

Divine Authority, Sublime Young Men

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Guddommelig myndighed, fremragende unge mænd

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I am forever grateful that holders of the Aaronic Priesthood, with its powers, ordinances, and duties, do bless all of us.

Thank you, Elder Andersen, for that remarkable expression of priesthood power and of the power of the Savior's Atonement.

One Sunday morning this January, as I sat in sacrament meeting, over a dozen young men were sustained to be advanced in the Aaronic Priesthood. I felt the world changing beneath our feet.

It struck me that all around the world, time zone by time zone, in sacrament meetings just like that one, tens of thousands of deacons, teachers, and priests—like President Holland's friend this morning, Easton—were being sustained to be ordained into lifelong priesthood ministries that would span the length and breadth of the gathering of Israel.

Each January, hands are laid on the heads of about 100,000 young men, connecting them through ordinance to a bright line of authority stretching back through the Restoration epoch to Joseph and Oliver, to John the Baptist, and to Jesus Christ.

Now, ours is not always a very demonstrative church. Here, we do understatement.

But still, seeing this rolling thunder of newly ordained priesthood holders spreading across the earth, I wondered—in a “church of joy” kind of way—if it shouldn't be shouted from the rooftops. “Today,” I thought, “there should be trumpets and crashing cymbals and blazing Roman candles. There should be parades!”

Knowing God's power for what it truly is, we were witness to the disruption of the very pat-

Jeg er for evigt taknemmelig for, at bærere af Det Aronske Præstedømme med al dets myndighed, ordinancer og pligter velsigner os alle.

Tak, ældste Andersen, for det bemærkelsesværdige udtryk for præstedømmets og Frelserens forsonings kraft.

Da jeg en søndag morgen i januar sad til et nadvermøde, blev over en halv snes unge mænd opretholdt til at avancere i Det Aronske Præstedømme. Jeg følte, at verden ændrede sig under vores fødder.

Det slog mig, at over hele verden, fra den ene tidszone til den næste, blev titusindvis af diakoner, lærere og præster – ligesom ældste Hollands ven fra denne morgen, Easton – opretholdt ved nadvermøder som dette og ordineret til en livslang præstedømmetjeneste, der omfatter hele Israels indsamling.

Hvert år i januar lægges hænderne på hovedet af omkring 100.000 unge mænd, og de forbindes gennem ordinancer til en klar myndighedslinje, der strækker sig tilbage gennem genoprettelsens tidsalder til Joseph og Oliver – og til Johannes Døber og til Jesus Kristus.

Nu viser vores kirke sig ikke altid frem. Men her underdriver vi faktisk.

Men mens jeg forestillede mig denne rullende torden af nyordnede præstedømmebærere, der spredte sig over jorden, tænkte jeg alligevel på – fordi vi jo er »glædens kirke« – om det ikke burde råbes ud fra hustagene. »I dag,« tænkte jeg, »burde der være trompeter og trommer og ceremoniel kanonild. Der burde være parader!«

Fordi vi kender Guds kraft for det, den virkelig er, var vi vidner til, at selve denne verdens

terns of this world by godly authority spreading across the earth.

These ordinations launch these young men into lifetimes of service as they will find themselves in consequential times and places where their presence and prayers and the powers of the priesthood of God they hold will profoundly matter.

This controlled chain reaction began with a ministering angel sent of God. The resurrected John the Baptist of ancient times appeared to Joseph and Oliver, placed his hands on their heads, and said, "Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins" (Doctrine and Covenants 13:1).

John called this authority the "Priesthood of Aaron," after Moses's brother and priesthood companion. Anciently, the holders of this priesthood of Aaron were to teach and assist with ordinances—ordinances that focused discipleship on the future Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ (see Deuteronomy 33:10).

The book of Numbers explicitly assigns to holders of the priesthood of Aaron the tasks of handling the vessels of the ordinances. "And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons ... and their charge shall be ... the table ... and the vessels of the sanctuary wherewith they minister" (Numbers 3:10, 31).

The Old Testament ordinance of animal sacrifice was fulfilled and replaced through the Savior's life and Atonement. That ancient ordinance was replaced with the ordinance we now call the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

The Lord entrusts today's bearers of the priesthood of Aaron to do very much the same things they did anciently: to teach and to administer ordinances—all to remind us of His Atonement.

When deacons, teachers, and priests help with the sacrament, they receive its blessings just like everyone else: by keeping the covenant they make as they individually partake of the bread and the water. But in the performance of these sacred duties, they also learn more about their priesthood roles and responsibilities.

The Aaronic Priesthood is called the preparatory priesthood partly because its ordinances allow them to experience the weight and the joy

vante gænge blev forstyrret ved, at guddommelig myndighed spredte sig over hele jorden.

Disse ordinationer fører disse unge mænd ud i en livslang tjeneste, hvor de vil opleve sammenhænge, hvor deres tilstedeværelse, bønner og kraften i Guds præstedømme, som de bærer, vil have stor betydning.

Denne kontrollerede kædereaktion begyndte med en tjenende engel, der blev udsendt af Gud. Den opstandne Johannes Døber fra fordums tid viste sig for Joseph og Oliver, lagde sine hænder på deres hoveder og sagde: »Til jer, mine medtjenere, overdrager jeg i Messias' navn Arons præstedømme, som besidder nøglerne til englebetjening og til omvendelsens evangelium og til dåb ved nedsænkning til syndernes forladelse« (L&P 13:1).

Johannes kaldte denne myndighed »Arons præstedømme« efter Moses' bror og præstedømmekammerat. Tidligere skulle bærere af Arons præstedømme undervise og assistere med ordinancer – ordinancer, der rettede disciplenes fokus på den fremtidige Messias, Herren Jesus Kristus (se 5 Mos 33:10).

4 Mosebog tildeler udtrykkeligt bærere af Arons præstedømme opgaven med at håndtere ordinancerne kar. »Aron og hans sønner skal du indsætte ... [og] deres tjeneste an[går] ... bordet ... [og] redskaberne, som man forretter tjenesten med i helligdommen« (4 Mos 3:10, 31).

Det Gamle Testaments ordinance med slagtofre blev opfyldt og erstattet gennem Frelserens liv og forsoning (se 3 Ne 15:2-9). Denne fordums ordinance blev erstattet med den ordinance, vi nu kalder Herrens nadver.

Herren betror denne tids bærere af Arons præstedømme at gøre stort set det samme, som de gjorde i fordums tid: Undervise og forrette ordinancer – alt sammen for at minde os om hans forsoning.

Når diakoner, lærere og præster hjælper med nadveren, modtager de dens velsignelser, ligesom alle andre: ved at holde den pagt, de indgår, når de hver især nyder brødet og vandet. Men ved at udføre disse hellige pligter lærer de også mere om deres præstedømmeroller og -ansvar.

Det Aronske Præstedømme kaldes også det forberedende præstedømme; dels fordi dets ordinancer gør det muligt for dem at opleve kraften

of being on the Lord's errand, preparing them for future priesthood service, when they may be called upon to minister in unforeseeable ways—including pronouncing inspired blessings in times when hopes and dreams, and even life and death, hang in precarious balance.

Such serious expectations require serious preparation.

The Doctrine and Covenants explains that deacons and teachers are “to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ” (Doctrine and Covenants 20:59). In addition to these opportunities, priests are to “preach ... and baptize” (Doctrine and Covenants 20:50).

Well, all that sounds like a lot, but in the real world, these things happen naturally and all over the world.

One bishop taught his new deacons quorum presidency these duties. So the young presidency began to talk about what that might look like in their quorum and in their ward. They decided they should start visiting elderly ward members to see what they needed and then do that.

Among those they served was Alan, a rough, often profane, and sometimes hostile neighbor. Alan's wife, Wanda, became a member of the Church, but Alan was, as we say, something of a piece of work.

Still, the deacons went to work, comically ignoring his insults, while they shoveled snow and took out trash. Deacons can be hard to hate, and Alan eventually began to love them. At some point they invited him to church.

“I don't like church,” he responded.

“Well, you like us,” they said. “So come with us. You can just come to our quorum meeting if you want.”

And with the bishop's approval, he came—and he kept coming.

The deacons became teachers, and as they continued to serve him, he taught them to work on cars and to build things. By the time these deacons-turned-teachers became priests, Alan was calling them “my boys.”

They were earnestly preparing for missions and asked him if they could practice missionary lessons with him. He swore that he would never listen and never believe, but, yeah, they could practice at his house.

og glæden ved at gå Herrens ærinde, og forbereder dem til fremtidig præstedømmetjeneste, hvor de kan blive kaldet til at tjene på uforudsigelige måder – deriblandt at udtale inspirerede velsigelser i tider, hvor håb og drømme, ja, selv liv og død, afhænger af det.

Sådanne alvorlige forventninger kræver seriøs forberedelse.

Lære og Pagter forklarer, at diakoner og lærere skal »advare, forklare, formane og undervise og opfordre alle til at komme til Kristus« (L&P 20:59). Derudover skal præster »prædike, undervise, forklare, formane og døbe« (L&P 20:50).

Alt det lyder af meget, men i den virkelige verden sker disse ting naturligt, og over hele kloden.

En biskop underviste sit nye præsidentskab for diakonernes kvorum om disse pligter. Så det unge præsidentskab begyndte at tale om, hvordan det kunne realiseres i deres kvorum og i deres menighed. De besluttede, at de først ville besøge menighedens ældre medlemmer for at finde ud af, hvad de havde brug for, og så gøre det.

Blandt dem, de tjente, var Alan, en barsk, ofte blasfemisk og nogle gange fjendtlig nabo. Alans hustru, Wanda, var blevet medlem af Kirken, men Alan var, som man siger, lidt af en pædagogisk udfordring.

Alligevel gik diakonerne i gang med arbejdet og ignorerede hans fornærmelser med godt humør, mens de skovlede sne og bar affald ud. Diakoner kan være svære at hade, så efterhånden begyndte Alan at holde af dem. På et tidspunkt inviterede de ham med i kirke.

»Jeg kan ikke lide at gå i kirke,« svarede han.

»Men du kan lide os,« sagde de. »Så kom med os. Du kan bare være med til vores kvorumsmøde, hvis du vil.«

Og med biskoppens godkendelse kom han – og han blev ved med at komme.

Diakonerne blev lærere, og da de fortsatte med at tjene ham, lærte han dem at udføre arbejde på biler og at bygge ting. Da disse diakoner, der var blevet lærere, blev præster, var Alan begyndt at kalde dem »mine drenge«.

De forberedte sig oprigtigt på at tage på mission og spurgte, om de måtte øve sig på missionærlektionerne sammen med ham. Han svor, at han aldrig ville lytte og aldrig tro, men jo, de kunne godt øve sig hjemme hos ham.

And then Alan got sick. And he softened.

And one day in quorum meeting, he tenderly asked them to pray for him to quit smoking, and so they did. But then they followed him home and confiscated all of his tobacco stash.

As his failing health put Alan into hospitals and rehab centers, “his boys” served him, quietly exuding powers of priesthood and of love unfeigned (see Doctrine and Covenants 121:41).

The miracle continued when Alan asked to be baptized—but then he passed away before it could happen. At his request, his deacons-turned-priests were the pallbearers and the speakers at his funeral, where they—fittingly—warned, expounded, exhorted, taught, and invited all to Christ.

And later, in the temple, it was one of “Alan’s boys” who baptized that erstwhile deacons quorum president in proxy for Alan.

Everything John the Baptist said to do, they did. They did what deacons, teachers, and priests do all over this Church and all over this world.

One of the things holders of the priesthood of Aaron are charged to do involves the ordinance of the sacrament.

Last year I met an inspired bishop and his wonderful wife. On a recent Saturday morning, they were driving to their son’s baptism and suffered the tragic and sudden loss of their darling two-year-old daughter, Tess.

The next morning their ward members gathered for sacrament meeting filled with compassion, also suffering over the loss of this perfect little girl. No one expected the bishop’s family to be at church that morning, but a couple of minutes before the meeting started, they quietly entered and took their place.

The bishop went to the stand and walked past his usual seat between his counselors and sat down instead between his priests at the sacrament table.

During that anguished and sleepless night before of searching for understanding and peace, he had received a strong impression of what his family most needed—and what his ward most needed. It was to hear the voice of their bishop, their ward Aaronic Priesthood president, their grieving father, pronounce the promises of the

Så blev Alan syg. Og han blev blødgjort.

En dag ved et kvorumsmøde bad han dem høfligt om at bede for ham om, at han kunne holde op med at ryge, og det gjorde de så. Men derefter fulgte de ham også hjem og konfiskerede hele hans tobakslager.

Efterhånden som Alans svigtende helbred førte ham på hospitaler og genoptræningscentre, betjente »hans drenge« ham, mens de stille emmede af præstedømmekraft og ægte kærlighed (se L&P 121:41).

Miraklet fortsatte, da Alan bad om at blive døbt, men han døde, før det kunne komme til at ske. På Alans anmodning bar hans diakoner, der nu var blevet præster, hans kiste, og de talte ved hans begravelse, hvor de – meget passende – advarede, forklarede, formanede, underviste og indbød alle til at komme til Kristus.

Og senere i templet var det naturligvis en af »Alans drenge«, der døbte den tidligere kvorumspræsident for diakonerne, som stedfortræder for Alan.

Alt, hvad Johannes Døber sagde, de skulle gøre, det gjorde de. De gjorde, hvad diakoner, lærere og præster gør over hele denne kirke og over hele denne verden.

En af de ting, som bærere af Arons præstedømme har fået til opgave at passe, er nadverordinansen.

Sidste år mødte jeg en inspireret biskop og hans vidunderlige hustru. Under en køretur en lørdag morgen for nylig til deres søns dåb havde de på tragisk og pludselig vis mistet deres elskede to-årige datter, Tess.

Næste morgen samledes medlemmerne i deres menighed til nadvermødet, fyldt med medfølelse, og de begræd også tabet af denne perfekte lille pige. Ingen forventede, at biskoppens familie var i kirke den morgen, men et par minutter før mødet begyndte, gik de stille ind og satte sig ned.

Biskoppen gik hen til forhøjningen, men gik forbi sin sædvanlige plads mellem sine rådgivere og satte sig i stedet mellem sine præster ved nadverbordet.

Om natten havde han forpint og søvnløs søgt efter forståelse og fred, og han fik en stærk tilskyndelse om, hvad hans familie havde mest brug for – og hvad hans menighed havde mest brug for. Det var at høre deres biskop, deres menighedspræsident for Det Aronske Præstedømme, og den sørgende far, udtale nadverpagtens løfter.

sacramental covenant.

So, in due course, he knelt with those priests and spoke to His Father. With the pathos of that occasion, he pronounced some of the most powerful words that anyone is ever allowed to say out loud in this lifetime.

Words of eternal consequence.

Words of ordinance.

Words of covenant.

Instruction that connects us to the very purposes of this life—and to the most magnificent outcomes of Heavenly Father’s plan for us.

Can you imagine what the congregation heard in that chapel that day—what they felt in the words that we hear every Sunday in our chapels?

“O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them; that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen” (Doctrine and Covenants 20:77).

And then: “O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this [water] to the souls of all those who drink of it, that they may do it in remembrance of the blood of thy Son, which was shed for them; that they may witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they do always remember him, that they may have his Spirit to be with them. Amen” (Doctrine and Covenants 20:79).

This good father and mother testify that that promise has been fulfilled. They do, in fact, to their everlasting comfort, “have his Spirit to be with them.”

I am forever grateful that holders of the Aaronic Priesthood, with its powers, ordinances, and duties, do bless all of us through the keys of the very “ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins” (Doctrine and Covenants 13:1). In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Så da tiden var inde, knælede han sammen med disse præster og talte til sin Fader. Med patos udtalte han nogle af de stærkeste ord, som nogen nogensinde har fået lov til at sige højt i dette liv.

Ord med evig konsekvens.

Ord i ordinancer.

Ord af pagter.

Vejledning, der forbinder os til selve formålet med dette liv – og til de mest storslåede resultater af vor himmelske Faders plan for os.

Kan I forestille jer, hvad forsamlingen hørte i den kirkebygning – hvad de følte om de ord, vi hører hver søndag?

»O Gud, du evige Fader, vi beder dig i din Søns, Jesu Kristi, navn velsigne og hellige dette brød for alle de sjæle, som nyder deraf, så de må spise til erindring om din Søns legeme og vidne for dig, o Gud, du evige Fader, at de er villige til at påtage sig din Søns navn og altid erindre ham og holde hans befalinger, som han har givet dem, så de altid må have hans Ånd hos sig. Amen« (L&P 20:77).

Og derefter: »O Gud, du evige Fader, vi beder dig i din Søns, Jesu Kristi, navn velsigne og hellige dette vand for alle de sjæle, som drikker deraf, så de må gøre det til erindring om din Søns blod, der blev udgydt for dem, så de må vidne for dig, o Gud, du evige Fader, at de altid erindrer ham, så de må have hans Ånd hos sig. Amen« (L&P 20:79).

Denne gode far og mor vidner om, at det løfte er blevet opfyldt. De fik virkelig til deres evigtvarende trøst »hans Ånd hos sig«.

Det er mit vidnesbyrd, at bærere af Det Aronske Præstedømme med al dets kraft, alle dets ordinancer og pligter, velsigner os alle gennem nøglerne til »engles betjening og til omvendelsens evangelium og til dåb ved nedsænkning til syndernes forladelse« (L&P 13:1). I Jesu Kristi navn. Amen.