

# The “M&M’s” of Learning

## Bruce H. Porter

There are three levels of understanding spoken of in the scriptures, which may be called the “three” and sometimes “four” doctrinal “M’s”. They are “Milk,” (Correlation) “Meat” (found in scripture) and “Mysteries” (personal revelation) and of course one could include “Manuals” somewhere, not forgetting one more could be added called “Meetings”. This discussion will restrict itself to the “milk, meat, and mysteries.’ The first of these “M’s” (the ‘milk’) we are taught to grow with, before the benefits offered by the second (‘meat’) might be realized. The ‘milk’ lays the healthy foundation and preparation for the ‘meat’ that might be discovered in the scriptures. The last of these “M’s” we are consistently counseled to seek for in the scriptures (D&C 6:7). Some in the Church have been trained to believe that if it isn’t in the ‘dairy manuals’ then it must be considered a “mystery” and therefore “taboo” and should not be talked about or discussed in any setting.

### Milk and Meat

The ‘manuals’ that are prepared for the general membership of the Church, must, by necessity contain the “milk” products, with gentle hints and savory smells of a meaty Bar-B-Q. This is because the manuals must teach to the lowest common denominator, which would be the level of the primary class member. This elementary correlation continues as the fifteen-year old class in Sunday School uses the same manual of which adults are to adhere in the Gospel Doctrine class. The Gospel is new to every generation, and because of the youth and the quantity of new members and conversions, the Church *must* provide the ‘dairy’ products. The Correlation Committee’s main responsibility (without any ire or complaint) is to make sure the members have a never-ending supply of these ‘dairy’ products. The unfortunate consequence is that almost all (the statistic is over 90%) of one’s religious and doctrinal education after Seminary and Institute, is the ‘Gospel Doctrine’ class. This has caused many to believe that the ‘milk’ is all that is available, all that is good and all that will ever be needed (contrary to 2 Ne. 28:27-30). It is learned from the scriptures, modern Prophets and especially Joseph Smith, that this restrictive idea of light, truth and knowledge, is simply not true.

There are, in many in the Wards and Stakes, who are appointed and self-appointed guards to make sure no one individual, student, member or teacher will venture out of the dairy section of ‘prescribed’ understanding. Because there are prepared and preferred cookbooks of dairy products, doesn’t mean that the ‘meat and mysteries’ don’t exist, nor that a healthier diet should be sought for. Joseph Smith discussed these restrictive traditions:

I say to all those who are disposed to set up stakes for the Almighty, You will come short of the glory of God. To become a joint-heir of the heirship of the Son, one must put away all his false traditions.<sup>1</sup>

I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions: they cannot stand the fire a all. How many will be able to abide a celestial law, and go through and receive their exaltation, I am unable to say, as many are called, but few are chosen.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *TPJS*, p. 321.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 331

But there has been a great difficulty in getting anything into the heads of this generation. It has been like splitting hemlocks knots with a corn-dodger for a wedge, and a pumpkin for a beetle. Even the Saints are slow to understand.<sup>3</sup>

Church Correlation provides the necessary ‘milk’ (albeit sometimes whole milk, cream and butter, but most often a formula of 2% and non-fat) while individual study can lead to the *meat found within the scriptures* and the teachings of Joseph Smith, as President Hinkley has so well counseled.<sup>4</sup> The ‘real mysteries’ come only from God, by revelation to the individual *who is prepared* for them. These, so called mysteries, carry with it specific obligations as Alma declares “...unto many is given to know the mysteries of God, *nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart* only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men” (Alma 12:9) “for unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but unto the world it is not given to know them” (D&C 42:65). Who can judge the preparation, ‘heed and diligence’ of another individual? The presentation and teaching of so called ‘mysteries’ should not to be taught in any public arena, especially those settings that are established by ‘Church Correlation’ as a milk venue such as “block classes” and Church meetings. Just as a grilled, rib-eye stake would and should never be served in a Baskin-Robbins, ‘meat and mysteries’ should never be taught in ‘Gospel Doctrine’ classes or any other collective auxiliary setting. It is just not the place.

## The Dilemma

The educational dilemma of the Church is twofold; the first is the control of information and knowledge. The church of Rome, as well as others, have learned that you can best control the masses by the control of knowledge, and this is done by prescription rather than the preparation. ‘Prescribe’ what can be taught, and then the institution has no need to prepare for the damage control of free thinking and scriptural interpretation. There are pros and cons of this process; however, ‘prescribed’ doctrine is always the final and safest choice for control. This decision is justified by the thought that the best plan is the limitation and prescription of knowledge, which will make it easier to insure ‘that one soul shall not be lost.’ The ancient church at Rome restricted the reading of scripture and the personal interpretation of scripture and doctrine to the ‘correlated’ teachings of the catechism and the priestly experts in theology and catechesis.

The second dilemma is found in the spiritual requirement to inspire the individual, at the same time knowledge is prescribed, to search beyond the ‘prescribed’ teachings and doctrinal traditions. The scriptures and the Latter-day Temples teach that the individual must, without exception, act upon the necessary desire, to seek for, receive and be obedient to a greater light and truth than is prescribed in the ‘block classes.’ The formulated milk based meals and the emphasis of only using the prepared materials and nothing more; has created a traditional view (that has now become a basic belief) that there is nothing more needed for exaltation than the Ensign can provide, obviously creating the feeling we need no more and that ‘all is well in Zion.’ Nonetheless, the progression of seeking for and being obedient to the knowledge, light and truth, one receives, is a requirement for exaltation. Again, the traditional security lies in the fact, that because of prescribed learning, the individual can claim that one has heard it all and that there is nothing new to learn or know. The problem is, the complacency with the knowledge one has. The Abraham’s, Moses’ the Joseph Smith’s continually seek for further light and truth, seeking to be a “greater follower of righteousness and to possess greater knowledge” (Abraham 1:2). The great separation lies somewhere between those who realize how little they know and those who don’t, it is when one believes that they have it, that they really lose it.

To be totally satisfied and secure in the pre-scripted milk products is to be satisfied being part of that ‘lowest common denominator.’ In this there is security. The security of never having to think for one’s self, nor put forth any effort for study, or read the scriptures for content to determine truth from error. Security lies

---

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Ensign, Oct 2003, 2-5

in the elementary education, believing there is *no more and no need to know more*, than simple math; reading over and over again ‘Dick and Jane’ primers with an occasional trip to the ‘book store of doctrinal trust’ for the relaxing LDS entertainment and Mormon equivalent of Dr. Seuss. For the adventurous Latter-day Saint, perhaps one might take a chance on expanding their horizons with the fiction of men mingled with scripture. If comfortable security in thought and doctrine is what one seeks for, the scriptures should be placed on the shelf along with the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith. These books should only be brought out in times of winter or famine. For those seeking security in ego and thought, the scriptures and teachings of Joseph Smith are to be perused only when one cannot get to Deseret Book to purchase the latest fiction, or LDS Harlequin novels and the plethora of computer generated spiritual self help books, and regurgitated commentaries of nothing but quotes from intellectuals and spiritual VIP’s. There is no end to what can be learned from the scriptures, but that would require individual desire, time and energy, which are commodities not seen in the recent past as displayed by the entertainment market that the LDS bookstores must focus on to become profitable. The masses determine the market, and the market reflects character and wants of the consumer.

Some scripture classes, special presentations, and books, (as this one) are not meant to focus on the ‘milk’ products, but rather the meat that is found in the scriptures. If an individual wants nothing more than a Gospel Doctrine or Primary lesson, they need not seek outside of the ‘correlated block’ lesson materials. Almost every teacher of the scriptures has discovered, that (especially with adults) there are those who come to an Institute or college level or an adult geared class, who are expecting a Primary class discussion. Others expect and want no more, than a Gospel Doctrine class discussion where they want to feel confident and secure that they have heard and know all the answers. After spending a life time in Gospel Doctrine class, a mission, Seminary and Institute; the individual ego, secure in it’s world of Gospel understanding, becomes frayed when threatened, in their own mind that there might be more learn than what they now know. Some get offended when they hear something (meat) they haven’t heard before even when it is found in scripture. Some choose to participate in a carnivorous class of a scriptural Bar-B-Q but are offended when served something other than the dairy products of which they are familiar. Who then can learn doctrine? Isaiah provides a great statement about those who are able to learn and understand:

Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.” (Isaiah 28:9, 10)

The scriptures open the exit doors of the dairy section of prescribed information. Not that one should forget or ignore the milk, it is a foundation upon which to build, but not the finished product. The milk is meant for the child in the Gospel and prepared to lay that necessary foundation for the lowest common denominator.

The scriptures are a never-ending source of light and truth for those who are seeking it. The scriptures are ‘standards’ of truth and are living because they have the information, the map, and the plan that one is to follow for salvation and exaltation. The Bible begins in Genesis with the creation of the heaven and the earth, and ends in Revelation with the creation of a ‘new heaven and new earth.’ What lies between these two creations is how to move from the first into the second. We have ever-present reminders that our bodies and spirits are in need of constant nourishment. The earth will provide the needed sustenance for our bodies and the scriptures provide the necessary nourishment for our spirits. To live on the milk is not enough, there must be ‘meat’ to thrive and understand doctrine. One must be “weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts” (Isaiah 28:9) before the buffet can begin. The ‘milk’ is needed, just as it is with a child; but there should come a time in every successful recipe, that with the ‘milk’ something more substantial added to the mixture. Combined with the regimented ‘milk’ of the manuals, the ‘meat’ should be consumed through the study of the scriptures, not just reading, but study, as one willingly is found “feasting on the word of God” (2 Nephi 31:20; Jacob 2:9).

## Mysteries

“Mysteries” in scripture are a promise to the faithful and obedient, and are for the *prepared individual recipient*, not the community of Saints. Mysteries are reserved “unto him that keepeth my commandments I will give the mysteries of my kingdom, and the same shall be in him a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life” (D&C 63:23). The Lord through the scriptures explains that the ‘mysteries’ are for the faithful, as long as the faithful are seeking them.

## Seek for the Mysteries

The command to seek for “further” light and truth or a greater knowledge and understanding, as Abraham describes it, is just that; more, further, greater than that which is offered by the gospel milk prepared for everyone. Paul explains that we are even incapable of understanding or even imagining the things that God has prepared for those who are prepared and seeking. Revelations and understanding does not come unless one is earnestly seeking with real intent. One does not bless the food until it is prepared. As Paul also explains in Corinthians the righteous “searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed [them] unto us by his Spirit: for *the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.*

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so *the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.* (1 Corinthians 2:9-11)

Nephi, like Paul, stresses that importance of seeking for light and truth that would exceed that which is already available as the formulated milk prepared the average lowest common consumer. Nephi, warns the ‘saints of the last days’ not to be complacent with what they have received. The complete text should be read as one sermon and not just fragmented into favorite verses for spiritual thoughts to begin meetings. The passage below is given in the context of seeking for light and truth, speaking to those who have a desire for more knowledge and a condemnation for those who feel they need no more that that which they already have.

17 . . . I, Nephi, was desirous also that I might see, and hear, and know of these things, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God unto all *those who diligently seek* him, as well in times of old as in the time that he should manifest himself unto the children of men.

18 For he is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and the way is prepared for all men from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto him.

19 For *he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost*, as well in these times as in times of old, and as well in times of old ***as in times to come;*** wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round.

24 Therefore, *wo be unto him that is at ease in Zion!*

25 *Wo be unto him that crieth: All is well!*

26 *Yea, wo be unto him that hearkeneth unto the precepts of men, and denieth the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost!*

27 *Yea, wo be unto him that saith: We have received, and we need no more!*

28 *And in fine, wo unto all those who tremble, and are angry because of the truth of God!* For behold, he that is built upon the rock receiveth it with gladness; and he that is built upon a sandy foundation trembleth lest he shall fall.

29 *Wo be unto him that shall say: We have received the word of God, and we need no more of the word of God, for we have enough!*

30 For behold, thus saith the Lord God: *I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from*

*them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have. (2 Nephi 28:17-30)*

Many would like to push this passage and its context toward the non-member, but the text itself is speaking to those who consider themselves 'Zion' and there is only one people who lays claim to the title of "Zion" in the last days. The non-member audience is addressed in the next chapter (2 Nephi 30) as it speaks of those who cry 'a Bible, a Bible, I have a Bible.' This last part of Chapter Twenty-eight of 2nd. Nephi is directed to members of the church in the latter-days, just as the first part of this chapter is directed to other churches that are not of God at the same time.

Zeezrom, is instructed as his elementary questions are answered by Amulek, (Alma 11) which is followed up by Alma explaining the basic concepts and rules of learning and understanding. The first of the concepts taught is that there are many that know the 'mysteries' but cannot explain these insights and truths to others beyond their preparation. Alma then (verse 10) explains that those who block their minds and hearts from further light and truth ("harden his heart") will eventually lose the truths they have received.

9 And now Alma began to expound these things unto him, saying: *It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him.*

10 And therefore, *he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full.*

11 And *they that will harden their hearts, [those that do not want to know more] to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction. Now this is what is meant by the chains of hell. (Alma 12:8-11)*

Joseph Smith taught that a 'man can be saved no faster that he obtains knowledge,'<sup>5</sup> and continues by stating that: "The principle of knowledge is the principle of salvation. This principle can be comprehended by the faithful and diligent; and every one that does not obtain knowledge sufficient to be saved will be condemned. The principle of salvation is given us through the knowledge of Jesus Christ."<sup>6</sup> The Prophet Joseph, like Nephi, taught that a '**man will be condemned more for what he doesn't believe than for the things that he might believe.**' The attitude of not seeking for more light and truth is a greater sin than believing everything. This greater knowledge is a requirement for salvation according to Joseph Smith.

Knowledge saves a man; and in the world of spirits no man can be exalted but by knowledge. So long as a man will not give heed to the commandments, he must abide without salvation. If a man has knowledge, he can be saved; although, if he has been guilty of great sins, he will be punished for them. But when he consents to obey the Gospel, whether here or in the world of spirits, he is saved.<sup>7</sup>

For this reason the Doctrine and Covenants teaches that this knowledge is for progression in the world to come:

18 Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection.

19 And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come. (D&C 130:18-19)

As all blessings of knowledge, a desire of light and truth and worthiness must precede the revelations from the Lord. Even the Word of Wisdom teaches that the windows of heaven will be opened to the those who

---

<sup>5</sup> TPJS, p. 217.

<sup>6</sup> TPJS, p. 297

<sup>7</sup> TPJS, p.357

are obedience “And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures” (D&C 89:19)

Nephi explains that though young he had “great desires to know of the mysteries of God, wherefore, I did cry unto the Lord; and behold he did visit me” (1 Nephi 2:16) giving him the knowledge he sought for. This “desire” is specifically mentioned by Jacob as he explains:

19 For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in these times as in times of old, and as well in times of old as in times to come; wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round. (1 Nephi 10:19)

More than once the Lord explains that these insights are available commanding: “Ask that you may know the mysteries of God. . .and according to your faith shall it be done unto you (D&C 8:11). Again, we read “if thou wilt inquire, thou shalt know mysteries which are great and marvelous. . .” And why should we seek them? For understanding, “that thou mayest find out mysteries, that *thou mayest bring many to the knowledge of the truth*, yea, convince them of the error of their ways” (D&C 6:11). The more knowledge about any subject one might have, the better the understanding. The better the understanding the better the ability to teach, followed by an increase of consequential conversions. What is the ultimate goal in knowing the mysteries? It is to provide the teacher a greater understanding with a increased vision of the plan of salvation, creating a more successful teacher. All revealed knowledge is to be used for the sake of the Gospel plan of salvation. Knowledge of the mysteries does not elevate or honor the individual, as an intellectual or doctrinal scholar; one receives the mysteries, not to teach the mysteries, but become a better teacher of the basic doctrines of salvation and exaltation. If mysteries are taught, it must be *by the spirit and from the scriptures* that they are taught and not by the claim of revelation: “open your mouths in proclaiming my gospel, the things of the kingdom, expounding the mysteries thereof *out of the scriptures, according to that portion of Spirit* and power which shall be given unto you, even as I will” (D&C 71:1). The knowledge or mysteries that one might know, does not place them in any elevated value or degree over those who might not know or understand even the basic doctrines or scriptures. Knowledge demands obedience and the greater the knowledge the greater the fall and the easier it is to fall.

Jacob continues to explain that education is not a requirement to receive and understand the “mysteries” that are available to man. The process is founded on revelation not education. There are two only gifts of the spirit that can or should be seen by others and that is the gift of tongues and the gift of prophecy. The gift of knowledge or revelation is individual for the individual and provided to the worthy in submissive humility.

8 Behold, great and marvelous are the works of the Lord. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways. And no man knoweth of his ways *save it be revealed unto him*; wherefore, brethren, despise not the revelations of God. (Jacob 4:8)

This is again taught in this dispensation as the Lord instructs Joseph Smith in the Doctrine and Convents about the ‘marvelous works’ of the Lord:

114 But *great and marvelous are the works of the Lord, and the mysteries of his kingdom* which he showed unto us, which surpass all understanding in glory, and in might, and in dominion;

115 Which he commanded us we should not write while we were yet in the Spirit, and are not lawful for man to utter;

116 Neither is man capable to make them known, for *they are only to be seen and understood by the power of the Holy Spirit, which God bestows on those who love him, and purify themselves before him*;

117 *To whom he grants this privilege* of seeing and knowing for themselves; (D&C 76:114-117)

Revealed ‘truth’ should not to be trifled with, or even argued because revelation is individual and based on preparation. King Benjamin teaches the people that have gathered and assembled to be taught, instructing them that: “I have not commanded you to come up hither to trifle with the words which I shall speak” but that the instruction received would be dependent on their desire to learn, stating that they “should hearken unto me, and open your ears that ye may hear, and your hearts that ye may understand, and your minds that the mysteries of God may be unfolded to your view” (Mosiah 2:9). Alma states that the mysteries are imparted “according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him” (Alma 12:9). He then explains that the definition of the “chains of hell” as; the captivity of man by Satan because of their lack of desire for further light and truth, or not seeking the mysteries of light and truth in their obedience to God (Alma 12:11).

This ‘heed and diligence’ for an understanding of the ‘mysteries’ is expanded by Alma as he explained that the revealed knowledge of the mysteries are to better qualify the teacher/missionary:

22 Yea, he that repenteth and exerciseth faith, and bringeth forth good works, and prayeth continually without ceasing—unto such it is given to know the mysteries of God; yea, unto such it shall be given to reveal things which never have been revealed; yea, and *it shall be given unto such to bring thousands of souls to repentance*, even as it has been given unto us to bring these our brethren to repentance. (Alma 26:22)

It is not the ‘mysteries’ that should be taught, but understanding further light and truth prepares the teacher to bring ‘souls unto repentance.’ The Doctrine and Covenants reveal the words of the Lord in response to the active and knowledgeable member of the church and the responsibility and purpose of the knowledge one has obtained by study or by faith. The first command of those who might know or have the responsibility to teach is to ‘teach the doctrine of the kingdom.’ Fulfilling this responsibility, the insights and mysteries will be made manifest as the Lord’s “grace shall attend” that the worthy might be “instructed more perfectly.”

77 And I give unto you a commandment that you shall *teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom*.  
78 Teach ye diligently and *my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly* in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand;  
79 Of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—  
80 That *ye may be prepared in all things when I shall send you again to magnify the calling* whereunto I have called you, and the mission with which I have commissioned you.  
81 Behold, I sent you out *to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor*. (D&C 88:77-81)

These verses explain that the God given knowledge is for the recipient to better prepare to fulfill their calling and to teach the Gospel truths as they will “seek to bring forth and establish Zion” on the earth (D&C 11:6). Revealed insights are not to satisfy the individual ego or make the recipient of any degree of knowledge by study, learning, or revelation consider themselves better or more informed than any other member of the Church, new or old, leader or lay-member, teacher or student. It is the ‘intellectual’ that finds pride in what they know, in public as well as in private. All knowledge and revelation that comes from God is given as a blessing to better prepare the individual to teach the “milk” of the Gospel to those who need to know and understand. The Doctrine and Covenants teach that the purpose of studying the scriptures is for this reason, as it declares that through one’s “studying of the scriptures” the insights learned *will* be used for the: ‘preaching, and confirming the church’ (D&C 26:1). To ‘confirm’ is to strengthen. God given knowledge is for the purpose of helping and strengthening the other members rather than lift one self above

others by supposed knowledge or learning. Alma declares that this life is a probationary state at “time to repent and serve God” (Alma 42:4). The very purpose of life is to serve our fellow man, rather than ourselves to teach rather than find security in personal knowledge and understanding. There are many warnings in the scriptures about the “learned” and those who believe that they are better because of education, knowledge or insight. All ‘active’ members of the Church have a mission, at almost every stage of life. “It becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor” (D&C 88:77-81). Every active Gospel and truth centered life must be connected to the three-fold mission of the Church, as we should be actively engaged in a good cause and do many things of our own free will as we help with ‘proclaiming the Gospel, perfecting the saints, or redeeming the dead.’ Knowledge of eternal truths demands obedience to a connected responsibility. The responsibility that accompanies knowledge, is not self aggrandizement, but the humble service of others. For he that is greatest among you is the servant of all.

Teaching the mysteries is not a responsibility of the learned, nor is it a responsibility of any position that found within the Church. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the ‘mysteries,’ when teaching the Gospel, are to be left alone:

Oh, ye elders of Israel, hearken to my voice; and when you are sent into the world to preach, tell those things you are sent to tell; preach and cry aloud, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; repent and believe the Gospel." Declare the first principles, and let mysteries alone. . .preach those things the Lord has told you to preach about--repentance and baptism for the remission of sins.<sup>8</sup>

Because of the fear of knowledge or ignorance, members have been conditioned, that the mysteries are forbidden, and should not be thought about or even sought for. But who can judge, if one has prepared themselves and received insights and knowledge beyond the milk? Who may make that determination? Surely not those who know nothing other than the milk. The Prophet Joseph Smith spoke of the judgement of those who knew only the milk and relied on limited understanding and the traditional teachings as a totality of truth.

But the moment you teach them some of the mysteries of the kingdom of God that are retained in the heavens and are to be revealed to the children of men when they are prepared for them they will be the first to stone you and put you to death. It was this same principle that crucified the Lord Jesus Christ, and will cause the people to kill the prophets in this generation.<sup>9</sup> Section Six 1843-44, p.309

The Lord, through the scriptures has issued the command to seek for these mysteries in the first commandment given to the church in this dispensation by the declaration to: “Seek not for riches but for wisdom, and behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich. Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich” (D&C 6:7). Making a connection between “eternal life” and a knowledge of the mysteries.

The Book of Mormon teaches that there is no law against what a man believes, and this because many in the Church are at different levels of understanding. There are traditions that are taught in Gospel Doctrine and other classes that are just wrong and false. That is alright even within the Church if the individual is not purposefully rebelling against the Church and Church leaders while trying to convince others to do so also. There are many who just don’t know what to believe.

7 Now there was no law against a man's belief; for it was strictly contrary to the commands of God that there should be a law which should bring men on to unequal grounds.

11 For there was a law that men should be judged according to their crimes. Nevertheless, there was no

---

<sup>8</sup> TPJS, p. 292.

<sup>9</sup> TPJS, p. 309.



law against a man's belief; therefore, a man was punished only for the crimes which he had done; therefore all men were on equal grounds. (Alma 30:7-11)

The Saints are instructed again in the Doctrine and Covenants of the necessity of the 'desire' that must precede the revelations as Abraham explains (Abraham 1:2). "*If thou shalt ask*, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal" (D&C 42:61).

The promises to those who are worthy and are seeking light and truth are greater than many understand. Too many of the Saints are stagnant in their knowledge and understanding, believing that all they need to know is presented in the manuals and Church magazines. Some protect themselves from having to make judgments of truth and error, which require a knowledge and understanding of the scriptures and mysteries, by condemning the teacher and teachings that they have not heard before. How foolish is one to think that they know it all because they have been raised in the Church, or served in any or every position. Men and women are not called because they know more, they are called and chosen to serve more. The promise is knowledge, to those who seek and are prepared. One must be as prepared to receive the answers as they are prepared to ask the questions:

7 And to them will I reveal all mysteries, yea, all the hidden mysteries of my kingdom from days of old, and for ages to come, will I make known unto them the good pleasure of my will concerning all things pertaining to my kingdom.

8 Yea, even the wonders of eternity shall they know, and things to come will I show them, even the things of many generations.

9 And their wisdom shall be great, and their understanding reach to heaven; and before them the wisdom of the wise shall perish, and the understanding of the prudent shall come to naught.

10 For by my Spirit will I enlighten them, and by my power will I make known unto them the secrets of my will—yea, even those things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor yet entered into the heart of man. (D&C 76:7-10)

26 God shall give unto you knowledge by his Holy Spirit, yea, by the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost, that has not been revealed since the world was until now

27 Which our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation to be revealed in the last times, which their minds were pointed to by the angels, as held in reserve for the fulness of their glory;

28 A time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld, whether there be one God or many gods, they shall be manifest.

29 All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

30 And also, if there be bounds set to the heavens or to the seas, or to the dry land, or to the sun, moon, or stars—

31 All the times of their revolutions, all the appointed days, months, and years, and all the days of their days, months, and years, and all their glories, laws, and set times, shall be revealed in the days of the dispensation of the fulness of times

32 According to that which was ordained in the midst of the Council of the Eternal God of all other gods before this world was, that should be reserved unto the finishing and the end thereof, when every man shall enter into his eternal presence and into his immortal rest. (D&C 121:26-32)

Teaching, what some my call 'mysteries' to others outside of a church setting, is not condoned in scripture. (Any personal revelation is for the individual and restrictive to that individual) Personal revelations are for the individual's benefit and their personal responsibility. And who could or would know if any other individual has been prepared or enlightened by revealed knowledge from God without making a judgment based on their own understanding and experience? The cliché of spiritual insight and knowledge of the mysteries is often forgotten by the intellectual: "Those who have it, don't talk about it, and those who talk about it, don't know what their talking about."

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught:

Search the scriptures--search the revelations which we publish, and ask your Heavenly Father, in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, to manifest the truth unto you, and if you do it with an eye single to His glory nothing doubting, He will answer you by the power of His Holy Spirit. You will then *know for yourselves and not for another*. You will not then be dependent on man for the knowledge of God nor will there be any room for speculation. No; for when men receive their instruction from Him that made them, they know how He will save them. Then again we say: Search the Scriptures, search the Prophets and learn what portion of them belongs to you and the people of the nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup>

Revealed knowledge beyond that presented in the manuals, strictly belongs to the individual. Teaching in the Church classroom should be confined to the “milk” prepared, prescribed and presented in the mountain of digital and printed manuals, without the use of outside materials. And (as many teachers are told) ‘the use of scripture references that are not presented in the lesson manual, should not be used as well.’

The ‘milk, meat and the mysteries’ are needed, and having one does not negate or nullify the others. To make a judgment that the church is not providing enough knowledge by teaching the ‘mysteries’ or even the ‘meat’ is not the responsibility of the learned and is precarious at best. To claim to know or teach these things will lead to an attitude of condemnation in it’s conclusion. All is a matter of preparation. The Church must teach the milk, the meat is found in the scriptures, by the individual study of the scriptures. And the mysteries come to the humble and obedient seeker of truth, and not by education or professional experience or degree. The understanding of the ‘milk, meat, and mysteries, are meant for those worthy, one building upon the other, and none capable of existing in full without including them all for the purpose of bringing all unto Christ.

---

<sup>10</sup> Smith, Joseph Fielding, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (TPJS), (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co. 1979), p. 9.

