

## Summary Handout

# “This Is My Gospel”

Lesson

42

Summary

3 Nephi 27–30; 4 Nephi

**Scripture Summary:** *Jesus commands them to call the Church in his name—His mission and atoning sacrifice constitute his gospel—Men are commanded to repent and be baptized that they may be sanctified by the Holy Ghost—They are to be even as Jesus is.*

*Nine of the Twelve desire and are promised an inheritance in Christ's kingdom when they die—The Three Nephites desire and are given power over death so as to remain on the earth until Jesus comes again—They are translated and see things not lawful to utter, and they are now ministering among men.*

*The coming forth of the Book of Mormon is a sign that the Lord has commenced to gather Israel and fulfill his covenants—Those who reject his latter-day revelations and gifts shall be cursed.*

*The latter-day Gentiles are commanded to repent and come unto Christ and be numbered with the house of Israel. [Between A.D. 34 and 35]*

*The Nephites and the Lamanites are all converted to the Church of Christ—They have all things in common, work miracles, and prosper in the land—After two centuries divisions, evils, false churches, and persecutions arise—After three hundred years both the Nephites and the Lamanites are wicked—Ammaron hides up the sacred records. [Between A.D. 36 and 321]*

**Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:** **Meaning of Turn and Return:** The Lord's first message to the Disciples in the “Americas” was the same as to the Disciples in the Land of Israel, that of repentance. The word “repentance” in Hebrew literally means “to turn” or “return.” “Although Judaism sees sin as a most serious matter, even the sinner is not without hope . . . if a sinner repents . . . God will forgive him. Repentance consists of several stages --- firstly the sinner must reflect . . . and realize that he has indeed done the wrong thing . . . make up his mind never to do it again, and confess his sin . . . However . . . his repentance is still not final until he has been exposed to the same temptation and withstood it . . . [and] . . . not deliberately put himself on that spot again.” “Repentance in Hebrew is known as *teshuvah*, which literally means ‘return,’ and signifies a return to God . . . when a person repents out of love of God (and not just out of fear of divine punishment), all the sins he had committed are considered to be *mitzvot*. This is perhaps the most comforting doctrine that Judaism has given to the world.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Unknown Visitors:** The special request of the Three Nephite Disciples to remain on the earth to serve mankind's quest in returning to God is, of course, similar to the Lord's beloved Disciple, John, in Israel. The Jews have a tradition (*aggadah*) that has a somewhat similar idea of special “unknown” visitors. Some refer to them as “Zaddikim” or very righteous beings. “According to an *aggadah* . . . in each generation there are exactly 36 righteous men -- Lamed *Vav* *Zaddikim* -- who received the Divine Presence and whose righteousness sustains the world . . . believed to be anonymous saints who remained unnoticed . . . in times of great peril it was believed that the *lamedvavnik* dramatically appeared and used his hidden powers to defeat the enemies of Israel. Then, as mysteriously as he came, he returned to his usual obscurity.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Lamb and Lion:** The miracle of being unharmed of wild beasts is a reminder of a spiritual presence and worthiness that can prevail with man and beasts. Daniel was among lions and yet remained unharmed. “My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt” (*Daniel 6:22*) “The international peace of the Messianic era is described in a beautiful passage in Isaiah (11:6--7): animals which are natural enemies will live together in harmony. ‘. . . wolf . . . lamb . . . and the leopard shall lie down with the kid . . . and a little child shall lead them.’” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Holding Earthly Things in Common:** This reflects a higher attitude and discipline that true disciples of the Lord can raise themselves to. The followers of the Disciples of Jesus in Israel had that standard for a while. Jews have attempted to raise themselves to that level throughout the ages. “And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all [men], as every man had need.” (*Acts 2:44-45*) The modern Kibbutz system in Israel is a lesser derivation of the principle of holding things in common and working for the common good of the entire community. “There is no private wealth whatever. Once a new member is accepted after a year's trial period, he gives everything he owns (apart from personal possessions) to the kibbutz. In addition, he is expected to put in his honest day's work in whatever field the kibbutz planning committee finds most useful for the kibbutz as a whole.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Common Identity of Hassidic Jews:** The Hassidic sect of Judaism attempted to create a commonality as they formed their special society a few hundred years ago. They wore black clothing to identify their common connection. They may have decided to do so based on ancient Biblical Jewish tradition and, in some cases, being forced to identify themselves as Jews. “Today, most Hasidim live in the United States and Israel. Among the main dynasties are such diverse groups as the Habad-Lubavich movement, which describes itself as ‘a mission to Jews by Jews;’ the violently anti-Zionist Satmar Hasidim; the ‘classical’ Hasidim of Belz and the scholarly followers of the Gur dynasty.” “But though these groups have their philosophical differences, they maintain a very similar way of life which has changed little since the 18th century. The men dress in traditional *kapotes* (long black coats; silk for the Sabbath and holidays) and wide-brimmed black hats, which may be replaced by the fur-trimmed *shtreimel* on special occasions.”

**Historic Identity Through Clothing:** “Imagine . . . wearing a tunic with purple stripes, as Jews once did in Persia; a long black gown as in medieval Spain; a yellow turban as in 16th-century Turkey; or a vest with 12 silver buttons as in 19th-century India. In many countries Jews have favored a distinctive style of dress, which has often helped them preserve their own identity in a foreign environment. Thus the Midrash gives three reasons by virtue of which our forefathers were redeemed from their slavery in Egypt. One of them is ‘that they did not change their style of dress.’” “Our first fashion record is the Bible, which describes common, priestly, and royal dress. Monuments in Egypt and Mesopotamia clearly show the styles of that time, which indicated a man's wealth and status. A common garment consisted of a white cloth suspended from the waist to the knees.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**The Challenge of Fashion:** Sometimes clothing or types of clothing are used to create an identity. The extremes of fashion often shout the departure from self discipline and godliness. The return to beautiful and yet modest clothing, turning our concern to the other’s well being and turning to God in all ways – is the Lord’s call of repentance, which is “His Gospel.”

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