

Summary Handout

“This Is My Voice unto All”

Lesson

10

Summary

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 25: Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, July 1830. See HC 1: 103—104; see also heading to Section 24. This revelation manifests the will of the Lord to Emma Smith, the Propbet's wife. 1—6, Emma Smith, an elect lady, is called to aid and comfort her husband; 7—11, She is also called to write, to expound scriptures, and to select hymns; 12—14, The song of the righteous is a prayer unto the Lord; 15—16, Principles of obedience in this revelation are applicable to all.

Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:

A Voice of Cheer: Just about every time the heavens open, those with the Lord's spirit are brought up to greater “cheer.” To those, the Lord's voice is comforting. “And he shall utter his voice out of Zion, and he shall speak from Jerusalem, and his voice shall be heard among all people.” (*Doctrine & Covenants 133:21*) “For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand . . . if ye will hear his voice . . .” (*Psalms 95:7*)

Recognizing the Voice of God: “How are we to know the voice of the Good Shepherd from the voice of a stranger? . . . the Spirit of the Lord pierces their inmost souls . . . by the testimony of the Holy Ghost light springs up within them, and they see and understand for themselves.” (*Discourses of Brigham Young, Pg.431*)
To remember those words would be a source of reoccurring joy.

Gathering and Remembering: On one hand, the Jews, without consciously knowing the Lord, are making an exodus from the far-flung reaches of the world and are being gathered home. On the other hand, throughout the world, Latter-day Saints are making an exodus from not knowing the Lord and are being gathered to an eternal home. They are striving to remember and follow the modern prophets who, like the ancient prophets, wanted them to know the Lord. Their response is in being worthy to know the law in their hearts without having to be told by many commandments, rules and regulations. Remembering has great value. “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Who will Forget? There is a mistaken idea that if one truly repents and truly forgives, he will forget. The scriptural verses about remembrance indicate that the Lord is the one who will forget our mistakes. Apparently we need to have memory, because it is from our memory of good and bad that we learn. As we remember our sins and the sins of our forefathers, we can prevent ourselves from repeating the same mistakes. “. . . for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (*Jeremiah 31:33-34*)

Look Forward to the Past: Alma teaches, as prophets taught in the past and as they teach today, to look forward to the past! In other words, our memory must be “before” us so that we can learn from the past. At the same time, our future is before us as well. In that way we have the advantage of a “wide screen” view of life. “. . . again, my brethren, I would cite your minds forward to the time when the Lord God gave these commandments unto his children; and I would that ye should remember . . .” (*Alma 13:1*)

Tools of Memory: Throughout time there have been symbolic and functional artifacts that brought to our minds God's counsel to his children. To this day, Jews are counseled to place a “Mezuzah” on their door posts and on their gates so that in all their comings and goings they may remember the Lord. (Deuteronomy 6 : 4—9; 11:13—21) In the Book of Mormon, the functional Liahona led the righteous descendants of Lehi. In the Bible, the cloud and pillar (as well as the raised serpent) was a reminder that God would lead Israel through the wilderness. “The Tabernacle stood in the center of the Israelite camp and a cloud rested over it.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Looking “Up:” “To typify Christ and point attention to the salvation which would come because he would be lifted up on the cross, Moses (as commanded by the Lord) made a brazen serpent and lifted it up on a pole. The brazen serpent was kept as a symbol in Israel until the time of Hezekiah, who broke it in pieces to keep apostate Israel of his day from burning incense to it. (2 Kings 18:4.)” (*Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, p.104*) The pattern of directional tools was to have us turn and “look up” in order to be “lifted up.” As with all prophets of God, the message is: improving, changing and turning toward God (“to turn” is the word “repentance” in Hebrew).

Serve God with Body and Soul: “A person's soul is that part of him that loves God . . . and wants to be like Him, and a person's body is the physical container of his soul on earth. Nearly all the *mitzvot* which God gave are to be performed with the body. Thus the physical actions of man are sanctified. This applies to all the physical aspects of life: even sex when it is practiced in the proper framework, marriage, is in accordance with the will of God and is a *mitzvah*. “The regulations concerning sexual relations between husband and wife (termed *tohorat ha-mishpahah*, literally, ‘family purity’), constitute another integral component of the laws of purity which still apply today.”

Sex and Holiness: “Like other basic human desires, sex is regarded in a positive light in Jewish teaching, especially as it is the means of fulfilling the first biblical commandment: ‘Be fruitful and multiply.’ Judaism does not encourage the unbridled fulfillment of desire, however, but rather imposes restrictions which raise the act to the level of holiness. “Detailed legislation concerning sexual behavior can be found in the Bible as well as in the Talmud and subsequent rabbinic literature. Celibacy (complete abstinence from all sexual activity) is discouraged as an unnatural state and detrimental to the human personality. The primary restriction of sexual activity in Jewish law is that it should take place within marriage, as an expression of love between husband and wife as well as out of a desire to fulfill God's commandments. An element of holiness is added by the laws of *niddah* . . . which ensure that the couple does not indulge in sex on impulse but rather directs the act to holiness.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Chastity and Modesty: “In general, moderation and self-control in sexual activity are encouraged. Chastity, the goal to be aimed for, does not mean the avoidance of all sex but of illegal sex. This includes adultery, incest, sodomy, rape and seduction. Adultery is defined as sexual relations between a married woman and any man other than her husband. “Judaism encourages modesty as one of the means to chastity. Thus the Jewish woman is enjoined to dress and act modestly at all times. Furthermore, a man is forbidden to be alone with a woman with whom he is not permitted to have sexual relations from considerations of both chastity and modesty.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Lasting Joy and Good Cheer: Latter-day Saint doctrine is more definitive in that any sexual contact or activity with any body, including your own body, that leads to improper sexual emotions is simply unwarranted. Obviously, the world's mass media culture generally disagrees with such a standard. Lasting joy and genuine good cheer comes from a healthy life which includes spiritual, emotional and physical health. “And inasmuch as ye do these things with thanksgiving, with cheerful hearts and countenances, not with much laughter, for this is sin, but with a glad heart and a cheerful countenance . . .” (*Doctrine & Covenants 59:15*)

Comfort from Heaven: When angels appeared to frightened shepherds on the hills of Bethlehem, the message was joyful and comforting. “And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.” (*Luke 2:10-11*)

“Be of Good Cheer:”In the New Testament, another unnerving and frightful experience turned into a message of good cheer. On a stormy sea of Galilee, the Apostles faced what they supposed was a spirit. Prior to that, the only instruction they might have had was that fasting and prayer was necessary to drive spirits away. However, they had eaten a miraculous meal the previous evening where thousands were fed from five loaves and two fish and they were likely full, not fasting! Therefore, they may have thought, “We cannot command the spirit.” “But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshiped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.” (*Matthew 14:27:33*)

When we hear His voice, we are comforted, we are cheered, we are happier.

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