

FOREWORD

A treasury is a collection of valuable and delightful things. It is a repository where wealth and precious objects are kept. Over the past three decades, the annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium on the study of the scriptures, has been sponsored by Religious Education and the Religious Studies Center (RSC) at Brigham Young University. These symposia honored Dr. Sperry for his forty years of faithful service and thoughtful scholarship; indeed, his scholarly work represents a treasury of knowledge on the scriptures.

In 2003 the RSC published *A Book of Mormon Treasury*. This volume was the first in a series to highlight gospel insights from General Authorities and religious educators from previous Sperry symposia on the Book of Mormon. At that time it was promised that other volumes, focused on the scriptures, would be forthcoming.

Of the thirty-two Sperry symposia, five were devoted to the study of the Doctrine and Covenants: 1979, 1984, 1989, 1992, and 1996. From these symposia, outstanding papers and presentations were published in books by the RSC. These selected, papers, in themselves are a treasury of valuable and delightful information and stand as a blessing to those who have sought understanding of the Doctrine and Covenants and the events of the Restoration.

Unfortunately, most of these excellent Sperry publications of the Doctrine and Covenants are no longer readily available for public use. This has left a void. In addition, an important objective of the RSC is to promote sound scholarship that will enhance the understanding of the scriptures and the history of the Church. To advance this objective and to fill this void, we have compiled a treasury of significant articles from past Sperry symposia on the Doctrine and

Covenants, including a few new chapters that fill in historical gaps. Much like the preceding volume on the Book of Mormon, this compilation provides valuable information to Church members in their study of the Doctrine and Covenants. It is hoped that this collection of articles will motivate learning toward, increase understanding of, and strengthen testimonies of this powerful book of scripture often referred to as the “capstone”—the Doctrine and Covenants.

The articles in this volume are, for the most part, arranged in the order that the revelations came forth. These articles are selected with the intended purpose of assisting the reader in gaining a better understanding of the historical context of the discussed revelation and of deepening the reader’s general understanding of doctrine, gospel principles, and application. All articles reflect sound scholarship and faith.

Three of the first five articles in this volume are keynote addresses given by General Authorities at the Sperry symposia. Of the other two General Authority addresses, Elder Dallin H. Oaks first gave his address on revelation at a Brigham Young University devotional, and Elder John K. Carmack originally published his piece on Fayette in the *Ensign* magazine.

Within the context of this compilation, it is important to understand that it is not practicable nor possible to provide a comprehensive study of all doctrines, gospel insights, historical backgrounds, and applications for each revelation. However, it is hoped that these classic addresses and articles will bring the reader to a greater understanding of the precious truths found in the Doctrine and Covenants.

It is noteworthy that a scripture index is provided, linking verse and section numbers to the page numbers in the book. The use of such an aid allows the reader to review multiple entries of a scripture reference throughout the book.

We are pleased to help make these timeless articles accessible to all who are interested, realizing as we do, that the Doctrine and Covenants carries with it the message to “teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom. Teach ye diligently any 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” (D&C 88:77–78).