

Summary Handout

Faith in Every Footstep

Lesson

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Summary

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 136; The word and will of the Lord, given through President Brigham Young at the Winter Quarters of the Camp of Israel, Omaha Nation, West Bank of the Missouri River, near Council Bluffs, Iowa. Journal History of the Church, January 14, 1847. 1—16, How the Camp of Israel is to be organized for the westward journey; 17—27, The saints are commanded to live by numerous gospel standards; 28—33, The saints should sing, dance, pray, and learn wisdom; 34—42, Prophets are slain that they might be honored and the wicked condemned.

Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:

Developing a Culture of Nationhood: When nations begin to “gather,” there evolves a certain culture. First, the spirit of commitment is challenged by hardships and rejection long before the new society begins to mature and be accepted by others. Secondly, because of true faith in the Lord, the Children of Israel, anciently and in modern times did not and do not let the hardships and the sometimes violent rejection get in the way of pursuing their faith identified goals. Third, a constant support mechanism is used to reinforce and strengthen those faith-identified goals.

Dancing, Singing and Music: These are things to keep Israel in a “good” mood. “In the communal and religious life of the Jewish people, dance was always regarded as an expression of joy and religious ecstasy. Ecclesiastes wrote: ‘To everything there is a season . . . A time to mourn and a time to dance’ (3:1, 4). When Jerusalem was destroyed, there was no dancing in the land—‘The joy of our heart is ceased: our dancing is turned into mourning’ (Lamentations 5:15), but Jeremiah's vision of its reconstruction was that the returnees would ‘go forth in the dances of them that make merry’ (Jeremiah 31:7, 13). The Bible tells of Miriam and the women dancing to celebrate the crossing of the Red Sea. When Jephthah's father came home victorious from battle, Jephthah welcomed him with dances. King David, when he placed the Holy Ark in Shiloh, danced and leaped before the Lord with all his might.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

Dancing During Temple Times: “The Jews incorporated dancing into all kinds of ceremonies. In Temple times, twice a year the girls of Jerusalem would go out in borrowed white dresses and dance in a circle, and the men would choose brides from amongst the dancers. The harvest festivals were celebrated with dancing. When the Temple was still standing, famous scholars would participate in torch dances on Sukkot. Of the dancing and merry-making of the water-drawing festival it is said that ‘whoever has not witnessed the joy of the festival of the water-drawing has seen no joy in life.’” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

Wedding Dances: “In the Diaspora, the nature-festival dances disappeared, but there was still plenty of dancing. It is considered an act of religious devotion to dance before the bride at a wedding, and so the people did. Even today, there is hardly a traditional Jewish wedding where the Mitzvah tanz, in which the men take turns dancing with the bride, their hands separated by a handkerchief, is not performed.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

Music as Prayer: “‘Praise the Lord with timbrels and dance’ we are told in one of the Psalms. The founder of the Hasidic movement, Israel ben Eliezer Ba'al Shem Tov, taught his followers that the ‘dances of a Jew before his Creator are prayers,’ and with the rise of Hasidism in Eastern Europe in the 18th century, dancing assumed great importance for the Jewish masses.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

Music in the Temple: “In the days of the Temple, each day during the last six hol ha-mo'ed days of the festival (though not on the Sabbath) . . . men of piety and good deeds used to dance before the candlesticks with burning torches in their hands, singing songs and praises. And countless Levites played on harps, lyres, cymbals, trumpets and other musical instruments, on the 15 steps leading from the Court of the Israelites to the Court of the Women. “From all corners of the Land of Israel throngs of pilgrims used to make their way up to Jerusalem carrying the gaily decorated baskets of fruit and grain which they brought to the Temple as a thanksgiving offering. At the gates of the city the townsfolk greeted them with music. The pilgrims then ascended the broad marble staircase that led from the City of David to the summit of the Temple Mount, where they would present their offerings to the Priests.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

Priestly duties Include Music: “Levites were entitled to serve at the sanctuary as assistants to the priests. Their duties included serving as custodians of the sanctuary, as musicians, judges, scribes and teachers.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

Psalms are Songs: The following quote give a wonderful background on the Psalms. They are original singing and musical praises to the Lord still used among many religious people. “Psalms - the first book of the Ketuvim section of the Bible, constituting an anthology of lyric poems universally recognized as the foremost collection of Hebrew religious poetry. The English name ‘Psalms’ is derived from the Greek word for a ‘song sung to a stringed instrument’ while the Hebrew name, Tehillim, is derived from the root meaning praise and glorification. The Hebrew title characterizes the book in terms of its essential contents—a collection of profoundly religious poems of praise to God— while the English title characterizes it in terms of its form: lyric poems designed for elaborate musical accompaniment. (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

David the Musician: “Traditionally, authorship of the book of Psalms has been ascribed to King David. 73 of the 150 Psalms begin with the superscription le-David, although the precise connotation of this term is uncertain; it could mean ‘concerning David’ or ‘a dedication to David’ and not necessarily ‘by David.’ Furthermore, of the remaining Psalms, many bear superscriptions relating them to ten other figures of early Israelite history, ranging from Adam to Moses. However, the association of King David with Psalms rests on strong, ancient traditions. Moreover, in other books of the Bible David appears as a skillful player on the lyre, as an inventor of musical instruments and as a composer of dirges, and is described in one place as the ‘sweet singer of Israel.’ (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

Prayers must Be Sung: It should be noted that reading scriptures and praying are to be done in a singing or chanting way to differentiate the common everyday sounds of the mouth with the Word of the Lord or words to the Lord. A pattern of singing has developed that puts emphasis on particular syllables and words. When a boy has a Bar Mitzvah, he is accompanied by a person who may prompt him to sing his words correctly while making sure that his clothing, cap, robe, sash, etc. is worn correctly. “Singing is a festive part of many Jewish occasions. Many times, the Eastern Jews (Sephardic) and Western Jews (Ashkenazi) sing the same lyrics with their own ethnic music and intonation. (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

Music Inspired Gathering Jews: “The ideal of freedom has always been cherished by the Jews, for their history has been one of slavery, exile and persecution—slavery in Egypt until the Exodus around the 13th century B.C.E., and exile and oppression since the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. Throughout the exile, the hope of the return to Erez Israel was kept alive, developing into the Zionist movement in the 19th century, which found its fruition in the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. A fitting symbol of the Jews' desire for their own land, government and defense is the national anthem Ha-Tikvah (‘The Hope’).

“Ha-Tikva,” Israeli National Anthem: “The poem was first written by Naphtali Herz Imber, probably in 1878, as ‘Our Hope,’ to express the yearning of the Jews to live as a free people on their own land. In 1882, after Imber had read the poem to a group of settlers in Rishon le-Zion, Samuel Cohen, a recent immigrant from Moldavia, set it to a melody based on an old Moldavian-Rumanian folk song. The song achieved the status of a folk song almost overnight, and was sung in settlements throughout Erez Israel, as well as at Zionist congresses. The Seventh Zionist Congress (Basle, 1905) ended with an ‘enormously moving singing of Ha-Tikvah by all present,’ a moment which probably confirmed the song's status. The 18th Zionist Congress in Prague, 1933, declared Ha-Tikvah the official Zionist anthem. In 1948, the Italian conductor Bernardino Molinari orchestrated the song for the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, giving it its final version. At the Declaration of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, Ha-Tikvah was sung at the opening ceremony and played by the Palestine symphony orchestra at the conclusion; however, Ha-Tikvah has never been given official status as a national anthem by a proclamation of the Knesset.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*) An inspiring instrumental rendition of Ha-Tikva was played and recorded by the LDS/Jewish concert pianist, Marvin Goldstein.

Daniel Rona, born in Israel and living in Jerusalem has authored Old & New Testament, Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Supplement Study Materials to be used in conjunction with the weekly LDS Gospel Doctrine Lesson study. NOTE: Three versions of the supplemental study materials are available FREE at www.HolyLandsRevealed.com. (Just click “LDS SUPPLEMENTS”)

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