
Doctrine and Covenants 21 — As If From Mine Own Mouth

A revelation given through Joseph Smith at the Peter Whitmer Sr. home in Fayette, New York, on April 6, 1830 — the day the Church was organized.

This is the revelation of the founding day itself — given on April 6, 1830, in the same room and the same hour the Church was organized.

Hebrew Word Studies

ro'eh / chozeh (רָאָה / חִזָּה) — "**seer; one who sees**" **v. 1.** Two Hebrew words for "seer." 1 Samuel 9:9 notes that "he that is now called a Prophet (navi) was beforetime called a Seer (ro'eh)" — the seer is the older, deeper office, the one who simply sees. The Book of Mormon sharpens it: "a seer is greater than a prophet... a revelator and a prophet also" (Mosiah 8:15–16). Section 21 gives Joseph the very office that book defines.

From the Chapter's Architecture

*The structure moves from office to man to order, and the middle is the surprise. It opens with the **titles and the record** (vv. 1–3) — the public, institutional naming of the prophet. It moves to the **covenant of heed** (vv. 4–6) — how the Church will relate to revelation, with the gates-of-hell promise as the seal. Then, at the center, it drops into the **personal** (vv. 7–9) — the Lord's notice of Joseph's diligence, prayers, and weeping. And it closes with the **ordinance** (vv. 10–12) — the mutual ordination that puts the whole thing under the law of conferred authority. A revelation that could have been all office is built around a moment of comfort, and a revelation that exalts one man ends by making him receive his office from another's hands. Exaltation and humility, in the same twelve verses.*