

Summary Handout

The Kingdoms of Glory

Lesson

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Summary

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 76; A vision given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon, at Hiram, Ohio, February 16, 1832. HC 1: 245—252. Prefacing his record of this vision the Prophet wrote: "Upon my return from Amherst conference, I resumed the translation of the Scriptures. From sundry revelations which had been received, it was apparent that many important points touching the salvation of man had been taken from the Bible, or lost before it was compiled. It appeared self-evident from what truths were left, that if God rewarded every one according to the deeds done in the body, the term 'Heaven,' as intended for the Saints' eternal home, must include more kingdoms than one. Accordingly, while translating St. John's Gospel, myself and Elder Rigdon saw the following vision." It was after the Prophet had translated John 5:29 that this vision was given. 1—4, The Lord is God; 5—10, Mysteries of the kingdom will be revealed to all the faithful; 11—17, All shall come forth in the resurrection of the just or the unjust; 18—24, Inhabitants of many worlds are begotten sons and daughters unto God through the atonement of Jesus Christ; 25—29, An angel of God fell and became the devil; 30—49, Sons of perdition suffer eternal damnation; all others gain some degree of salvation; 50—70, The glory and reward of exalted beings in the celestial kingdom; 71—80, Those who shall inherit the terrestrial kingdom; 81—113, Status of those in the telestial, terrestrial, and celestial glories; 114—119, All the faithful may see the vision of the degrees of glory.

Doctrine and Covenants 131; Instructions by Joseph Smith the Prophet, given at Ramus, Illinois, May 16 and 17, 1843. HC 5: 392—393. 1—4, Celestial marriage is essential to exaltation in the highest heaven; 5—6, How men are sealed up unto eternal life; 7—8, All spirit is matter.

Doctrine and Covenants 132:19—24; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Nauvoo, Illinois, recorded July 12, 1843, relating to the new and everlasting covenant, including the eternity of the marriage covenant, as also plurality of wives. HC 5: 501—507. Although the revelation was recorded in 1843, it is evident from the historical records that the doctrines and principles involved in this revelation had been known by the Prophet since 1831. 15—20, Celestial marriage and a continuation of the family unit enable men to become gods; 21—25, The strait and narrow way that leads to eternal lives; 26—27, Law given relative to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

Doctrine and Covenants 137; A vision given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, in the temple at Kirtland, Ohio, January 21, 1836. HC 2: 380—381. The occasion was the administration of the ordinances of the endowment as far as they had then been revealed. 1—6, The Prophet sees his brother Alvin in the celestial kingdom; 7—9, The doctrine of salvation for the dead is revealed; 10, All children are saved in the celestial kingdom.

Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:

“Heaven and Hell:” This concept is often vague in most religions. Even though there is little discussion of after life among the Jews, heaven and hell appear in much Jewish commentary. “The souls of the righteous enter paradise, or *Gan Eden* [Garden of Eden] . . . ‘there is no eating or drinking... no envy, hatred or competition . . . the souls of the wicked enter hell, or *Gebinnom*, as it is known, where they undergo purification before they too can enter paradise . . . not longer than 11 months and can only be permanent in the case of exceedingly wicked persons. (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

An Image of Heavenly Living: The pattern of living in the “City of our Lord” (Isaiah 60:14) can be seen in Israelite dwelling places such as tents with their poles (stakes) and curtains that may represent the organized facilities and order of heaven. The families were on the outside; the priests (Levites) were next. They surrounded the holiest place (the Ark) where the Lord’s prophet communed with God. It may be likened to the terms telestial, terrestrial and celestial. “. . . it seems, the ancient Israelites were commanded to build a sanctuary so that God may dwell amongst them (Exodus 25:8) . . . it became the place to which Moses retired when he wanted to communicate with God. When the Children of Israel camped in the desert, the Tabernacle was erected at the very center of the camp . . . it was through the Tabernacle that they felt their connection with God.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

A Place of Holy Convocations: Even in the Book of Mormon, such an organized camp could be imagined as a place where a special holy convocation was being held. “And it came to pass that when they came up to the temple, they pitched their tents round about, every man according to his family, consisting of his wife, and his sons, and his daughters, and their sons, and their daughters, from the eldest down to the youngest, every family being separate one from another. And they pitched their tents round about the temple, every man having his tent with the door thereof towards the temple, that thereby they might remain in their tents and hear the words which king Benjamin should speak unto them;” (*Mosiah 2:5-6*)

“Camp of Israel,” a Preparatory Exercise of Living with God: “Balaam . . . stood on a lofty summit overlooking the camp of the People of Israel in the plain below . . . Balaam blessed the nation, predicting its victory over Edom and Moab . . . Balaam, seeing Israel's tents arranged in such a way that each family was assured of its

privacy, praised the nation he had come to curse, with the words: ‘How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, thy dwelling places, O Israel!’ (Numbers 24:5) (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Original Use of “Stakes:” Is it possible that the areas of responsibility and assigned living were “staked” out with stakes, poles or standards that identified the living areas? “The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron saying ‘The Israelites shall camp each with his standard under the banners of their ancestral house’ (Numbers 2:2). The standards borne by the 12 tribes served the same purpose as heraldic devices. Their colors and emblems were: Reuben red; emblem mandrakes. Simeon green; emblem the town of Shechem. Levi white, black and red; emblem the Urim and Thummim (Deuteronomy 33:9). Judah azure; emblem a lion. Issachar black; emblem a strong boned ass or sun and moon. Zebulun white; emblem a ship. Dan sapphire; emblem a tent or a lion. Naphtali rose; emblem a hind. Asher aquamarine; emblem an olive tree. Ephraim and Manasseh black, embroidered with a picture of Egypt; emblem: Ephraim, a bullock and Manasseh, a wild ox. Benjamin 12 colors; emblem a wolf.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Curtains Between Posts: In the ancient days, the inner two courtyards were draped or had curtains draped between the stakes or poles and cords so that the sacredness and dignity of the priestly area and the Lord’s habitation were maintained. “Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.” (*Isaiah 33:20*)

Hebrew Terms for God’s Dwelling: “The Bible uses a variety of Hebrew terms when speaking of the place where God and Israel communed: a) *Mishkan* - ‘Dwelling’ [God’s dwelling place among the people of Israel]. b) *Mishkan ha-Edut* - ‘The dwelling place of the Testimony’ [the place where the two tablets containing the Ten Commandments were kept]. c) *Ohel Mo’ed* - ‘Tent of Meeting’ [where God reveals Himself to Israel]. It should be noted that the words *Mishkan* and *Ohel* are synonyms. In the Bible they are both used to denote the Tabernacle. d) *Mikdash* - ‘Sanctuary’ or the ‘Holy Place’; and especially *Kodesh ha-Kodashim*, the most holy place within the Tabernacle. “Some traditional commentators and many critical scholars believe that these terms may refer to more than one place.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“Stakes of Zion:” In the latter-days, this organizational unit may have the same purpose in reminding us to live in dignity and sacredness and commune with God as a community. “Until the day cometh when there is found no more room for them; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains or the strength of Zion.” (*Doctrine & Covenants 101:21*)

Jewish Marriage and “Stakes:” When Jews marry, since they do not have a temple, a ‘Huppah’ is used. It is a remnant of the ancient temple garments, a Tallit, supported by four poles or stakes! “Today, the term *huppah* refers to the decorative canopy under which the wedding ceremony is performed . . . the Talmud relates that there was an ancient custom to make staves of the *huppah* from a cedar and a pine tree planted specifically for this purpose at the birth of a male and female child respectively. In medieval France, it was customary for the groom to cover the bride’s head with his *tallit* as a symbol of sheltering her; and in modern-day Israel, for weddings of soldiers on active duty, it is not unusual to see a *huppah* constructed of a *tallit* supported by four rifles held by friends of the bride and groom . . .” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

His House, His Kingdom, Heals: Another name for the Lord is Water or Living Water. The name for heaven in Hebrew is “Shamayim.” It means, “from the waters!” Water comes from heaven and so does the Lord. There are many images of water used in the scriptures that can be connected to Him. For example, water coming from the temple to heal the Dead Sea is a metaphor of the Lord coming from his abode, heaven (the temple, after all, is His house—a part of heaven on earth), to heal all the imbalances of the world.

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