
“Looking Forth for the Great Day of the Lord to Come”

Lesson
21
Summary

Scripture Summary: *Doctrine and Covenants 29:9–29; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in the presence of six elders, at Fayette, New York, September 1830. HC 1: 111–115. This revelation was given some days prior to the conference beginning September 26, 1830. 9–11, His coming ushers in the Millennium; 12–13, The Twelve shall judge all Israel; 14–21, Signs, plagues, and desolations will precede the Second Coming; 22–28, The last resurrection and final judgment follow the Millennium;*

Doctrine and Covenants 34:5–12; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Orson Pratt, at Fayette, New York, November 4, 1830. HC 1: 127–128. Brother Pratt was nineteen years old at the time. He had been converted and baptized when he first heard the preaching of the restored gospel by his older brother, Parley P. Pratt, six weeks before. This revelation was received in the Peter Whitmer, Sen., home. 5–9, Preaching of the gospel prepares the way for the Second Coming; 10–12, Prophecy comes by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Doctrine and Covenants 45:16–75; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to the Church, at Kirtland, Ohio, March 7, 1831. HC 1: 158–163. Prefacing his record of his revelation, the Prophet states that “at this age of the Church many false reports and foolish stories were published and circulated, to prevent people from investigating the work or embracing the faith; but to the joy of the saints . . . I received the following.” 16–23, Christ revealed signs of his coming as given on the Mount of Olives; 24–38, The gospel shall be restored, the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, and a desolating sickness cover the land; 39–47, Signs, wonders, and the resurrection are to attend the Second Coming; 48–53, Christ shall stand on Mount of Olives, and Jews shall see the wounds in his hands and feet; 54–59, The Lord shall reign during the Millennium; 60–62, The Prophet is instructed to begin the translation of the New Testament, through which important information would be made known; 63–75, The saints are commanded to gather and build the New Jerusalem, to which people from all nations will come.

Doctrine and Covenants 88:86–99; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet at Kirtland, Ohio, December 27, 1832. HC 1: 302–312. It was designated by the Prophet as the “olive leaf . . . from the Tree of Paradise, the Lord’s message of peace to us.” It appears from the historical records that portions of this revelation were received on December 27 and 28, 1832, and January 3, 1833. 86–94, Signs, upheavals of the elements, and angels prepare the way for the coming of the Lord; 95–102.

Doctrine and Covenants 101:22–34; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, December 16, 1833. HC 1: 458–464. At this time the saints who had gathered in Missouri were suffering great persecution. Mobs had driven them from their homes in Jackson County, and some of them had tried to establish themselves in Van Buren County, but persecution followed them. The main body of the saints was at that time in Clay County, Missouri. Threats of death against individuals of the Church were many. The people had lost household furniture, clothing, livestock, and other personal property, and many of their crops had been destroyed. 22–31, The nature of life during the Millennium is set forth; 32–42, The saints shall be blessed and rewarded then.

Doctrine and Covenants 133; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, November 3, 1831. HC 1: 229–234. Prefacing this revelation the Prophet wrote: “At this time there were many things which the Elders desired to know relative to preaching the Gospel to the inhabitants of the earth, and concerning the gathering; and in order to walk by the true light, and be instructed from on high, on the 3rd of November, 1831, I inquired of the Lord and received the following important revelation.” This section was first added to the book of Doctrine and Covenants as an appendix, and was subsequently assigned a section number. 1–6, The saints are commanded to prepare for the Second Coming; 7–16, All men are commanded to flee from Babylon, come to Zion, and prepare for the great day of the Lord; 17–35, He shall stand on Mount Zion, the continents shall become one land, and the lost tribes of Israel shall return; 36–40, The gospel was restored through Joseph Smith to be preached in all the world; 41–51, The Lord shall come down in vengeance upon the wicked; 52–56, It shall be the year of his redeemed; 57–74, The gospel is to be sent forth to save the saints and for the destruction of the wicked.

Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights: **Jewish Rituals Look Forward to the “Great Day:”** Religious Jews still practice many forms of ancient rites and rituals whose meanings have become distorted or lost over many years. With the restoration of priesthood, we are privileged to comprehend how the “New Covenant” restores the true doctrine. Old rituals contain signs of the “Great Day of the Lord to Come.”

Wine and Bread and Bread and Wine: One of the most consistent rituals includes, the eldest male in the family pouring the “kosher wine” at the onset of the Sabbath each week. He pronounces a blessing and takes a sip of the wine, after which each member of the family likewise partakes. This ritual also includes blessing and partaking of a piece of broken bread, after which, again, the rest of the family partakes.

Remembrance and Looking Forward: Although “wine and bread” are partaken weekly and four times during the Passover meal (Seder), there is only one time in Jewish ritual when bread precedes the wine. That is at the end of the Passover meal when the children find a “lost piece of bread,” (afikommen). It is blessed and broken with the master of the house eating the first piece, and others follow. Then, the cup of wine is filled completely with the instruction to “drink all of it.” There is no Jewish explanation as to the meaning of the reversed order of this lost piece eaten followed by wine. The Passover Seder meal is done in remembrance of the first Passover deliverance, yet the prayers look forward to a greater deliverance in the future.

Children Seek “Lost” Piece of Bread: The Seder meal is eaten with a door left open for Elijah who, by Jewish tradition, would announce the coming Messiah. The hidden piece of bread (*afikommen*) is often wrapped in a red cloth. When found, the children receive a reward. The prayer spoken invokes a hope for Jerusalem and the Temple to be rebuilt and anticipates a greater deliverance in the future. That is the reward for the later generation.

How is Jesus’ Seder Different than Any Other? One item that makes the Last Supper (Passover Seder) different from any other night is the explanation of the bread taken before the wine. Jesus used this meal to teach His Apostles that He was the Deliverer. He probably showed that the Passover practice of partaking of wine followed by bread (three times) was very likely a symbolic anticipation of a future atonement. It was henceforth changed to bread followed by wine—symbolic of the deliverance He was to carry out within the next four days. “. . . this do in remembrance of me.” (*Luke 22:19*) “. . . he took the cup . . . saying, Drink ye all of it . . .” (*Matthew 26:27*)

From Above and in Red: A tradition to hide the afikommen above something (often in a red cloth) may also connote the second coming of the Messiah. The first time he came in lowly circumstances, in a manger, likely under the house of relatives whose “katalima” (guest chamber or inn) was filled with other family members. The second time he comes dressed in red and in great glory from above. As stated in Numbers 19:1-9, the Red Heifer ritual was for forgiveness of sins. This was made possible through the “red” bleeding atonement of the Lord later on the Mount of Olives. Jews have a tradition that this red calf offering had to be high on the Mount of Olives, above the Temple itself and opposite the Gate Beautiful. Those who have had the experience of sitting on the upper part of the Mount of Olives opposite of the present day Gate Beautiful can attest to the spirit of Gethsemane (well away from the traditional Church of Gethsemane on the lower part of the mount).

Red, Symbolic for Jews: “. . . there are Ashkenazim who attempt to protect their toddlers from harm by tying a red ribbon around their wrists. “The Bible is very specific about the kind of (calf or heifer) to be used. It had to be . . . ‘a red heifer, faultless, containing no blemish and which has never been yoked.’ “Perhaps the strangest feature of the law of the red heifer is that, although the impure were cleansed by its ashes, all those who helped to perform the ceremony were rendered unclean by it and had themselves to be purified afterwards. Thus the red heifer was an agent of both purity and impurity. This paradox has puzzled the rabbis and the law remains one of the few in the Torah for which no rational explanation can be found.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Consider the “Day of the Lord to Come:” Where will He appear? What will He wear? “For behold, he shall stand upon the mount of Olivet, and upon the mighty ocean, even the great deep, and upon the islands of the sea, and upon the land of Zion.” (*Doctrine & Covenants 133:20*) “. . . I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.” (*Isaiah 63:2-3*)

Questions Asked: There will be questions as he appears to those who have waited so long for him. The questions indicate a lack of even knowing who he is: “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?” (He will answer them.) “I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” (They will continue to question.) “Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?” (*Isaiah 63:1-2*)

Winepress–Gethsemane: The old English word “winefat” is from the Hebrew word for a “wine press” or “vineyard.” It is from that word we get “Gethsemane,” where the Savior bled from every pore. His stained clothing is reflected in his return to the Mount of Olives in red. The fact that some will be asking indicates that they have not been instructed. They just don’t know the account of the Gethsemane suffering and of the crucifixion. “. . . What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet? Then shall they know that I am the Lord . . . I am the Son of God.” (*Doctrine & Covenants 45:51-53*)

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