic leader in the Church and as the head of the Kingdom of God.<sup>33</sup> At the time, several self-proclaimed prophets, such as Joseph Smith III, challenged John Taylor’s right to lead the Church.<sup>34</sup> President George Q. Cannon, counselor in the First Presidency, noted in 1882 that he had “heard more of new prophets and revelators” than he had “for several years.” He continued, “I do not know how many prophets I have heard of who have arisen. . . . Many revelations have been sent to me by persons who claim the right to preside over the Church and to be the Prophet of the Church.”<sup>35</sup>

In addition, the revelation explicitly informed the council that the Lord’s voice would continue to come through John Taylor: “Verily, thus saith the Lord, I have instituted my Kingdom and my laws, with the keys and power thereof, and have appointed . . . President John Taylor at your head, whom I have appointed to my Church and my Kingdom as Prophet, Seer and Revelator unto my Church and unto my Kingdom . . . to be my mouthpiece unto my Church and unto my Kingdom.”<sup>36</sup>

John Henry Smith, a member of both the Quorum of the Twelve and the Council of Fifty, provides documentation in

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his journal on June 27, 1882, that President Taylor submitted the revelations to Church leaders for their sustaining: “Two revelations were accepted as the word and will of God. They were given through President John Taylor, and in the same the Lord has promised to fight our battles for us.”<sup>37</sup> Elder Richards also noted, “Much conversation and argument was used about the Revelation already read on a motion for its adoption as the Word & Will of [the] Lord as also another recd. today. . . . Both Revelations were adopted as the Word & Will of God.”<sup>38</sup>

This revelation was not published by President Taylor, most likely because, as George Reynold noted, it was a revelation to a specific body of men—the Council of Fifty.

### THE JUNE 28, 1882, REVELATION

Another revelation was received on the following day, dated June 28, 1882, and follows on the heels of the two previous revelations directed to the Council of Fifty.<sup>39</sup> This revelation reassured the leaders of the council and of the Church that the Lord controls the destiny of nations, his Church, and his kingdom: “And if they fight against me and my laws, and my Church, and my Kingdom, they shall be overthrown in mine own due time, for I have so decreed. Even so, Amen.”<sup>40</sup> As with the earlier revelations given in June 1882, President Taylor did not publish this revelation.

### THE OCTOBER 13, 1882, REVELATION

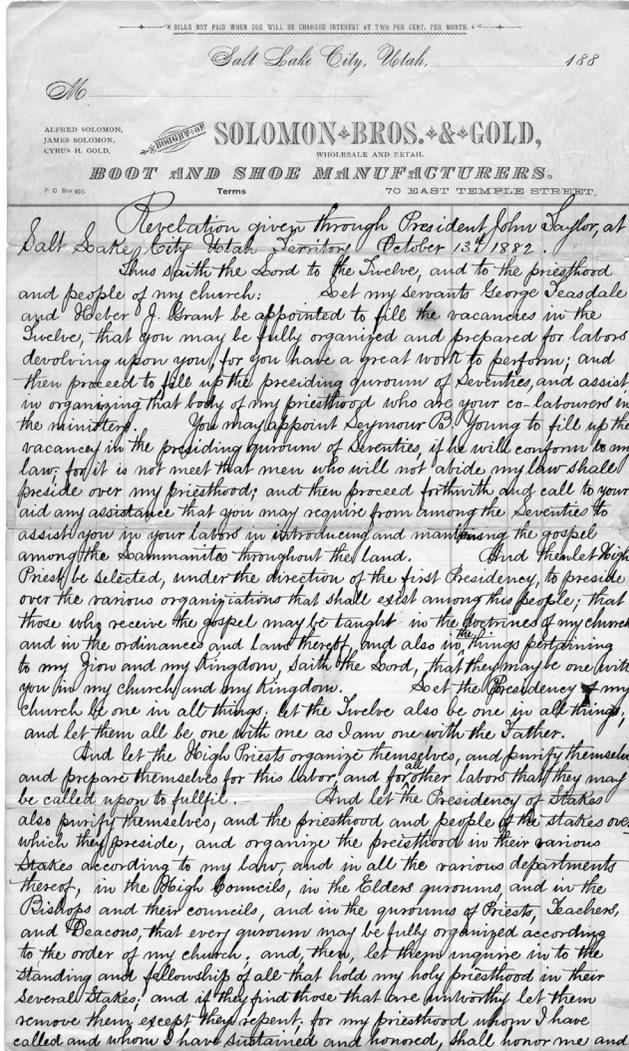
President Taylor received an important revelation on October 13, 1882. This revelation dealt with Church organizational matters, including the call of three men to fill vacancies in the leading quorums of the Church. When the First Presidency was

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reorganized in October 1880, John Taylor called Francis M. Lyman and John Henry Smith to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.<sup>41</sup> However, this still left one vacancy in the Quorum. A second vacancy occurred when Orson Pratt died on October 3, 1881.<sup>42</sup> Church leaders struggled to identify two men to fill these vacancies, resulting in no callings at either the April or October 1882 general conferences. On Friday, October 13, President Taylor received a revelation on the subject.<sup>43</sup> He met with his counselors in the First Presidency later in the morning and, as noted above, had George Reynolds read the revelation.<sup>44</sup> At noon, members of the Twelve Apostle met to hear the revelation.<sup>45</sup> During this busy day, President Taylor sent telegrams to local stake presidents, inviting them to attend an important meeting at 7:00 p.m.<sup>46</sup> For some unknown reason, the gathering was delayed until the next day. As a result President Taylor placed an announcement in the *Deseret News*: “Presidents of Stake and their Counselors will meet at my office, to-morrow morning at 10:00 am.”<sup>47</sup>

On Saturday morning, members of the Twelve Apostles and stake presidency members assembled at John Taylor’s office in the Gardo House. Elder Richards noted, “At 10 . . . listened to Geo. Reynolds read a Revelation recd by Prest. Taylor yesterday morning.”<sup>48</sup> President Taylor asked President Cannon to speak to the group, and President Cannon recorded his talk in his journal. John Irvine, a Church recorder, also carefully recorded it: “If the brethren feel as I do about these matters, no doubt they have a feeling of great satisfaction in their minds respecting the word of the Lord that we have received. I think myself that it is a precious privilege to live in a day and time when God’s will can be made know unto us, His people, as it always has been. There never has been a moment since this church was organized up to the

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One of several contemporary handwritten copies of a revelation given through John Taylor at Salt Lake City, October 13, 1882. This revelation calls George Teasdale and Heber J. Grant to “fill the vacancies of the Twelve.” (Courtesy of Church History Library.)

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present time that we have not had the mind and will of God made accessible to us; we had only to ask and receive.”

President Cannon continued, providing insight and context for this revelation:

Now, respecting these matters that have been laid before us, respecting the appointment to the Quorum of the Twelve and Presidency of the Seventies, there was a difference of views among us. We have not had our minds settled. I suppose it is an open secret that this has been the case. The spirit has not made itself manifest in such a manner that we could be satisfied, and therefore no steps have been taken up to the present to fill the vacancies. . . . But when the word of the Lord comes respecting matters of this kind, there is not difference of opinion, there is no room for difference of opinion. We know that God controls this works and presides over it. We know that He has controlled it from the beginning, and that He will control it as long as the earth stands. He will appoint and call His servants as he thinks fit. He directs this work. It is not the work of man.<sup>49</sup>

On Monday, October 16, President Taylor met again with Church leaders, including the Presidents of the Seventy and a few invited guests. Abraham H. Cannon wrote in his diary, “I worked in the office until 3:30 p.m. when I attended a Council meeting of the First Presidency, Seventies and Twelve in the President’s office, where a revelation of the Lord to Pres. Taylor was read.”<sup>50</sup>

Heber J. Grant, who had been invited to this special meeting, noted in his journal, “Recd a telegram from Apostle F. M. Lyman last evening telling me not to fail in coming to Salt Lake today to attend a Council at 3:30 p.m.”<sup>51</sup> He had taken a train from Tooele to Salt Lake City, was met at the depot, and was taken

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immediately to the Gardo House. He continued his account: “Pres. Taylor stated that the word of the Lord had been recd. regarding the filling of the vacancies in the Quorum of Apostles also the vacancy in the Prests of Seventies—Bro. Geo Reynolds read a revelation in which the Lord stated that he had chosen Bro. Teasdale and myself as Apostle and Bro. S. B. Young as a Prest. of Seventies. Bro Teasdale and myself were ordained under the hands of the 1<sup>st</sup> Presidency of the Church and the Twelve. Prest. Taylor was mouth in Bro. Teasdale’s ordination. Prest. Cannon in mine.”<sup>52</sup>

The revelation Heber J. Grant heard for the first time at this meeting began, “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. . . . You may appoint Seymour B. Young to fill up the vacancy in the presiding quorum of Seventies.”<sup>53</sup>

President Taylor wrote to Albert Carrington, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve who was in the British Isles serving as mission president of the European missions, with a personal update: “The vacancies in the quorum of the Twelve Apostles were not filled at Conference; but since its close, the Lord has revealed His will and designated Elder George Teasdale and Heber J. Grant to fill those vacancies, and also that we might appoint Elder Seymour B. Young to fill the vacancy in the presiding quorum of Seventies. This revelation was submitted to the Twelve and by them accepted, and was afterwards read to the Presidents of Stakes, First Presidents of Seventies and a few others.”<sup>54</sup>

The news of the revelation spread rather quickly to local priesthood leaders and then on to lay members of the Church. For example, Charles Lowell Walker, who lived in southern Utah, noted in his diary at the beginning of November 1882, “Attended

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the Priesthood Meeting again at the [St. George] Tabernacle. . . . President MacAllister read a Revelation from God thro Pres J[ohn] Taylor in which it tells him to set in order the quorum of the Twelve, the Seventies and High Priests, and the other Quorums. . . . It was rather lengthy and I cannot remember it all.”<sup>55</sup>

In addition to announcing new Church leaders, the revelation also informed Seymour Young that he must “conform to [God’s] law, for it is not meet that men who will not abide my law shall preside over my Priesthood.”<sup>56</sup> President Taylor and Wilford Woodruff, President of the Twelve, explained the meaning of the revelation in a meeting held on October 14, just a day after the revelation was received. President Taylor said, “A man obeying a lower Law is not qualified to preside over those who keep a higher Law.” President Woodruff added, “The leading men of Israel who are presiding over Stakes will have to obey the Law of Abraham or they will have to Stop.”<sup>57</sup>

The revelation emphasized that Church leaders should be united: “Let the Presidency of my Church be one in all things; and let the Twelve also be one in all things; and let them all be one with me as I am one with the Father. And let the High Priests organize themselves, and purify themselves, and prepare themselves for this labor, and for all other labors that they may be called upon to fulfill.”<sup>58</sup>

William G. Hartley noted that in addition to calling priesthood leaders to increased righteousness by keeping God’s law (plural marriage), the October 13 revelation explained that the Seventies should assist the Twelve in their “labors in introducing and maintaining the gospel among the Lamanites throughout the land.”<sup>59</sup> George Reynolds explained, “This last Revelation marks a new epoch in our history that was my view. It shows that the fulness of the Gentiles long looked for has come in, and that

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henceforth the burden of our labors will be directed to the House of Israel commencing with the Lamanites.”<sup>60</sup>

President Taylor decided to publish this document as a three-page pamphlet before the end of the year in 1882; it was the first revelation he printed during his ministry.<sup>61</sup> Because it was printed, this revelation became fairly well known among Church leaders. Elder Richards, apparently still basking in the light of the October 1882 revelation, emphasized in an important article published in November, “Therefore, as has been committed unto us, so we deliver to you, that you believe in, and teach the importance of continuing revelation.”<sup>62</sup>

### THE APRIL 14, 1883, REVELATION

President Taylor received another revelation on the last day of a two-day meeting held on April 13 and 14, 1883, in which President Taylor met with the Twelve and the Presidents of the Seventy to discuss the mobilization of the quorums of the seventies in accordance with the October 13, 1882, revelation. They concluded that they would reorganize the First Quorum of Seventies, which had not functioned since 1844.<sup>63</sup> Abraham H. Cannon, one of the presidents of the Seventy in attendance at the meeting, noted, “These instructions were confirmed by the voice of revelation.”<sup>64</sup> Elder Richards attended the meeting on April 14 and recorded in his journal, “9:40 am Pres. Taylor’s office. . . . Heard George Reynolds read the conclusions & directions of the Presidency as to the method of reorganizing the Quorum of Seventies and a Revelation give[n] today through Prest. John Taylor.”<sup>65</sup>

The revelation stated in part, “What ye have written is my will, and is acceptable unto me; and furthermore, thus saith the Lord unto

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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, 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 decisions to the First Seven Presidents of the Seventies.

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.

*A Revelation given through President John Taylor, at Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, on Saturday, April 14th, 1883, in answer to the question: "Show unto us Thy will, O Lord, concerning the organization of the Seventies."*

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 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.

To the Seventies (*Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1883*). This pamphlet contains one of John Taylor's printed revelations, "A Revelation given through President John Taylor," Salt Lake City, April 14, 1883. (Courtesy of R. Q. and Susan Shupe, Oceanside, California).

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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.”<sup>66</sup>

Shortly thereafter, the instructions and the revelation were published as a pamphlet and distributed.<sup>67</sup> Charles Lowell Walker noted that the document reached southern Utah by May 3: “To day I saw a circular from the First Presidency regarding the organization of the Seventies, and a Revelation from God, thru Pres. John Taylor on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April in answer to the Question, ‘Show unto us thy will, O Lord, concerning the organization of the Seventies.’”<sup>68</sup>

### THE APRIL 28, 1883, REVELATION

President Taylor received a revelation on April 28, 1883, reminding the Church to “be one in spiritual things” and exhorting the First Presidency, the Twelve, stake presidencies, high councils, and priesthood holders in general to “be diligent and act in their several positions, callings, or Priesthood, and honor and magnify the same, and honor and obey me, the Lord their God, and respect and obey the counsels of my holy Priesthood,” with the promise that the Lord “will honor and exalt them . . . in time and throughout eternity.”<sup>69</sup>

The revelation ends with a command to reconvene the School of the Prophets: “These things belong to my Priesthood, but more properly to the School of the Prophets. Let the School of the Prophets be organized, even all such as are worthy. But if they are found unworthy they shall not have a place in my school; for I will be honored by my Priesthood; and let my laws be made known unto them as may be deemed expedient.”<sup>70</sup>

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Joseph Smith established the first School of the Prophets in 1833, emphasizing religious and secular topics of study. Once in Utah, Brigham Young organized similar schools, and although the size and focus varied, the purpose of the school remained the same: to help establish the Church more fully through education and planning.<sup>71</sup>

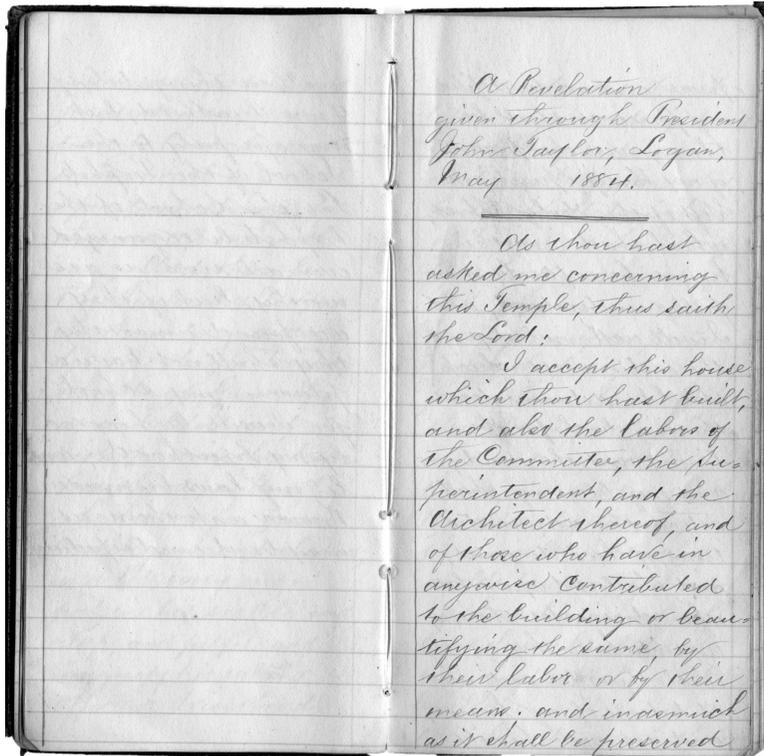
John Taylor’s revelation on the School of the Prophets was not published or canonized. Nevertheless, President Taylor acted upon it and reorganized the School of the Prophets on October 12, 1883.<sup>72</sup>

THE MAY 1884 REVELATION

President Taylor received a revelation in May 1884, at the time of the dedication of the Logan Temple.<sup>73</sup> During the dedication on May 17, 1884, President Taylor prayed, “We have built this house, and present it to Thee, and pray that Thou wilt accept it in the name of Thy Son Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Redeemer.”<sup>74</sup> Soon thereafter, either on the evening of May 17 or during the morning of May 18, John Taylor received the Lord’s answer to his petition: “As thou hast asked me concerning this temple, thus saith the Lord: I accept this house which thou hast built, and also the labors of the Committee, the Superintendent, and the Architect thereof, and of those who have in anywise contributed to the building or beautifying the same by their labor or by their means; and inasmuch as it shall be preserved pure and not be defiled, my presence shall be there, even the power of my Spirit, the Gift of the Holy Ghost; which shall in this house hereafter be more fully understood.”<sup>75</sup>

Although President Taylor did not publish this particular revelation, he alluded to the Lord’s answer to his dedication

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*Revelation given through John Taylor at Logan, Utah, May 1884. This revelation, in the handwriting of George F. Gibbs, is part of the John Taylor revelation booklet prepared by Gibbs. (Courtesy of Church History Library)*

prayer in several meetings with the Saints in the days following the first dedication service. For example, Jo Ann Sloan Rogers recorded in her diary a synopsis of President Taylor's address in a meeting at the temple on May 18, a day after the first dedication service: "Prest Taylor spoke of the Priest[hoods] Aaronic and Melchisedek. Spoke of the comforter Jesus promised would come & show the things of the Father[,] which has been given for our

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instructions in these days. . . . He declared the [Logan] Temple & the Labors thereon were sanctioned & approved of the Lord.”<sup>76</sup>

A few days later, on May 22, President Woodruff noted in his journal, “I visited the Temple. President Taylor told the People to record that the Lord was well pleased with the Temple the people had built and accepted of the Dedication at the Hands of his People, and if they wished to ornament it they were at Liberty to do so and this is the word of the Lord unto you.”<sup>77</sup> L. John Nuttall also recorded a synopsis of this address in his diary, including the observation that the Lord had accepted the dedication of the temple, providing a slight variation of President Taylor’s concluding words, “I state this as the Word of the Lord.”<sup>78</sup>

THE DECEMBER 25, 1884, REVELATION

The final revelation recorded in Gibbs’ booklet is dated December 25, 1884.<sup>79</sup> In this revelation, the Lord chastens the Saints for their failure “to put themselves in order before the Lord.” The Lord speaks of “a day of trouble and anxiety and sorrow and judgment [that] will soon overtake this nation and other nations.” Because of this, the Lord continues, “the inhabitants of Zion must purge themselves from iniquity, folly, covetousness, and vanity, and listen to and obey my laws, or they cannot have my protection.” Finally, the Lord concludes by promising to “be your shield and protector, and your strong tower and no man shall be able to hurt you, for I will be your defense” if you will “listen to the counsels of those whom I have appointed, and seek not your own will and way, but the will of the Lord your God; For by him only can you be sustained in the time of trouble which is fast approaching, Even so, Amen.”<sup>80</sup>

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The prophetic warning that “the time of trouble . . . [was] fast approaching” was fulfilled shortly thereafter. Six weeks after President Taylor received the Christmas Day revelation, he gave his last public address before going into seclusion on the Mormon Underground. As President Daniel H. Wells, a counselor in the First Presidency, argued, “The First Presidency and many of the Apostles” did so “to avoid the consequences of mock trials and packed juries with which a prejudice and wicked judiciary are seeking to harass the servants of God.”<sup>81</sup> Thus began a long and difficult exile from home, family, and friends for Church leaders and their associates.<sup>82</sup>

### RUMORS, VISIONS, AND REVELATIONS

Unable to attend public gatherings or to hold regularly scheduled meetings with the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, and other Church leaders (many of whom were either in prison or on the Mormon Underground themselves), President Taylor attempted to keep the Saints informed through a series of epistles, circulars, and broadsides and through a remarkable letter-writing campaign during this difficult period.<sup>83</sup> Despite such extraordinary efforts, various rumors spread among the Saints regarding his activities in his physical absence, including reports that federal officers had captured him. Additionally, reports circulated about purported visions and alleged revelations he had received. For example, Abraham H. Cannon, a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, reported in March 1886, “Bro. Olson brought word in this evening that President Taylor had received a revelation from the Lord in which it stated that God was satisfied with the sacrifice made by the people in this crusade. . . . This word, he said, came from Bishop Allen of the 21<sup>st</sup> Ward,

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and, if true, we as a people can rejoice at it.”<sup>84</sup> Note his cautionary and hopeful acceptance of the report: “*if* true, we as a people can rejoice.” Additionally, this particular report reveals a rather unique situation as a General Authority was, in this instance, relying on lay members for information about President Taylor.<sup>85</sup>

Another account surfaced in July 1886, when Philo Dibble told a group of Saints that President Taylor had seen Joseph Smith the Prophet in vision and discussed with him the current challenges facing the Saints.<sup>86</sup>

In addition to this revelation and vision, another document surfaced after John Taylor’s death in July 1887 that purports to be President Taylor’s last revelation, received on September 27, 1886.<sup>87</sup> A copy in circulation begins: “My son John. You have asked me concerning the New & Everlasting covenant how far it is binding upon my peop[le.] Thus saith the Lord All commandments that I give must be obeyed by those, calling themselves by my name unless they are revoked by my [*sic*] or by my authority, and how can I revoke an everlasting covenant.”<sup>88</sup>

Beginning in 1912, a sensational vision became associated with this revelation.<sup>89</sup> In the 1920s a greatly expanded version of the vision began circulating which told of the ordination of five men by resurrected beings who were authorized “to perpetuate plural marriage, independent of Church leaders.”<sup>90</sup> Although the authenticity of the vision is not necessarily connected to the veracity of the revelation itself, the issue of corroborative documentation for the revelation also remains the most significant obstacle in connecting it with President Taylor. For example, President George Q. Cannon did not say anything about the revelation in his personal diary.<sup>91</sup> They were in close proximity, both day and night, under the protection of guards in a secret location where

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movement was extremely limited; thus it seems odd that nothing was mentioned in his diary on this occasion.

Nuttall, President Taylor's private secretary, does not mention the revelation or purported ordination regarding plural marriage in his fairly detailed diary. Some groups have claimed that Nuttall made five copies of the revelation at the time.<sup>92</sup> Nuttall was also in close quarters with President Taylor, and therefore the silence in his diary and the diary of George Q. Cannon is deafening, raising serious questions about the purported revelation's authenticity. Finally, Samuel Bateman, one of President Taylor's bodyguards, failed to mention the revelation or the special ordinations in his own diary.<sup>93</sup> The absence of any mention of this event undermines the claim that he was one of the men ordained on that occasion.

In addition to these purported visions and alleged revelation, there are at least two documents attributed to John Taylor that are most certainly not genuine, one dated December 16, 1877, and another that surfaced in 1951.<sup>94</sup>

By mid-1886, President Taylor's health began to deteriorate. During the last eight months of his life he lived in the farm home of Thomas and Margaret Roueche in Kaysville, Utah. Finally, after two and half years on the Mormon Underground, President Taylor died on July 25, 1887, at 7:55 p.m.<sup>95</sup>

## SIGNIFICANCE OF PRESIDENT TAYLOR'S REVELATIONS

B. H. Roberts identified one of the significances of John Taylor's revelations: "His counsels, his warnings, his doctrines and promises received the most direct approval by the voice of God Himself, demonstrating that his teaching had all along been inspired."<sup>96</sup> Although these revelations were not presented

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to the general Church body and thereby not canonized, Latter-day Saints recognize that they represented the “mind and will of the Lord” given to the Lord’s anointed servant at a specific time and at a specific place, comprising what President Taylor called “present and immediate revelation.”<sup>97</sup> President George Q. Cannon provided an important perspective on the subject: “They [the revelations through the Prophet] were authentic and divinely inspired, whether any man or body of men received them or not. Their reception or non-reception of them would not affect in the least their divine authenticity.”<sup>98</sup>

Additionally, John Taylor’s revelations are important documents that provide insights into his ministry, highlighting particularly the concerns he grappled with during this important transitional period in the history of the Church. Additionally, these revelations constitute a significant repository of primary source material that should be used to reconstruct an understanding of his life and labors.

John Taylor’s October 13, 1882, and April 14, 1883, revelations were printed in several foreign language editions of the Doctrine and Covenants for a few years (as sections 147 and 138) following President Taylor’s death.<sup>99</sup> Finally, John Taylor’s revelations continue to be printed and discussed in a number of official publications of the Church and in important scholarly works dealing with this period of Latter-day Saint history.<sup>100</sup> All of this collectively signifies the continuing importance of President John Taylor’s written revelations in understanding the Latter-day Saint past.

In 1881 President Taylor said, “Very few men upon the face of the earth believe in revelation from God. . . . They know nothing about, ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ as men used to do when they had the gospel.”<sup>101</sup> During his nearly ten years as the presiding

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Apostle and President of the Church, John Taylor led the Church and kingdom by inspiration and revelation. He often recorded the revelations he received from the Lord and presented them to Church leaders. On two occasions, President Taylor printed his revelations for wider distribution among Church leaders.

A review of his written revelations reveals a Church leader dependent upon direct revelation to guide the Church and kingdom of God. The revelations provide insights on the issues that John Taylor faced during his administration and the Lord's response to those issues. The revelations also provide a window into the nature and scope of his prophetic leadership. From them emerges a portrait of a dedicated and spiritually sensitive leader who proclaimed "Thus saith the Lord," and who, through his ministry, had indeed become a modern "John the Revelator."

## NOTES

1. "John the Revelator," *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 19, 1879, 2; see also "Solid with the Revelator," *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 16, 1877, [4]; and "The Vacant Prophethship," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 7, 1880, 2.
2. John Taylor, "What the Gospel Teaches," February 1, 1874, in *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854–86), 16:369.
3. John Taylor's revelations are outlined in this essay. A complete annotated transcription of these revelations will be published in Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and Christopher C. Jones, eds., *The Revelations of John Taylor, 1877–1887* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, forthcoming).
4. See, for example, J. H. Smith Journal, June 27, 1882; as cited in *Church, State, and Politics*, ed. Jane Bickmore White (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990), 80. Additionally, John Taylor wrote as a foreword to *Items on Priesthood, Presented to the Latter-day Saints*, "The following views have been submitted

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to the Council of the Twelve and have received their sanction; they were also laid before the Priesthood Meeting at the Semi-Annual Conference held in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City October 9<sup>th</sup> A.D. 1880, and were unanimously accepted by the large body at Priesthood present on that occasion” (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1881), 1–2. Two years later, he noted in his important publication, *On Marriage*: “The foregoing ideas and considerations were submitted by me to the Council of the Apostles, and were approved by that body, and have been read” (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1882), 8.

5. *Revelation given through President John Taylor, at Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, October 13, 1882* (Salt Lake City, 1882) and *To the Seventies* (Salt Lake City, 1883), which included the April 14, 1883, revelation. Two variants of the *To the Seventies* circular were published during the same year; see items 1694, 1694a, and 1694b in Chad J. Flake and Larry W. Draper, eds., *A Mormon Bibliography, 1830–1930* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2004), 1:213.
6. Charles Lowell Walker Journal, May 19, 1883, Church History Library, Salt Lake City; see *Diary of Charles Lowell Walker*, ed. A. Karl Larson and Katharine Miles Larsen (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1980), 2:609.
7. George Reynolds, “Revelation—Inspiration,” *Juvenile Instructor*, March 1, 1902, 131.
8. Reynolds, “Revelation,” 130–31.
9. George Q. Cannon Journal, October 13, 1882, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.
10. See Franklin D. Richards Journal, October 14, 1882, Church History Library.
11. George Reynolds Journal, July 26, 1885, Church History Library.
12. L. John Nuttall Journal, November 10, 1886, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; see Jedediah S. Rogers, *In the President’s Office: The Diaries of L. John Nuttall, 1879–1892* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2007), 172.
13. Highlighting the effort to obtain copies of the revelations, L. John Nuttall noted, “A letter was recd. From Dr. John Cook of Benjamin, Utah Co, asking

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- for a copy [of] the Revelation given through Prest John Taylor in October 1886. Bro. [George] Reynolds was requested to send him a copy” (Nuttall Journal, November 10, 1886); see Rogers, *In the President’s Office*, 172. Some have wondered which revelation was intended since there was no October 1886 revelation. However, the original letter requesting the copy revelation asks for “a copy of the Revelation received by you on or about the 13<sup>th</sup> of October 1882” (Dr. John Cook to President John Taylor, November 8, 1886, John Taylor Papers, Church History Library).
14. “Revelations given to John Taylor, 1882–1884,” Church History Library. The revelations are recorded at the beginning and end of the booklet with a number of blank pages separating the two sections. Each section begins from the first page and proceeds forward. Interestingly, each section of the booklet is copied in reverse of the other. It is difficult to determine the purpose for this unusual recording of the revelations.
  15. Rogers, “Prominent Characters,” in *In the President’s Office*, xxxiv. See also Gibbs’s short autobiography in Eliza R. Snow, *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow: One of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1884), 352–58.
  16. D. Michael Quinn, “The Council of Fifty and Its Members, 1844 to 1945,” *BYU Studies* 20, no. 2 (Winter 1980): 194.
  17. See, for example, John Taylor, *Succession in the Priesthood: A Discourse by President John Taylor . . . Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs* (Salt Lake City, 1881).
  18. Reynolds, “Revelation,” 131.
  19. Reconstruction of the events is found in the “Bibliographic Information” file on John Taylor’s “Revelations given to John Taylor, 1882–1884,” Church History Library.
  20. John Taylor Revelation, November 19, 1877, Church History Library.
  21. Leonard Arrington, “The Settlement of the Brigham Young Estate, 1877–1879,” *Pacific Historical Review* 21, no. 1 (1952): 1–20.
  22. Franklin D. Richards Journal, November 23, 1877.
  23. Journal History of the Church, April 10, 1878, 1, Church History Library.

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24. L. John Nuttall Journal, October 4, 1879; see Rogers, *In the President's Office*, 33.
25. Reynolds, “Revelation,” 130.
26. See Edwin Brown Firmage and R. Collin Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 160; cf. 161–197.
27. Revelation to John Taylor, April 25–26, 1882, “Revelations given to John Taylor, 1882–1884.”
28. See Andrew F. Ehat, “‘It Seems Like Heaven Began on Earth’: Joseph Smith and the Constitution of the Kingdom of God,” *BYU Studies* 20, no. 3 (Spring 1980): 253–79.
29. See Wilford Woodruff Journal, April 10, 1880; as cited in Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 7:569.
30. Revelation to John Taylor, June 27, 1882, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.” The full name appears, with some variations, in other sources, including, William Clayton Journal, January 1, 1845, Church History Library; Franklin D. Richards Journal, March 16, 1880; Abraham H. Cannon Journal, October 9, 1884, L. Tom Perry Special Collections; John D. Lee Journal, March 3, 1849, Huntington Library, San Marino, California, as cited in Robert Glass Cleland and Juanita Brooks, eds., *A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee, 1848–1876* (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1955), 1:98; and Wilford Woodruff Journal, May 29, 1847, as cited in Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 3:188; see Quinn, “The Council of Fifty,” 167, n. 11.
31. See James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith: A Series of Lectures on the Principal Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1899), 376–79.
32. Revelation to John Taylor, June 27, 1882, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.”
33. Revelation to John Taylor, June 27, 1882, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.”
34. Incoming correspondences to John Taylor in the 1880s claimed special revelation and authority from various individuals; see “John Taylor Family

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- Papers (1883–1994),” Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah.
35. George Q. Cannon, “The Power and Authority,” October 29, 1882, in *Journal of Discourses*, 23:358–59.
  36. Revelation to John Taylor, June 27, 1882, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.”
  37. J. H. Smith Journal, June 27, 1882; as cited in White, *Church, State, and Politics*, 80.
  38. Franklin D. Richards Journal, June 27, 1882. In October, Elder Richards noted, “October 10, 1882. Tuesday. Met with Council of Kingdom—morning spent reading my minutes & Revelations & adopting them” (F. D. Richards Journal, October 19, 1882).
  39. The revelation is dated “end of June or very early July, 1882” by Gibbs (“Book of Revelations, 1882–1884”).
  40. Revelation to John Taylor, June 28, 1882, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.”
  41. John Henry Smith Journal, October 9, 1880; as cited in White, *Church, State, and Politics*, 53.
  42. Wilford Woodruff Journal, October 3, 1881, as cited in Kenney, Wilford Woodruff’s Journal, 8:54–55; Breck England, *The Life and Thought of Orson Pratt* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985), 286.
  43. See for example, *Revelation Given through President John Taylor, at Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, October 13, 1882* (Salt Lake City, 1882).
  44. George Q. Cannon Journal, October 13, 1882.
  45. President Cannon noted, “About noon we came over to the office and the revelation was read to the Twelve”; George Q. Cannon Journal, October 13, 1882.
  46. Elder Richards noted, “Received a telegram from Pres. Taylor to meet with Prests of Stakes at his office at 7.o.clock this PM” (Franklin D. Richards Journal, October 13, 1882).
  47. “President of Stake,” *Deseret News*, October 13, 1882; as cited in the Journal History of the Church, October 13, 1883, 5.
  48. Franklin D. Richards Journal, October 14, 1882.

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49. George Q. Cannon Journal, October 14, 1882.
50. Abraham H. Cannon Journal, October 16, 1882.
51. Heber J. Grant Journal, October 16, 1882, Church History Library.
52. Heber J. Grant Journal, October 16, 1882.
53. Revelation to John Taylor, October 13, 1882, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884”; see also *Revelation Given through President John Taylor, at Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, October 13, 1882* (Salt Lake City, 1882), 1.
54. “Correspondence,” *Millennial Star*, November 13, 1882, 732.
55. C. L. Walker Journal, November 4, 1882; see Larson and Larson, *Diary of Charles Lowell Walker*, 2:593.
56. Revelation to John Taylor, October 13, 1882, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884”; see also Nuttall diary entry for October 14, 1882 (cited in *In the President’s Office*, 95–97).
57. Woodruff Journal, October 14, 1882; as cited in Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, 8:126.
58. Revelation to John Taylor, October 13, 1882, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.”
59. William G. Hartley, “The Seventies in the 1880s: Revelations and Reorganizing,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 (Spring 1983): 67.
60. Isaiah M. Coombs Diary, November 23, 1882, Church History Library.
61. *Revelation Given through President John Taylor, at Salt Lake City, Utah Territory, October 13, 1882* (Salt Lake City, 1882).
62. Franklin D. Richards, “Continuing Revelation,” *Contributor*, November 1882, 47.
63. Hartley, “The Seventies in the 1880s,” 63, 69–71.
64. Abraham H. Cannon Journal, April 14, 1883.
65. Franklin D. Richards Journal, April 14, 1883.
66. Revelation to John Taylor, April 14, 1883, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.”
67. *To the Seventies: the following instructions were presented at a meeting of the First Presidency and the Councils of the Twelve Apostles and the First Seven Presidents*

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- of the Seventies, on Saturday, April 14th, 1883* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1883).
68. Charles Lowell Walker Journal, May 4, 1883; see Larson and Larson, *Diary of Charles Lowell Walker*, 609.
  69. Revelation to John Taylor, April 28, 1883, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.”
  70. Revelation to John Taylor, April 28, 1883, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.”
  71. See John R. Patrick, “The School of the Prophets: Its Development and Influence in Utah Territory” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 1970).
  72. George Reynolds Journal, October 12, 1883.
  73. Revelation given through President John Taylor, May 1884, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.”
  74. Prayer of Dedication, May 17, 1884; as cited in S. George Ellsworth, *The Logan Temple* (Logan, UT: Logan Temple Centennial Commemoration Committee, 1984), 32.
  75. Revelation to John Taylor, May 1884, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.”
  76. Jo Ann Sloan Rogers Diary, May 18, 1884, Church History Library.
  77. Wilford Woodruff Journal, May 22, 1884, as cited in Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, 8:252.
  78. L. John Nuttall Journal, May 22, 1884; see Rogers, *In the President’s Office*, 146.
  79. Revelation to John Taylor, December 25, 1884, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.”
  80. Revelation to John Taylor, December 25, 1884, “Book of Revelations, 1882–1884.”
  81. Daniel H. Wells, “Preface,” in *Journal of Discourses*, 26:ii.
  82. See L. John Nuttall’s reflection in 1887, “This is the 53<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of my birth, away from home, family and dear friends” (L. John Nuttall Journal, July 6, 1887, Church History Library); see Rogers, *In the President’s Office*, 198.

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83. For example, a broadside signed by John Taylor was printed in 1886 (*To the presidents of stakes, and bishops of ward. Dear brethren: Owing to the peculiar circumstances* [Salt Lake City, 1886]).
84. Abraham H. Cannon Journal, March 28, 1886; see *An Apostle's Record: The Journals of Abraham H. Cannon*, ed. Dennis B. Horne (Clearfield, UT: Gnolaum Books, 2004), 77.
85. This is all the more interesting because Abraham H. Cannon was not only a general Church officer as a member of the Presidency of the Seventy, but was also the son of George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency.
86. According to this report, Joseph Smith told John Taylor that he was displeased with Joseph Smith III's efforts to proselytize the Latter-day Saints (see Quinn, *Extensions of Power*, 786). The RLDS leader and son of the martyred Prophet visited Utah in 1876, 1885, the winter of 1887–88, and 1889 (see Roger Launius, *Joseph Smith III* [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995], 29).
87. The current location of the original document is unknown, making it virtually impossible to answer questions about dating and authorship. Various copies are in circulation, but no one has come forward claiming any of these as the original.
88. See B. Carmon Hardy, *Doing the Works of Abraham: Mormon Polygamy—Its Origin, Practice, and Demise* (Norman, OK: Arthur H. Clark, 2007), 325–26.
89. Lorin C. Woolley, “Statement of Facts,” 1912, Church History Library; as cited in J. Max Anderson, *The Polygamy Story: Fiction and Fact* (Salt Lake City: Publishers Press, 1979), 2–3; and Brian C. Hales, *Modern Polygamy and Mormon Fundamentalism: The Generations after the Manifesto* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2006), 146–47.
90. Hales, *Modern Polygamy*, 37–41.
91. George Q. Cannon Journal, September 26–27, 1886. Although President Cannon did not always mention John Taylor's revelations (see, for example, George Q. Cannon Journal, May 1884 where he does not mention the revelation regarding the Logan Temple), the lack of discussion in this context,

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when they were living in the same house and spending virtually twenty-four hours a day together, seems to be telling.

92. See L. John Nuttall Journal, September 26–27, 1886; see also Rogers, *In the President's Office*, 169–71. Additionally, George Q. Cannon does not mention these events in his diary either (see George Q. Cannon Journal, September 26–27, 1887; as cited in Rogers, noted above).
93. Samuel Bateman Journal, September 26–27, 1886, L. Tom Perry Special Collections.
94. The first contested document is an apocalyptic vision, dated December 16, 1877, that reads like a biblical apocalyptic prophecy. A copy is found in Wilford Woodruff's journal, recorded on June 15, 1878. It predicts the destruction of many major U.S. cities and includes a reference to plural marriage, explaining that after the destruction of those cities and the establishment of the kingdom of God, Isaiah's prophecy that "seven women shall take hold of one man" would be fulfilled (see Wilford Woodruff Journal, June 15, 1878; as cited in Kenney, *Wilford Woodruff's Journals*, 7:419–23). The second alleged vision is another apocalyptic vision attributed to John Taylor circulated widely in the 1950s and 1960s among Church members in the United States and Canada, commonly known as the "Horseshoe Prophecy" (not to be confused with the equally famous "White Horse Prophecy"). Edward Lunt, a lay member of the Church, originated this particular report in 1951 from information he claimed his mother shared with him nearly fifty years earlier. According to this late recollection, President Taylor stayed with the Lunt family during a weekend trip to Cedar City, Utah. One afternoon, according to Lunt, John Taylor retired to his room to rest but soon after returned to the kitchen and related to Lunt's mother a vision he had just experienced (Edward Lunt, "A Remarkable Prophecy by President John Taylor," June 29, 1951, L. Tom Perry Special Collections).
95. B. H. Roberts, *The Life of John Taylor, Third President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: George Q. Cannon & Sons, 1892), 338–43, 351–59.

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96. Roberts, *The Life of John Taylor*, 349.
97. John Taylor, “What the Gospel Teaches,” February 1, 1874, in *Journal of Discourses*, 16:369.
98. George Q. Cannon, “Topics of the Times: Important Questions and Answers,” *Juvenile Instructor*, January 1, 1891, 14.
99. The two revelations, dated October 13, 1882, and April 14, 1883, published in English, were eventually included in the 1888 Swedish edition of the Doctrine and Covenants as sections 137 and 138 respectively. Over the course of the next forty years, these documents—the October 13, 1882, revelation and the instructions regarding the Seventies, dated April 14, 1883—were also printed in other European editions of the book, including three German editions (1893, 1903, and 1920), a Danish edition (1900), and a 1928 Swedish edition (this edition omitted the April 14, 1883, revelation but included the instructions to the Seventies and the October 13, 1882, revelation); see L. R. Jacobs, *Mormon Non-English Scriptures, Hymnals, and Periodicals, 1830–1986* (Ithaca, NY: L. R. Jacobs, 1986).
100. See, for example, James Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965), 2:347–49; Roberts, *The Life of John Taylor*, 349; *My Kingdom Shall Roll Forth: Readings in Church History* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1980), 50–51; *Church History in the Fulness of Times* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2000), 429–30; *Teachings of the Presidents of the Church: John Taylor* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2001), 153–54.
101. John Taylor, “The Priesthood,” October 9, 1881, in *Journal of Discourses*, 22:291–92.