

May 17-23, 2021

Doctrine and Covenants 51–57

“A FAITHFUL, A JUST, AND A WISE STEWARD”

Summary: *Doctrine and Covenants 51. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Thompson, Ohio, May 20, 1831. At this time the Saints migrating from the eastern states began to arrive in Ohio, and it became necessary to make definite arrangements for their settlement. As this undertaking belonged particularly to the bishop’s office, Bishop Edward Partridge sought instruction on the matter, and the Prophet inquired of the Lord. 1–8, Edward Partridge is appointed to regulate stewardships and properties; 9–12, The Saints are to deal honestly and receive alike; 13–15, They are to have a bishop’s storehouse and to organize properties according to the Lord’s law; 16–20, Ohio is to be a temporary gathering place.*

Doctrine and Covenants 52. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to the elders of the Church, at Kirtland, Ohio, June 6, 1831. A conference had been held at Kirtland, beginning on the 3rd and closing on the 6th of June. At this conference the first distinctive ordinations to the office of high priest were made, and certain manifestations of false and deceiving spirits were discerned and rebuked. 1–2, The next conference is designated to be held in Missouri; 3–8, Appointments of certain elders to travel together are made; 9–11, The elders are to teach what the apostles and prophets have written; 12–21, Those enlightened by the Spirit bring forth fruits of praise and wisdom; 22–44, Various elders are appointed to go forth preaching the gospel while traveling to Missouri for the conference.

Doctrine and Covenants 53. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Algernon Sidney Gilbert, at Kirtland, Ohio, June 8, 1831. At Sidney Gilbert’s request, the Prophet inquired of the Lord as to Brother Gilbert’s work and appointment in the Church. 1–3, Sidney Gilbert’s calling and election in the Church is to be ordained an elder; 4–7, He is also to serve as a bishop’s agent.

Doctrine and Covenants 54. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Newel Knight, at Kirtland, Ohio, June 10, 1831. Members of the Church living in Thompson, Ohio, were divided on questions having to do with the consecration of properties. Selfishness and greed were manifest. Following his mission to the Shakers (see the heading to section 49), Leman Copley had broken his covenant to consecrate his large farm as a place of inheritance for the Saints arriving from Colesville, New York. As a consequence, Newel Knight (leader of the members living in Thompson) and other elders had come to the Prophet asking how to proceed. The Prophet inquired of the Lord and received this revelation, which commands the members in Thompson to leave Leman Copley’s farm and journey to Missouri. 1–6, The Saints must keep the gospel covenant to gain mercy; 7–10, They must be patient in tribulation.

Doctrine and Covenants 55. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to William W. Phelps, at Kirtland, Ohio, June 14, 1831. William W. Phelps, a printer, and his family had just arrived at Kirtland, and the Prophet sought the Lord for information concerning him. 1–3, William W. Phelps is called and chosen to be baptized, to be ordained an elder, and to preach the gospel; 4, He is also to write books for children in Church schools; 5–6, He is to travel to Missouri, which will be the area of his labors.

Doctrine and Covenants 56. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, June 15, 1831. This revelation chastises Ezra Thayre for not obeying a former revelation (the “commandment” referred to in verse 8), which Joseph Smith had received for him, instructing Thayre concerning his duties on Frederick G. Williams’ farm, where he lived. The following revelation also revokes Thayre’s call to travel to Missouri with Thomas B. Marsh (see section 52:22). 1–2, The Saints must take up their cross and follow the Lord to gain salvation; 3–13, The Lord

commands and revokes, and the disobedient are cast off; 14–17, Wo unto the rich who will not help the poor, and wo unto the poor whose hearts are not broken; 18–20, Blessed are the poor who are pure in heart, for they will inherit the earth.

Doctrine and Covenants 57. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, July 20, 1831. In compliance with the Lord's command to travel to Missouri, where He would reveal "the land of your inheritance" (section 52), the elders had journeyed from Ohio to Missouri's western border. Joseph Smith contemplated the state of the Lamanites and wondered: "When will the wilderness blossom as the rose? When will Zion be built up in her glory, and where will Thy temple stand, unto which all nations shall come in the last days?" Subsequently he received this revelation. 1–3, Independence, Missouri, is the place for the City of Zion and the temple; 4–7, The Saints are to purchase lands and receive inheritances in that area; 8–16, Sidney Gilbert is to establish a store, William W. Phelps is to be a printer, and Oliver Cowdery is to edit material for publication.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

How do I view the "lifestyle" reflected in the Law of the Lord?

There is a significant difference between the "United Order" and the "Law of Consecration." The United Order is more like the modern version of the Jewish *kibbutz*. Modern Jewish communities reflect some similar cooperative efforts as was done anciently. One such community structure is called the *kibbutz*. "Zionism in its modern sense began in 1897, when Theodor Herzl founded the World Zionist Organization. Herzl's objective was to 'secure for the Jewish people a publicly recognized, legally secured home in Palestine.' His ambitious efforts captured the imagination of his fellow Jews and soon the initial settlers were joined by new groups of Zionists as the Second *Aliyah* (immigration) (1904) and continuous waves of immigrants after that made their way to Israel. These groups established agricultural settlements all over the country, revived the Hebrew language, and created their own Watchman Society to guard their members from Arab attack. In 1909, on land purchased by the Jewish National Fund, the first *kibbutz*, Deganyah, was established. By 1914, the *yishuv*, as the Jewish community was called, numbered some 85,000. "Kibbutzim with similar ways of thinking

often group together in federations, which save their member-villages money by purchasing for them all in bulk, and arranging from one central office to sell all their crops. In addition, many kibbutzim cooperate with other kibbutzim in the same region, whether they share the same ideas or not, and together they are able to build central silos and arrange heavy transport. Likewise, the kibbutz associations have their own adult education courses, choirs, amateur orchestras, art collections, bulletins, publishing houses, and even their own teachers' training college. Thousands of members of certain older kibbutzim, after completing their three-year army service, volunteer a year's labor—unpaid, of course—in newer *kibbutzim*, in order to help them stand on their own feet."
([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

How can I see the echoes of God's true leadership of the restoration?

Just prior to Jesus' time, a legislated, cooperative community arose that used similar governance. The Essenes wrote about their disciplines. The best preserved of these Qumran scrolls is called *The Manual of Discipline*, a sort of doctrines and covenants of these religious people. It describes their organization that included a teacher of righteousness and two assistants. There was also a council of twelve overseers. Their priestly system

included two castes: One of a higher authority that connected with an order of the *Melech Zedek* (righteous king), and another of lesser authority that connected with the Levitical, or order of *Aaron*. They were bound by a strict order of unity. An Essene's membership in a kibbutz-like united order came into effect only after a two-year trial period. The Essenes kept copies of the scriptures, interpretations of the scriptures, and their own scrolls of doctrines and covenants. In the Old Testament we read how the Children of Israel were led by twelve elders, and another council of seventy elders. ““And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel . . .” (Exodus24:1)

Do I discuss or argue?

“Within Judaism the polemics, or scholarly arguments, have been almost as bitter. From the *Talmudic* period when the Sadducees and Samaritans were in dispute with traditional Judaism, disputes have been frequent. Purely *halakhic* and rabbinic disputes were usually dealt within question-and-answer and other literary forms. However, battles over *Kabbalah*, ordination of rabbis and Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed* were more substantial.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.) Another noteworthy disputation came from the “Satmar Rabbi.” He argued that the *Aliyah* to the Land of Israel was an evil trick and thus against God's will. He felt that the establishment of Israel as a modern nation was wrong.” “Satmar [is the] name of a small, contemporary Hasidic sect, distinguished by its fanatical opposition to Zionism and the State of Israel. It takes its name from the hometown of its leader, Joel Teitelbaum of Satmar (1888–1979), and most of its adherents reside in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, New York.” “Teitelbaum was an exceedingly sharp polemicist who combined extreme

fanaticism with a forceful personality . . . he regarded the Holocaust of European Jews as a direct punishment for secular Zionism . . . Teitelbaum opposed the use of Hebrew as a spoken language, since he believed that it secularized and profaned the holy tongue. He forbade the Hasidim living in his community to cooperate with State institutions and he ordered those living in Israel not to take the oath of loyalty to the State, not to take part in elections, and not to make use of its law courts or legal system.”

(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.) These kinds of disputations have also drawn Jews away from dialogues with believers in Jesus, the Messiah. Disputations require some learning of the other's point of view. Jews know very little about Jesus' restoration of the original order that Father in Heaven gave Adam and his children. However, in the last days, more and more Jews are becoming aware that religious order was restored from time to time throughout history and that there may need for a final restoration that has to happen in these “latter-days.” These restorations consistently review the “beginning to the end,” the plan of salvation, the true original order of God.

When did children books begin to be part of Jewish life?

Passover week is likely the best family Jewish holiday. There is a manual or booklet called the “*Haggadah*,” it's content is usually followed every year. There are *Haggadah* booklets that have artistic creations to capture and anchor a child's memory. The purpose is to bring Jewish children back to a recollection of the greatest deliverance in their history. As a believing Jew, I see a great amount of symbolism in the redemption story. The account of baby Moses being saved during an extermination order by the Pharaoh parallels the account of the baby Jesus being saved during an

extermination order by King Herod as his family fled to Egypt. Moses becomes a “type” of the deliverer. He was raised to deliver Israel from bondage. Jesus of Nazareth raised all people from the bondage of physical and spiritual death. He is the real deliverer. Most Jewish children books came to be in the mid twentieth-century. Jewish publisher’s say, “It’s important that children have access to stories that contain Jewish characters and explore Jewish issues, to help them grow up to be understanding and compassionate towards people of all cultures and faiths. From picture books to graphic novels, we’ve found books that deal with a variety of Jewish experiences, from forming friendships to fighting injustice.” (<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/uk/lifestyle/editors-choice-book-reviews/g33573398/books-children-jewish-culture-antisemitism>) Anne Frank's Diary is likely the most famous of children Holocaust literature. Anne kept her diary as her family hid from Nazis in Amsterdam. Tragically, She was captured in 1944 and died in 1945, Her legacy lives on in her diary; read by older children world-wide.

How important are the poor in my life?

“Nowadays many (Jewish) communities

integrate all their charitable endeavors into one central agency. In the State of Israel the needs of the poor are looked after by the Ministry of Welfare, which is a government agency. However, a great deal of private, non-governmental charity work still goes on.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) In modern times, to the Jews, the principle of tithing has been modified to reflect the charity and alms given. It is a general Jewish understanding that three percent of one’s income should be used for charitable purposes. I have found a few who prefer the tithing amount to be ten percent. In the Islamic religion, charity is one of the basic five pillars or tenants of faith. The charitable contribution is generally considered to be two percent.

Where will the next Temple be?

In previous supplemental information, we have discussed how a desire for a Temple is a central inclusion of Jewish prayers – before and after every meal, and at every gravesite prayer. On the other hand, you can see how the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is planning to have Temples accessible all over the world, and in a sense, live in such a way to have a holy home for the “Lord to be in our midst!”