

# Section 130

---

“I am going to offer some corrections to you.” That’s what Joseph said to Orson Hyde at lunch on April 2, 1843, after Elder Hyde had spoken at a morning session of a stake conference in Ramus, Illinois. A Protestant preacher before his conversion to the restored gospel, Elder Hyde mixed unrestored ideas into his sermon. Elder Hyde wisely replied to Joseph, “They shall be thankfully received.”<sup>1</sup>

Joseph and Elder Hyde and everyone else were aware of the prophecies of a contemporary named William Miller, who had predicted that the Savior’s second coming would be April 3, 1843, the day after conference. Elder Hyde spoke about what John 14:23 and 1 John 3:2 had to say about that.

Joseph preached twice at the stake conference, offering corrections to Elder Hyde, answering William Clayton’s question about time relativity, and correcting Miller’s prediction of the Second Coming. William Clayton captured Joseph’s teachings in his journal and Willard Richards later copied them into Joseph’s journal. Some of the teachings were then clarified and prepared for publication in the Church’s newspaper in the 1850s and finally added to the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

Section 130 begins by clarifying John 14:23, which prophesies that the Savior will appear and reveal his Heavenly Father. Joseph emphasized, contrary to what Elder Hyde had suggested, that the appearance of the Father and Son are literal. They are

---

<sup>1</sup> “[Instruction, 2 April 1843, as Reported by Willard Richards](#),” [37], The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed December 8, 2020.

exalted, embodied Gods; the designation *Heavenly Father* is not a euphemism, and the social relationship sealed here will endure into eternity only with “eternal glory, which glory we do not now enjoy” (D&C 130:2).

Beginning in verse 4, Joseph answers a question William Clayton posed about the relativity of time depending on one’s proximity to God. Joseph declared that time is relative but that all angels who minister to our earth have themselves lived or will live on this earth. The angels now reside with God “on a globe like a sea of glass and fire” where there is no time since “past, present, and future ... are continually before the Lord” (D&C 130:7). Joseph taught that this earth will become a celestial kingdom, a great seer stone in which its inhabitants will be able to see kingdoms of lesser glory. Even more exciting, each individual who enters this kingdom will get a personal “stone” as a means of learning and progressing eternally.

Beginning in verse 12, Joseph prophesies the American Civil War based on his Christmas 1832 revelation (see section 87). He refuses to prophesy specifically about the date of the Savior’s second coming, having learned his lesson from an earlier earnest prayer, which the Lord answered with intentional ambiguity, leaving Joseph “unable to decide” (D&C 130:16).

One result of section 130 is clarification of what we do not know: the timing of the Savior’s second coming. The section leaves no doubt that Joseph was a true prophet, however. He knew by revelation the nature of the American Civil War long before it came to pass. As Elder Neal A. Maxwell wrote, “The Prophet Joseph and the revelations confirm that God lives in an ‘eternal now,’ where the past, present, and future are continually before Him. He is not constrained by the perspectives of time as we are.”<sup>2</sup>

Verses 18–21 teach principles revealed in sections 51, 58, 88, 93, and elsewhere about the relationship between God’s law, individual agency, and growth. Intelligence is gained by choosing to diligently obey God’s laws. This is one of Joseph’s most profound, exalting teachings.

The last two verses clarify the nature of the Godhead. Joseph’s teachings at the conference focused on the Holy Ghost. “The Holy Ghost is a personage,” he said, “and

---

<sup>2</sup> Neal A. Maxwell, *If Thou Endure It Well*, 28.

a person cannot have the personage of the H.G. in his heart. A man may have the gifts of the H.G., and the H.G. may descend upon a man but not to tarry with him.”<sup>3</sup> Church historians, apostles, amended the text in the 1850s to more explicitly clarify the embodied nature of the Father and the Son.

Section 130 captures glimpses of the expansive Nauvoo teachings of Joseph Smith. In the last years of his life Joseph was teaching temple ordinances to select Saints and related principles to the general body of Saints. Some of Section 130 is simply fascinating answers to the questions of curious enquirers. But it is laced with temple teachings, including the eternal nature of social relationships, the exaltation of man in the image of God, the heavenly temple, eternal progression, and growth by degrees of knowledge or intelligence based on obedience to the laws of God.

---

<sup>3</sup> “[Instruction, 2 April 1843, as Reported by William Clayton](#),” The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed December 8, 2020.