

Divine Authority, Sublime Young Men

By President Steven J. Lund
Young Men General President

Mamlaka ya Kiungu, Wavulana Adhimu

Na Rais Steven J. Lund
Rais Mkuu wa Wavulana

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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!”

Ni ushuhuda wangu kwamba wenye Ukuhani wa Haruni, pamoja na nguvu zake, ibada, na wajibu, hutubariki sisi sote.

Asante, Mzee Andersen, kwa maelezo ya kupendeza kuhusu nguvu ya ukuhani na juu ya nguvu ya Upatanisho wa Mwokozi.

Januari hii, nilipokuwa nimeketi katika mkutano wa sakramenti, zaidi ya wavulana dezeni moja walikubaliwa kupandishwa katika Ukuhani wa Haruni. Nilihisi ulimwengu ukibadilika chini ya miguu yangu.

Ilinishangaza kwamba kote ulimwenguni, kulingana na saa za nchi husika, katika mikutano ya sakramenti kama ule, makumi elfu ya mashemasi, walimu na makuhani walikuwa wakikubaliwa ili kutawazwa kwenye huduma za ukuhani za maisha yote ambazo zingetanuka kwa urefu na upana kwenye ukusanyaji wa Israeli.

Kila Januari, mikono huwekwa juu ya vichwa vya wavulana takribani 100,000, ikiwaunganisha kupitia ibada kwenye mstari ulionyooka wa mamlaka unaorudi nyuma kupitia enzi za Urejesho kwa Joseph na Oliver, na Yohana Mbatizaji hadi kwa Yesu Kristo.

Letu daima siyo kanisa la maonyesho sana. Hapa, tunafanya urahisishaji.

Lakini bado, kuona makundi haya ya wenye ukuhani wapya waliotawazwa wakitembea kwa kishindo kama radi kote ulimwenguni, nilijiuliza—katika “kanisa la shangwe” kwa namna ya shangwe—kama haipaswi kutangazwa kutokea juu ya dari. “Leo,” niliwaza, “kunapaswa kuwe na matarumbeta na sauti ya juu na mishumaa ya Kirumi inayowaka sana. Kunapaswa kuwa na gwaride!”

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

Tukizijua nguvu za Mungu kwa hakika zilivyo, sisi tulikuwa mashahidi wa uvurugaji wa hasa mipangilio ya ulimwengu huu kwa mamlaka ya kiungu yakifurika duniani.

Utawazo huu unawaingiza wavulana hawa kwenye huduma ya maisha yote kadiri wataka-vyojikuta wenyewe katika nyakati zenye matokeo na sehemu ambapo uwepo wao na sala zao na nguvu za ukuhani wa Mungu walio nao vitakuwa na umuhimu.

Huu mnyororo ulio dhibitiwa wa mabadiliko ulianza na malaika mtumishi aliyetumwa na Mungu. Yohana Mbatizaji wa nyakati za kale aliyefufuka aliwatokea Joseph na Oliver, akaweka mikono yake juu ya vichwa vyao na kusema, "Juu yenu ninyi watumishi wenzangu, katika jina la Masiya, ninawatunukia Ukuhani wa Haruni, ambao hushikilia funguo za huduma ya malaika, na za injili ya toba, na za ubatizo kwa uzamisho kwa ajili ya ondoleo la dhambi" (Mafundisho na Maagano 13:1).

Yohana aliyaita mamlaka haya "Ukuhani wa Haruni," kwa jina la kaka wa Musa na mwenzake katika ukuhani. Hapo kale, wenye ukuhani wa Haruni huu walipaswa kufundisha na kusaidia katika ibada—ibada ambazo zilifokasi uanafunzi kwa Masiya wa siku zijazo, Bwana Yesu Kristo (ona Kumbukumba la Torati 33:10).

Kitabu cha Hesabu kwa uwazi kinatoa kwa wenye ukuhani wa Haruni majukumu ya kubeba vyombo vya ibada. "Nawe utawaweka Haruni na wanawe ... na vitu watakavyovitunza ... meza ... na vile vyombo vya mahali patakatifu wavi-tumiavyo katika kutumika kwao." (Hesabu 3:10, 31).

Ibada ya Agano la Kale la dhabihu ya mnyama ilitimilika na kupatiwa mbadala kupitia maisha na Upatanisho wa Mwokozi. Ibada hiyo ya kale ilibadilishwa kwa ibada sasa tunayoiita sakramenti ya Meza ya Bwana.

Bwana anawakabidhi leo wenye ukuhani wa Haruni wa siku za leo kufanya mambo yale yale waliyoyafanya hapo kale: kufundisha na kuhudumu katika ibada—yote kutukumbusha juu ya Upatanisho Wake.

Wakati mashemasi, walimu na makuhani wanaposaidia kwenye sakramenti, wanapokea baraka za sakramenti kama vile mwingine yeyote: kwa kushika agano wanalolifanya pale wao binafsi wanapopokea mkate na maji. Lakini katika utekelezaji wa majukumu haya matakati-fu, wanajifunza pia zaidi kuhusu wajibu wao wa

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

ukuhani.

Ukuhani wa Haruni unaitwa ukuhani wa maandalizi kwa sehemukwa sababu ibada zake uwaruhusu wao kupata uzoefu wa uzito na shangwe ya kuwa kwenye kazi ya Bwana, kuwaandaa wao kwa ajili ya huduma ya baadaye ya ukuhani, wakati wanapoweza kuitwa kuhudumu katika njia zisizotarajiwa—ikijumuisha kutamka baraka zenye mwongozo wa kiungu katika nyakati ambapo tumaini na ndoto na hata maisha na kifo, vikiwa havitabiriki.

Matarajio hayo makini yanahitaji maandalizi makini.

Mafundisho na Maagano inafafanua kwamba mashemasi na walimu wanapaswa “kuonya, kuelezea, kushawishi, na kufundisha, na kuwaalikwa wote kuja kwa Kristo,” (Mafundisho na Maagano 20:59). Kama nyongeza kwenye fursa hizi makuhani wanapaswa “kuhubiri ... na kubatiza” (Mafundisho na Maagano 20:50).

Yote hayo yanaonekana kama mengi, lakini katika ulimwengu halisi, mambo haya yanatokea kiasili, na kote ulimwenguni.

Askofu mmoja aliwafundisha urais mpya wa akidi ya mashemasi yake wajibu huu. Kwa hiyo urais wa vijana ulianza kuzungumza kuhusu vile ambavyo hilo lingekonekana katika akidi na kata yao. Waliamua kwamba walipaswa kuanza kuwatembelea waumini wazee katika kata ili kuona kile walichohitaji na kisha kukifanya.

Kati ya wale walio wahudumia alikuwepo Alan, jirani ambaye hakuwa nadhifu, mara nyingi akitumia lugha chafu na wakati mwingine mwenye chuki. Wanda, mke wa Alan, alikuwa muumini wa Kanisa, lakini Alan alikuwa, kama tunavyosema, kazi kweli.

Lakini bado, mashemasi walifanya kazi, kwa ucheshi wakipuuza matusi yake, wakati wakiondoa theluji na kuondoa taka. Ni vigumu kuwachukia mashemasi, na Alan hatimaye alianza kuwapenda wao. Wakati fulani walimwalika kanisani.

“Sipendi kanisa,” alisema.

“Unatupenda,” walisema. “Basi, njoo pamoja nasi. Unaweza kuja tu kwenye mikutano yetu ya akidi kama unataka.”

Na kwa idhini ya askofu, alikuja—na alindelea kuja.

Mashemashi wakawa walimu na kadiri walivyoendelea kumhudumia, aliwafundisha kufanya kazi kwenye magari na kujenga vitu. Wakati mashemasi hawa walipandishwa kuwa

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.

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

walimu na kuwa makuhani, Alan alikuwa akiwaita “wavulana wangu.”

Walikuwa sasa wakijiandaa kwa ajili ya kutumikia misheni na walimuomba kama wangeweza kufanya mazoezi ya masomo ya umisionari na yeye. Aliapa kwamba kamwe asingesikiliza au kuamini, lakini, wangeweza kufanya mazoezi nyumbani kwake.

Kisha Alan aliugua. Na alikuwa mnyeyekevu.

Siku moja, katika mkutano wa akidi, kwa upole aliwaomba wasali kwa ajili yake ili aache kuvuta sigara, walifanya hivyo. Lakini kisha walimfuata hadi kwake na kuondoa vyombo vyake vyote vya kutunzia tumbaku.

Wakati afya yake iliyozorota ilipomfan-ya Alan alazwe hospitali na kwenye vituo vya urekebishaji, “wavulana wake” walimhudumia, kimya kimya wakionesha nguvu za ukuhani na za upendo usio shindwa (ona Mafundisho na Maagano 121:41).

Muujiza uliendelea wakati Alan alipoomba kubatizwa—lakini kisha akafariki kabla ya hilo kutokea. Kama ombi lake, mashemasi wake waliokuwa sasa makuhani wakawa wasindikiza jeneza na wazungumzaji kwenye mazishi, ambapo—kwa usahihi—walionya, walielezea, walishawishi, walifundisha na kuwakaribisha watu wote kuja kwa Kristo.

Na baadaye, ndani ya hekalu, ilikuwa mmoja wa “wavulana wa Alan” aliyembatiza rais yule wa zamani wa akidi ya mashemasi kwa niaba ya Alan.

Kila kitu Yohana Mbatizaji alichosema kifanywe, walikifanya. Walifanya kile mashemasi, walimu, na makuhani hufkianya kote katika Kanisa hili na kote ulimwenguni.

Mojawapo ya vitu wenye ukuhani wa Haruni wamepatiwa jukumu juu yake hujumisha ibada ya sakramenti.

Mwaka uliopita, nilikutana na askofu mwenye mwongozo wa kiungu na mkewe wake wa ajabu. Kwenye safari ya hivi karibuni ya Jumamosi asubuhi, walikuwa wakielekea kwenye ubatizo wa mwana wao na walipata ajali iliyopelekea kifo cha Tess, binti yao mpendwa wa miaka miwili.

Asubuhi iliyofuata, waumini wa kata yao walikusanyika kwa ajili ya mkutano wa sakramenti wakiwa wamejaa huruma, pia wakiumia juu ya kumpoteza binti huyu mdogo mkamilifu. Hakuna aliyetarajia familia ya askofu kuwa kani-sani asubuhi hiyo, lakini dakika chache kabla ya

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 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

mkutano kuanza, familia ya askofu iliingia kwa utulivu.

Askofu alienda kwenye jukwaa na akakipita kiti chake cha siku zote katikati ya washauri wake na badala yake akaketi na makuhani wake kwenye meza ya sakramenti.

Katika usiku ule wenye maumivu na usio na usingizi kutafuta uelewa na amani, alikuwa amepokea msukumo wa kile familia yake ilichokihitaji zaidi—na kile kata yake ilichokihitaji zaidi. Kilikuwa ni kusikia sauti ya askofu wao, Rais wao wa Ukuhani wa Haruni kwenye kata, baba yao mwenye huzuni, akitamka ahadi za agano la sakramenti.

Hivyo, baada ya muda, alipiga magoti pamoja na makuhani wale na kuzungumza na Baba Yake. Kwa huzuni ya tukio lile, alitamka baadhi ya maneno yenye nguvu zaidi ambayo mtu yeyote amewahi kuruhusiwa kuyasema kwa sauti katika maisha haya.

Maneno yenye matokeo ya milele.

Maneno ya ibada.

Maneno ya agano.

Maelekezo ambayo yanatuunganisha na lengo hasa la maisha haya—na kwenye matokeo ya kupendeza zaidi ya mpango wa Baba wa Mbinguni kwa ajili yetu.

Je, unaweza kufikiria kile mkusanyiko ulichokisikia ndani ya nyumba ile ya mkutano—Walichokihisi kwenye maneno ambayo tunayasikia kila Jumapili kwenye nyumba zetu za mikutano?

“Ee, Mungu, Baba wa Milele, tunakuomba katika jina la Mwanao, Yesu Kristo, ubariki na utakase mkate huu kwa roho za wale wote watakaoula, ili waweze kuula kwa ukumbusho wa mwili wa Mwanao, na wakushuhudie, Ee Mungu, Baba wa Milele, kwamba wako radhi kujichukulia juu yao jina la Mwanao, na daima kumkumbuka, na kushika amri zake ambazo amewapa, ili daima Roho wake apate kuwa pamoja nao. Amina” (Mafundisho na Maagano 20:77).

Na kisha: “Ee Mungu, Baba wa Milele, tunakuomba katika jina la Mwanao, Yesu Kristo, ubariki na utakase [maji] haya kwa roho za wale wote watakaoyanywa, ili waweze kufanya hivi kwa ukumbusho wa damu ya Mwanao, ambayo ilimwagwa kwa ajili yao; kwamba washuhudie kwako, Ee Mungu, Baba wa Milele, kwamba daima wamkumbuke, ili Roho wake apate kuwa pamoja nao. Amina” (Mafundisho na Maagano

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.

20:79).

Baba huyu na mama huyu wema wana-shuhudia kwamba ahadi hiyo imetimizwa. Wanapata, hakika, kwenye faraja yao ya milele, “kuwa na Roho wake pamoja nao.”

Nina shukrani milele kwamba wenye Ukuhuni wa Haruni, pamoja na nguvu zake, ibada na wajibu, wanatubariki sote kupitia funguo za “huduma za malaika, na za injili ya toba, na za ubatizo kwa uzamisho kwa ajili ya ondoleo la dhambi” (Mafundisho na Maagano 13:1). Katika jina la Yesu Kristo, amina.