

Doctrine and Covenants and Church History

Supplemental Study Material

Holy Land and Judaic Insights
by Daniel Rona

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Doctrine and Covenants and Church History
Supplemental Study Material
Holy Land and Judaic Insights by Daniel Rona
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Doctrine and Covenants and Church History

Supplemental Study Material

Holy Land and Judaic Insights

By Daniel Rona

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The ENSIGN FOUNDATION

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Daniel Rona was born in Israel— educated in America— and has been a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints since 1950. He was a well-known radio broadcaster in Salt Lake City, St. Louis, Chicago and New York, as well as an international newscaster for the “Voice of Israel.”

In 1974, he returned to Israel with his wife, Marilyn, and their three children. Their family has grown to five children. Like all Israelis, his sons and daughters served in the Israeli Military before their full-time missions.

Brother Rona directs the nonprofit **ENSIGN FOUNDATION** which unites the people of Judah and Joseph in educational, cultural and scientific activities. The Ensign Foundation also provides learning experiences in the Holy Land. For twenty-seven years, Brother Rona has been the only LDS licensed tour guide in Israel. His background is unique: he is an American, an Israeli, a Mormon, and a Jew!

Latter-day Saints, who have experienced **ISRAEL REVEALED** with Brother Rona, tell of greater enrichment in their lives through his spiritual and cultural insights. He harmonizes the language, the culture, the time and the places of the Holy Land, sharing the deep feelings and spirit of ancient and modern Israel. These are reflected in this Gospel Doctrine Supplemental Study Material along with a weekly printable summary sheets which he also provides every week on the Internet, **www.HolyLandsRevealed.com**. His book, **ISRAEL REVEALED**, is an authoritative work bringing the ethnic cultures and traditions of the Holy Land into a spiritual and pictographic review. He also produced a TV mini-series about Israel. These six TV-films are also on home-video cassettes.

Brother Rona has served many years in the presidencies of the Israel District and Jerusalem Branches.

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Supplemental Information

For Doctrine and Covenant and Church History Studies

This material was prepared by Daniel Rona who, for twenty-seven years, has been the only LDS licensed tour guide in Israel. For almost thirty years, he has been teaching the Old and New Testaments in tours, as many as thirty times a year. Additionally, for years, he has directed numerous tours to the LDS Church History locations as well as the Book of Mormon Lands of Central America. Following the Footprints of the Savior, he brings people to the bridge connecting the Ancient Holy Land to the Modern Promised Lands. He was born and lives in Israel. As an active LDS member and Church leader, Brother Rona combines his gospel knowledge, Israeli ethnicity and Jewish insights to assist in bringing the tribes of “Joseph” and “Judah” closer together. His background is unique in that he is an **American**, an **Israeli**, a **Mormon** and a **Jew**.

Under each scripture listing is a summary to the chapters being discussed. These are from the LDS Scriptures and are provided only as an overview. It is important that the actual scriptures be read. The Holy Land and Jewish insights are added to help the teacher and student “go back” to the setting in which the scriptures were given and also to better understand what general Judaic views are of those scriptures. Jewish views have varied with time and dispersion, yet understanding the Jews (basically Judah) will help Joseph in the prophetic mission of reuniting “Joseph and Judah.” That will bring us both back to the original understanding and truths that God gave to his children, yesterday and today as well as tomorrow.

In reading quotes from Jewish authors, it is helpful to keep in mind that the Jewish calendar differs from the Gregorian calendar used today. Not only can the number of months in a year differ, but also the days in a month: the Jewish or Biblical months only have twenty-eight days. The number of the year also differs; the Jews calculate from creation, whereas Christians calculate from Jesus’ birth. *B.C.* stands for *Before Christ* and *A.D.* for *Anno Domini*, the Year of our Lord. Jews have made a “scholastic adjustment” in referring to the Christian calendar by using *B.C.E.* for *Before Common* (or *Christian*) *Era*, and *C.E.* for *Common* (or *Christian*) *Era*, respectively.

Helps for the Teacher and Student

The young prophet Nephi gave us a substantial key to understanding the scriptures. Note how subtly he teaches us through a ‘chiasmus’ (an order of words listed in one direction to a center thought and then listed in the other direction in reverse order).

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. learning of my father 2. highly favored of the Lord 2. knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God 1. learning of the Jews 	<p>I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, therefore I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father; and having seen many afflictions in the course of my days, nevertheless, having been highly favored of the Lord in all my days; yea, having had a great knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God, therefore I make a record of my proceedings in my days.</p> <p>Yea, I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians. (<i>1 Nephi 1:1-2</i>)</p>
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The center point of his instruction is the gift he acknowledges, the knowledge of mysteries. A synonym for mysteries is the “subtle understanding” of God’s word. This is available through the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

“For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in these times as in times of old, and as well in times of old as in times to come; wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round.” (1 Nephi 10:19)

“Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.” (2 Nephi 32:3)

The center point is sandwiched by “learning of my father” and “learning of the Jews.” This material suggests some ‘learning of the Jews’ to add insight to the study of the same religion and scriptures that Nephi brought from Israel. Other Jewish insights may simply help Latter-day Saints better understand Judah and thereby bring our two families closer together. It is necessary for the teacher and the student to relate and coordinate this information with the material provided in their respective lesson manuals.

The basis of Jewish learning is the “Torah,” that is the first five books of the “Old Testament.” To better understand the following quote, please note that “Torah” refers to the first five books of the Old Testament, Neve'im refers to the prophets. Hence we have the “Law and the Prophets.” The term Halakhah refers to the system of law that the Jews have developed.

“The Bible is holy to Jews because it represents the Word of God. This is particularly true of the Torah which is, so to speak, God's direct statement. The halakhah, or Jewish law, which is the authoritative guide for a Jew's life, is mainly based on the Torah, so obviously study of the Torah as well as the rest of the Bible is one of the prime religious duties.

“The custom of reading the Torah publicly is very ancient—originating with Ezra in the fifth-fourth centuries B.C.E. At some later date a reading from the Nevi'im was added; this corresponding passage from the Prophets is known as the Haftarah.”
(*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

The Latter-day Saint's use of the Doctrine and Covenants is another part of LDS *Haftarah*. Literally, it is the reading of *Nevi'im*, the “Prophets,” in the land of America—with their explanations and heavenly insights—based on Eternal truths. The connection to the past prophets is that truth is consistent. The first verse of the Book of Mormon reveals this key of understanding God's will, “learning of the fathers.” The Hebrew word for “going back” is the same as “repent.” The Doctrine and Covenants together with all the scriptures teach **Faith** in the Lord as taught by true learning of the fathers. That leads us to **Repent**, make the true covenant of **Baptism** and rewards us with the blessing of the **Gift of the Holy Ghost**. The last verse of Section One in the Doctrine and Covenants is that the “. . . truth abideth forever and ever.”

“Introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants and Church History”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 1; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, during a special conference of elders of the Church, held at Hiram, Ohio, November 1, 1831. HC 1: 221—224. Many revelations had been received from the Lord prior to this time, and the compilation of these for publication in book form was one of the principal subjects passed upon at the conference. This section constitutes the Lord's Preface to the doctrines, covenants, and commandments given in this dispensation. 1—7, The voice of warning is to all people; 8—16, Apostasy and wickedness precede the Second Coming; 17—23, Joseph Smith called to restore to earth the Lord's truths and powers; 24—33, The Book of Mormon brought forth and true Church established; 34—36, Peace shall be taken from the earth; 37—39, Search these commandments.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

In Israel, a statement like, “the Book of Mormon is the keystone of our religion” conjures a picture of one of the stones in an arch angled to wedge the others in place. The center stone is equivalent to the center point. The center point in a chiasm is the focusing on the Lord. Stones in a typical five stone Roman archway can be compared to the five “Standard Works (scriptures)” that Latter-day Saints use, the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price. Every stone in the arch is necessary to have the advantage of the structure which holds a building in place as well as having the enjoyment of the beauty in something that holds itself together. How then can we connect the terms “cornerstone” and “capstone?” The Doctrine and Covenants are often called the “capstone” of the restoration in these “last days.”

It is interesting to note that the metaphor of a building was used in ancient times to denote the structure and stability of the Lord's organization in the “last days.”

“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.”
(*Psalms 118:22*)

“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” (*Isaiah 28:16*)

“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?” (*Matthew 21:42*)

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” (*Ephesians 2:19-22*)

Since this is a visual image, picture a building fitly framed with all parts of it functioning and without apparent holes or breaks in it. From a western building style architectural view, a cornerstone really cannot be removed and the building still remain “fitly framed.”

Therefore, picture an eastern building style, a pyramid. Its chief cornerstone is the capstone. It can be removed and the building is still “fitly framed.” A U.S. one dollar bill has that image with the top, cap or chief cornerstone shown with rays beaming forth from an all-seeing eye. The pyramid also has twelve blocks as its foundation.

The imagery continues into the family. As the children start their own family, the parents are “removed” from their former role yet still maintain a spiritual influence through their previous teaching and subsequent prayers and spiritual influence on their children. The unity of the family can still be imaged as “fitly framed.” As with any home, protection from unwarranted outside influence is necessary. Security systems or defensive armor are part of the proper stewardship of the family’s leaders. Sustaining the Lord as the Chief Cornerstone and following His instructions to defend ourselves with His words in these latter days we can protect our families inside or outside of the home.

As exciting as it is to know that heaven is open again, every “new” word from the Lord, as given in modern times, has a basis, a precedent, in the past. That gives an additional meaning to the term “The New and Everlasting Covenant.”

“Behold, I Am Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World”

Lesson 2

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 18:10–11; Revelation to Joseph Smith the Prophet, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer, given at Fayette, New York, June 1829. HC 1: 60–64. When the Aaronic Priesthood was conferred, the bestowal of the Melchizedek Priesthood was promised. See heading to Section 13. In response to supplication for knowledge on the matter, the Lord gave this revelation. 9–16, The worth of souls is great;

Doctrine and Covenants 19:19; Revelation given through Joseph Smith, at Manchester, New York, March 1830. HC 1: 72–74. In his history the Prophet introduced it as “a commandment of God and not of man, to Martin Harris, given by him who is Eternal.” 13–20, Christ suffered for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;

Doctrine and Covenants 24; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, July 1830. HC 1: 101–103. Though less than four months had elapsed since the Church was organized, persecution had become intense, and the leaders had to seek safety in partial seclusion. The following three revelations were given at this time to strengthen, encourage, and instruct them. 1–9, Joseph Smith is called to translate, preach, and expound scriptures; 10–12, Oliver Cowdery is called to preach the gospel; 13–19, Law is revealed relative to miracles, cursings, casting off the dust of one’s feet, and going without purse or scrip.

Doctrine and Covenants 34:3; 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. 1–4, The faithful become the sons of God through the atonement; 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 88:14–18; 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. 14–16, The resurrection comes through the redemption.

Doctrine and Covenants 93:33; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, May 6, 1833. HC 1: 343–346. The elements are eternal, and man may receive a fulness of joy in the resurrection.

Alma 11:42–44; All men shall rise in immortality.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

Isaiah, who knew the mountains of Judah, also knew the Lord and combined the majesty of both in teaching us about the Savior and His atonement.

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” (*Isaiah 52:7*)

Looking at the sacred event that redeemed us from the sins of life, bruises of experience, captivity of conscience, blindness of bigotry, hurt of hearts broken, poverty of stinginess and the imprisonment of self pity, we are drawn to the Mount of Olives. Two thousand years ago, He sank below all things, experiencing deeper depths than we would ever reach so that we would never have to. Bleeding from every pore of His body, He was stained for us. How beautiful upon the Mount of Olives are the feet of Him who brings good tidings. Good tidings are the “good news,” the gospel of joy. Isaiah wrote the words of the Savior’s testimony seven hundred years before the Savior would speak them.

“The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the

brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;” (*Isaiah 61:1*) (*Luke 4:18*)

Although the principle of “one atoning for our sins” in Judaism has diminished over the years, one day every year is set aside as the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur.

“The tenth of the Hebrew month of Tishrei is Yom Kippur, a day of fasting and prayer for all Israel, a day which has been significant to Jews throughout the ages. The Day of Atonement is the last of the Ten Days of Penitence which begin with Rosh Ha-Shanah, and is the climax of the repentance and soul-searching incumbent on every Jew during this period.

“Perhaps the most beloved ritual of the Day of Atonement, *Kol Nidrei* is . . . chanted before sunset as the . . . worshipers are wrapped in *tallitot* and some even robed in white gowns (*kitels*).” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Since 1967, when Jerusalem became open for Jews, the congregant’s response is “Next year in Jerusalem-rebuilt.” This is an expression of rebuilding the temple in the mountains of Judah.

“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.” (*Malachi 3:1*)

“I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God; wherefore, gird up your loins and I will suddenly come to my temple. Even so. Amen.” (*Doctrine and Covenants 36:8*)

The understanding of the term “resurrection” is quite lost by most Christians and Jews. In previous discussions we have pointed out that for Jews, the concept of God has diminished since the days of Biblical writings that constantly referred to God in anthropomorphic terminology. Likewise, the concept of life after death in a resurrected state has largely disappeared; and when used, it refers mostly to the righteous in a distant future. “Resurrection” is one of the Lord’s names.

The Book of Mormon prophet, Alma, teaches that there is no resurrection until after the coming of the Messiah. Judaism, nowadays, has virtually no belief in resurrection or life, as such, after death. To the Jews, the Messiah has not come; consequently, it is understandable that they do not have an active belief in the resurrection. There are, however, benedictions and other statements with words that seem to connect to a former belief in Resurrection.

“... *Barukh mehayyeh ha-metim* (‘Blessed be . . . He Who revives the dead’) is therefore also known as *Tehiyat ha-Metim* (‘Resurrection of the Dead’) . . .

“... the righteous of all generations will be reunited at the time of the resurrection of the dead during the messianic period.

“... They [Essenes] believed in reward and punishment; in immortality of the soul; but not in physical resurrection.

“Some rabbis believed in resurrection. That is that at a certain point in time God will bring everybody back to life and then the world will be a perfect place and physical life will go on indefinitely. This doctrine poses some obvious difficulties: the body actually decomposes after burial so how can it be

reconstituted; furthermore what about overpopulation of the world? Those who believe in resurrection claim that anyway the whole process will be miraculous and the miracle will solve all the problems. Other rabbis however denied physical resurrection entirely and understood the afterlife to be a completely spiritual experience.

“The argument about resurrection lasted well into the Middle Ages, and was one of the reasons for the sharp attacks against Maimonides. Many believed that he denied the doctrine and his views started a controversy that lasted for hundreds of years. In modern times most Jewish theologians do not subscribe to the doctrine of physical resurrection and movements such as Reform Judaism do not consider it to be a necessary belief for the Jew.

“The whole subject of [an] afterlife is not explicitly stated in the Bible and many scholars are of the opinion that belief in [an] afterlife was adopted by Jews during the Babylonian exile after the destruction of the First Temple when they came into contact with eastern religions such as Zoroastrianism.

“The Sadducees also rejected the Pharisaic belief in the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body, claiming that there is no basis for these beliefs in the Torah.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The process of resurrection also depends on our preparation. That includes repentance. The Lord’s first message to the Disciples in the “Americas” was the same as to the Disciples in the Land of Israel, and repeated in Latter-days is that of repentance. The word “repentance” in Hebrew literally means “to turn” or “return.”

“Repentance in Hebrew is known as *teshuvah*, which literally means ‘return,’ and signifies a return to God. A person who repents his sins is known as a *ba'al teshuvah*. Many rabbis of the Talmud believed that the real *ba'al teshuvah* is greater even than a person who has never sinned and they furthermore said that 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.

“A unique aspect of the Jewish faith is that although God rules the world with absolute justice, He is also merciful and forgives sins against Him. The doctrine of repentance is based on this belief.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The Lord descended below all things and then rose above all things. He came from the rocks below and ascended to the heaven above. This is reflected in each of the prophet’s lives. Those who know him best and are destined to testify of Him the most are often subjected to the worst.

I know of a religious instructor visiting Israel who asked religious Jews why they were chosen. One responded, “We are chosen to suffer.” Later, in making a point about the Savior’s suffering, the instructor said, “No one is chosen to suffer other than the Lord.” Yet, I believe that the difficulties, calamities, and sufferings of the Jews will ultimately bring them closer to the Lord who covenanted to remember and save His people. Sufferings bring us closer to Him and those having the highest responsibilities of serving Him often suffer greatly. They “sink to new heights.”

“And if thou shouldst be cast into the pit, or into the hands of murderers, and the sentence of death passed upon thee; if thou be cast into the deep; if the billowing surge conspire against thee; if fierce winds become thine enemy; if the heavens gather blackness, and all the elements combine to hedge up the way; and above all, if the very jaws of hell shall gape open the mouth wide after thee, know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good. The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?” (*Doctrine & Covenants 122:7-8*)

The following is a partial list of symbolisms and/or names of the Lord. Each name has one or more prophet’s testimony, historical and prophetic, of the Savior and his mission.

<i>Names of the Lord – Including His Roles, Attributes and Imagery</i>		
ADVOCATE ALMIGHTY ANCHOR ASHES AXE BANNER BEAUTIFUL BEGGAR BEGOTTEN BELOVED BLOOD BODY BOUGH BRANCH BREAD BREAD OF LIFE BRIDE BRIDEGROOM BRIGHT STAR BRIGHTNESS BUCKLER CAPTAIN CHILD CHRIST CLOTH, NEW CLOTH CORNER STONE COUNSELOR COVER, COVERT CRAFTSMAN (CARPENTER) CREATOR DIVINE SON DOOR EXEMPLAR FATHER FIRSTBORN FORGIVENESS FOUNDATION FOUNTAIN GLORY	GOD GOOD SHEPHERD GOODNESS GRACIOUS GREAT GREATEST HEAD HELP HIDING PLACE HIGH TOWER HOLY ONE I AM IMMANUEL JEHOVAH JOY JUDGE KEY KING KING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS LAMB LAW GIVER LAW LAWYER LEAST LIFTER LIGHT LIVING WATER LORD LORD OF HOSTS LORD OF THE SABBATH (SABAOTH) MASTER MEDIATOR MERCIFUL MERCY MESSENGER MESSENGER OF COVENANT MESSIAH	MIGHTY MORNING STAR NEW WINE OLD WINE ONLY BEGOTTEN PRINCE RABBI REDEEMER REFUGE RESURRECTION RIVER ROCK ROD SALVATION SAVIOR SERVANT SHADE, SHADOW SHEPHERD SHIELD SIGHT SON SON OF DAVID SON OF GOD SON OF MAN SPRING STEM STONE STRENGTH SUN TRIED STONE TRUTH WATER WINE WORD

“I Had Seen a Vision”

Lesson

3

Scripture Summary:

Joseph Smith History 1:1–26; Joseph Smith tells of his ancestry, family members, and their early abodes—An unusual excitement about religion prevails in western New York—He determines to seek wisdom as directed by James—The Father and the Son appear and Joseph is called to his prophetic ministry. Some preachers and other professors of religion reject account of First Vision—Persecution heaped upon Joseph Smith—He testifies of the reality of the vision.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The phenomenon of heavenly visions has occurred throughout time. Whether it was Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Ezekiel or any of the prophets of old, the people's reaction was either very negative or supportive. Some of those visions happened outside of Israel (Ezekiel) and even came to what Jews call “Gentile Prophets,” (Balam). Many of those visions foresaw the time of the restoration.

“Ezekiel was the only prophet to prophesy outside the Land of Israel. Ezekiel saw the entire history of Israel as one continuous breach of the Covenant, for which the destruction of the Temple was the just and predicted punishment. From the prophet's call until the start of Jerusalem's siege the prophecies are condemnatory. During the siege years and briefly thereafter the prophecies condemn Israel's neighbors who were involved in Judah's revolt but failed to support her. However, although the Book of Ezekiel starts on a note of doom, it continues with consolation, and the news of Jerusalem's fall is followed by consolatory prophecies of its restoration. Ezekiel is transported in a vision to the future Jerusalem and describes the future Temple in detail. He also gives a blueprint for the reorganization of the priesthood and the allocation of the Land of Israel to the respective tribes. Among the most striking prophecies in the Bible is Ezekiel's vision in Babylonia, of the valley of dry bones which become miraculously reconstructed and come to life. Such a message must have been of great encouragement to the depressed exiles of Judah.

“In his vision of the end of days, the prophet Zechariah foretells that all the nations of the world will assemble for the festival of Sukkot in Jerusalem to worship God.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

When visions and revelations were interrupted for a time, because the people were not worthy to accept such divine manifestations, their importance faded and hope for future revelation diminished.

“Dreams have fascinated people through the ages. The Biblical view was that dreams are divine communication—events transpiring on a supernatural plane. Thus, dreams were regarded as omens, which could be interpreted only by visionaries or prophets, who were in touch with this ‘divine dimension.’ In the Bible, ‘dreamer,’ ‘prophet,’ and ‘magician’ are related terms.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The Biblical accounts of Joseph and Daniel have a great basis in dreams. Some irritated family or friends, and others brought redemption, as well as condemnation, of people in the lands where they lived.

For many Moslems, Mohammed is called a Prophet although he apparently never claimed to be one. His writings did not particularly predict the future because he still held the Bible as he interpreted it to be as accurate.

“From about 610 C.E. Muhammad claimed to have visions and to have been commanded, as messenger of God [Allah] to recite certain verses which came to his mind. In order too win over the Arabs to his new religion Muhammad realized that his appeal would have to be national and not aligned to either the Christianity of Byzantium or the Judaism of Babylonia. The holy book of Islam, the Koran, soon attracted a small community of devotees, and its message at this time concentrated on God's goodness and power, the return to God and final judgment, the necessity for man to be humble and grateful to God and to worship Him, and the obligation of generosity and respect for the rights of the poor and defenseless.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The prophecies of the “Colonization of America” in the Book of Mormon echo the blessings, prophecies and visions given to Joseph, son of Jacob (Israel). The fascinating geographic connection in his blessing is the term, “everlasting hills.” Mountainous Israel is the “Crossroads of the East.” On the other hand, Utah (“Tops of the Mountains” in the Navaho language) is the “Crossroads of the West.” There are only two land masses on this planet that have a perpetual, unending range of mountains or “everlasting hills,” Israel and USA. The connection to God’s everlasting ways is also noted.

“In the blessing given by Jacob to his son Joseph, the inheritance of America is foreshadowed and predicted in the following words: ‘Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall . . . The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.’ (Genesis 49:26)” (*Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation Vol.3, Pg.68*)

“Whenever God has called and authorized men to perform a work in any age or dispensation, it has been done by revelations, and not by mere impressions, or some undefinable, internal feelings, which leave the mind in uncertainty and doubt. Noah was called by the word of the Lord to be a preacher of righteousness, and to build an ark. Abraham, Lot, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, were called by revelation to perform a great variety of duties. Moses and Aaron were called to the priest's office by the word of the great Jehovah. Seventy elders of Israel were called by revelation to assist Moses. Joshua was appointed by the word of the Lord through Moses to be his successor in leading Israel. The successors of Aaron were appointed to the priesthood by revelation. The Judges of Israel were called by visions, by angels and by the inspiration of the Spirit. Samuel was called by the voice of the Lord. And finally, all their officers, wise men and prophets, down to the days of Malachi, were called by new revelation.” (*Orson Pratt Divine Authenticity of BofM, No. 2 (1850), p.17*)

There are rabbinic suggestions of expected heaven-sent visitors that include a latter-day Messiah, Ben-Joseph, who will receive the keys of the gathering of Israel and restore temple worship. When the Chief Rabbi, Avraham HaKohen Kook was appointed in Palestine in the 1920's, he was asked if the Jews could now build the Temple (destroyed since year 70 A.D.). His response was that the priestly rights were gone and referred to the great 12th century rabbi Moses Maimonides, who said, in effect, “We are waiting for a Messiah Ben-Joseph. To him will be given the keys of the gathering of Israel. He will restore Temple worship.”

There is a chiasmus here that memorializes ancient Joseph, who saved his family, yet they did not know who he was. Latter-day Joseph is saving his brothers again, (more foreign aid goes to Israel from the U.S.A., the land of Joseph, than from all other countries combined) and they don't know that it is "Joseph." In the meridian of times there was "One" who saved us all – and still most people don't know it.

Anciently, when his brothers sought "foreign aid" from the Egyptians, their own brother, Joseph, was the "servant" to save them. First, he did so without revealing his true identity. When he finally revealed himself it was in humble family circumstance and he apparently prophesied that in latter days another Joseph would save his family again. From the Book of Mormon we find a reiteration of that prophecy:

"... For behold, thou art the fruit of my loins; and I am a descendant of Joseph who was carried captive into Egypt. And great were the covenants of the Lord which he made unto Joseph. Wherefore, Joseph truly saw our day. And he obtained a promise of the Lord, that out of the fruit of his loins the Lord God would raise up a righteous branch unto the house of Israel; not the Messiah, but a branch which was to be broken off, nevertheless, to be remembered in the covenants of the Lord that the Messiah should be made manifest unto them in the latter days, in the spirit of power, unto the bringing of them out of darkness unto light—yea, out of hidden darkness and out of captivity unto freedom . . . Yea, Joseph truly said: Thus saith the Lord unto me: A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins. And unto him will I give commandment that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren, which shall be of great worth unto them, even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers . . . And his name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father. And he shall be like unto me; for the thing, which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand, by the power of the Lord shall bring my people unto salvation . . . who shall do much good, both in word and in deed, being an instrument in the hands of God, with exceeding faith, to work mighty wonders, and do that thing which is great in the sight of God, unto the bringing to pass much restoration unto the house of Israel, and unto the seed of thy brethren." (*Excerpts from 2 Nephi 3*)

Latter-day Saints know that this prophecy has been fulfilled in the nineteenth century through the mission of Joseph Smith Jr. Ancient Joseph overcame his "pride" and served his brothers forgivingly (at first without identifying himself). He, thereby, established a pattern for a latter-day Joseph, who, for the time being, is keeping his identity from Judah and should release all forms of pride as he serves his family forgivingly.

“Remember the New Covenant, Even the Book of Mormon”

Scripture Summary:

Joseph Smith History 1:27-65; Moroni appears to Joseph Smith—Joseph’s name is to be known for good and evil among all nations—Moroni tells him of the Book of Mormon and of the coming judgments of the Lord, and quotes many scriptures—The hiding place of the gold plates is revealed—Moroni continues to instruct the Prophet. Joseph Smith marries

Emma Hale—He receives the gold plates from Moroni and translates some of the characters—Martin Harris shows characters and translation to Professor Anthon, who says: “I cannot read a sealed book.”

Doctrine and Covenants 3; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, July 1828, relating to the loss of 116 pages of manuscript translated from the first part of the Book of Mormon, which was called the “Book of Lehi.” The Prophet had reluctantly allowed these pages to pass from his custody to that of Martin Harris, who had served for a brief period as scribe in the translation of the Book of Mormon. The revelation was given through the Urim and Thummim. HC 1: 21—23. See also Section 10. 1—4, The Lord’s course is one eternal round; 5—15, Joseph Smith must repent or lose the gift to translate; 16—20, The Book of Mormon comes forth to save the seed of Lehi.

Doctrine and Covenants 5; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, March 1829, at the request of Martin Harris. HC 1: 28—31. 1—10, This generation shall receive the Lord’s word through Joseph Smith; 11—18, Three witnesses shall testify of the Book of Mormon; 19—20, The word of the Lord will be verified as in previous times; 21—35, Martin Harris may repent and be one of the witnesses.

Doctrine and Covenants 10; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, in the summer of 1828. HC 1: 20—23. Herein the Lord informs Joseph of alterations made by wicked men in the 116 manuscript pages from the translation of the “Book of Lehi,” in the Book of Mormon. These manuscript pages had been lost from the possession of Martin Harris, to whom the sheets had been temporarily entrusted. See heading to Section 3. The evil design was to await the expected retranslation of the matter covered by the stolen pages, and then to discredit the translator by showing discrepancies created by the alterations. That this wicked purpose had been conceived by the evil one, and was known to the Lord even while Mormon, the ancient Nephite historian, was making his abridgment of the accumulated plates, is shown in the Book of Mormon (The Words of Mormon 1: 3-7). 1—26, Satan stirs up wicked men to oppose the Lord’s work; 27—33, He seeketh to destroy the souls of men; 34—52, The gospel is to go to Lamanites and all nations through Book of Mormon; 53—63, The Lord will establish his Church and his gospel among men; 64—70, He will gather the repentant into his Church and will save the obedient.

Doctrine and Covenants 17; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris, at Fayette, New York, June 1829, prior to their viewing the engraved plates that contained the Book of Mormon record. HC 1: 52—57. Joseph and his scribe, Oliver Cowdery, had learned from the translation of the Book of Mormon plates that three special witnesses would be designated. See Ether 5: 2—4; also 2 Nephi 11: 3 and 27: 12. Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris were moved upon by an inspired desire to be the three special witnesses. The Prophet inquired of the Lord, and this revelation was given in answer, through the Urim and Thummim. 1—4, By faith the Three Witnesses shall see the plates and other sacred items; 5—9, Christ bears testimony to the divinity of the Book of Mormon.

Doctrine and Covenants 20:5—15; Revelation on Church Organization and Government, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, April 1830. HC 1: 64—70. Preceding his record of this revelation the Prophet wrote: “We obtained of him [Jesus Christ] the following, by the spirit of prophecy and revelation; which not only gave us much information, but also pointed out to us the precise day upon which, according to his will and commandment, we should proceed to organize his Church once more here upon the earth.” 1—16, The Book of Mormon proves the divinity of the latter-day work.

Doctrine and Covenants 84:54—62 Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, September 22 and 23, 1832. HC 1: 286—295. During the month of September, elders had begun to return from their missions in the eastern states and to make reports of their labors. It was while they were together in this season of joy that the following communication was received. The Prophet designates it a revelation on priesthood. 54—61, The saints must testify of those things they have received.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The preparation that Joseph Smith went through is part of a pattern of preparation identified throughout the scriptures and evident in Jewish tradition. Many of the Jewish holidays have extensive preparations that are as important as the holy day itself.

“The Sabbath before Passover is known as Shabbat ha-Gadol. Tradition connects it with the tenth of Nisan, the day on which the Israelites in Egypt set aside the lamb that they were to slaughter on the first Passover (Exodus 12:3). On Shabbat ha-Gadol, a special *haftarah*, [reading from the Prophets] taken from the Book of Malachi and referring to the day on which Elijah the Prophet will

reappear as forerunner of the great day of the Lord, is read.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.” (*Malachi 4:5-6*)

The prophesy of Elijah being the forerunner of the Messiah implies a unique preparation for salvation. Elijah’s mission, reflected in temple ordinances, is part of the preparation for mankind to be completely saved in the life to come. Anciently, temple sacrifices had a preparation period.

“During the period of the Second Temple, hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from within Erez Israel as well as from the Diaspora streamed to the Temple at each of the three festivals. The pilgrims would arrive several days before the festival, and would prepare for their entry into the Temple to offer there the obligatory sacrifices. This was the essential component of the pilgrimage act . . .” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In Jewish customs, even the creation itself had a preparation period.

“... almost all scholars agree that the text is teaching that God created an orderly and good universe. They note that each of the first three days is used to prepare the work for the next three days.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Although Jews generally do not refer to a life after death, sages have taught that our earth life is a preparation for the life to come.

“The sages of the Talmud saw life as a prelude to life in the world to come. ‘This world is like a vestibule before the world to come; prepare yourself in the vestibule that you may enter into the hall’ (Mishnah, Avot 4:21). In other words, according to rabbinic theology, the physical life a person has is a kind of trial period for his ‘real’ life which comes after death. Indeed, in rabbinic parlance, the life after death is known as ‘the world of truth’.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The preparation of scriptures for later use is definitely a pattern seen in the Bible as well as the Book of Mormon. There is strong evidence that Biblical texts were lost and even found again as told in an account of King Josiah.

“During the renovation, the book of Deuteronomy was discovered in one of the storage chambers. The biblical Books had previously been destroyed by Amon so that the find caused a sensation. When the Book was read to Josiah he was deeply shocked by its prophecies of doom. He immediately sent a delegation to the prophetess Hulda to ask her advice. The answer was forthright and not reassuring—Jerusalem and the Temple were doomed, but Josiah himself would not live to see their destruction. Josiah led the people to the Temple in repentance. He issued a proclamation to celebrate the Passover according to the ancient statutes. The people flocked to Jerusalem from all corners of the kingdom to celebrate the renovation of the Temple and the holiday of Passover. Josiah was far-sighted. Despite his successes, he heeded Hulda’s prophesy and hid the Ark of the Covenant so that it should not be captured when Jerusalem fell. He also hid the anointing oil, prepared in the wilderness by Moses.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Some of the witnesses for the Book of Mormon are the previous prophets who foresaw its coming and its value in the restoration of all things.

“And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which *men* deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it *is* sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near *me* with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work . . . *even* a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise *men* shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent *men* shall be hid.” (*Isaiah 29:12-14*)

Starting with the ancient prophets, the function of witnesses is very established. Some modern/biblical considerations of the legal term “witness” follow.

“*Kiddushin* is a legal act of acquisition of the bride by the groom: by handing over an object of value (usually a simple ring) to the bride in the presence of two witnesses and reciting the formula, ‘Behold you are consecrated unto me with this ring according to the law of Moses and Israel,’ the groom signifies his intent to reserve the bride exclusively to himself, and by accepting the ring the bride signifies her consent.

“The laws involving witness are many. Not all people are qualified to testify before the court. Among those not admissible are slaves, minors (before bar mitzvah), lunatics, the deaf and dumb, the blind, criminals who have not repented their crime, relatives of any party involved in the case or the judges, one who stands to gain from his testimony, and, in certain cases, women. Any person who has seen the event but does not testify is liable to punishment which will be meted out to him by God. In criminal cases the witness is under obligation to testify of his own accord; in civil cases the duty to testify arises only when the man is summoned to do so.

“The court warns the witnesses that bearing false witness is a serious crime and each witness is investigated and interrogated separately in order to make sure that he is not lying. If it is established that the witnesses have testified falsely, they are disqualified from ever bearing witness again and, under certain circumstances receive . . . the same punishment the accused would have received had he been convicted. If one witness should contradict another, or say something contradicted by fact—the testimony is rejected. The Bible declares that in order to convict, the evidence must be given by at least two witnesses. However, in certain cases such as those requiring an oath, a single witness is valid. A testimony must be given by the witness himself and not by another who says that he heard such a testimony. Acceptable witnesses who sign a document render it valid.

“Halakhic requirements of the marriage ceremony include . . . giving of the ring by the groom to the bride in the presence of two valid witnesses;

“Today in courts in most countries, it is common practice to ‘swear in’ all witnesses. Jewish law never adopted this custom, preferring to accept testimony without the administration of an oath, as long as there were at least

two witnesses who corroborated each other's testimony, as well as other supportive evidence. Testimony given under oath was, in fact, considered to be a particularly weak form of evidence, and it was only accepted when there was a complete lack of something better. When the judicial oath was administered, it was only used in civil cases and then not to the witnesses but to the defendant, or less often, to the plaintiff. In capital cases, a judicial oath was never administered, since it was assumed that no one charged with a capital crime could be believed, even under oath.

“In Jewish law, perjury can only be proven by the evidence of two other witnesses who both testify that the perjurer could not have been present at the time and place he claims. These second witnesses must give their evidence in the presence of the first witness. Only in this way can the charge of perjury be leveled: if the second witnesses simply disagree with the first but cannot break his alibi, or if the second witnesses do not offer their refutation in front of the first, this constitutes not perjury, but contradiction in which case all the evidence is disregarded.

“The punishment for perjury is laid down in Deuteronomy 19:19–21: ‘You shall do to him as he schemed to do to his fellow (i.e., the accused).’ There was considerable discussion on the death sentence for perjurers, complicated by a debate on whether a perjurer who had intended to kill by his false testimony, but had not in fact succeeded in doing so, was himself liable for execution. The law was interpreted to mean that a perjurer should suffer what he had schemed to do, not what had occurred, but in practice the death sentence was rarely carried out for any offense . . . perjurers were usually fined or flogged . . . never allowed to act as witnesses again . . . convictions for perjury were widely publicized.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

One of the reasons witness for the restoration could be given in ancient times is because the Old Covenant was the same as the New Covenant.

“It was the design of the councils of heaven before the world was, that the principles and laws of the priesthood should be predicated upon the gathering of the people in every age of the world . . . Ordinances instituted in the heavens before the foundation of the world . . . for the salvation of men, are not to be altered or changed. All must be saved on the same principles.” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Section Six 1843-44, Pg.308*)

“Actually, of course, the law of carnal commandments, the law of performances and ordinances revealed through Moses, was an old covenant as compared with the gospel restored by Jesus and his apostles. But this new testament or covenant, this restored gospel, was the same testament that had been in force between God and his people from Adam to Moses in both the old and the new worlds.” (*Mormon Doctrine, Bruce R. McConkie, Pg.543*)

Religious Jews still practice many forms of ancient rites and rituals whose meanings may have become distorted or lost over many years without priesthood guidance. Now that the priesthood has been restored, we can learn about the old practices in order to better understand the “Old Covenant,” which was true and how the “New Covenant” restored the ancient practices with true doctrine.

Lesson 5 “This Is the Spirit of Revelation”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 6; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, April 1829. HC 1: 32—35. Oliver Cowdery began his labors as scribe in the translation of the Book of Mormon, April 7, 1829. He had already received a divine manifestation of the truth of the Prophet’s testimony respecting the plates on which was engraved the Book of Mormon record. The Prophet inquired of the Lord through the Urim and Thummim and received this response. 1—6, Laborers in the Lord’s field gain salvation; 7—13, There is no gift greater than the gift of salvation; 14—27, Witness of truth comes by the power of the Spirit; 28—37, Look unto Christ, and do good continually.

Doctrine and Covenants 8; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Oliver Cowdery, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, April 1829. HC 1: 36—37. In the course of the translation of the Book of Mormon, Oliver, who continued to serve as scribe, writing at the Prophet’s dictation, desired to be endowed with the gift of translation. The Lord responded to his supplication by granting this revelation. 1—5, Revelation comes by the power of the Holy Ghost; 6—12, Mysteries of God and the power to translate ancient records come by faith.

Doctrine and Covenants 9; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Oliver Cowdery, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, April 1829. HC 1: 37—38. Oliver is admonished to be patient, and is urged to be content to write, for the time being, at the dictation of the translator, rather than to attempt to translate. 1—6, Other ancient records are yet to be translated; 7—14, The Book of Mormon is translated by study and by spiritual confirmation.

Joseph Smith History 1:8—17; The Father and the Son appear and Joseph is called to his prophetic ministry.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

In Jewish thinking, “looking to God” and “revelation” are almost figurative and in modern times have become unexplainable.

“Revelation, the act by which the hidden, unknown God shows himself to man. There is no specific term corresponding to ‘revelation’ in the Bible or in rabbinic Hebrew. God is said to ‘appear’ to the patriarchs and prophets, and the appearances are described by a series of anthropomorphic (i.e., human) expressions and concrete images. Sometimes God manifests Himself ‘in a vision’ or ‘in a dream’ or he appears through the mediation of an angel. However, the Bible emphasizes that no direct, sensory perception of God is possible. Thus, various phrases are used when describing appearances of the Divine, for example *kevod* (‘glory’) or *shekhinah* (. . . ‘Divine Presence’) or *davar* (‘word’ of God).

“Any event in which the Divine presence is felt is called a revelation, but the term is applied more particularly to communications of the Divine will as revealed through God’s messengers, the prophets. The Bible itself, and later the rabbis, discerned among the prophets a hierarchy of form and degree, with that of Moses as supreme and unique. At Sinai, the principal revelation of God to man took place. At that time, all the assembled ‘heard’ the Voice of God, and through the mediation of Moses (who, according to the rabbis, functioned there as a scribe), received the complete text of the Torah and its interpretation, the Oral Law.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Revelation has no time limits. It is a gift of seeing the past, present and future and may result in prophecy. There is also an assigned order for revelation; some revelation is for the people as authorized by the Lord through His prophet.

“The phenomenon of prophecy is founded on the basic belief that God makes His will known to chosen individuals in successive generations. A prophet is a charismatic individual endowed with the divine gift of both receiving and imparting the message of revelation. A prophet does not choose his profession but is chosen, often against his own will, as in the case of Jonah, to convey the word of God to the people regardless of whether they wish to hear it. The prophet, although conscious of being overwhelmed by the divine word and of being involved in an encounter with God, is still capable of reacting and responding, and may even engage God in dialogue.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“The same Prophets who have contemplated and described the . . . reunion of the tribes of Israel . . . have also predicted that, in connection with all these preparations, a new dispensation should be manifested, a new covenant established, ‘A standard’ for the nations, ‘An Ensign’ for the people. In short, ‘Swift Messengers,’ ‘Teachers,’ Prophets would be commissioned, revelations be manifested, and a new organization be developed, fitted to the times, and with the principles and laws adapted to the reorganization, order, and government of a renovated world.” (*Parley P. Pratt, Key to Theology, Ch.9, Pg.76 - Pg.77*)

“Aaron was clearly given a lesser role than Moses. Aaron experienced revelations from God and, being an eloquent speaker, acted as prophet and miracle-worker before Pharaoh in the matter of the Plagues of Egypt. However, it is significant that even where he plays an active role in performing the miracles, it is not a result of his own ability or initiative, but solely by divine command given through Moses.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Jewish learning is based on the “Torah,” that is, the first five books of the “Old Testament” as given by the Prophet Moses.

“The Bible is holy to Jews because it represents the Word of God. This is particularly true of the Torah which is, so to speak, God's direct statement. The halakhah, or Jewish law, which is the authoritative guide for a Jew's life, is mainly based on the Torah, so obviously study of the Torah as well as the rest of the Bible is one of the prime religious duties.

“The custom of reading the Torah publicly is very, very ancient—originating with Ezra in the fifth-fourth centuries B.C.E. At some later date a reading from the *Nevi'im* was added; this corresponding passage from the Prophets is known as the Haftorah.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The Latter-day Saint's use of the “Pearl of Great Price” and the Doctrine and Covenants is the LDS *Haftorah*. Literally, it is the reading of the *Nevi'im*, the “Prophets,” with their explanations and heavenly insights.

Isaiah and other prophets wrote about the Lord who “directs our paths.” The idea is repeated in Jewish teachings and also by latter day prophets.

“Solomon, the Gaon of Vilna . . . emphasized the study of Torah as the supreme duty of the Jew and the safest path to follow in the search for the truth.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Jewish worship practices include reading the Torah (the Law) and Haftorah (the Prophets). Anciently, this was done publicly once a week on the Sabbath. In modern times there are three public readings each week; Monday, Thursday and Saturday

(Sabbath). The entire Bible text (Old Testament) is covered in one year. By the way, when Jesus lived, apparently the Jews read the “Law and the Prophets” just once a week.

“And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.”
(*Luke 4:16*)

It is likely that the reason Jesus’ ministry was three years long was so that He could read, review and instruct the Disciples through the entire Law and the Prophets once during those training years. His instruction brought back the spirit, reopening the purpose of the law. The spirit was replacing the wall of do’s and don’ts. The obsession with the “letter of the law” had drawn the Jews away from an understanding of and looking forward to the redemption.

When the Jews pray in a synagogue, they form a prayer circle (Minyan). It usually consists of at least ten participants. There is a tradition that if there are only nine persons, the prayer circle can be completed with an agreement that the presence of the Lord or the Spirit of the Lord is with them. In addition to group prayer and the prayer circle, it is still essential to have individual prayer.

“The rabbis placed great emphasis on the relationship of the individual to the community during prayer. Almost all prayer, for example, was written in the first person plural—‘Forgive us,’ ‘Teach us,’ ‘Bring us to our Land.’ Although private prayer was certainly permitted, the individual was urged to join a congregation (*minyan*) when he prays and to incorporate the needs of the *minyan* in his prayers.

“A *minyan* was said to consist of at least ten adult Jewish males. Without the presence of a *minyan* many important prayers—*Kedushah*, *Kaddish*, the *Priestly Benediction*, the *reading of the Torah* and the *Haftarah* and the *hazzan*’s repetition of the *Amidah*—cannot be recited. Recently, the Conservative movement in Judaism has granted its congregations permission to include women in the *minyan*. Reform congregations generally have not insisted on the presence of a *minyan*. When they have, women have usually been counted.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Most prayers in Judaism are pre-written. Many are created from the Psalms. It is common that the prayers were and still are said in the Hebrew language. In fact, the Hebrew language was largely preserved because of prayers and, of course, the scriptures. There is also a recent trend of thought that questions the pre-written structure of prayers.

“The rabbis assumed that God understands all languages; therefore they said that prayers may be recited in any language which the worshiper understands. Hebrew, however, was given a special status—it may be used even though the worshiper does not understand it. Over the centuries some widely accepted prayers (*Kaddish*, *Kol Nidrei* for example) have been written in other languages. The Reform movement and, to a lesser extent, the Conservative movement, have encouraged prayer in the language understood by the worshiper. Recently, however, all movements have stressed the significance of Hebrew, not only as the language of prayer which ties the Jew to his past, but also as a means of uniting him with fellow Jews throughout the world.

“Modern Jewish thinkers, even those with a deep faith in God, have raised many questions about prayer, its effect upon God, and the person who is worshiping. Can the individual pray with real *kavvanah* [holiness] when he is reciting words written by other people who lived in another era and when he is asked to recite these same words at set times every day? Do prayers, written so long ago, reflect the moral and religious ideas of modern Jews? Does God really ‘hear’ prayer; does He, or can He, change the processes of nature (for example, heal a dying person) in response to prayer?

“In light of these and other problems, many thinkers who have associated themselves with the Reform and Reconstructionist movements have suggested changes which should be made in the wording of traditional prayers. They have chosen to eliminate or to reinterpret prayers for the Resurrection of the Dead, the coming of a personal Messiah, the restoration of animal sacrifices and the benediction in which a man blesses God for not having made him a woman. Some thinkers, who do not believe that God changes the course of nature or favors the prayers of one person more than another have tried to reinterpret those prayers which call upon God to intervene in human affairs. These authors generally stress the belief that the Hebrew word for prayer, *tefillah*, is derived from a root *pil* which (in reflexive form) means to ‘judge oneself; prayer, therefore, is mainly an act of self-judgment in which the individual examines his life in the light of what God expects of him and of what he, himself, is able to achieve.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

The hasidic movement in Judaism places great emphasis on the necessity for *kavvanah* [holiness] in prayer. According to hasidic teaching, man may easily be overcome by "evil thoughts" which deprive him of *kavvanah* and which, eventually, may destroy his moral and spiritual life. Prayer, in part, involves the "annihilation" of evil thoughts; it helps the good, already present in man's soul, to come forth; it enables man to achieve an intense closeness (*devekut*) to God. Many scholars believe that Hasidism stresses the *devekut* aspect of prayer even more than the literal meaning of the words recited.

“In prayer, mention of God's holiness should stimulate the worshiper to seek holiness in his own religious and moral life. Holiness is acquired by separation from evil, by the performance of *mitzvot* and by one's willingness to do even more than the law requires, ‘You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God, am holy’ (Leviticus 19:2).” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

Kneeling, a common form of prayer among Christians, is shunned by Jews, although scriptural references to kneeling do exist.

“And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven.” (*1 Kings 8:54*)

“O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.” (*Psalms 95:6*)

Obedience to the Lord’s commandments is a prerequisite for personal revelation. Notice the physical lesson of opening the heavens also applies in a spiritual sense.

“In the Bible, reward and punishment—whether individual, national or universal—is described as appertaining to this world. It is recognized as axiomatic that God rewards the righteous by granting them prosperity and well-being, and punishes the wicked with destruction. This forms the basis of the passage from Deuteronomy which constitutes the second paragraph of the *Shema*: adherence to God's commandments will bring ‘the rain in its seasons’; disobedience will cause God ‘to shut up the heavens that there be no rain, and the land will not yield her fruit.’” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In response to the faithlessness of Israel, the “sealing” prophet, Elijah, used his God-given authority to seal the heavens. The physical phenomenon of drought and losing their crops reflected the spiritual phenomenon of disregarding the “still small voice” and, thereby, losing their eternal families.

There is a reason it is called the “still small voice” because without a sense of reverence we won’t be able to hear it. In the Old Testament, reverence is often referred to as “fear.” Another meaning is “opposite of faith.” Fear is expecting what you “don’t want” while faith is expecting things you “do want.”

“In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me. (*Psalm 56:4*)

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (*Psalm 27:1*)

“Just before he died, and on the eve of the Children of Israel's entry into the Promised Land, Moses made a farewell speech to the Jews. In it, he reviewed their history and gave direction for their future. In one sentence (Deuteronomy 10:12) he summed up what the Bible considers to be the entire purpose of human existence: ‘And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God demand of you? Only this: to revere (fear) the Lord your God, to walk only in His paths, to love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and soul.’

“The Hebrew word for ‘revere’ is (*yirah*) which is usually translated as ‘fear,’ and that for ‘love’ is (*aha'vah*). These two concepts, although they may seem contradictory at first glance, are the essence of Judaism's view of man's attitude to God.

“The ‘fear’ referred to is not the fright or scaredness which a person feels when he is confronted, for example, with a hungry lion. It is rather a feeling of awe or reverence felt when witnessing greatness or grandeur. The view of a major natural wonder, for instance, is breathtaking and inspires the beholder with awe. It is this kind of feeling that is meant by the ‘fear of God’; that is, awe at the thought of the infinity and greatness of God.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“I Will Tell You in Your Mind and in Your Heart, by the Holy Ghost”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 6; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, April 1829. HC 1: 32—35. Oliver Cowdery began his labors as scribe in the translation of the Book of Mormon, April 7, 1829. He had already received a divine manifestation of the truth of the Prophet's testimony respecting the plates on which was engraved the Book of Mormon record. The Prophet inquired of the Lord through the Urim and Thummim and received this response. 1—6, Laborers in the Lord's field gain salvation; 7—13, There is no gift greater than the gift of salvation; 14—27, Witness of truth comes by the power of the Spirit; 28—37, Look unto Christ, and do good continually.

Doctrine and Covenants 8; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Oliver Cowdery, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, April 1829. HC 1: 36—37. In the course of the translation of the Book of Mormon, Oliver, who continued to serve as scribe, writing at the Prophet's dictation, desired to be endowed with the gift of translation. The Lord responded to his supplication by granting this revelation. 1—5, Revelation comes by the power of the Holy Ghost; 6—12, Mysteries of God and the power to translate ancient records come by faith.

Doctrine and Covenants 9; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Oliver Cowdery, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, April 1829. HC 1: 37—38. Oliver is admonished to be patient, and is urged to be content to write, for the time being, at the dictation of the translator, rather than to attempt to translate. 1—6, Other ancient records are yet to be translated; 7—14, The Book of Mormon is translated by study and by spiritual confirmation.

Doctrine and Covenants 11; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to his brother Hyrum Smith, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, May 1829. HC 1: 39—46. This revelation was received through the Urim and Thummim in answer to Joseph's supplication and inquiry. “History of the Church” suggests that this revelation was received after the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood. 1—6, Laborers in the vineyard will gain salvation; 7—14, Seek wisdom, cry repentance, trust in the Spirit; 15—22, Keep the commandments and study the Lord's word; 23—27, Deny not the spirit of revelation and of prophecy; 28—30, Those who receive Christ become the sons of God.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The concept of the “Holy Ghost” is unclear for Jews, yet the Hebrew term “Ruach Elohim” means the Spirit of God. The Hebrew word for breath and wind is closely related to spirit. There are several Biblical verses using these words. One of my favorites is in the vision of dry bones.

“So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. . . . And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.”
(*Ezekiel 37:7-14*)

Ezekiel spoke of breath and of wind bringing life into a dead skeleton. As the sticks (ETZ-emot) of the body are clothed again with flesh and come alive again, so shall the stick (ETZ) of Judah, the dead skeleton of a once true and living religion, come together

with the stick of Joseph. This symbolizes the true religion, and with the “breath” of the Lord (His spirit) a resurrection and a new life begins.

“Flesh is the term used in the Bible to distinguish mortal man from God. The Hebrew word for flesh, *basar*, is contrasted with the Divine Spirit, *ru'ah*, with which man is temporarily endowed. Thus: ‘My spirit shall not abide in man forever, for that he is also flesh; therefore shall his days be a hundred and twenty years’ (Genesis 6:3). The Talmud and Midrash refer to man as *basar va-dam* (‘flesh and blood’) to indicate his mortality as against the eternity of God.

“Ruah ha-Kodesh [holy spirit] is often used as a synonym for prophecy. However, according to some rabbis, unlike prophecy, there are some types of *ruah ha-kodesh* which also can be attained by doing good deeds.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The expression of the “Holy Spirit” has been used to describe various righteous Jewish teachers and sages.

“... Luria already had a reputation as a man of striking personality who possessed the holy spirit.

“... Nahman was the great-grandson of the Ba'al Shem Tov, the founder of Hasidism, and his mother was said to ‘possess the holy spirit.’

“... Phinehas is known to have traveled to redeem captives, and on one journey a river in flood parted for him, so as not to delay his mission. He constructed the famous ‘ladder of saintliness’ in which Caution (against evil) leads through Eagerness (for good), Cleanliness, Purity, Asceticism, Holiness, Humility, Fear of God, Attainment of the Holy Spirit (divine inspiration), ultimately to the Resurrection of the Dead.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The key to recognizing the Messiah and the true meaning of his life and those who testified of Him is the SPIRIT. As mentioned, the word for spirit in Hebrew is Ruach Elohim, the breath—the wind of God. Moses knew that gift well and desired that everyone would have it.

“And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!” (*Numbers 11:29*)

There are some people who do not have that gift yet, and those who do must exercise patience and love because eventually more will get that gift and be very happy. The gift of belief comes from God.

The point to consider is that the Lord’s gift of spirit reveals and teaches truth. In the New Testament, the day that Jesus gave His apostles the promised comforter as the gift of the spirit was the Jewish Pentecost. This occurred on the Mount of Olives fifty days after the Passover when Jesus completed the great atonement. In the Biblical calendar, fifty days after Passover is Shavuot, a day to commemorate receiving the “Law of Moses at Mount Sinai,” the Jewish Pentecost.

“In many modern synagogues, the ceremony of confirmation takes place on Shavuot. This is a group ceremony in which the boys and girls of the community

who have reached the age of maturity (usually when they are 15 or 16 years old), take a sort of symbolic oath of allegiance to the Torah and Judaism. The custom began with the Reform Movement's efforts to deepen the significance of bar mitzvah and to emphasize the relationship between Shavuot and the study of Torah." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

For Latter-day Saints, the procedure of confirmation includes giving the gift of the Holy Ghost. One of its blessings is that of helping us understand the scriptures.

"... the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (*John 14:26*)

"In this last great gift through one of the Godhead, even the Holy Ghost, is to be found the way to the certain knowledge, after one's study of the scriptures . . ." (*Harold B. Lee, Stand Ye In Holy Places, Pg.317*)

A tool or gift of spirit used by ancient and modern prophets is the Urim and Thummim.

"The exact meaning of the words 'Urim' and 'Thummim' have puzzled scholars over the generations. Both in the Greek and Latin translations of the Bible they were rendered as 'revelation and truth' or 'teaching and truth' and this understanding gave rise to the incorporation of the Hebrew words *Urim ve-Thummim* on the official seal of Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

There are symbols in modern Judaism that purportedly date back to David and Solomon's times. One of the most popular is known by non-Jews as The Star of David. Those of the House of Israel call it the Magen David, the sign or shield of David.

"Magen David ('Shield of David'), the six-pointed star, has become the generally accepted emblem of the Jewish people. Tradition tells us that King David wore a *magen David* on his shield, and that King Solomon had the symbol inscribed on his ring in place of the name of God to give him dominion over demons. In spite of its long history, it is however only recently that the *magen David* has become an exclusively Jewish symbol.

"During the early Middle Ages, Christians decorated their churches and cathedrals with the *magen David*. For Muslims it was a magical sign; in Arabic sources the *magen David* was also known as the 'seal of Solomon' and this alternative name was taken over by Jewish groups as well." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The Magen David is always shown as two triangles, interwoven. One possible explanation is that the two triangles represent a characterization of the Urim and Thummim. According to statements attributed to Joseph Smith, the Urim and Thummim were two triangular stones connected by a silver bow. One pointed up and the other pointed down. Superimposed, they make a fascinating Magen David!

According to a paper given at Hebrew University by John Tvedtnes, now Senior Researcher at FARMS (BYU), the words Urim and Thummim may come from Egyptian words similar to "RMMM" and "TMMM," one meaning yes or act upon it (positive), the other a more negative meaning (leave it alone).

Since the Urim and Thummin were revelatory tools, it is possible that they represent or operate on a simple principle of revelation, study then ask. The answer, if we are ready, will be yes or no. Think of it as one answer points up and the other points down. This is as simple as the most complicated computer which works on one and zero, yes and no.

“But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.” (*Doctrine & Covenants 9:8*)

Sometimes the exact right answer does not come when we expect it. A parable about a rock wall that I learned years ago included the imagery of a farmer dragging and lifting the stones from his field as he cleared the land for planting. He laid the stones a row around his property. Later, a stone worker arrived to turn the loose stones into a rock wall. With his skill, the worker managed to find the stones that fit, each one supporting itself and the others above, under or around it. At one point the worker reached a place where no stone seemed to fit. He simply left a hole and continued constructing the terrace wall. At the end he had some left-over stones. Remembering the gap, the stone worker returned with the extra left-over stones. They fit perfectly!

“For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith.” (*Doctrine and Covenants 98:12*)

“. . . the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept . . . line upon line; here a little, and there a little . . . Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” (*Isaiah 28:14-16.*)

“In biblical times, Jerusalem was surrounded by thick, green forests of almond, olive and pine trees. But in the course of numerous wars and settlements, much of this lush greenery was destroyed and the soil left to dry out in the summer sun and wash away in the heavy winter rains. From earliest times, farmers have therefore been forced to terrace the ground and build stone fences along the slopes to hold back the soil. This stone terracing is still in evidence all along the Jerusalem landscape.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The imagery of stone is used often in the scriptures. One of the reasons is that the Lord is the “Rock of Salvation.” Our testimony of Him comes with repeated experiences from the “still small voice.” Even the strongest stone wall is made from many smaller ones.

“The First Principles and Ordinances of the Gospel

Lesson 7

Scripture Summary:

Joseph Smith History 1:1–20; Joseph Smith tells of his ancestry, family members, and their early abodes—An unusual excitement about religion prevails in western New York—He determines to seek wisdom as directed by James—The Father and the Son appear and Joseph is called to his prophetic ministry. 21–26; Some preachers and other professors of religion reject account of First Vision—Persecution heaped upon Joseph Smith—He testifies of the reality of the vision.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

In Judaism, Faith, Repentance, Baptism (immersion - Mikveh) and the Holy Spirit are viewed as follows.

Faith: “In the Bible there are no articles of faith or dogmas in which the Jew is commanded to believe. Belief in God's existence and infinite ability is taken for granted and is the basis of the Bible. This is the importance of the story of the Exodus from Egypt; the Children of Israel witnessed God's wonders and passed on the record of their own personal experience to their descendants. The biblical word *emunah* (and its other forms) which is often translated as ‘belief’ really means ‘trust’ or ‘confidence,’ which is something quite different.

“Judaism insists on belief, faith and good deeds (which are also called *mitzvot*); but by themselves they are not enough. The actual observance of the *mitzvot*, notwithstanding the fact that it may occasionally cause inconvenience, is a prime doctrine of Judaism.

Repentance: “A unique aspect of the Jewish faith is that although God rules the world with absolute justice, He is also merciful and forgives sins against Him. The doctrine of repentance is based on this belief.

“Although Judaism sees sin as a most serious matter, even the sinner is not without hope. One of the most important theological doctrines of both the Bible and the Talmud is that if a sinner repents his bad deeds, God will forgive him. Repentance consists of several stages—firstly the sinner must reflect on his actions and realize that he has indeed done the wrong thing. He must then make up his mind never to do it again, and confess his sin. This confession is not made to any other human being but is made by the sinner directly to God. On this basis the two confessions *Ashamnu* and *Al-Het* were introduced into the prayers for the Day of Atonement which is a special occasion for repentance and forgiveness. However, even when a sinner has done all these things, his repentance is still not final until he has been exposed to the same temptation and withstood it. Of course he should 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. A person who repents his sins is known as a *ba'al teshuvah*. Many rabbis of the Talmud believed that the real *ba'al teshuvah* is greater even than a person who has never sinned and they furthermore said that 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.*)

Conversion - Immersion: “A convert to Judaism is considered a new-born child, and, from the halakhic point of view, he has no father or mother. Thus, if a whole family converts, the children and the parents start their lives as Jews with no legal relationship. Because of this state of affairs, converts are always named as though they were the sons of Abraham, the first Jew. A husband and wife who convert must also have another wedding ceremony in order to be married under Jewish law.

“A potential convert (or proselyte) is first questioned by a court (*bet din*) of three rabbis. They usually begin by trying to persuade him to give up the idea of joining a nation which has been, and today still is, severely persecuted. If the candidate still affirms sincerely that he is ready to ‘accept the yoke of the commandments,’ he or she must undergo a period of instruction in Judaism, in its laws and practices. After thorough study, when he understands the *mitzvot* and is ready to begin his life as a Jew, the candidate is ready for the rituals of conversion. For both males and females the *bet din* oversees their immersion in a ritual bath (*mikveh*).” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Jewish thought requires that the Bet Din should always have the presence of Levites. They will witness the total immersion of the person.

“Just how to construct a *mikveh* in accordance with the numerous legal specifications involved constantly posed a technological problem of great seriousness, and over the generations rabbinic thinkers were repeatedly challenged to come up with novel solutions to this unusual problem which demanded a rare combination of technologic and halakhic ingenuity.

“Briefly the basic legal requirements are these:

- 1) A *mikveh* must not be filled with water that has been drawn (i.e., has been in a vessel or a receptacle), but with water from a naturally flowing source; spring water or rainwater are the ideal sources, but melted snow and ice are also permitted.
- 2) The water must be able to flow into the *mikveh* freely and unimpeded (any blockage renders the water ‘drawn water’) and must reach the *mikveh* in vessels that are not susceptible to ritual uncleanness.
- 3) The minimum size of the *mikveh* is of a vessel which has a volume of ‘40 *seah*,’ variously estimated at between 250 and 1,000 liters (quarts).
- 4) The *mikveh* must be watertight and must be constructed of natural materials on the spot, for otherwise it is deemed itself to be a ‘vessel’ and renders the water in it ‘drawn water’.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

John, a Levite, was administering immersions in a classic Jewish environment. The water source came from springs (living water), it flowed freely (Jordan River), it exceeded the minimum amount of water needed, and it was a natural setting. Jewish tradition also includes a requirement that the mikveh should be below ground level. The Jordan River, where John the Baptist was immersing people, is at the lowest place on the face of the earth, near the Dead Sea.

Holy Spirit: “*Ruah ha-Kodesh* [holy spirit] is often used as a synonym for prophecy. However, according to some rabbis, unlike prophecy, there are some

types of *ruah ha-kodesh* which also can be attained by doing good deeds.”
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The possession of the “Holy Spirit” has been used to describe various righteous teachers and sages.

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“... Phinehas is known to have traveled to redeem captives, and on one journey a river in flood parted for him, so as not to delay his mission. He constructed the famous ‘ladder of saintliness’ in which Caution (against evil) leads through Eagerness (for good), Cleanliness, Purity, Asceticism, Holiness, Humility, Fear of God, Attainment of the Holy Spirit (divine inspiration), ultimately to the Resurrection of the Dead.” *(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)*

“The Restoration of the Priesthood”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 13; Ordination of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to the Aaronic Priesthood along the bank of the Susquehanna River, near Harmony, Pennsylvania, May 15, 1829. HC 1: 39—42. The ordination was done by the hands of an angel, who announced himself as John, the same that is called John the Baptist in the New Testament. The angel explained that he was acting under the direction of Peter, James, and John, the ancient apostles, who held the keys of the higher priesthood, which was called the Priesthood of Melchizedek. The promise was given to Joseph and Oliver that in due time the Priesthood of Melchizedek would be conferred upon them. See also Section 27: 7, 8, 12. Keys and powers of Aaronic Priesthood are set forth.

Doctrine and Covenants 20:38—67; Revelation on Church Organization and Government, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, April 1830. HC 1: 64—70. Preceding his record of this revelation the Prophet wrote: “We obtained of him [Jesus Christ] the following, by the spirit of prophecy and revelation; which not only gave us much information, but also pointed out to us the precise day upon which, according to his will and commandment, we should proceed to organize his Church once more here upon the earth.” 38—67, Duties of elders, priests, teachers, and deacons are summarized;

Doctrine and Covenants 27:12—13 Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, August 1830. HC 1: 106—108. In preparation for a religious service at which the sacrament of bread and wine was to be administered, Joseph set out to procure wine for the occasion. He was met by a heavenly messenger and received this revelation, a portion of which was written at the time, and the remainder in the September following. Water is now used instead of wine in the sacramental services of the Church. 5—14, Christ and his servants from all dispensations are to partake of the sacrament;

Doctrine and Covenants 84:6—30 Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, September 22 and 23, 1832. HC 1: 286—295. During the month of September, elders had begun to return from their missions in the eastern states and to make reports of their labors. It was while they were together in this season of joy that the following communication was received. The Prophet designates it a revelation on priesthood. 6—17, Line of priesthood is given from Moses to Adam; 18—25, The greater priesthood administers the gospel ordinances; 26—32, The greater priesthood administers the gospel ordinances; 26—32, The lesser priesthood administers the preparatory gospel;

Doctrine and Covenants 107:1—20 Revelation on priesthood, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, dated March 28, 1835. HC 2: 209—217. On the date named the Twelve met in council, confessing their individual weaknesses and shortcomings, expressing repentance, and seeking the further guidance of the Lord. They were about to separate on missions to districts assigned. Although portions of this section were received on the date named, the historical records affirm that various parts were received at sundry times, some as early as November 1831. 1—6, There are two priesthoods: the Melchizedek and the Aaronic; 7—12, Those who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood have power to officiate in all offices in the Church; 13—17, The bishopric presides over the Aaronic Priesthood, which administers in outward ordinances; 18—20, The Melchizedek Priesthood holds the keys of all spiritual blessings; the Aaronic Priesthood holds the keys of the ministering of angels;

Doctrine and Covenants 110:11—16 Visions manifested to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery in the temple at Kirtland, Ohio, April 3, 1836. HC 2: 435—436. The occasion was that of a Sabbath day meeting. The Prophet prefaces his record of the manifestations with these words: “In the afternoon, I assisted the other Presidents in distributing the Lord’s Supper to the Church, receiving it from the Twelve, whose privilege it was to officiate at the sacred desk this day. After having performed this service to my brethren, I retired to the pulpit, the veils being dropped, and bowed myself, with Oliver Cowdery, in solemn and silent prayer. After rising from prayer, the following vision was opened to both of us.” 11—12, Moses and Elias each appear and commit their keys and dispensations; 13—16, Elijah returns and commits the keys of his dispensation as promised by Malachi.

Joseph Smith History 1:1—20; Joseph Smith tells of his ancestry, family members, and their early abodes—An unusual excitement about religion prevails in western New York—He determines to seek wisdom as directed by James—The Father and the Son appear and Joseph is called to his prophetic ministry. 21—26; Some preachers and other professors of religion reject account of First Vision—Persecution heaped upon Joseph Smith—He testifies of the reality of the vision.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The account of ancient Joseph is truly a chiasmus paralleled by the modern story of Joseph. It is a prefiguring of the Savior’s mission. There is a lesson in looking at Joseph’s life as he is chosen by his father and then rejected by his brothers. In slavery, his identity is really unknown, yet he serves and saves those around him. Later, he serves and saves his brothers before identifying himself. Consider the symbolism of the ancient Joseph with a latter-day Joseph.

Ancient Joseph was blessed and authorized by his father, Jacob, when Jacob laid his hands on Joseph’s head.

“In the same way that priests lift their hands in blessing, so parents place their hands on the heads of their children when they bless them. (For example, in the Bible, Jacob blessed his grandsons, Ephraim and Manasseh, by placing his hands on their heads.) Placing the hands on another person is symbolic not only of transferring blessing but also of passing on authority. In talmudic times, scholars received their rabbinic ordination through the symbolic act of placing of the hands (known as semikhah).” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In modern Judaism, there is a powerful cultural and legendary history of Joseph and his future role. Some of these excerpts can give “modern Joseph” a little insight to what the Jews are still anticipating.

“Based on the famous story of Joseph and his brothers, the Talmud warns against favoring one child over another . . . Jealousy is considered such a serious evil that it is mentioned in the Ten Commandments where the tenth commandment is an outright prohibition of envy: . . . the rabbis of the Talmud developed the philosophy that a truly rich man is one who is happy with his portion in life and does not envy others.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“According to the Talmud, the Messiah will be a descendant of the House of David and will be preceded by a secondary Messiah, from the House of Joseph . . .” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Although mentioned previously in this manual, let’s recall that when the Chief Rabbi, Avraham HaKohen Kook was appointed in Palestine in the 1920's, he was asked if the Jews could now build the Temple (destroyed since year 70 A.D.). His response was that the priestly rights were gone and referred to the great 12th century rabbi Moses Maimonides. Maimonides said, in effect, “We are waiting for a Messiah Ben-Joseph. To him will be given the keys of the gathering of Israel. He will restore Temple worship.”

The chiasmus shows that ancient Joseph saved his family and they did not know who he was. Latter-day Joseph is saving his brothers again, (more foreign aid goes to Israel from the U.S.A., the land of Joseph, than from all other countries combined) and they don’t know that it is “Joseph.” In the meridian of times there was “One” who saved us all and still most people don’t know it.

As Latter-day Saints consider the wonder of the restoration of the priesthoods and how priesthood bearers function, they may enjoy the functions in Jewish culture.

“In every town where there are Jews they must appoint 'charity wardens,' men who are well-known and honest that they should collect money from the people every Sabbath eve and distribute it to the poor . . . We have never seen or heard of a Jewish community which does not have a charity fund.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

It is interesting to see the similarity of young Aaronic Priesthood bearers gathering “Fast Offerings” at the beginning of the month. Fasting is an integral part of Jewish life, yet never on a Sabbath, unless it is Yom Kippur. There is a monthly Yom Kippur Katan (lesser), a day before the beginning of every month. It is a fast day, however, monthly fasting is never done on a Sabbath day. Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) is the only exception.

References to angels are no exceptions in Middle Eastern religions. Both Moslems and Jews have “angels” in their folklore, notwithstanding their sparse understanding or acceptance of an afterlife.

“Islam, the name given by Muslims to their religion, means ‘submission’ (to the will of God). Muhammad, a seventh century C.E. merchant of Mecca, and founder of Islam, is considered by believers to have been the last of a line of prophets starting with Adam, and the one who revealed to the world the divine doctrine of the Koran, said to have been given him from God by the **angel** Gabriel. Acceptance of Muhammad's teaching implies belief in Allah as the only god; in the angels; in the divine inspiration of the holy books (including the Bible); in the prophets (including such Jewish and Christian figures as Abraham, ‘the merciful friend’ and the first to profess monotheism, Moses, and Jesus); in the day of judgment; and in Allah's predetermination of good and evil. Muslims are obliged to recite their creed and to pray five times daily; to fast from dawn to sunset in the month of Ramadan; to pay legal alms (charity); and to go on at least one pilgrimage to Mecca, site of the holy Black Stone, the Ka'aba.

“The Bible is full of examples of hospitality. Abraham, for example, broke off a conversation with God Himself in order to receive guests (the three **angels**), and though weak in health, ran out to meet them, personally washed their feet, served them food, and made them feel welcomed and honored.

“In literary tradition the Jewish People is one large family descended from Jacob, who was given the name ‘Israel’ in honor of his mysterious and victorious struggle with the **angel** of God.

“When the first man was to be created, says the Aggadah, God consulted the **angels**. Some favored his creation, because of the love and mercy he would show; others were opposed—because of the falsehood and strife he would stir up. In the end, for reasons best known to Himself, the Holy One decided to create man.

“A delightful Talmudic sermon has it that two **angels** accompany a man on his way back from synagogue, one good and one bad. When they arrive home, if the table is laid nicely and all the Sabbath preparations have been made, the good **angel** says, ‘May it be so next week’ and the bad **angel** is forced to say, ‘Amen!’ If, however, the home is not Sabbath-like, the bad **angel** invokes: ‘May it be so next week,’ and the good **angel** has to answer ‘Amen!’ This *aggadah* is the basis of a special Sabbath hymn recited in the home on return from prayers. It was written by the kabbalists of Safed and welcomes the **angels** into the house.

“... **angels** are assigned to countries, and thus there are **angels** who must not leave Erez Israel; **angels** walk upright and speak Hebrew; and they have no needs or free will. Man, because he does have free will and must conquer his evil inclination, is considered more important than the **angels**.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

The restored practice of immersion (baptism by authority) has similarities to customs the religious Jews still do. Some religious Jews who experience repeated immersions (monthly for women and regularly for men) step into their immersion font from the east side, immerse themselves, and then exit to the west side. This could be a reminder of entering into the gateway of cleanness as the Children of Israel entered into their Promised Land.

For the religious Jews, immersions are favored below ground level in flowing water that emanates from bedrock the “Rock of Salvation.” Consider that the lowest spot on the face of the earth where water that originated in bedrock flows is where the Children of Israel crossed into their erstwhile homeland. Judaism and Christianity agree that it is also the likely spot where Jesus came to John in Judea to be immersed.

“As an everlasting covenant, baptism began on this earth with Adam (Moses 6:64-67) and has continued ever since whenever the Lord has had a people on earth. (D. & C. 20:23-28; 84:26-28.) It was not a new rite introduced by John the Baptist and adopted by Christ and his followers. The Jews were baptizing their proselytes long before John, as is well attested from secular sources. The Inspired Version of the Bible, the Book of Moses being a part thereof contains ample evidence of the practice of baptism in Old Testament times. The part of the Book of Mormon of the pre-Christian Era contains some of the best information we have relative to this eternal law.” **(Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, Pg.71)**

As mentioned earlier, other Jewish customs of immersion or use of the mikveh, can give added insight to an eternal covenant.

“Like the synagogue and the cemetery, the *mikveh* is a basic element of Jewish family and communal life, and thus the erection of a *mikveh* was among the first projects undertaken by Jewish communities throughout the world from earliest times.

“Where large amounts of rainwater or spring water are available, the problem of establishing an adequate feed to replenish the *mikveh* is not great, but since most *mikva'ot* are built in urban centers where such supplies are not available, the technological and legal solution of a valid *mikveh* depends upon a fifth principle which stipulates that once a properly constructed *mikveh* is filled with the minimum amount of non-drawn water, drawn water can then be added to it indefinitely and not render it invalid.

“Several ingenious designs have been developed over the generations which take advantage of this principle, but no one design was ever universally accepted, and thus many of the *mikva'ot* differ in many of their details, in accordance with the rabbinic authority whose solution was adopted.

“The reasons for purity or impurity are not given in the Torah, and the rabbis devote little discussion to that aspect of the subject. It is clear, however, that ritual impurities are not to be regarded as infectious diseases or the laws of purification as hygienic measures. Indeed, immersion in a *mikveh* must be preceded by careful cleansing of the body. In the Bible, the Israelites are warned against making the land impure by their transgressions, while the rabbis described purity as one of the grades on the path toward a state of holiness. Maimonides wrote: ‘Uncleanliness is not mud or filth which water can remove . . . but is dependent on the intention of the heart. The sages have therefore said: ‘If one immerses himself, but without special intention, it is as though he had not immersed himself at all.’” **(*Encyclopedia Judaica* Jr.)**

Another element of the restoration is the ordinance of the sacrament, using bread and wine (water). Weekly, Latter-day saints take a “sacrament” that consists of bread that is broken and blessed. The presiding Elder partakes first, then water (nowadays, water instead of wine) is blessed. Again, the presiding authority partakes first and then everyone follows. This is done in “remembrance” of the greater deliverance provided by the Savior’s atonement.

It should be considered that symbolically, the Jews take wine and bread in *anticipation* of a greater deliverance, while Christians take bread and wine in *remembrance* of that great deliverance . . . a chiasmus with the Savior’s atonement in the middle.

The present Jewish Passover feast is, in fact, an annual event to remember Israel’s deliverance. In a religious Jewish home, a weekly reminder of the first Passover is done with a “Kiddush.” The master of the house always pours the wine with an appropriate blessing, sips first, followed by everyone else sipping the wine. He breaks a piece of bread and, after the appropriate blessing, eats the first piece with everyone following his example. The prayers said include a promise that in the future another deliverance would occur greater than the first Passover.

“The table is set for the festive meal, with the Sabbath candles glowing in polished holders. The family stands and the father raises the brimming silver cup to say *Kiddush*, the blessing and sanctification over wine. This age-old ceremony is in fulfillment of the biblical command, ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy’ (Exodus 20:8). ‘Remember it,’ said the rabbis, ‘over wine,’ for wine is the symbol of joy.

“Two loaves appear on the Sabbath table. They recall the double portion of manna which the Israelites in the desert gathered on the eve of the Sabbath for the next day. “On Sabbath and festivals the blessing over bread is recited over two loaves (representing the double portion of manna that fell on Friday and did not go bad when kept till the Sabbath). These loaves are specially sweet bread and made in a distinctive shape. They are known as *ballot* (singular: *ballah*), and are usually covered with a cloth embroidered with Shabbat symbols. Should there be no wine for *Kiddush*, it can be recited over the *ballot* . . . beverages other than wine may also be used.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The restoration of the priesthood has been a hope of Jews since it began to be corrupted even before Jesus’ time. This is reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The best preserved of these Qumran scrolls is called *The Manual of Discipline*, a sort of doctrines and covenants of religious people who left Jerusalem prior to Jesus’ coming. It describes their organization including a Teacher of Righteousness and two assistants. There was also a council of twelve overseers. Their priestly system included two castes: One of a higher authority that connected with an order of the *Melech Zedek* (righteous king), and another of lesser authority that seemed to be connected with the Levitical, or order of Aaron.

Some people suggest that this governing system was copied by Jesus, and that he may have studied with this sect. It seems highly unlikely that this is the case. However, Jesus did use the same system of government that was previously given to Moses, a system that partially continued to exist in other Jewish traditions up to and at the time of Jesus.

“And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles . . .” (*Luke 6:13*)

“After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place . . .” (*Luke 10:1*)

“And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel . . .” (*Exodus 24:1*)

The Qumran community did not follow the Mosaic governmental pattern completely. Jesus did. For example, Moses had a governing leadership of three persons, Moses and his two assistants, Aaron and Hur.

“And he said unto the elders, Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you: and, behold, Aaron and Hur are with you: if any man have matters to do, let him come unto them.” (*Exodus 24:14*)

Moses had a governing body of twelve elders, one from each tribe. This order was continued after Moses as well.

“These are those that were numbered . . . and the princes of Israel, being twelve men: each one was for the house of his fathers.” (*Numbers 1:44*) “Now therefore take you twelve men . . . out of every tribe a man.” (*Joshua 3:12*)

In Jesus’ time, the size of the multitude who truly believed in the restoration of ancient covenants, as preached and administered by His Twelve and the Seventy, grew and expanded well beyond the borders of Israel. Many non-Jews also felt the true spirit and believed. Their conversions bothered some of the Jews, because the Jews wanted to hold on to past customs and social traditions. Soon, the growth of the Church became an even greater threat for the Jewish community leaders. It seems that the restoration in modern times, in a Christian society, has gone through a similar pattern.

“The Only True and Living Church”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 20: Revelation on Church Organization and Government, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, April 1830. HC 1: 64—70. Preceding his record of this revelation the Prophet wrote: “We obtained of him [Jesus Christ] the following, by the spirit of prophecy and revelation; which not only gave us much information, but also pointed out to us the precise day upon which, according to his will and commandment, we should proceed to organize his Church once more here upon the earth.” 1—16, The Book of Mormon proves the divinity of the latter-day work; 17—29, The doctrines of creation, fall, atonement, and baptism are affirmed; 29—37, Laws governing repentance, justification, sanctification, and baptism are set forth; 68—74, Duties of members, blessing of children, and mode of baptism are revealed; 75—84, Sacramental prayers and regulations governing church membership are given.

Doctrine and Covenants 21: Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Fayette, New York, April 6, 1830. HC 1: 74—79. This revelation was given at the organization of the Church, on the date named, in the home of Peter Whitmer, Sen. Six men, who had previously been baptized, participated. By unanimous vote these persons expressed their desire and determination to organize, according to the commandment of God; see Section 20. They also voted to accept and sustain Joseph Smith, Jun., and Oliver Cowdery as the presiding officers of the Church. With the laying on of hands, Joseph then ordained Oliver an elder of the Church; and Oliver similarly ordained Joseph. After administration of the sacrament, Joseph and Oliver laid hands upon the participants individually, for the bestowal of the Holy Ghost and for the confirmation of each as a member of the Church. 1—3, Joseph Smith is called to be a seer, translator, prophet, apostle, and elder; 4—8, His word shall guide the cause of Zion; 9—12, The saints shall believe his words as he speaks by the Comforter.

Doctrine and Covenants 27: Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, August 1830. HC 1: 106—108. In preparation for a religious service at which the sacrament of bread and wine was to be administered, Joseph set out to procure wine for the occasion. He was met by a heavenly messenger and received this revelation, a portion of which was written at the time, and the remainder in the September following. Water is now used instead of wine in the sacramental services of the Church. 1—4, The emblems to be used in partaking of the sacrament are set forth; 5—14, Christ and his servants from all dispensations are to partake of the sacrament; 15—18, Put on the whole armor of God.

Doctrine and Covenants 115: Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Far West, Missouri, April 26, 1838, making known the will of God concerning the building up of that place and of the Lord’s House. HC 3: 23—25. This revelation is addressed to the presiding officers of the Church. 1—4, The Lord names his church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; 5—6, Zion and her stakes are places of defense and refuge for the saints; 7—16, The saints are commanded to build a House of the Lord at Far West; 17—19, Joseph Smith holds the keys of the kingdom of God on earth.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

In order to better understand the miracle of the restoration and the day that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was officially organized, let us go back to Biblical times. Isaac was a miracle child, born of Sarah who was ninety-years old and barren. When she became pregnant, even in ancient parameters, one could ask, “what did the neighbors say?” The name Isaac in Hebrew means laughter, humor, amusing or delightful. Abraham and Sarah were delighted. A human impossibility became a God-given fulfillment. In the Lord’s own plan, he kept his promises!

“According to the aggadah, Isaac was born to Sarah on the first day of Passover.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

According to revelation, the Savior was born on the same day as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, April 6, 1830. Using the biblical and Jewish calendar, that day was the first day of Passover in 1830. That means that the Son of God was born to Mary on the first day of Passover. The Redeemer was born on the holiday representing the redemption and restoration of Israel. It is also the holiday that anticipates an even greater redemption of Israel in the future that includes restored temple activity and the advent of the Messiah.

The modern-day restoration included the priestly powers in an organizational structure. The necessity of this organization was established in the past. Probably the most

repeated verse of Amos is the Lord's instruction that He needs his prophets to reveal His word and will.

“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.” (*Amos 3:7*)

Since the Biblical Hebrew has such a small vocabulary, it is fascinating to know that words with related meanings are placed in precise order for a rainbow of meanings. Secrets, counsel, advice and insight are all related in meaning!

“Amos, the shepherd, was called from following his flock to become a prophet of Israel. His prophecies began two years before the great earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam, king of Israel, in the eighth century B.C.E.

“The third of the twelve Minor Prophets, Amos, preached a powerful message that sounds as relevant in the Western world of the twentieth century as it did in Erez Israel in Amos' own day.” *Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*

The opportunity of meeting together is a God-given instruction for the benefit of all His children.

“The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all.” (*Proverbs 22:2*)

“The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the LORD lighteneth both their eyes.” (*Proverbs 29:13.*)

“And the church did meet together oft, to fast and to pray, and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of their souls. And they did meet together oft to partake of bread and wine, in remembrance of the Lord Jesus.” (*Moroni 6:5–6*)

In a religious Jewish home, every Sabbath Eve begins with an old ritual of a blessing and pouring of a little pure wine (or living [spring] water if wine is not available). It is followed by a blessing, breaking and eating of a little piece of the “Hallah” bread. This procedure is called “Kiddush.” The father or grandfather in the home always partakes first, and then others receive the Kiddush.

“The table is set for the festive meal, with the Sabbath candles glowing in polished holders. The family stands and the father raises the brimming silver cup to say *Kiddush*, the blessing and sanctification over wine. This age-old ceremony is in fulfillment of the biblical command, ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ (Exodus 20:8)

“*Kiddush* is recited on the evening of the Sabbath, or the festival, before the start of the meal. Nothing may be eaten before *Kiddush*. On Sabbath eve, the first paragraph of *Kiddush* includes a phrase from the end of the first chapter of Genesis and the passage at the beginning of the second which describe God's completion of Creation and His sanctification of the seventh day as a day of rest. *Kiddush* continues with the benediction for wine, preceded by the word *savri* (Attention!) so that all present, men and women, may fulfill the requirement of *Kiddush* by listening carefully to the recital of the prayer and by responding ‘Amen’ afterwards’.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The weekly Jewish ritual using wine and bread also includes a remembrance of the first Passover deliverance from Egypt. During the Passover meal, the master of the house will pour and bless wine (it should be “new Wine”) three different times. He sips first, and then everyone else may sip. After each occurrence of wine there is a breaking and blessing of bread (unleavened) three different times. Again, each time the master blesses and eats a broken piece, then everyone else eats a piece. The remarkable exception is that at the beginning of the meal, the middle of the three bread pieces is broken in two and, a broken piece (largest of the two called the afikommen) is hidden for the children to find later in the Seder service. When it is found, that piece (fourth time bread is used) is blessed, broken, and the master eats the first part, then everyone follows his example. The fourth cup of wine is then poured full (more than the previous three “sips”) and the master instructs everyone to “drink all of it.”

There is a verse in the Book of Joel that bridges his day when the Lord was known, to the end of days when he would not be known. The Lord has many names, one of them being “Wine” and another one, “New Wine.” Notice that the “New Wine,” the new identity of the Lord, is rejected in favor of “old habits.”

“Awake . . . all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine, for it is cut off from your mouth.” *(Joel 1:5)*

In the meridian of times, the Apostle Luke seems to amplify this metaphor of the Lord being “New Wine.”

“No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.” *(Luke 5:39)*

It is generally considered that aging makes wine better, hence old wine is better than the new. At a festivity, the oldest, best wine is given first and then the more recent wine is used. When wine ran out at a marriage feast in Cana, Jesus was asked by his mother for assistance. It might be considered that he referred to one of his names (New Wine) by indicating that his time (fulfillment of New Wine) had not yet come.

“And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.” *(John 2:3-4)*

He graciously turned water into wine (very new) and it was better than the old. The prophetic metaphor of New Wine was fulfilled when Jesus, at the Last Supper, instituted a new meaning for the old ordinance of “wine and bread.” Jews still have a memory of that ritual as they pour, bless and sip wine followed by breaking, blessing and eating a piece of bread at the beginning of every Sabbath (Kiddush).

The only time Jews will break, bless and eat a piece of bread first, followed by pouring, blessing and sipping wine last is when children at the traditional Passover meal (Seder) find the “hidden piece of bread” (Afikommen). It was that piece of bread that Jesus was referring to as he blessed bread and wine, giving a new meaning to an old ordinance . . . hence, the New Wine.

“And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.”
(1 Corinthians 11:24-25)

“The Sabbath bears record of Christ: from Adam to Moses it was the 7th day to signify that our Lord rested on that day from his creative labors (Ex. 20:8-11); from Moses to Christ, the Sabbath day was a different day each year to commemorate our Lord's leading of the children of Israel out of bondage (Deut. 5:12-15); and from the apostolic day until now, the Sabbath has been the first day of the week to point attention to our Lord's resurrection on his holy day.” (***Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, Pg.452***)

Lesson 10

“This Is My Voice unto All”

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 Prophet'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 Judaic Insights:

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. To day if ye will hear his voice . . .” (*Psalms 95:7*)

“How are we to know the voice of the Good Shepherd from the voice of a stranger? Can any person answer this question? I can. It is very easy. To every philosopher upon the earth, I say, your eye can be deceived, so can mine; your ear can be deceived, so can mine; the touch of your hand can be deceived, so can mine; but the Spirit of God filling the creature with revelation and the light of eternity, cannot be mistaken—the revelation which comes from God is never mistaken. When an individual, filled with the Spirit of God, declares the truth of heaven, the sheep hear that, the Spirit of the Lord pierces their inmost souls and sinks deep into their hearts; by the testimony of the Holy Ghost light springs up within them, and they see and understand for themselves. This is the way the Gospel should be preached by every Elder in Israel . . .” (*Discourses of Brigham Young, Pg.431*)

To remember those words would be a source of reoccurring joy. Jews use garments to remind them of ancient temple rituals. The garment is called a ‘Tallit’ and it has four sets of Zizit (strings) with knots that are reminders of the binding covenants.

“According to the Bible, God commanded the Jews to wear fringes on the corners of their garments as a reminder of the Lord's commandments: ‘And it shall be unto you for a fringe that ye may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord’ (Numbers 15:39). This fringe is called *zizit*.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

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.

“From more than two thousand years before the start of the Common Era, the Babylonian Empire went through many changes of rulers and dynasties. In 612 B.C.E. Nebuchadnezzar became the ruler of Babylonia and shortly afterwards, in 586 B.C.E., conquered Judea, destroying the Temple and exiling the Jews to Babylonia. These exiles formed a large Jewish community who yearned for their homeland; as we read in Psalm 137: ‘By the rivers of Babylon we sat and cried, remembering Zion . . . How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning’.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

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.

“But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (*Jeremiah 31:33-34*)

There is great value in being reconciled with God through the process of remembering. It leads us to seek forgiveness and imbues us with a sense of forgiving.

“It is natural for someone who has endured a terrible disaster to want to bury his painful memories along with the dead and forget the past. But the Jews, being only a tiny minority in the world and having a long history of persecution, cannot afford to forget that Nazism brutally murdered six million of their people. Thus in 1953 the Knesset, Israel's parliament, established Yad Vashem, the Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, to perpetuate their memory.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

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*)

Throughout time there have been symbolic and functional artifacts that brought to our minds or reinforced 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 and in all their “doings” they may remember the Lord.

“Mezuzah is the name of the parchment scroll attached to the doorposts of a Jewish home. The word itself actually means ‘doorpost’ but has come to refer to the scroll. On it are written verses from Deuteronomy (6 : 4–9 and 11 : 13–21) in square Assyrian letters, traditionally arranged in 22 lines. The Torah commands of these verses that ‘you shall write them on the doorposts (*mezuzot*)

of your house and in your gates.’ The 12th century rabbinic authority, Maimonides, stresses that this commandment is to be observed purely from love of God, and that the *mezuzah* is not a good luck charm with power to ward off evil spirits. Many people, however, are accustomed to kiss the *mezuzah* or to touch it and then kiss the fingers when entering or leaving.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In the Book of Mormon, the functional Liahona led the righteous descendants of Lehi. Its presence was a reminder that the Lord would lead his people. 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. When the cloud lifted, it was considered a divine signal to move the camp. A silver trumpet was sounded, the Levites dismantled the Tabernacle and transported it to its next resting place.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“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. Then those of the children of Israel who were bitten by poisonous serpents were healed by looking upon the serpent, while those who refused to look died of the poisonous bites. (Num. 21:4-9) This performance was a ceremony in Israel which was intended to show the people that by looking to Christ they would be saved with eternal life, but by refusing to look to him they would die spiritually (John 3:14-15; Alma 33:1922; Hela. 8:14-15) 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 is a metaphor 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). Various metaphors were used by various prophets, and Hosea chooses the tender subject of marriage and moral fidelity to emphasize the nurturing and forgiving nature of our Father in Heaven.

“Hosea, a prophet in the last years of the kingdom of Israel, (up to 722 B.C.E.) . . . describes the relationship of God and the people of Israel as essentially one of love, like that between a man and a woman, and prophesies that the divine punishment will be similar to that befitting an unfaithful wife, i.e., God will cast Israel out of its home and into exile. However . . . proclaiming that through repentance, Israel can return to its former glory. The love of God for Israel is eternal; thus, God will eventually restore His people to their land.

“Jeremiah used the favorite image of the earlier prophet Hosea that the relationship between God and Israel is like that of husband and wife and that Israel, in deserting the true faith, had been like an unfaithful wife. He urged the people to acknowledge no other God than the God of Israel, and to submit to Him totally.

“Judaism believes that man must serve God with his soul and his body. A person's soul is that part of him that loves God and His goodness 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. According to biblical law, a couple must abstain from sexual intercourse while the wife is a *niddah*, i.e., during her period of menstruation. The *halakhab* as it developed over the generations extended the biblical prohibition somewhat, and as it is presently codified, stipulates that sexual intercourse (as well as intimacies which may lead to it) is forbidden from the time the woman expects her menses until seven ‘clean’ days (that is, days on which no blood whatsoever is seen) have elapsed. A minimum of five days is fixed for the menses themselves, so that the minimum period of separation is 12 days. In the evening of the seventh clean day, the woman immerses herself in a *mikveh* and normal marital relations are resumed until the next menses are expected.

“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* (separation during the period of menstruation) which ensure that the couple does not indulge in sex on impulse but rather directs the act to holiness.

“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.*)

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*)

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*)

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.

“The Field Is White Already to Harvest”

Lesson

11

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 4: Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to his father, Joseph Smith, Sen., at Harmony, Pennsylvania, February 1829. HC 1: 28. 1—4, Valiant service saves the Lord’s ministers; 5—6, Godly attributes qualify them for the ministry; 7, Things of God must be sought after.

Doctrine and Covenants 11: Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to his brother Hyrum Smith, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, May 1829. HC 1: 39—46. This revelation was received through the Urim and Thummim in answer to Joseph’s supplication and inquiry. “History of the Church” suggests that this revelation was received after the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood. 1—6, Laborers in the vineyard will gain salvation; 7—14, Seek wisdom, cry repentance, trust in the Spirit; 15—22, Keep the commandments and study the Lord’s word; 23—27, Deny not the spirit of revelation and of prophecy; 28—30, Those who receive Christ become the sons of God.

Doctrine and Covenants 12: Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Joseph Knight, Sen., at Harmony, Pennsylvania, May 1829. HC 1: 47—48. Joseph Knight believed the declarations of Joseph Smith concerning his possession of the Book of Mormon plates and the work of translation then in progress, and several times had given material assistance to Joseph Smith and his scribe, which enabled them to continue translating. At Joseph Knight’s request the Prophet inquired of the Lord and received the revelation. 1—6, Laborers in the vineyard are to gain salvation; 7—9, All who desire and are qualified may assist in the Lord’s work.

Doctrine and Covenants 14: Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to David Whitmer, at Fayette, New York, June 1829. HC 1: 48—50. The Whitmer family had become greatly interested in the translating of the Book of Mormon. The Prophet established his residence at the home of Peter Whitmer, Sen., where he dwelt until the work of translation was carried to completion and the copyright on the forthcoming book secured. Three of the Whitmer sons, each having received a testimony as to the genuineness of the work, became deeply concerned over the matter of their individual duty. This revelation and the two next following (Sections 15 and 16) were given in answer to an inquiry through the Urim and Thummim. David Whitmer later became one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. 1—6, Laborers in the vineyard will gain salvation; 7—8, Eternal life is the greatest of God’s gifts; 9—11, Christ created the heavens and the earth.

Doctrine and Covenants 15: Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to John Whitmer, at Fayette, New York, June 1829. HC 1: 50; see also heading to Section 14. The message is intimately and impressively personal, in that the Lord tells of what was known only to John Whitmer and himself. John Whitmer later became one of the Eight Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. 1—2, The Lord’s arm is over all the earth; 3—6, To preach the gospel and save souls is the thing of most worth.

Doctrine and Covenants 16: Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Peter Whitmer, Jun., at Fayette, New York, June 1829. HC 1: 51; see also heading to Section 14. Peter Whitmer, Jun., later became one of the Eight Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. 1—2, The Lord’s arm is over all the earth; 3—6, To preach the gospel and save souls is the thing of most worth.

Doctrine and Covenants 18: Revelation to Joseph Smith the Prophet, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer, given at Fayette, New York, June 1829. HC 1: 60—64. When the Aaronic Priesthood was conferred, the bestowal of the Melchizedek Priesthood was promised. See heading to Section 13. In response to supplication for knowledge on the matter, the Lord gave this revelation. 1—5, Scriptures show how to build up the Church; 6—8, The world is ripening in iniquity; 9—16, The worth of souls is great; 17—25, To gain salvation, men must take upon them the name of Christ; 26—36, The calling and mission of the Twelve are revealed; 37—39, Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer are to search out the Twelve; 40—47, To gain salvation, men must repent, be baptized, and keep the commandments.

Doctrine and Covenants 31: Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Thomas B. Marsh, September 1830. HC 1: 115—117. The occasion was immediately following a conference of the Church. See heading to Section 30. Thomas B. Marsh had been baptized earlier in the month, and had been ordained an elder in the Church before this revelation was given. 1—6, Thomas B. Marsh is called to preach the gospel and is assured of his family’s well-being; 7—13, He is counseled to be patient, pray always, and follow the Comforter.

Doctrine and Covenants 33: Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Ezra Thayre and Northrop Sweet, at Fayette, New York, October 1830. HC 1: 126—127. In recording this revelation the Prophet affirmed that “the Lord is ever ready to instruct such as diligently seek in faith.” 1—4, Laborers are called to declare the gospel in the eleventh hour; 5—6, The Church is established and the elect are to be gathered; 7—10, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; 11—15, The Church is built upon the gospel rock; 16—18, Prepare for the coming of the Bridegroom.

Doctrine and Covenants 75: Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Amherst, Ohio, January 25, 1832. HC 1: 242—245. The occasion was that of a conference previously appointed. At this conference Joseph Smith was sustained and ordained President of the High Priesthood. Certain elders, who had encountered difficulty in bringing men to an understanding of their message, desired to learn more in detail as to their immediate duties. This revelation followed. 1—5, Faithful elders who preach the gospel will gain eternal life; 6—12, Pray to receive the Comforter, which teaches all things; 13—22, Elders shall sit in judgment on those who reject their message; 23—36, Families of missionaries are to receive help from the Church.

**Supplemental
Holy Land
and Judaic
Insights:**

To facilitate adherence to the tenant that Godly things should constantly be sought after, the Jews have some traditional symbols which “keep God’s word in front of them” at all times. Jews remind themselves of God’s words by binding leather phylacteries (Tfillin) on the arm and forehead as well as on all Jewish doorposts (Mezuzah). These are the words in the ‘Mezuzah’ and in the ‘Tfillin’:

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. (*Deuteronomy 6:4-9*)

It is a strong Jewish custom for men to bind “Tfillin” on the arm (close to the heart) and on the forehead as well as on all gates and doorposts of their buildings.

“There should be a mezuzah at the entrance to every home and on the doorpost of every living room within the home—this of course excludes lavatories, bathrooms, storerooms and stables. It is also customary to place mezuzot at the entrances to synagogues and public buildings, including all government offices in Israel. In Israel a mezuzah must be put up immediately when a house is occupied by a Jew—outside Israel after the householder has lived in the house for 30 days. If the house is later sold to Jews, the mezuzot must be left on the doorposts. Today the mezuzah represents one of Judaism's most widely observed ceremonial commandments.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

“Returning to the Land of Israel” “returning to the Lord” are as great motivating factor in Jewish life, as proselytizing is for Christians. Special “Yeshiva” institutes have been established to help those who have “gone astray.” Someone who does not speak Hebrew may not recognize that “Yeshiva” and the word “teshuvah” have a common root.

“Repentance in Hebrew is known as teshuvah, which literally means ‘return,’ and signifies a return to God. A person who repents his sins is known as a ba'al teshuvah. Many rabbis of the Talmud believed that the real ba'al teshuvah is greater even than a person who has never sinned and they furthermore said that 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.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

The connection to “family” is unending, even if one “goes astray.” The connection to this familial identity is unalterable:

“Yet according to Jewish law, . . . being born of a Jewish mother, [a person] never [loses] his Jewish status . . . Indeed, as the Talmud teaches: ‘A Jew, even if he has sinned, remains a Jew’.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

For Latter-day Saints, returning to God’s family is a powerful motivator, prompting family research stretching throughout the world.

“And again, this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all the nations, and then shall the end come, or the destruction of the wicked . . . and they shall gather together the remainder of his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” *(Joseph Smith - Matthew 1)*

The expression “white and ready to harvest” gives an image of goodness and readiness to accept the Lord’s plan. In Judaism, wearing white clothing, specifically robes and the Talith (prayer garment), denotes the desire to be pure and spotless from the sins of generations around them.

White is a combination of all colors, metaphorically implying a “wholeness” or “completeness.” Garments used by religious Jews are often pure white. There is a certain symbolism to covering the dead with a white sheet. The emblems of the sacrament are covered with a white sheet in remembrance of His death and resurrection.

“The *tallit* is usually white and made either of wool, cotton, or silk . . . Although the ordinary *tallit* is worn only in the synagogue, strictly observant Jews wear the *tallit katan* (small *tallit*) under their upper garments the whole day.

“Perhaps the most beloved ritual of the Day of Atonement, *Kol Nidrei* is . . . chanted before sunset as the . . . worshipers are wrapped in *tallitot* and some even robed in white gowns (*kitels*).” *(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)*

The special white garment, the Kitel, mentioned above is worn in many Jewish weddings.

“In Ashkenazi tradition it is not just the bride who wears white on her wedding day. The groom, too, stands under the canopy wearing his white *kitel*, or robe, over his wedding finery. The day of their marriage is a solemn one for the bride and groom. They pray that their past sins will be forgiven and they can start their life together afresh. The white of their clothing symbolizes the purity and the forgiveness of sin for which they are hoping. For this reason a similar garment is used to clothe the dead for burial. The *kitel* therefore also serves to remind the wearer of how brief life is, and of the necessity for atonement.

“Our first fashion record is the Bible, which describes common, priestly, and royal dress . . . The Talmud stresses that ‘a man’s dignity is seen in his costume.’ A scholar must be spotless and neat . . . From ancient times Jewish women were known for their modesty. Their hair was always covered, their dresses plain and white. Fine clothing was worn on Sabbath and holidays, simple clothing on weekdays. On the Day of Atonement there was no gold on the vestments of the high priest; he officiated in robes of pure linen.

“From Talmudic times, it was the special duty of the housewife to bake the bread for the Sabbath. This bread, usually prepared from white flour, is also called ‘*ballab*.’ Two such loaves are placed on the festive Sabbath table as a symbol for the double portion of manna which the Israelites in the wilderness received every Friday, and because of the Show bread in the Temple, which was displayed each Sabbath.” *(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)*

White cloth for the Sabbath table and white cloth over the wine and bread that precedes the Sabbath meal are again indicative of the special nature, the purity, and the goodness of the meal. It should invoke a memory of partaking of the temple sacrifices and subsequent feasts in ancient days.

Lesson 12

“The Gathering of My People”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 29: 1–8; revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to his father, Joseph Smith, Sen., at Harmony, Pennsylvania, February 1829. HC 1: 28. 1–4, Valiant service saves the Lord’s ministers; 5–6, Godly attributes qualify them for the ministry; 7, Things of God must be sought after.

Doctrine and Covenants 33:3–7; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to his brother Hyrum Smith, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, May 1829. HC 1: 39–46. This revelation was received through the Urim and Thummim in answer to Joseph’s supplication and inquiry. “History of the Church” suggests that this revelation was received after the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood. 1–6, Laborers in the vineyard will gain salvation; 7–14, Seek wisdom, cry repentance, trust in the Spirit; 15–22, Keep the commandments and study the Lord’s word; 23–27, Deny not the spirit of revelation and of prophecy; 28–30, Those who receive Christ become the sons of God.

Doctrine and Covenants 37: Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Joseph Knight, Sen., at Harmony, Pennsylvania, May 1829. HC 1: 47–48. Joseph Knight believed the declarations of Joseph Smith concerning his possession of the Book of Mormon plates and the work of translation then in progress, and several times had given material assistance to Joseph Smith and his scribe, which enabled them to continue translating. At Joseph Knight’s request the Prophet inquired of the Lord and received the revelation. 1–6, Laborers in the vineyard are to gain salvation; 7–9, All who desire and are qualified may assist in the Lord’s work.

Doctrine and Covenants 38:24–41; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to David Whitmer, at Fayette, New York, June 1829. HC 1: 48–50. The Whitmer family had become greatly interested in the translating of the Book of Mormon. The Prophet established his residence at the home of Peter Whitmer, Sen., where he dwelt until the work of translation was carried to completion and the copyright on the forthcoming book secured. Three of the Whitmer sons, each having received a testimony as to the genuineness of the work, became deeply concerned over the matter of their individual duty. This revelation and the two next following (Sections 15 and 16) were given in answer to an inquiry through the Urim and Thummim. David Whitmer later became one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. 1–6, Laborers in the vineyard will gain salvation; 7–8, Eternal life is the greatest of God’s gifts; 9–11, Christ created the heavens and the earth.

Doctrine and Covenants 52:2–5; 42–43; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to John Whitmer, at Fayette, New York, June 1829. HC 1: 50; see also heading to Section 14. The message is intimately and impressively personal, in that the Lord tells of what was known only to John Whitmer and himself. John Whitmer later became one of the Eight Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. 1–2, The Lord’s arm is over all the earth; 3–6, To preach the gospel and save souls is the thing of most worth.

Doctrine and Covenants 57:1–3; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Peter Whitmer, Jun., at Fayette, New York, June 1829. HC 1: 51; see also heading to Section 14. Peter Whitmer, Jun., later became one of the Eight Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. 1–2, The Lord’s arm is over all the earth; 3–6, To preach the gospel and save souls is the thing of most worth.

Doctrine and Covenants 110:11; Revelation to Joseph Smith the Prophet, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer, given at Fayette, New York, June 1829. HC 1: 60–64. When the Aaronic Priesthood was conferred, the bestowal of the Melchizedek Priesthood was promised. See heading to Section 13. In response to supplication for knowledge on the matter, the Lord gave this revelation. 1–5, Scriptures show how to build up the Church; 6–8, The world is ripening in iniquity; 9–16, The worth of souls is great; 17–25, To gain salvation, men must take upon them the name of Christ; 26–36, The calling and mission of the Twelve are revealed; 37–39, Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer are to search out the Twelve; 40–47, To gain salvation, men must repent, be baptized, and keep the commandments.

Articles of Faith 1:10; We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The Jewish tradition of a latter-day “Joseph son of Joseph” is so significant to the “gathering” that I will repeat it. When the Chief Rabbi, Avraham HaKohen Kook was appointed in Palestine in the 1920's, he was asked if the Jews could now build the Temple (destroyed since year 70 A.D.). His response was that the priestly rights were gone and referred to the great 12th century rabbi Moses Maimonides. Maimonides said, in effect, “We are waiting for a Messiah Ben-Joseph, to him will be given the keys of the gathering of Israel, he will restore Temple worship.”

“Wandering from place to place, has been one of the major components of Jewish history, for since the time of the Patriarchs the ‘wandering Jew’ has

suffered from a lack of territory, government, and defense. Major Jewish migrations in search of favorable living conditions and in flight from harassment, destruction of the Second Temple. The scattering of Jews throughout the Christian and Islamic states, culminating in the expulsion from the Iberian peninsula in 1492 and their settlement in the New World since the early stages of the European colonization, a process that greatly accelerated in the latter half of the 19th century. Throughout the period of the Diaspora, small numbers of Jews made their way back to Erez Israel, the land promised them in a covenant with their God.

“Although the ten tribes disappeared, the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel promised that the time would come when they would be reunited with the remainder of the Jewish nation. This promise kept alive the hope that the ten tribes still existed and would be found.

“Numerous attempts have been made by travelers and explorers to discover the ten tribes, or to identify them with different people. Almost every nation, including the Japanese, Persians, the Falashas of Ethiopia, Red Indians, and the British, have been suggested as descendants of the lost tribes.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In Tel Aviv, the Diaspora Museum displays the supposed travels and dispersion of the tribes of Israel. The museum curators also identify “Mormons” as those claiming to be part of the lost tribes, identifying themselves for the most part as Ephraimites from the Israelite tribe of Joseph.

Following the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, the account of Joshua and Caleb as spies or emissaries for Israel introduces some symbolism of two tribes working together. Returning with a good report, they exemplified choosing to serve the Lord faithfully and leading Israel. Joshua was of the tribe of Joseph and Caleb of Judah, two tribes that have always led Israel in the past. Their shared, present-and-future obligations to deliver a good report enjoins them to continue to lead Israel in these latter-days and to perpetuate the faithful examples of choosing to serve the Lord. The two tribes will once again combine as emissaries for the Lord preceding the gathering of the rest of Israel. The symbol of the Israeli Ministry of Tourism is the characterization of the two emissaries (Joshua and Caleb) carrying a clump of grapes between them - bringing good news!

There must be a gathering going on because when I was born in 1941, there were only a few hundred thousand Jews in what was to become the land of Israel. Now, there are more than 5 million Jews in Israel. In a recent ten year period, almost a million Russian-speaking Jews have gathered. There were months when more than twenty thousand Russian immigrants were landing in Israel. Mobile homes were hastily bought and built to accommodate them. Many of those mobile homes were built under the direction of a Latter-day Saint, Fred Huckvale of California (Joseph was blessing Judah!).

During that peak arrival period, the brethren in a Jerusalem branch priesthood meeting were discussing Jeremiah’s prophecy:

“Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.” (*Jeremiah 16:14-15*)

“The Talmud teaches that the ingathering of the exiled kingdoms will be part of the coming of the Messiah. The great exile to Babylonia in the sixth century B.C.E. was ended by Cyrus the Great of Persia. However, the rabbis did not consider his proclamation and the return at that time to be the Ingathering of the Exiles since it was incomplete. The day of the ingathering, the rabbis write, will be ‘as great as the day on which heaven and earth were created’.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

This exodus from the Diaspora, when viewed in its complete scope, will be greater than the exodus from Egypt. The State of Israel has special emissaries assigned throughout the world to assist the Jews in gathering to Israel. This is a frustrating thing to some religious Jews. They feel that the State of Israel should be established by the Lord through a Messiah; hence, the traditions of a latter-day “Messiah ben Joseph, a Joseph, son of Joseph, who would receive the keys of the gathering of Israel and restore Temple worship.

A parallel gathering is taking place since the keys of the gathering of Israel were restored to the Prophet Joseph Smith Jr. during Passover week in 1846. Special emissaries are also assigned throughout the world to find and assist the “Blood of Israel” to gather to the Lord. The scope of this gathering is the greatest gathering the world has ever known.

Calculating for a moment, we see that just before Prophet and President David O. McKay was leading the Lord’s work there was one Mormon for every 100,000 persons on the earth. Now, Prophet and President Gordon B. Hinckley is leading the Lord’s work with one Mormon for every 600 persons on the earth! These eye-opening statistics are fruits of the Lord’s work.

On one hand, the Jews, without 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 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.

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (*Jeremiah 31:31-33*)

“The time has at last arrived when the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has set his hand again the second time to recover the remnants of his people . . . and with them to bring in the fulness of the Gentiles, and establish that covenant with them, which was promised when their sins should be taken away. See Isaiah 6: Romans 6:25, 26 and 27, and also Jeremiah 31: 31, 32 and 33. This covenant has never (before) been established with the house of Israel, nor with

the house of Judah . . .” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Section One 1830-34 Pg.14*)

Obviously, many descendants of Abraham are still scattered throughout the world. Isaiah spoke numerous times of the scattering as well as the gathering or return of the covenant descendants. That gathering has physical as well as spiritual meanings. Just as we were sent from God to experience life and exercise our God-given attributes, so do we have the opportunity to return to Him.

The subject of the ingathering of the Jews rippled through Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century. Schemes were hatched to “get the Jews out” of Europe or maybe they should gather to Uganda!

“In 1903 the Zionist movement was shaken by the introduction of the Uganda Scheme, which proposed that the Jews settle in the East African Protectorate of Uganda rather than the disputed territory of Palestine. Weizmann was among the opponents of this plan, unwilling to agree to Zionism without Zion. By a quirk of fate this adamant stand gained him an introduction to British leader Arthur James Balfour, who was later to play an important role in the establishment of the Jewish state. Balfour had been puzzled by the Zionist rejection of the Uganda plan and asked Weizmann to explain this step. Weizmann then asked Balfour whether, if he were offered Paris he would abandon London. Balfour answered, ‘No, London is the capital of my country.’ Weizmann replied, ‘Jerusalem was the capital of our country when London was a marsh’.”
(*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

Subsequently, the Balfour Declaration, calling for the ingathering of the Jews, brought exhilaration to Jews and others who cherished the biblical prophecies of the gathering of the children of Israel.

“Lord Balfour, who was a British statesman, first began to take an interest in the Jewish question in 1902–1903, when Theodor Herzl spoke with Joseph Chamberlain, the British colonial secretary and with Lord Lansdowne, the foreign secretary, about a homeland for the Jews. Lord Balfour was prime minister at that time.

“He listened sympathetically to both Theodor Herzl and Chaim Weizmann. The latter met Balfour in 1906, and spoke to him about the need to build a Jewish homeland on the soil of what was then Palestine. Lord Balfour's interest in Zionism grew more intense during World War I, when he became foreign secretary.

“The meetings with Weizmann eventually led to the Balfour Declaration, which he signed in 1917. This was England's declaration of approval that ‘a national home for the Jewish people’ be built in Palestine. In 1925 Balfour accepted an invitation to open the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem. He made the then difficult journey to Jerusalem at the age of 77, in the company of his niece and her husband, who served as Balfour's private secretary. Another niece, Blanche Dugdale, worked closely with Chaim Weizmann.

“News of Balfour's letter brought joy to Jewish communities throughout the world. Copies of the Declaration were showered from airplanes over Jewish townships in Germany, Austria and Poland, and on the shores of the Black Sea.

200,000 Jews rallied at Odessa, Russia, bearing banners inscribed 'Land and Freedom in Erez Israel' (Their enthusiasm was soon silenced when the Communists came to power in the same year.) The Declaration was compared to the Persian King Cyrus' permission to the exiled Jewish captives in the sixth century B.C.E. to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple.

“Zerubbabel, leader of a group of Jews returning from Babylonian exile in the sixth century B.C.E. went to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. Zerubbabel (whose name means ‘scion of Babylon’) was a descendant of exiled King Jehoiachin of Judah. He and Joshua, son of Jehozadak the high priest, brought the first group of Jews back to the Holy Land and began the formidable task of reconstructing the Temple. Despite the harassment of neighboring peoples and the depressing barrenness and desolation of Jerusalem, they managed to set up the altar, reinstitute the sacrificial service and celebrate the Feast of Sukkot. In the second year of their return they began laying the foundations of the Temple, but their efforts were soon forced to a halt. Distrustful of the non-Jewish tribes, Zerubbabel refused their offer of help and, in retaliation, these neighboring groups blocked all further construction attempts.

“For years the site remained untouched until finally the prophets Haggai and Zechariah began exhorting the Jews to complete the unfinished task. Once more Zerubbabel and Joshua took up the challenge and this time the Temple was erected.

“Zerubbabel is fondly remembered by the Jews for his accomplishment. The Second Temple is often referred to as the Temple of Zerubbabel and in the Hanukkah hymn *Ma'oz Zur*, lauding Israel's past redeemers, the "end of Babylon" is associated with Zerubbabel.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

The building of the temple, as well as the city walls, was met with resistance by some inside and outside the Israel community. The Samaritans, who were denied the right to assist in the temple construction (and later worked against it) still claim to be part of Israel.

“Samaritans [are] a small religious sect residing in Israel whose members consider themselves to be direct descendants of the Israelite tribes.

“According to Samaritan history, they broke away from the Israelites in the 11th century B.C.E., refusing to accept a change in the location of the religious capital. To this day the Samaritans maintain that Mount Gerizim near Shechem [Nablus, north of Jerusalem] is the place chosen by God as the center of Israelite worship and not Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. They have therefore continued to live around Shechem and to make pilgrimages to Mount Gerizim.

“The Samaritan population has remained small due to persecutions and plagues throughout the centuries. By the beginning of the 20th century there were only 150 of them left. With the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 this minute community was split into two centers—one under Jordanian rule and the other in Israel. But the Six-Day War in 1967 ended the isolation of the two branches and under the protection of the Israel government, their population has grown to about 500 persons.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

There is an amazing parallel today, as in ancient times, of “enemies of the Jews preventing them from building the wall” (or settling their ancient country). Even

Orthodox Jews maintain that the State of Israel is not legitimate because the Messiah did not restore it!

A similar example of dissent and subsequent success is when the State of Israel's government had approved the building of the "Mormon" center on Mount Scopus where the BYU Study program is currently located. The building was well under way when an Orthodox Jewish group (dedicated to crushing Christian activities) started a twofold campaign. Their first objective was to discredit the government (which they did not support anyway) for allowing the BYU facilities to continue. Second, striking a chord of antisemitism, they called the center a "missionary activity." (There are three kinds of antisemitism to the Jews; 1. kill the Jews, 2. let someone else kill the Jews, and 3. convert the Jews.) This same Orthodox group has attempted to pass a law against proselytizing in Israel and has failed. There is NO Israeli statute prohibiting missionary activity. However, missionary activity is deemed highly insensitive and, frankly, antisemitic.

They did manage to pass a law that prohibits any type of bribe or payment to induce Jews to change their religion. (Mormons do not pay people to become members—they charge them!) BYU did sign a statement announcing they had no intention of doing missionary activities. President Howard W. Hunter also signed a statement to the same effect with the clause added, ". . . so long as such activity is prohibited by the government of Israel." The real reason that Latter-day Saints are not proselytizing in Israel is because it is the Lord's will.

"And the time cometh that he shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last."
(1 Nephi 13:42)

Israeli government leaders kept their commitment to allow the building. This Orthodox group did not manage to convince the government to stop the BYU project. No legal precedent was established that might affect the Latter-day Saints nor, for that matter, any other church.

Likewise, latter-day attempts at undermining the existence of Israel, such as calling for the elimination of Jerusalem as its capital or calling for the annihilation of Jews, will be met with the same response as in older times.

"And conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it. Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God . . ." (Nehemiah 4:8-9)

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee." (Psalm 122:6)

The Dead Sea "Temple Scroll" describes a temple to be built in "latter days." The Essenes believed that they were in the latter-days and referred to themselves as "Saints." The dimensions of the Temple they planned were similar to the dimensions described by Ezekiel. However, the outer dimension seems to include the entire walled city of Jerusalem.

“That temples and temple ordinances are essential to the [true] faith is well established in the Bible. Malachi predicted the coming of the Lord suddenly to his temple, in the day of vengeance, in the latter times, as a refiner and purifier. Ezekiel predicted the building of a temple in Jerusalem which will be used for ordinance work after the gathering of Israel from their long dispersion and when they are cleansed from their transgressions. John the Revelator saw the day when, after the earth is sanctified and celestialized, the presence of the Father and the Son in the New Jerusalem would take the place of the temple, for the whole city, due to their presence, would become a temple.” (*Doctrines of Salvation - Joseph Fielding Smith - Vol.2, Pg.244*)

Now that Jerusalem has been restored and is once again the capital of “a distinct nation,” Jewish prayers at every meal and at every synagogue service have been modified to say, “Next year in Jerusalem, rebuilt!” Orson Hyde prophesied about Jerusalem, its temple and its leadership:

“ . . . Now, O Lord! Thy servant has been obedient to the heavenly vision which Thou gavest him in his native land; and under the shadow of Thine outstretched arm, he has safely arrived in this place to dedicate and consecrate this land unto Thee, for the gathering together of Judah's scattered remnants, according to the predictions of the holy Prophets—for the building up of Jerusalem again after it has been trodden down by the Gentiles so long, and for rearing a Temple in honor of Thy name . . .

“ . . . Thou, O Lord, did once move the heart of Cyrus to show favor unto Jerusalem and her children. Do Thou now also be pleased to inspire the hearts of kings and the powers of the earth to look with a friendly eye towards this place, and with a desire to see Thy righteous purposes executed in relation thereto. Let them know that it is Thy good pleasure to restore the kingdom unto Israel, raise up Jerusalem as its capital, and constitute her people a distinct nation and government, with David Thy servant, even a descendant from the loins of ancient David to be their king . . .

“ . . . Let that nation or that people who shall take an active part in behalf of Abraham's children, and in the raising up of Jerusalem, find favor in Thy sight. Let not their enemies prevail against them, neither let pestilence or famine overcome them, but let the glory of Israel overshadow them, and the power of the persecution and expulsion, include the Exodus from Egypt, the Babylonian exile, Jewish settlement outside Erez Israel during the Second Temple period, the dispersion under the Roman and Near Eastern empires after the Highest protect them; while that nation or kingdom that will not serve Thee in this glorious work must perish, according to Thy word—Yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.” (*History of the Church, vol. 4, pp. 456-57.*)

The Lord will return to a Jerusalem that will have the House of the Lord. The entire city will become the City of The Lord.

“And he spake also concerning the house of Israel, and the Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come—after it should be destroyed it should be built up again, a holy city unto the Lord; wherefore, it could not be a new Jerusalem for it had been in a time of old; but it should be built up again, and become a holy city of the Lord; and it should be built unto the house of Israel.” (*Ether 13:5*)

The Lord will also come to a Zion that will have a House of the Lord. Apparently, it will become a City of the Lord as well.

“That you may come up unto the crown prepared for you, and be made rulers over many kingdoms, saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Zion, who hath established the foundations of Adam-ondi-Ahman;” (*Doctrine & Covenants 78:15*)

“ . . . Adam-ondi-Ahman means the place or land of God where Adam dwelt . . . Apparently the area included was a large one; at least, the revelations speak of the land, the valley, and the mountains of Adam-ondi-Ahman. They tell us that Christ himself ‘established the foundations of Adam-ondi-Ahman’ (D. & C. 78:15-16), and that it included the place now known as Spring Hill, Daviess County, Missouri. (D. & C. 116.) Far West, Missouri, also appears to be included in the land of Adam-ondi-Ahman. On April 17, 1838, the Lord commanded his saints to assemble at Far West, which place, he said, was holy ground; and there they were to build a city. (D. & C. 115)” (*Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, Page 20*)

May we be prepared for His coming. May we live with Him, in His house, in His city, in His glory.

“This Generation Shall Have My Word through You”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 35:20 Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon, at or near Fayette, New York, December 1830. HC 1: 128—131. At this time the Prophet was engaged almost daily in making a translation of the Bible. The translation was begun as early as June 1830, and both Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer had served as scribes. Since they had now been called to other duties, Sidney Rigdon was called by divine appointment to serve as the Prophet's scribe in this work (verse 20). As a preface to his record of this revelation the Prophet wrote: "In December Sidney Rigdon came [from Ohio] to inquire of the Lord, and with him came Edward Partridge. . . . Shortly after the arrival of these two brethren, thus spake the Lord."

Doctrine and Covenants 45:60—62 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." 60—62, The Prophet is instructed to begin the translation of the New Testament, through which important information would be made known;

Doctrine and Covenants 73:3—4 Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon, at Hiram, Ohio, January 10, 1832. HC 1: 241—242. Since the early part of the preceding December, the Prophet and Sidney had been engaged in preaching, and by this means much was accomplished in diminishing the unfavorable feelings that had arisen against the Church (see heading to Section 71). 3—6, Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon are to continue to translate the Bible until it is finished.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

There are doctrines that seem unique among the Latter-day Saints, yet on closer examination of Jewish traditions and, of course, Biblical texts, we see a verification of the principle of restoration. The following paragraphs show apparent links to the past.

Godhead:

“. . . God, as depicted by the rabbis, embodies a combination of justice and mercy, of strict judgment and lenient compassion. This combination of justice and mercy in God is represented by the two names of God—Elohim and YHWH. The former stands for justice and the latter for mercy. Though they may seem contradictory, one actually complements the other and, when there is a conflict between the two, God usually favors mercy.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Jehovah is His name. Salvation is what He provides. Jehovah means “I Am,” and “I Am” is so sacred that it is not repeated. Modern Hebrew does not even have a first person conjugation of “I am.” The shortened version of Jehovah is “Jeho” and connected to the abbreviation of “salvation” it is pronounced Jeho-Shua. By the time Jeho-shua was transliterated into Greek and then into Latin, it became pronounced “Jesus,” and in English, Jesus. He is the “I AM” who “saves.”

The experience of Abraham and, subsequently, Isaac being saved from sacrifice is one of the most direct symbols of the Savior's atonement.

“And as they lifted up their hands upon me, that they might offer me up and take away my life, behold, I lifted up my voice unto the Lord my God, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and he filled me with the vision of the Almighty, and the angel of his presence stood by me, and immediately unloosed my bands; And his voice was unto me: Abraham, Abraham, behold, my name is Jehovah, and I have heard thee, and have come down to deliver thee, and to take thee away from thy father's house, and from all thy kinsfolk, into a strange land which thou knowest not of . . .” (*Abraham 1:15-16*)

Later, Abraham was commanded to offer his son as a sacrifice. The appointed event was to take place at Mount Moriah, “Moreh-Yah,” (to be taught of Jehovah). The dialogue that followed teaches us the real lesson of two humble, obedient and Godly men who are taught about the atonement. These are patterns that teach the ultimate sacrifice of the Lord.

Abraham and Isaac apparently knew that Isaac was a symbol of God's firstborn son. A substitute was found as a ram in the thicket. Ever since, other substitutes were offered as a symbol of Him who would pay for our sins as we repent.

Created In the Image of God:

Latter-day Saints readily accept “two creation stories” as being spiritual, then temporal. One could say that the first is when mankind is created in the image of God and the second when mankind is physically formed from the materials or elements of the newly created earth, hence from “dust.” The Jewish thought on creation is not as clear any more.

“Two Creation Stories? Students of the Bible have long noted several apparent contradictions between the text of section one (chapters 1–2:4) and that of section two (the remainder of chapter 2). The second account, for example, does not detail the creation of day and night, of the seas, and of the luminaries; it begins with man who is formed (not created) out of dust (not in the image of God), and is placed into a Garden of Eden which is formed after man (not before him). These and many other apparent differences have led some critical scholars to see the two stories as the work of different authors who wrote at different times and reflected different, sometimes conflicting, traditions. Not all scholars accept this theory. Many view the second section as a more detailed supplement to the first. (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

“But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel . . .” (*Genesis 49:24*)

“Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God.” (*Leviticus 26:1*)

“And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.” (*Deuteronomy 4:28*)

For Judaism, “looking to God” and “revelation” are almost figurative and in modern times have become unexplainable. The knowledge of a God as a “physical being” has diminished.

“Revelation, the act by which the hidden, unknown God shows himself to man. There is no specific term corresponding to ‘revelation’ in the Bible or in rabbinic Hebrew. God is said to ‘appear’ to the patriarchs and prophets, and the appearances are described by a series of anthropomorphic (i.e., human) expressions and concrete images. Sometimes God manifests Himself ‘in a vision’ or ‘in a dream’ or he appears through the mediation of an angel. However, the Bible emphasizes that no direct, sensory perception of God is possible. Thus, various phrases are used when describing appearances of the

Divine, for example *kavod* ('glory') or *shekhinah* (. . . 'Divine Presence') or *davar* ('word' of God).

"Any event in which the Divine presence is felt is called a revelation, but the term is applied more particularly to communications of the Divine will as revealed through God's messengers, the prophets. The Bible itself, and later the rabbis, discerned among the prophets a hierarchy of form and degree, with that of Moses as supreme and unique. At Sinai, the principal revelation of God to man took place. At that time, all the assembled 'heard' the Voice of God, and through the mediation of Moses (who, according to the rabbis, functioned there as a scribe), received the complete text of the Torah and its interpretation, the Oral Law." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

However, man's subservience to God and man's responsibility to this earth is referred to as follows.

"In their search for lessons on man's place in God's universe, the rabbis discussed at great length the biblical account of the creation of Adam, which is outlined above. Thus, for example, the Midrash observes that each newly created form of life ruled over what preceded it in the order of creation. Adam and Eve were thus created last in order that they should rule over all creation, and in order that they should be able to enter a banquet hall that was waiting ready for them. In the words of the Midrash, 'The matter may be likened to an emperor's building a palace, consecrating it, preparing the feast, and only then inviting the guests.' On the other hand, the rabbis taught that Adam was created last, so that if he should become conceited, he could be told: 'The gnat was created before you.' (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Prophets:

"Naturally, not all Jews accepted the new role of the sages and their methods of interpreting the Torah. Had not the last of the prophets, Malachi, written: 'For the priests' lips preserve knowledge, and one should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts?'; was it not then the priests and the wealthy landowners who were entitled to interpret the Torah? And was not the Temple rather than the synagogue the true center of Jewish life? Before long there had developed a political/religious party, representing the priestly class, which opposed the sages. This party took the name *Zedukim* (Sadducees) probably because a priest named Zadok was selected by both David (II Samuel 8:17) and Solomon (I Kings 1:34) to control the affairs of the Temple and because Zadok's descendants constituted the Temple hierarchy down to the second century B.C.E. The Sadducees refused to accept a precept as binding unless it was based directly on the Torah. They denied the validity of the Oral Law as developed by the Pharisees. The Sadducees also rejected the Pharisaic belief in the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body (claiming that there is no basis for these beliefs in the Torah). They also disagreed with the Pharisees in regard to the question of free will. Whereas the latter group claimed that human freedom was somewhat limited by fate, the Sadducees . . . 'take away fate entirely, and suppose that God is not concerned in our doing or not doing what is evil; and they say that to act what is good, or what is evil, is at man's own choice . . .' as the ancient historian, Josephus put it." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The Jews even refer to “gentile prophets.” One of which is Balaam, with quite a collection of Jewish traditions about him, mostly negative and confusing. What makes this of interest is the acknowledgment, or at least the implication that there were prophets outside of ethnic Israel. Unfortunately, the same Jewish tradition distrusts “gentile” prophets. In the same breath, it diminishes the importance of the positive Biblical accounts of Balaam before his apostasy.

The Jews are still waiting for the prophets Moses and Elijah to return. Two seats are traditionally and historically reserved for them in every synagogue. At one of the early meetings of the “Bnai Shalom” group (Jewish/Mormon cultural group), the late Apostle LeGrand Richards once remarked that he saw two beautifully decorated chairs fastened to the wall of a synagogue he was visiting. Knowingly, he asked the Rabbi, “What are those two chairs for?” The reply came quickly that they were being kept for Elijah and Moses. Elder Richards, seizing the moment and using his wonderful sense of humor said, “Get them down, they’ve already been here!”

Another principle of “Prophets” is the selection of Joshua to replace Moses (which was anticipated by the Israelites). There was (and still is) a system that God established that there would always be a worthy “Prophet in waiting.” Known examples include Joseph for Jacob, Joshua for Moses, Nephi for Lehi and presently the President of the Quorum of the Twelve. These prophets were and are still led by the Lord. History sometimes only records the results of their decisions without elaborating on the revelatory decision-making process.

“A special chair is set aside for Elijah at circumcisions, as he is called the protector of children, and the upholder of the covenant between God and Israel, and Elijah is supposed to visit every Jewish home on Passover, so a special cup of wine is set aside for him. And, says the Midrash, when the time is right, it will be Elijah who will herald the coming of the Messiah.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Melchizedek:

Through the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, we find that the motivation of those whom many call the Essenes was to move away from wickedness and establish a singular community of righteousness. Their organization had a shadow of biblical organization. Their leader was called the “Teacher of Righteousness,” and he had two assistants. There was also a council of “Twelve Overseers.” They had an order following the ‘righteous king’, which is said in Hebrew, “Melech Zedek.” Melchizedek is one of the many names of the Lord.

There is also a tradition to anticipate the expected latter-day David. This is done in joyful singing at a Bar Mitzvah celebration when a boy is thirteen years old (some do it at twelve years if the boy has no father). In Jewish tradition, that is the age the ancient David was chosen and ordained by the Prophet Samuel to be the King of Israel. The folk song of David has even become a pop-song: “David, Melech Israel, hai, hai ve kayam,” David, King of Israel lives!

Aaronic:

As previously mentioned, a “Charity Warden” has a role similar to an Aaronic priesthood bearer in modern times.

“In every town where there are Jews they must appoint 'charity wardens,' men who are well known and honest that they should collect money from the people every Sabbath eve and distribute it to the poor . . . We have never seen or heard of a Jewish community which does not have a charity fund.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

It is similar to young Aaronic Priesthood bearers gathering “Fast Offerings” at the beginning of the month. Repeating again, fasting is an integral part of Jewish life, yet never on a Sabbath unless it is Yom Kippur. There is a monthly Yom Kippur Katan (lesser), a day before the beginning of every month. It is a normal fast day, excepting when it falls on a Sabbath.

Immersion:

Some religious Jews who experience repeated immersions, (monthly for women and regularly for men) step into their immersion font from the east side, immerse themselves, and then exit to the west side. This could be a reminder of entering into the gateway of cleanness as the Children of Israel entered into their Promised Land.

For the religious Jews, immersions are favored below ground level in flowing water that emanates from bedrock the “Rock of Salvation.” Consider that the lowest spot on the face of the earth where water “that originated in bedrock” flows is where the Children of Israel crossed into their erstwhile homeland. Judaism and Christianity agree that it is also the likely spot where Jesus came to John in Judea to be immersed. As mentioned earlier:

- “1) A mikveh must not be filled with water that has been drawn (i.e., has been in a vessel or a receptacle), but with water from a naturally flowing source; spring water or rainwater are the ideal sources, but melted snow and ice are also permitted.
- 2) The water must be able to flow into the mikveh freely and unimpeded (any blockage renders the water ‘drawn water’) and must reach the mikveh in vessels that are not susceptible to ritual uncleanness.
- 3) The minimum size of the mikveh is of a vessel which has a volume of ‘40 seah,’ variously estimated at between 250 and 1,000 liters (quarts).
- 4) The mikveh must be watertight and must be constructed of natural materials on the spot, for otherwise it is deemed itself to be a ‘vessel’ and renders the water in it ‘drawn water.’

“It is a particularly important religious duty to wash the hands before eating bread and this washing must be performed by pouring water over the hands from a utensil with a wide mouth, the lip of which must be undamaged. Prior to this ritual washing, the hands must be clean and without any foreign object (such as a ring) to intervene between hand and the water.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Although religious Jews have various manners of washing and immersions, they do not claim an immersion for forgiveness of sins. Yet, there are specific instructions for a Jew to reconcile him or herself and go through a repentance before immersion. There is a statement in the Bible that suggests a “washing” [immersion] for purification for sins.

As stated in the Book of Numbers (19:1-9), the Red Heifer ritual was for forgiveness of sins. Jumping forward in time, this was made possible through the "red" atonement of the Lord on the Mount of Olives. Jews have a tradition that this red calf offering had to be made 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).

Water and sins do have a connection and a place in Jewish traditions:

“On the afternoon of the first day (of Rosh Hashana), it is customary to walk to the nearest body of running water and there symbolically ‘cast’ one’s sins into the water. The ceremony may be based on a verse in the biblical book of Micah: ‘And Thou (referring to God) shall cast all their sins into the depths of the seas’ (Micah 7:19). This practice, to which there is no reference in the Talmud, is generally called *Tashlikh*, probably after the Hebrew word meaning ‘cast’ (vatashlikh) in the verse from Micah.

“A potential convert (or proselyte) is first questioned by a court (*bet din*) of three rabbis. They usually begin by trying to persuade him to give up the idea of joining a nation which has been, and today still is, severely persecuted. If the candidate still affirms sincerely that he is ready to ‘accept the yoke of the commandments,’ he or she must undergo a period of instruction in Judaism, in its laws and practices. After thorough study, when he understands the *mitzvot* and is ready to begin his life as a Jew, the candidate is ready for the rituals of conversion. For both males and females the *bet din* oversees their immersion in a ritual bath (*mikveh*).” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Jewish thought requires that the Bet Din should always have the presence of Levites. They will witness the total immersion of the person. That symbolism begins with Adam. His immersion was an act of being born again.

“As an everlasting covenant, baptism began on this earth with Adam (Moses 6:64-67) and has continued ever since whenever the Lord has had a people on earth. (D. & C. 20:23-28; 84:26-28.) It was not a new rite introduced by John the Baptist and adopted by Christ and his followers. The Jews were baptizing their proselytes long before John, as is well attested from secular sources. The Inspired Version of the Bible, the Book of Moses being a part thereof contains ample evidence of the practice of baptism in Old Testament times. The part of the Book of Mormon of the pre-Christian Era contains some of the best information we have relative to this eternal law.” (*Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, Pg.71*)

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (*Romans 6:4*)

Holy Ghost (Ruach Elohim):

The concept of the “Holy Ghost” is unclear for Jews, yet the Hebrew term “Ruach Elohim” means the Spirit of God. The Hebrew word for breath and wind is closely related to spirit. There are several Biblical verses using these words. One of my favorites is in the vision of dry bones.

“So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And

when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. . . . And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.”
(Ezekiel 37:7-14)

Ezekiel spoke of breath and of wind bringing life into a dead skeleton. As the sticks (ETZ-emot) of the body are clothed again with flesh and come alive again, so shall the stick (ETZ) of Judah, the dead skeleton of a once true and living religion come together with the stick of Joseph. This symbolizes the true religion and with the “breath” of the Lord (His spirit), a resurrection and a new life begins.

“Flesh is the term used in the Bible to distinguish mortal man from God. The Hebrew word for flesh, *basar*, is contrasted with the Divine Spirit, *ru'ah*, with which man is temporarily endowed. Thus: ‘My spirit shall not abide in man forever, for that he is also flesh; therefore shall his days be a hundred and twenty years’ (Genesis 6:3). The Talmud and Midrash refer to man as *basar va-dam* (‘flesh and blood’) to indicate his mortality as against the eternity of God.

“Ruah ha-Kodesh [holy spirit] is often used as a synonym for prophecy. However, according to some rabbis, unlike prophecy, there are some types of *ruah ha-kodesh* which also can be attained by doing good deeds.” *(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)*

The expression of the “Holy Spirit” has been used to describe various righteous teachers and sages.

“... Luria already had a reputation as a man of striking personality who possessed the holy spirit.

“... Nahman was the great-grandson of the Ba'al Shem Tov, the founder of Hasidism, and his mother was said to ‘possess the holy spirit.’

“... Phinehas is known to have traveled to redeem captives, and on one journey a river in flood parted for him, so as not to delay his mission. He constructed the famous ‘ladder of saintliness’ in which Caution (against evil) leads through Eagerness (for good), Cleanliness, Purity, Asceticism, Holiness, Humility, Fear of God, Attainment of the Holy Spirit (divine inspiration), ultimately to the Resurrection of the Dead.” *(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)*

Pre-Earth Life:

Jeremiah’s life showed how the Lord “formed” him to make him a vessel to represent the Lord.

“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”
(Jeremiah 1:5)

The concept of a pre-existence has long since disappeared from Judaism, yet inference of life before birth can be seen in Dead Sea Scroll writings and in the discussions of Jewish sages earlier than Maimonides eight hundred years ago. It seems that since his compilation of Jewish thought and the code of laws, the concept of a pre-existence has been rejected or at least it has disappeared from Jewish thought.

At the time of Jesus, a Society of Jews that many call the Essenes lived at the Dead Sea. Their writings included suggestions of “pre-existence.” This seems evident because their scribes referred to the Messiah they expected as having been known by previous prophets and sages. Again, the eighth century Jewish philosopher, Maimonides, eliminated references to a pre-existence. Various writing of sages prior to Maimonides and available in Hebrew refer to an existence before this earth life.

There is a Jewish tradition (Agaddah) of a conflict in the creation process:

“When the first man was to be created, says the Aggadah, God consulted the angels. Some favored his creation, because of the love and mercy he would show; others were opposed—because of the falsehood and strife he would stir up. In the end, for reasons best known to Himself, the Holy One decided to create man.”
(*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Immersion of the Dead:

In Judaism, there has always been a great deal of procedure surrounding death. There is an immediate preparation of the body which includes washing, completely immersing and anointing of the dead. There are periods of mourning. The immediate mourning after death is called Shiva. It is derived from the word for seven and Shiva continues for seven days. Another period of mourning continues for a month. There is also an annual remembrance of death called Yartzeit.

“When a person dies, the body is covered with a sheet and a lighted candle placed at the head. There is an ancient custom to cover all the mirrors in the house and to pour out any water that was in containers or vessels at the time of death. This latter practice may be the result of superstitious beliefs but it has been suggested that it was a way to tell the neighbors that a death had occurred without having to say the actual words. In strictly Orthodox circles it is customary for men to stay with the body from the time of death until the funeral and recite the Book of Psalms. This is a sign of respect to the deceased.”
(*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

There is a certain symbolism to covering the dead with a white sheet. The emblems of the sacrament are covered with a white sheet in remembrance of His death and resurrection. The pouring out of water can also be seen as symbolic of “living water” being removed.

“Shivah . . . is the Hebrew for ‘seven’ and refers to the seven-day period of mourning which starts immediately after the funeral. All those required to mourn stay indoors (normally at the house of the deceased) for the week. They sit on low stools or on the floor and may not wear shoes made of leather. At the funeral, the relatives perform the rite of *keri'ah*, which is making a tear in the lapel of their outer garments. During the week of *shivah* they wear the torn clothes. A very ancient custom is for neighbors and friends to prepare the first meal for the mourners on their return from the funeral.

“The mourning is suspended for the Sabbath and should a major festival occur during the week, it stops the *shivah* altogether.

“After the *shivah*, a modified period of mourning continues till the thirtieth (Hebrew: *sheloshim*) day after death. During this period the mourner should not attend places of entertainment or participate in social gatherings. A mourner may not marry during the *sheloshim*. When mourning for parents many of these laws apply for the whole year after death, and a son recites the *Kaddish* at the daily services for the whole year.

“One of the functions of the *bevrā kaddisha* is the *Toborah* rite. This is washing the corpse and preparing it for burial. In ancient times various cosmetics were used but these have been largely discontinued. The corpse is dressed in simple white shrouds and, as a rule, wrapped in the *tallit* he wore during his lifetime. The *tallit* is, however, invalidated by having one of the *zizit* removed.”
(*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

As noted, mourning is suspended on the Sabbath. To continue the symbolism, it seems that the suspension mourning on the Sabbath serves as an opportunity for us to reflect on the Lord's death and resurrection.

Resurrection:

Death is another fact that has faded in meaning over the centuries. In Judaism, physical death is simply explained:

“The Talmud explains that there are three partners in the creation of a human being; the father and mother who supply the physical parts, and God, Who supplies the spirit. At death, God reclaims his part, and the spirit lives on even though the body has died.

“The exact nature of this afterlife is the subject of great discussion in classical Jewish sources. All agree that after death the soul continues to live. The souls of the righteous enter paradise, or Gan Eden [Garden of Eden] as it is generally called. In that state ‘there is no eating or drinking . . . no envy, hatred or competition but only this: that the righteous sit with crowns on their heads and delight in the splendor of “God's presence.” The souls of the wicked enter hell, or Gehinnom, as it is known, where they undergo purification before they too can enter paradise.’

“Some rabbis believed in resurrection. That is that at a certain point in time God will bring everybody back to life and then the world will be a perfect place and physical life will go on indefinitely. This doctrine poses some obvious difficulties: the body actually decomposes after burial so how can it be reconstituted; furthermore what about overpopulation of the world? Those who believe in resurrection claim that anyway the whole process will be miraculous and the miracle will solve all the problems. Other rabbis however denied physical resurrection entirely and understood the afterlife to be a completely spiritual experience.

“The argument about resurrection lasted well into the Middle Ages, and was one of the reasons for the sharp attacks against Maimonides. Many believed that he denied the doctrine and his views started a controversy that lasted for hundreds

of years. In modern times most Jewish theologians do not subscribe to the doctrine of physical resurrection and movements such as Reform Judaism do not consider it to be a necessary belief for the Jew.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Three Degrees:

Some information about the three heavenly degrees of glory may be garnered from earthly comparisons. For example, the Jerusalem temple precinct had three courtyards. The outer courtyard circumscribed about forty acres, approximately the area of four square Salt Lake City blocks. On the insistence of the Herod, who rebuilt the temple, the outer courtyard was available for any visitor, including Gentiles. Within the outer courtyard was a raised complex under the administration of the Jewish priests that included two major areas. In ancient times, one raised area was under the administration of the twelve High Priests and the innermost area was a little higher and under the charge of the High Priest of the Temple

In about three decades of being a tour guide in Israel, one of many experiences stands out as most touching. It is the experience of reviewing Israel’s history and sacred way of dwelling. There seemed to be a telestial, terrestrial and celestial identity. I see the Lord’s people as a “temple society,” a “Zion,” with eleven parts (tribes) of the camp on the outside circle. Each tribe had stakes with banners identifying their location. They circled one tribe, the priestly Levites, who made a ring around the Lord’s “presence,” his tabernacle. The tabernacle, the “Holy of Holies” and center part of the camp of Israel, was likewise identified by stakes that were draped with curtains because of its very holy and high priestly state.

Eventually, Israel began to grow and wander from the unity the temple society required. So, a system of cities and of capital cities began to develop. The capital city had the tabernacle with temple courtyards large enough to handle tens of thousands of worthy Israelites to teach and remind them of ordinances that still applied to the whole Zion society. There still was an outer ring for the multitude that circled a center ring that was under the priestly Levite administration. Only worthy members were able to be brought through the priestly courtyard to participate in ordinances and sacrifices that occurred in the higher priestly part of the temple with its altar in front of the “Holy of Holies.”

Subsequently, the temple courtyards gave way to sacred “temple buildings” with telestial, terrestrial, and celestial identity. Instructions are given to prepare the people to be a Zion society. Again, its lesser and higher priestly environments and ordinances are designed to bring us into the Lord’s presence.

Eternal Marriage:

Marriage in Jewish custom has always been regarded as forever. It may be considered that the ring is used as a symbol of “eternity.” In any case, words such as “Until death do you part” are not part of Jewish wedding ceremonies. The ring is examined by a Rabbi and is considered “kosher” only if it is unblemished and with no pits. A “huppah” or canopy is used, probably to symbolize the Temple. A glass is shattered, symbolizing the destruction of the Temple. Both the bride and groom are addressed by their Hebrew “special names.” The “tallith” [prayer shawl] is used. To some, it is customary to drape the “tallith” over the couple. It may be considered symbolic that the “tallith” is the remaining remnant of garments used in the ancient temples.

“By law, the ring must belong to the bridegroom, and can be constructed of any material, as long as it is free of precious stones . . . 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. . . . among Orthodox Jews, the preferred custom is to erect the huppah outside, or at least in a spot open to the sky, underneath the stars . . . ”
(*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Becoming Like God:

The anthropomorphic nature of God was known to the Jews at the time of Jesus. The Old Testament, as well as the Dead Sea Scrolls contain several references to God in ‘human terms’. As the true nature of God is seen to diminish in history, true religion fades away. By the time the Crusaders were approaching the Holy Land, a prominent Jewish philosopher, Moses Maimonides, began collecting the writings and interpretations of other Jewish sages in order to codify and centralize them. In his work “The Guide to the Perplexed,” Maimonides included “Thirteen Articles of Faith”. The first three articles declared that God cannot be explained. That is probably the first published Jewish work that (in most Judaic studies) eliminated reference to the anthropomorphic nature of God.

“The great Jewish philosopher Maimonides argued for the existence of God from the idea of motion. Everything in the universe is moving, and since we know that movement is finite, it must have started somewhere; hence the idea of the Prime Mover, i.e., God.

“In the final analysis, however, there is no direct positive evidence of the existence of God. It can be argued that if there were such evidence then there would be no virtue in believing in Him. Ultimately it is a question of faith.

“Perhaps the most famous of the various formulations of dogmas is the Thirteen Principles of Faith of Maimonides. Originally written in Arabic, this creed is the basis of the *Yigdal* hymn which is part of the daily service and is usually recited at the conclusion of the Friday evening synagogue service . . .” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The first three of the thirteen fundamentals (Articles of Faith) are:

“(1) The existence of God, which is perfect; (2) God is ‘one’ in every sense of the word; (3) God has no body or physical attributes; (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Since the Jewish concept of God has diminished, it is difficult to find commentary about becoming like Him. At least the concept of being chosen remains.

“‘How odd of God, to choose the Jews.’ W.N. Ewer, who wrote this jingle, could not understand why Israel is God's Chosen People. Moses, in Deuteronomy 7:7–8, explains it thus: ‘The Lord did not set His love upon you because you were more in number than any people . . . but because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn to your fathers.’ The rabbis insist that Israel was elected because it voluntarily accepted the Torah whereas other nations would not. Mercy and forgiveness, says the Talmud, are distinguishing characteristics of Abraham and his seed, and these characteristics motivated God to choose Israel as His people.

“The covenant which signifies the special relationship between God and Israel is based on Israel being elected by God. God has chosen the Jews. Israel has also chosen God. ‘You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord for yourselves, to serve Him’ (Joshua 24:22). This is the thrust of the anonymous retort to the above jingle: ‘Its not so odd, the Jews chose God.’

“Being the Chosen People means receiving God's love and protection, but it also means accepting responsibilities. The prophet Isaiah says that Israel, God's servant, has been chosen for the task of spreading salvation. Israel must convince the other nations of the world that there is only one God, and must spread the true religion, and through it, happiness.

“Israel may not take for granted that God will never be angry with them, no matter what they do, just because they are the Chosen People. In fact, the prophet Amos pointed out that it is precisely because Israel is special and has a responsibility towards God that they are often punished for their sins more severely than other nations. However, it is unimaginable that God will ever reject His people completely. ‘And yet, for all that . . . I will not cast them away... to destroy them utterly and to break My covenant with them, for I am with them, the Lord their God’ (Leviticus 26:4).” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The Law of Consecration

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 42:30–42; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, February 9, 1831. HC 1: 148–154. It was received in the presence of twelve elders, and in fulfillment of the Lord's promise previously made that the "law" would be given in Ohio; see Section 38: 32. The Prophet specifies this revelation as "embracing the law of the Church." 30–39, Laws governing the consecration of properties are set forth;

Doctrine and Covenants 51; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Thompson, Ohio, May 1831. HC 1: 173–174. At this time the saints migrating from the eastern states began to arrive in Ohio, and it became necessary to make definite arrangements for their settlement. As this undertaking belonged particularly to the bishop's office, Bishop Edward Partridge sought instruction on the matter, and the Prophet inquired of the Lord. 1–8, Edward Partridge is appointed to regulate stewardships and properties; 9–12, The saints are to deal honestly and receive alike; 13–15, They are to have a bishop's storehouse and to organize properties according to the Lord's law; 16–20, Ohio is to be a temporary gathering place.

Doctrine and Covenants 78; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, March 1832. The order given of the Lord to Joseph Smith for the purpose of establishing a storehouse for the poor. HC 1: 255–257. It was not always desirable that the identity of the individuals whom the Lord addressed in the revelations should be known by the world; hence, in the publication of this and some subsequent revelations the brethren were referred to by other than their own names. When the necessity had passed for keeping the names of the individuals unknown, their real names were thereafter given in brackets. Since there exists no vital need today to continue the code names, the real names only are now used herein, as given in the original manuscripts. 1–4, The saints should organize and establish a storehouse; 5–12, Wise use of their properties will lead to salvation; 13–14, The Church should be independent of earthly powers; 15–16, Michael (Adam) serves under the direction of the Holy One (Christ); 17–22, Blessed are the faithful, for they shall inherit all things.

Doctrine and Covenants 82; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Jackson County, Missouri, April 26, 1832. HC 1: 267–269. The occasion was a general council of the Church at which Joseph Smith the Prophet was sustained as the President of the High Priesthood, to which office he had previously been ordained at a conference of high priests, elders, and members, at Amherst, Ohio, January 25, 1832 (see heading to Section 75). Formerly unusual names were used in the publication of this revelation to conceal the identity of the persons named (see heading to Section 78). These unusual names have now been dropped, except in cases where the identification is not known (see verse 11). 1–4, Where much is given, much is required; 5–7, Darkness reigns in the world; 8–13, The Lord is bound when we do what he says; 14–18, Zion must increase in beauty and holiness; 19–24, Every man should seek the interest of his neighbor.

Doctrine and Covenants 104:11–18; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, April 23, 1834, concerning the United Order, or the order of the Church for the benefit of the poor. HC 2: 54–60. The occasion was that of a council meeting of the First Presidency and other high priests, in which the pressing temporal needs of the people had been given consideration. The United Order at Kirtland was to be temporarily dissolved and reorganized, and the properties as stewardships were to be divided among members of the order. 11–16, The Lord provides for his saints in his own way; 17–18, Gospel law governs the care of the poor;

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

There is a significant difference between the "United Order" and the "Law of Consecration." The United Order is more like the modern version of the Jewish Kibbutz. Modern Jewish communities reflect some similar cooperative efforts as was done anciently. One such community structure is called the Kibbutz.

"Zionism in its modern sense began in 1897, when Theodor Herzl founded the World Zionist Organization. Herzl's objective was to 'secure for the Jewish people a publicly recognized, legally secured home in Palestine.' His ambitious efforts captured the imagination of his fellow Jews and soon the initial settlers were joined by new groups of Zionists as the Second Aliyah (1904) and continuous waves of immigrants after that made their way to Israel. These groups established agricultural settlements all over the country, revived the Hebrew language, and created their own Watchman Society to guard their members from Arab attack. In 1909, on land purchased by the Jewish National Fund, the first kibbutz, Deganyah, was established. By 1914, the *yishuv*, as the Jewish community was called, numbered some 85,000.

“Kibbutzim with similar ways of thinking often group together in federations, which save their member-villages money by purchasing for them all in bulk, and arranging from one central office to sell all their crops. In addition, many kibbutzim cooperate with other kibbutzim in the same region, whether they share the same ideas or not, and together they are able to build central silos and arrange heavy transport. Likewise, the kibbutz associations have their own adult education courses, choirs, amateur orchestras, art collections, bulletins, publishing houses, and even their own teachers' training college. Thousands of members of certain older kibbutzim, after completing their three-year army service, volunteer a year's labor—unpaid, of course—in newer kibbutzim, in order to help them stand on their own feet.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Just prior to Jesus' time, a legislated, cooperative community arose that used similar governance. The Essenes wrote about their disciplines. The best preserved of these Qumran scrolls is called *The Manual of Discipline*, a sort of doctrines and covenants of these religious people. It describes their organization that included a Teacher of Righteousness and two assistants. There was also a council of twelve overseers. Their priestly system included two castes: One of a higher authority that connected with an order of the *Melekh Zedek* (righteous king), and another of lesser authority that connected with the Levitical, or order of Aaron. They were bound by a strict order of unity. An Essene's membership in a kibbutz-like united order came into effect only after a two-year trial period. The Essenes kept copies of the scriptures, interpretations of the scriptures, and their own scrolls of doctrines and covenants.

A similar unity and community bond can be seen in the scriptures.

“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. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” (*Acts 2:44-47*)

“And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.” (*Acts 4:32*)

“And they taught, and did minister one to another; and they had all things common among them, every man dealing justly, one with another.” (*3 Nephi 26:19*)

The valuable lesson that we can learn is that unity represented in the scriptures is always connected with a central belief and faith in the Lord. That focus assures a unity because His directive powers are the same for everyone.

“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” (*Proverbs 3:6*)

“Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.” (*1 Thessalonians 3:11*)

“Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning let thy heart be full of

thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day.”
(*Alma 37:37*)

“And now, behold, I give unto you a commandment, that when ye are assembled together ye shall instruct and edify each other, that ye may know how to act and direct my church, how to act upon the points of my law and commandments, which I have given.” (*D&C 43:8*)

“... you would not criticize a group of people who sought the same high ground in the midst of a flood; you would not see their presence in one place as an unintelligent act, for they came together in order to be saved. So it is here. Life here is life in a large, affectionate, and unified family. Love in a family does not diminish the freedom of each member thereof; our unity does not jeopardize our individuality. Undivided, we are multiplied. Being of one heart and one mind permits no divorce between knowing and feeling in the City of Enoch.” (*Neal A. Maxwell, Of One Heart, p.51*)

A beautiful principle of Jewish unity can be sensed in the repeated prayers said when a “prayer circle” (*minyan*) is formed in Jewish ritual. The request for forgiveness should include all.

“The rabbis placed great emphasis on the relationship of the individual to the community during prayer. Almost all prayer, for example, was written in the first person plural—‘Forgive us,’ ‘Teach us,’ ‘Bring us to our Land.’ Although private prayer was certainly permitted, the individual was urged to join a congregation (*minyan*) when he prays and to incorporate the needs of the *minyan* in his prayers.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

The Latter-day Saints’ concept of focusing on the Lord has promoted a unified way of community life that can still be expressed individually.

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.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

The law of consecration, in a celestial sense, is a stewardship of doing without being instructed to do so. Those that have to ask, “What must I do to inherit life?” must grasp the opportunity to reach higher so that the spirit can dictate the “Law of Consecration.”

In the days of the Savior, all believing members committed their time, talent and even their lives to “the kingdom.” I participated in an archaeological survey close to Jericho where we were discussing the odd nature of a beautiful synagogue floor of the first century. What was odd about it was the signature. Almost every ancient mosaic floor found in Israel has the signature of the donor with his family name and title. This one simply had an inscription that indicated that the “entire community” had done this work. I had the distinct feeling we were standing on the remains of a worship center used by early saints, “former-day Saints,” people who committed themselves first to the building of the Kingdom of God.

As a discipline and behavioral structure, the early Saints gave everything to the Lord. By consecrating their resources to the Kingdom of God, they were learning stewardship instead of ownership. Stewardship is an eternal principle also given before Jesus' time.

“For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves to day to the LORD, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day.” (*Exodus 32:29*)

In Jesus' day, two men asked what they should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus gave each one an answer that applied to him because each had to learn a principle he needed most. The rich young man was told to keep the commandments and when he answered that he observed them all, he was told to sell what he had and give to the poor. On the other hand, a lawyer was asked a question and when he answered correctly Jesus told him to follow his own answer. In other words, “Do it.”

Rich Man

“And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? . . . Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. . .” (*Mark 10:17-20*)

Lawyer

“And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. (*Luke 10:25-28*)

The Law of Consecration includes more than a guidelines on riches, wealth or worldly aspects. It is a guideline in stewardship, humility, and a fervent purpose of service to others guided by mercy, piety, wisdom, humility, gentility and understanding.

Lesson 15

“Seek Ye Earnestly the Best Gifts”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 46; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to the Church, at Kirtland, Ohio, March 8, 1831. HC 1: 163—165. In this early time of the Church, there had not yet developed a unified pattern for the conducting of Church services. However, a custom of admitting only members and earnest investigators to the sacrament meetings and other assemblies of the Church had become somewhat general. This revelation expresses the will of the Lord relative to governing and conducting meetings. 1—2, Elders are to conduct meetings as guided by the Holy Spirit; 3—6, Truth seekers should not be excluded from sacramental services; 7—12, Ask of God and seek the gifts of the Spirit; 13—26, An enumeration of some of these gifts; 27—33, Church leaders are given power to discern the gifts of the Spirit.

Articles of Faith 1:7; We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, and so forth.

1 Corinthians 12—13; Holy Ghost reveals Jesus is the Christ—Spiritual gifts are present among the saints—Apostles, prophets, and miracles found in the true Church. Paul extols the high status of charity—Charity, a pure love, excels and exceeds almost all else.

Moroni 10:8—18 A testimony of the Book of Mormon comes by the power of the Holy Ghost—The gifts of the Spirit are dispensed to the faithful—Spiritual gifts always accompany faith—Moroni’s words speak from the dust—Come unto Christ, be perfected in him, and sanctify your souls.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The key to recognizing the Messiah, the true meaning of his life and those who testified of Him is the SPIRIT. The word for spirit in Hebrew is Ruach Elohim, the breath the wind of God. Moses knew that gift well and desired that everyone would have it.

“And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the LORD’S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!” (*Numbers 11:29*)

As previously stated, there are some people who do not have that gift yet, and those that do must exercise patience and love because eventually more will get that gift and be very happy. The gift of belief comes from God.

“... Phinehas is known to have traveled to redeem captives, and on one journey a river in flood parted for him, so as not to delay his mission. He constructed the famous ‘ladder of saintliness’ in which Caution (against evil) leads through Eagerness (for good), Cleanliness, Purity, Asceticism, Holiness, Humility, Fear of God, Attainment of the Holy Spirit (divine inspiration), ultimately to the Resurrection of the Dead.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

In Judaism, “belief” is superceded by “doing.” Hence, the 613 commandments (365 do not’s and 248 do’s) have preeminence over faith.

“The biblical word emunah (and its other forms) which is often translated as ‘belief’ really means ‘trust’ or ‘confidence,’ which is something quite different.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

Even prayers and benedictions are prepared to be followed, rather than be spoken from the heart. However, some of these benedictions still carry an admonition to go beyond the ‘do’ to embrace ‘faith’ (Emunah) in God.

In Synagogue services there are certain benedictions recited or read. One of them is a request for the gifts of wisdom and knowledge.

“The fourth benediction is a request for the gift of wisdom and understanding. It concludes with Barukh . . . honen ha-da'at (Blessed be . . . the gracious giver of knowledge.)” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

In biblical times, men were called as judges or prophets in Israel when they understood the law and had extra abilities and spiritual gifts.

“The shofet, or judge, had to meet strict qualifications, besides just knowing the law. Among these qualifications were piety, wisdom, humility, gentility and human understanding. When Moses set up the first courts, he looked for ‘able men such as fear God, men of truth, hating unjust gain’ (Exodus 18:21) and ‘wise men, and understanding and full of knowledge.’

“Daniel was a Jewish sage and prophet who lived in Babylonia during the sixth century B.C.E. Because of his great wisdom and ability to interpret dreams, Daniel rose to positions of responsibility and honor in the court of kings Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar and Darius. However, as a Jew, he was constantly tormented by his rivals who denounced him for not worshiping the idols of the land. Daniel's piety and faith in God always stood firm and despite all dangers, he continued to pray daily in the traditional Jewish way.

“Potiphar respected Joseph's wisdom and put him in charge of his entire household. When Potiphar's wife fell in love with Joseph and he refused to respond to her, she lied about him to Potiphar, who immediately had him imprisoned. The chief jailer soon put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners. He interpreted the dreams of two important prisoners, saying that one would be freed and one would die. Although the interpretation came true, the man who was freed forgot him. He remained in prison for two more years, until Pharaoh requested an interpreter for his strange dreams. Joseph was called before Pharaoh to hear them and God gave him the wisdom to understand that the dreams predicted seven years of plenty throughout the kingdom, to be followed by seven years of famine. He suggested that food be stored and distributed during the years of hunger. Pharaoh realized that Joseph was honest and wise and ordered him to supervise all necessary preparations. Once again Joseph rose to a high position, and became Pharaoh's chief minister. (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

Ba'al Shem Tov is a descriptive title which means the "Good Master of the Name" (for the "Master of the Good Name"), and the "Name" refers to the Name of God. Thus the bearer of the title was a person who was able to invoke the Name of God for the purpose of healing the sick or in other worthy causes.

“Although the capacity to obtain wisdom might be considered a natural endowment, wisdom itself had to be learned, and could be taught. The two principal methods of teaching were musar (instruction or training) and ezah (counsel, or persuasion) according to whether the teacher's authority was imposed or freely sought. In general, the teacher's musar was an appeal to reason and conscience and to the pupil's own desire for knowledge and understanding. The wisdom was transmitted by a saying or proverb; a rhetorical question; a parable or allegory; and imaginative tales and anecdotes. Despite this great emphasis on teaching and learning, however, wisdom ultimately remained a divine gift rewarding those who desired it enough to submit to its discipline.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

It is difficult to develop spiritual gifts when you make an effort not to use them. The inspired translation of the following verse makes the lesson of using spiritual gifts easier to understand.

“For whosoever receiveth to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever continueth not to receive, from him shall be taken even that he hath.” (*Matthew 13:12*)

There is a modern proverb which repeats the message, “If you don’t use it, you’ll lose it.” By exercising the gift, it expands and grows. The parables Jesus used offered learning experiences on the level of those listening and according to their sense of understanding. Parables are like paintings. They can be studied for more interpretation. Many of Jesus’ parables contained references to nature and human experiences so that more people with differing gifts would be able to understand them.

“Thou Shalt . . . Offer Up Thy Sacraments upon My Holy Day”

Lesson 16

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 59; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, August 7, 1831. HC 1: 196—201. Preceding his record of this revelation, the Prophet writes descriptively of the land of Zion wherein the people were then assembled. The land was consecrated, as the Lord had directed, and the site for the future temple was dedicated. The Lord makes these commandments especially applicable to the saints in Zion. 1—4, The faithful saints in Zion shall be blessed; 5—8, They are to love and serve the Lord and keep his commandments; 9—19, By keeping the Lord's day holy, the saints are blessed temporally and spiritually; 20—24, The righteous are promised peace in this world and eternal life in the world to come.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

It is not surprising to find latter-day revelation about the Sabbath. Since Biblical times, the honoring of the Sabbath has been one of the most important commandments the Lord has given his children and an identifier of his covenant people.

“In the course of time observance of the Sabbath became the identifying mark of the Jew. It set him apart from all other religions. According to the First Book of Maccabees (2:31–41), at the beginning of the Hasmonean revolt against Syria, the Jews would not fight on the Sabbath but let themselves be killed. Later they realized that was a mistake and that if danger to life is involved, the Sabbath is suspended.

“The rabbis of the Talmud thought that the Sabbath is the most important of all the laws of the Torah and that by itself it is equal to all the rest. One statement is that ‘if Israel keeps one Sabbath as it should be kept, the Messiah will come.’ They saw Shabbat as a special privilege; a gift that God gave His people Israel and as a foretaste of the world-to-come.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“Other biblical laws repeatedly show concern for the well being of animals. Man must rest on the Sabbath and may not work his animals either. ‘Thou shalt not do any manner of work, neither thy son . . . nor thy servant . . . nor thy cattle.’” (*Exodus 20:10*)

“The Sabbath and the festivals are particularly times of joy, and indeed it is a positive commandment, often difficult to observe, to be happy on them. The joy required is not frivolity but, contradictory though it may sound, a serious happiness. The highest level of joy according to the rabbis is the *simhah shel mitzvah*, the joy felt at performing a commandment or doing a good deed.

“For the Sabbath, there are special candlesticks and oil lamps, *Kiddush* cups, *hallah* covers and tablecloths; and for *Havdalah*, special candleholders and spice containers in many shapes and sizes, some of them masterpieces of artistic workmanship.

“Women usher in the Sabbath each week by lighting candles and blessing God ‘who sanctified us by His commandments and commanded us to kindle the Sabbath light.’ On Saturday night, traditional Jewish families light a *havdalah* candle made of several wicks braided together, raise a cup of wine and sniff fragrant spices, thus bidding farewell to the Sabbath peace and beginning a new week.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In a religious Jewish home, every Sabbath Eve begins with an old ritual of a blessing and pouring of a little pure wine (or living [spring] water if wine is not available). It is followed by a blessing, breaking, and eating of a little piece of the “Hallah” bread. This procedure is called “Kiddush.” The father or grandfather in the home always partakes first, and then others receive the Kiddush.

“The table is set for the festive meal, with the Sabbath candles glowing in polished holders. The family stands and the father raises the brimming silver cup to say *Kiddush*, the blessing and sanctification over wine. This age-old ceremony is in fulfillment of the biblical command, ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ (Exodus 20:8)

“*Kiddush* is recited on the evening of the Sabbath, or the festival, before the start of the meal. Nothing may be eaten before *Kiddush*. On Sabbath eve, the first paragraph of *Kiddush* includes a phrase from the end of the first chapter of Genesis and the passage at the beginning of the second which describe God's completion of Creation and His sanctification of the seventh day as a day of rest. *Kiddush* continues with the benediction for wine, preceded by the word *savri* (Attention!) so that all present, men and women, may fulfill the requirement of *Kiddush* by listening carefully to the recital of the prayer and by responding ‘Amen’ afterwards.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

On the Sabbath, a special bread called hallah is used. The Hallah is baked sweeter than regular bread because the Sabbath is a “sweeter” day. There are activities inappropriate for the Sabbath, yet other activities are encouraged.

“From Talmudic times, it was the special duty of the housewife to bake the bread for the Sabbath. This bread, usually prepared from white flour, is also called ‘*ballab*.’ Two such loaves are placed on the festive Sabbath table as a symbol for the double portion of manna which the Israelites in the wilderness received every Friday, and because of the Showbread in the Temple, which was displayed each Sabbath.

“Funerals may not take place on the Sabbath or on the Day of Atonement . . .

“In some communities it is customary for the father to bless his children on the Sabbath eve when he returns from the synagogue.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Although previously mentioned, the collections of offerings are a part of Sabbath day activities.

“In every town where there are Jews they must appoint ‘charity wardens,’ men who are well-known and honest that they should collect money from the people every Sabbath eve and distribute it to the poor . . . We have never seen or heard of a Jewish community which does not have a charity fund.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

It is interesting to see the similarity of young Aaronic Priesthood bearers gathering “Fast Offerings” at the beginning of the month. Fasting is an integral part of Jewish life, yet never on a Sabbath unless it is Yom Kippur. There is a monthly Yom Kippur Katan (lesser), a day before the beginning of every month. It is a fast day, again, never on a Sabbath.

Throughout generations, the Sabbath has increased in symbolism.

“The Sabbath bears record of Christ: from Adam to Moses it was the 7th day to signify that our Lord rested on that day from his creative labors (Ex. 20:8-11); from Moses to Christ, the Sabbath day was a different day each year to commemorate our Lord's leading of the children of Israel out of bondage (Deut. 5:12-15); and from the apostolic day until now, the Sabbath has been the first day of the week to point attention to our Lord's resurrection on his holy day.” **(Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, Pg.452)**

There is another consideration of the symbolism of the Sabbath. The commandment also includes six days of labor! More than just a rest day of the week, Sabbath represents the ultimate goal of “resting” in a heavenly reward. Oh, there will be “work” and progress, however, rising above the difficulties of earthly life becomes our heavenly “rest.”

“And now, my beloved son . . . let us labor diligently; for if we should cease to labor, we should be brought under condemnation; for we have a labor to perform whilst in this tabernacle of clay, that we may conquer the enemy of all righteousness, and rest our souls in the kingdom of God.” **(Moroni 9:6)**

“Wherefore we labored diligently among our people, that we might persuade them to come unto Christ, and partake of the goodness of God, that they might enter into his rest . . .” **(Jacob 1:7)**

“Then spake Jesus, saying, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” **(Matthew 11:28.)**

The Law of Tithing and the Law of the Fast

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 59:13–14, 21; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, August 7, 1831. HC 1: 196–201. Preceding his record of this revelation, the Prophet writes descriptively of the land of Zion wherein the people were then assembled. The land was consecrated, as the Lord had directed, and the site for the future temple was dedicated. The Lord makes these commandments especially applicable to the saints in Zion. 1–4, The faithful saints in Zion shall be blessed; 5–8, They are to love and serve the Lord and keep his commandments; 9–19, By keeping the Lord’s day holy, the saints are blessed temporally and spiritually; 20–24, The righteous are promised peace in this world and eternal life in the world to come.

Doctrine and Covenants 119; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Far West, Missouri, July 8, 1838, in answer to his supplication: “O Lord, show unto thy servants how much thou requirest of the properties of thy people for a tithing.” HC 3: 44. The law of tithing, as understood today, had not been given to the Church previous to this revelation. The term “tithing” in the prayer just quoted and in previous revelations (64: 23; 85: 3; 97: 11) had meant not just one-tenth, but all free-will offerings, or contributions, to the Church funds. The Lord had previously given to the Church the law of consecration and stewardship of property, which members (chiefly the leading elders) entered into by a covenant that was to be everlasting. Because of failure on the part of many to abide by this covenant, the Lord withdrew it for a time, and gave instead the law of tithing to the whole Church. The Prophet asked the Lord how much of their property he required for sacred purposes. The answer was this revelation. 1–5, The saints are to pay their surplus property and then give, as tithing, one-tenth of their interest annually; 6–7, Such a course will sanctify the land of Zion.

Doctrine and Covenants 120; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Far West, Missouri, July 8, 1838, making known the disposition of the properties tithed as named in the preceding revelation, Section 119. HC 3: 44.

Isaiah 58:6–12; True law of the fast, with its attendant blessings, is set forth—Sabbath observance enjoined.

Malachi 3:8–12; The Lord’s messenger shall prepare the way for the Second Coming—Christ shall sit in judgment—Israel commanded to pay tithes and offerings—They keep a book of remembrance.

Matthew 4:3–11; Jesus fasts forty days and is tempted—He begins his ministry, calls disciples, and heals the sick.

Matthew 6:18–18; Jesus continues the Sermon on the Mount—He teaches the disciples the Lord’s Prayer—They are commanded to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

3 Nephi 13:16–18; Jesus teaches the Nephites the Lord’s Prayer—They are to lay up treasures in heaven—The Twelve in their ministry are commanded to take no thought for temporal things.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The Law of Tithing was given as a part of the plan to teach, by means of serving each other, how to develop a total commitment to serving Him.

When discussing tithes and offerings, consider that God’s math is different to man’s math. Man will think that 100% goes further than 90%. Yet God’s instruction is to bring the tithes, 10%, to him and that the remaining 90% will go further than the 100% could. Alma reminds the people that Melchizedek paid tithes. Those tithes were part of the true order of things. The Jewish view of tithing still has some biblical meaning even though Jews do not have an order or organized way of collecting and distributing tithes. The Hebrew words used for tithes are: *terumot*, “heave offerings,” and *ma’aserot*, “tithes.”

Judaism reflects a great history of instructions and traditions in paying tithes, giving charity and making offerings to assist the less fortunate. Philanthropy is a basic part of Biblical life, and hence, a religious life. To devout Jews, Biblical life means a Jewish life.

“Tithes (Hebrew: *terumot*, ‘heave offerings,’ and *ma’aserot*, ‘tithes’). During Temple times Israelites would set aside a portion of their agricultural products as tithes which were given to the priests, Levites, and alternately to the poor or were to be taken to Jerusalem and eaten there.

“The tithes served the purpose of supporting the priest and Levite who did not have any ancestral holdings of land and were occupied with the Temple service and other ritual duties, of supporting the poor, and of strengthening the position of Jerusalem in the consciousness of all the people of Israel. Basing themselves on the close similarity in sound between the words *te aser* (give tithes) and *tit'asher* (become rich), Rabbi Johanan said: ‘Give tithes so that you will become rich,’ and Rabbi Akiva added that, ‘tithes are a fence which guards one's riches.’ After the exile from Erez Israel, pious people became accustomed to give one-tenth of their earnings to charity, although this ‘tithe’ is of comparatively modern origin.

“It is still customary among Orthodox Jews to set aside tithes from all produce of the Land of Israel, and the produce marketed by Tnuva, the large agricultural collective, is tithed at source before it is sold. The *terumah* part is either destroyed or used as fodder for animals owned by priests; because they are ritually unclean, the *kohanim* themselves cannot eat it. The other tithes are distributed to the poor and needy.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The tithes were used to take care of the Jerusalem Temple, the House of the Lord. After it was destroyed, a memory of the last temple was perpetuated and a hope for its return was and still is constantly repeated. The principle of tithes, however, has diminished and now includes offerings for the needy.

“The obligation to help the poor and the needy and to give them gifts is stated many times in the Bible and was considered by the rabbis of all ages to be one of the cardinal *mitzvot* [good deed or commandment] of Judaism.

“In the Bible there are several laws which are in effect a sort of tax for the benefit of the poor. Among these are *leket*, *shikhhah* and *pe'ah*, according to which the farmer could not pick up the ears of corn that had fallen during the harvest, or go back for forgotten sheaves or reap into the corners of the field. All these he was required to leave for the poor. Every third year the farmer was also required to put aside a special tithe for the needy. The institution of the Sabbatical Year and Jubilee was in order ‘that the poor of your people may eat’ as well as to cancel debts. The Torah also insists that the needy be remembered when the Festivals are celebrated, e.g., ‘You shall rejoice before the Lord your God, with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite in your communities, and the stranger, the fatherless and the widow in your midst.’ The Bible expects Israel to be aware of the needs of the poor and the stranger because Israel itself had experienced this situation in Egypt.

“Although the idea of charity and almsgiving is spread throughout the whole of the Bible, there is no special term for it. The rabbis of the Talmud, however, adopted the word (*zedakah*) for charity and it is used (but not exclusively so) throughout rabbinic literature in the sense of helping the needy by gifts. The word has since passed into popular usage and is almost exclusively used for charity. The term *hesed* (‘loving-kindness’), which is used widely in the Bible, has taken on the meaning of physical aid, or lending money without interest.

“Everybody is obliged to give charity; even one who himself is dependent on charity should give to those less fortunate than himself. The court can compel one who refuses to give charity—or donates less than his means allow—to give according to the court's assessment.

“To give a tenth of one's wealth to charity is considered to be a ‘middling’ virtue, to give a 20th or less is to be “mean”; but the rabbis decided that one should not give more than a fifth lest he become impoverished himself and dependent on charity.

“The rabbis were especially concerned about the manner in which alms are to be dispensed. The prime consideration is that nothing be done that might shame the recipient. About one pious man it was related that if he met a man of good family who had become impoverished he would say, ‘I have heard that a legacy has been left to you in such a place; take this money in advance and pay me back later.’ When the man accepted it he then said to him, ‘It is a gift.’

“Maimonides lists eight ways of giving *zedakah* which are progressively more virtuous: to give

- (1) but sadly;
- (2) less than is fitting, but in good humor;
- (3) only after having been asked to;
- (4) before being asked;
- (5) in such a manner that the donor does not know who the recipient is,
- (6) in such a manner that the recipient does not know who the donor is; and
- (7) in such a way that neither the donor nor the recipient knows the identity of the other.

“The highest form of charity is not to give alms but to help the poor to rehabilitate themselves by lending them money, taking them into partnership, employing them, or giving them work, for in this way the purpose is achieved without any loss of self-respect at all.

“This last way of helping the poor is known as *gemilut hasadim*, ‘dispensing kindness.’ This term also includes aiding people who need help and encouragement and includes such matters as visiting the sick and looking after them and inviting needy guests to eat at your home. One of the greatest acts of charity is to provide for orphans.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In modern times, the principle of tithing has been modified to reflect the charity and alms given. It is a general Jewish understanding that three percent of one's income should be used for charitable purposes. I have found a few who prefer the tithing amount to be ten percent. In the Islamic religion, charity is one of the basic five pillars or tenants of faith. The charitable contribution is generally considered to be two percent. The five pillars are underlined below.

“Islam, the name given by Muslims to their religion, means ‘submission’ (to the will of God). Muhammad, a seventh century C.E. merchant of Mecca, and founder of Islam, is considered by believers to have been the last of a line of prophets starting with Adam, and the one who revealed to the world the divine doctrine of the Koran, said to have been given him from God by the angel Gabriel. Acceptance of Muhammad's teaching implies belief in Allah as the only god; in the angels; in the divine inspiration of the holy books (including the Bible); in the prophets (including such Jewish and Christian figures as Abraham, ‘the merciful friend’ and the first to profess monotheism, Moses, and Jesus); in the day of judgment; and in Allah's predetermination of good and evil. Muslims are obliged to recite their creed and to pray five times daily; to fast from dawn to sunset in the month of Ramadan; to pay legal alms (charity); and to go on at least

one pilgrimage to Mecca, site of the holy Black Stone, the Ka'aba.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Remember, that in addition to tithes, the religious Jew have a fasting day each month. It stands to reason that the meal afterwards is a “feast” of sorts - with prayers before and after every meal. Each prayer is preceded by a washing of hands in “living water” that is naturally flowing. Over time, these and other prayers have come to be pre-written.

In spite of the statement in the Bible that fasting is only required on Yom Kippur, Jews have many traditional fasting days and fasting reasons. The Talmudic teachings caution against excessive fasting. Young children are not required to fast nor are individuals whose health is precarious.

“The Fast of Tammuz is also traditionally associated with the fast mentioned by the prophet Zechariah [8:19] as the ‘Fast of the Fourth Month.’ According to the prophet, this fast in messianic times will be transformed into ‘joy and gladness and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah’.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

As mentioned above, the practice of fasting is found in Islam. It is also a part of Jewish life, although fasting is never done on a Sabbath day because Sabbath is a day of joy and fasting (to many) is less than joyful! Yom Kippur (a High Day - hence, treated as a Sabbath) is the only exception. On that day, fasting begins an hour before the Sabbath and continues until an hour afterwards.

The book of Jonah is read by religious Jews on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, accompanied by a full day of fasting and prayer. The prayers that day ask for forgiveness and for the Lord’s spirit to be with them. Other days of fasting also include prayers.

“Yahrzeit . . . is a Yiddish word which comes from the German meaning ‘year-time’ or anniversary. Among Ashkenazi Jews it has come to refer exclusively to the anniversary of the death of a relative for whom one was required to mourn. The anniversary is according to the Hebrew date of death, and so in the secular calendar it will be on different dates each year. Very pious people observe a fast on the *yahrzeit* of parents and it is the general custom that a candle or light is kindled for the whole day, and that a mourner who is able to, leads the daily services on that day. Sons recite the *Kaddish* prayer on the *yahrzeit* of parents.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“Fasting is an act of repentance or of supplication seeking divine forgiveness or the prevention of disaster. Public fasts also commemorate catastrophic events in Jewish history. On fast days one neither eats nor drinks. On major fasts, other prohibitions are washing, wearing leather shoes, using ointments or perfumes, and other physical pleasures. There are special prayers and the Torah is read in the synagogue. Yom Kippur and Tishah be-Av are observed from sunset to sunset. All other fasts are from sunrise to sunset.

“When a natural or human disaster threatens or strikes a whole community, a public fast is proclaimed. In biblical times, fasting served to beseech the Almighty to end a famine or to lighten the oppression of foreign rulers.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“Establish . . . a House of God”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 95; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, June 1, 1833. HC 1: 350—352. This revelation is a continuation of divine directions to build houses for worship and instruction, especially the House of the Lord. See Section 88: 119—136 and Section 94. 1—6, The saints are chastened for their failure to build the House of the Lord; 7—10, The Lord desires to use his house to endow his people with power from on high; 11—17, The house is to be dedicated as a place of worship and for the school of the apostles.

Doctrine and Covenants 109; Prayer offered at the dedication of the temple at Kirtland, Ohio, March 27, 1836. HC 2: 420—426. According to the Prophet's written statement, this prayer was given to him by revelation. 1—5, Kirtland Temple built as a place for the Son of Man to visit; 6—21, It is to be a house of prayer, fasting, faith, learning, glory, and order, and a house of God; 22—33, May the unrepentant who oppose the Lord's people be confounded; 34—42, May the saints go forth in power to gather the righteous to Zion; 43—53, May the saints be delivered from the terrible things to be poured out upon the wicked in the last days; 54—58, May nations and peoples and churches be prepared for the gospel; 59—67, May the Jews, the Lamanites, and all Israel be redeemed; 68—80, May the saints be crowned with glory and honor and gain eternal salvation.

Doctrine and Covenants 110; Visions manifested to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery in the temple at Kirtland, Ohio, April 3, 1836. HC 2: 435—436. The occasion was that of a Sabbath day meeting. The Prophet prefaces his record of the manifestations with these words: “In the afternoon, I assisted the other Presidents in distributing the Lord's Supper to the Church, receiving it from the Twelve, whose privilege it was to officiate at the sacred desk this day. After having performed this service to my brethren, I retired to the pulpit, the veils being dropped, and bowed myself, with Oliver Cowdery, in solemn and silent prayer. After rising from prayer, the following vision was opened to both of us.” 1—10, The Lord Jehovah appears in glory and accepts the Kirtland Temple as his house; 11—12, Moses and Elias each appear and commit their keys and dispensations; 13—16, Elijah returns and commits the keys of his dispensation as promised by Malachi.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

Before the first Israelite temple was built, the entire encampment of Israel was a "city temple" (apparently it will be that way again when the Lord returns to Jerusalem):

“In pre-Temple times, in the desert, the whole encampment was considered to be in a state of sanctity, and hence anyone who was *tameh* (unclean) was forced to go outside the marked boundaries and was forbidden to return until he had completed the purification ritual. With the destruction of the Temple, such sanctions ceased to apply. Nevertheless, the maintenance of ritual impurity has remained an essential aspect of Jewish life. Thus, because all Jews are now assumed to be ritually impure, they are even today forbidden to enter the Temple area in Jerusalem.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

The call to go to the temple includes the phrase, “He that hath clean hands and a pure heart.” (*Psalms 24:1-3*) Since the Jews feel they don't have a temple, they have used the meal table as a substitute “altar.” It is appropriate to wash hands before every prayer at the beginning and ending of each meal. That is why kosher hotels have a basin and naturally flowing water at the entrances of each dining room. There are large cups in public restrooms and other public fountains (like the Western Wall) so a Jew can fill the cup and then let the water flow naturally over his hands before he prays.

The Lord's house is where His glory and honor dwells (*Psalms 26:8*). The ark holding the torah scroll is a reminder of the ark in the temple that held the tablets—the word of the Lord. Once, as I was leading my guests to the Western (Wailing) Wall, I observed a young Bar Mitzvah lad anxious to open the ark to retrieve the scroll so he could get on with his presentation to the congregation. His grandfather stopped him and said, “Inside represents the essence and the presence of the Lord. Be polite; first you knock, then pull the curtain aside and then you take the scroll.”

As David wrote the Psalm indicating that the Lord is his light (*Psalms 27:1*), he must have known that the ark contained a special menorah, a light with seven candles or wicks. That symbol is now the official seal of the State of Israel. It is a chiasmus; the first and the last candles or lights are connected at the base. Likewise, the second and sixth, and third and fifth are connected and the center light is the main light. Could that have represented the Lord? After all, He should be the center of our attention.

The center of the Lord's house was curtained because of its sacredness, a courtyard where we could converse with the Lord. As mentioned previously, the Children of Israel lived in a "camp" that was divided into three sections; the people, the Levites and the Lord. We long for the time when we can return to "dwell in thy courts" (*Psalms 65:4*), and be "shielded," safe from the imbalance of the world around us. (*Psalms 84*).

A pattern that is interesting is that the first Israelite temple in the land of Israel was in the hands of the tribe of Ephraim.

"Situated in the mountains of central Erez [land of] Israel, Shiloh was in the territory of the tribe of Ephraim and housed the 'temporary sanctuary' or Tabernacle containing the Ark of the Law." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The latest temples outside the land of Israel are now in the hands of Ephraim, the Latter-day Saints. The destiny of Joseph and Judah is that they will eventually come together to build the temple in Jerusalem.

There is a Jewish tradition that the Messiah's return will reflect either the date or event of the destruction of the First and Second Temples. Joseph Smith's mission was to restore temple worship. Eventually, the "Lord will suddenly come to his Temple." (*Malachi 3:1*)

Abraham brought his son to the Mount Moriah (Hebrew: 'Taught of the Lord'), which was later to become the place of the Temple, to offer Isaac as a human sacrifice. Human sacrifice is precisely the trouble that Abraham was spared in the Ur of Chaldees. It was a profound lesson in opposition, a chiasmus. Jewish tradition states that Isaac was in his early thirties when he was to be sacrificed. The "trouble" was spared when God provided instruction that a "lamb" was to be offered as a sacrifice.

Abraham and Isaac found an "alternative sacrifice," a ram in the thicket, and it was offered as a substitute for Isaac. Later, other animals, first born and unblemished, were brought to the same place where the Temple now stood. In some cases they were "blessed" with the sins (troubles) of the people in attendance. In one case, a lamb or goat would "escape" out the Gate Beautiful (also Gate of Forgiveness and Gate of Mercy). It would be tied with a red ribbon and let out into the wilderness to die on its own (carrying the sins of the people).

Isaiah portrays the same principle when he describes the "glory" fastened in a "sure place." It is glorious that we can bring our troubles (sins) to the Lord, at his house, and leave with greater blessings than we ever imagined.

"And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang

upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the LORD hath spoken it.” (*Isaiah 22:21-25*)

In Jerusalem, there have been thousands of nails pounded into the old Western (Wailing) Wall, a remnant of the last known Jewish Temple. They remind us of a practice the Jews had until about a hundred years ago. They would “nail their sins in a sure place” and then get on with life. A glorious thought! Going to the Temple for Latter-day Saints not only blesses the ancestors whose work is being done, but those who are serving them. It is the Lord’s house, where virtuous people meet, renew their souls, and remind themselves of the name they have taken upon themselves.

Most major events in scriptural history centered around certain commemorative seasons. The dedication of the Kirtland temple culminated with the remarkable visits of Elijah and Moses at Passover which is the first full moon after the first day of spring.

In context to this lesson we repeat that the Jews are still waiting for the prophets Moses and Elijah to return. Two seats are traditionally and historically reserved for them in every synagogue. At one of the early meetings of the “Bnai Shalom” group (Jewish/Mormon cultural group), the late Apostle LeGrand Richards once remarked that he saw two beautifully decorated chairs fastened to the wall of a synagogue he was visiting. Knowingly, he asked the Rabbi, “What are those two chairs for?” The reply came quickly that they were being kept for Elijah and Moses. Elder Richards, seizing the moment and using his wonderful sense of humor said, “Get them down, they’ve already been here!”

The sequel to Passover, the festival of Sukkoth, which happens at the first full moon after the first day of autumn, commemorates among other things, the dedication of Solomon’s Temple.

“Sukkoth [Hebrew for ‘huts’ or ‘tabernacles’], [is] a seven-day festival beginning on the 15th day of the month of Tishrei, which falls in September or October. (In the Diaspora an extra eighth day is celebrated.) One of its main observances is living temporarily in huts, called *Sukkoth*, resembling those in which the Children of Israel dwelt during their forty years in the wilderness after the Exodus from Egypt.

“This autumn festival was the last of the three ‘pilgrim’ festivals connected with the farming year. 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.

“This holiday was also the occasion for the consecration of the Temple built by Solomon and every seventh year on Sukkoth, the Torah was read by the king before the assembled people. In his vision of the end of days, the prophet Zechariah foretells that all the nations of the world will assemble for the festival of Sukkoth in Jerusalem to worship God.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The word “festival” comes from feasting on the sacrificial emblems that came from the temple. A festive meal is always a part of a Jewish wedding, in part a connection to the temple.

“With the destruction of the Second Temple sacrifices were no longer made. It was then said: ‘Now that there is no altar, a man's table . . . and prayer takes the place of the sacrifices.’

“The Talmud describes in detail the various modes of conduct to be observed at meals. For example persons should engage in a discussion of Torah during the meal so that they will be ‘as though they had eaten at the table of God.’ Furthermore, the table is regarded as a substitute for the altar in the Temple, and therefore, it must be treated with reverence. Before any meal, the hands must be washed pronouncing the appropriate blessing over the washing, after which bread is eaten. The meal is concluded with the Grace after Meals.

“... (a) benediction (after meals), called *Boneh Yerushalayim* . . . asks God to have mercy on Israel and to restore the Temple and the Kingdom of David. It includes a plea that He may always sustain and support Israel.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Remember, the Dead Sea “Temple Scroll” described a temple to be built in “latter days.” The Essenes believed that they were in the latter days and referred to themselves as “Saints.” The dimensions of the Temple they planned were similar to the dimensions described by Ezekiel. However, the outer dimension seems to include the entire walled city of Jerusalem.

“That temples and temple ordinances are essential to the (true) faith is well established in the Bible. Malachi predicted the coming of the Lord suddenly to his temple, in the day of vengeance, in the latter times, as a refiner and purifier. Ezekiel predicted the building of a temple in Jerusalem which will be used for ordinance work after the gathering of Israel from their long dispersion and when they are cleansed from their transgressions. John the Revelator saw the day when, after the earth is sanctified and celestialized, the presence of the Father and the Son in the New Jerusalem would take the place of the temple, for the whole city, due to their presence, would become a temple.” (*Doctrines of Salvation Joseph Fielding Smith Vol.2, Pg.244*)

Stones or rocks are still placed on Jewish graves as reminders of the stone-built temple and an innate desire to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Apparently, it was and will be made with stone – and the Rock of Salvation will come to that temple!

Our homes can become the “temple” model of the Lord’s house. Entertainment brought in by various “vicarious” means may challenge us today as it did in the past! On the other hand, our homes may just be the model to prepare us daily to live with Him, in His house and in His city. Also mentioned previously is the expectation that the entire city of Jerusalem will become the “City of the Lord.” May our feet “stand within thy gates.” (Psalm 122, 134).

The Plan of Salvation

**Scripture
Summary:**

Doctrine and Covenants 138:55–56; A vision, given to President Joseph F. Smith in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 3, 1918. In his opening address at the eighty-ninth Semiannual General Conference of the Church, on October 4, 1918, President Smith declared that he had received several divine communications during the previous months. One of these, concerning the Savior's visit to the spirits of the dead while his body was in the tomb, he had received the previous day. It was written immediately following the close of the conference; on October 31, 1918, it was submitted to the counselors in the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve, and the Patriarch, and it was unanimously accepted by them. 53–60, The righteous dead of this day continue their labors in the world of spirits.

Abraham 3:22–23; Abraham learns about the sun, moon, and stars by means of the Urim and Thummim—The Lord reveals to him the eternal nature of spirits—He learns of pre-earth life, foreordination, the creation, the choosing of a Redeemer, and the second estate of man.

Alma 42; Mortality is a probationary time to enable man to repent and serve God—The fall brought temporal and spiritual death upon all mankind—Redemption comes through repentance—God himself atoneth for the sins of the world—Mercy is for those who repent—All others are subject to God's justice—Mercy cometh because of the atonement—Only the truly penitent are saved.

**Supplemental
Holy Land
and Judaic
Insights:**

An understanding of the anthropomorphic nature of God was known to the Jews at the time of Jesus. The Old Testament, as well as the Dead Sea Scrolls contain several references to God in 'human terms.' As the true nature of God is seen to diminish in history, true religion fades away. By the time the Crusaders were approaching the Holy Land, a prominent Jewish philosopher, Moses Maimonides, began collecting the writings and interpretations of other Jewish sages to codify and centralize them. As previously mentioned, in his work "The Guide to the Perplexed," Maimonides included "Thirteen Articles of Faith." The first three articles declared that God cannot be explained. That is probably the first published Jewish work that (in most Judaic studies) eliminated reference to the anthropomorphic nature of God.

"The great Jewish philosopher Maimonides argued for the existence of God from the idea of motion. Everything in the universe is moving, and since we know that movement is finite, it must have started somewhere; hence the idea of the Prime Mover, i.e., God.

"In the final analysis, however, there is no direct positive evidence of the existence of God. It can be argued that if there were such evidence then there would be no virtue in believing in Him. Ultimately it is a question of faith.

"Perhaps the most famous of the various formulations of dogmas is the Thirteen Principles of Faith of Maimonides. Originally written in Arabic, this creed is the basis of the *Yigdal* hymn which is part of the daily service and is usually recited at the conclusion of the Friday evening synagogue service. The 13 fundamentals are:

- (1) The existence of God, which is perfect;
- (2) God is 'one' in every sense of the word;
- (3) God has no body or physical attributes;
- (4) God is eternal;
- (5) God alone must be worshiped;
- (6) the prophecy of the Bible is true;
- (7) Moses was greater than any other prophet;
- (8) the entire Torah was given to Moses;

- (9) the Torah will never be superseded or abrogated;
- (10) God knows the actions of men;
- (11) God rewards and punishes;
- (12) the Messiah will ultimately come; and
- (13) the dead will be resurrected.

It may seem obvious that there is a different Jewish interpretation of what resurrection means, since God has no body or physical attributes. It begs the question of what kind of resurrection there is. Death is another fact that has faded in meaning over the centuries. Repeating some thoughts previously mentioned, in Judaism, physical death is simply explained as follows.

“The Talmud explains that there are three partners in the creation of a human being; the father and mother who supply the physical parts, and God, Who supplies the spirit. At death, God reclaims his part, and the spirit lives on even though the body has died.

“The exact nature of this afterlife is the subject of great discussion in classical Jewish sources. All agree that after death the soul continues to live. The souls of the righteous enter paradise, or Gan Eden [Garden of Eden] as it is generally called. In that state ‘there is no eating or drinking . . . no envy, hatred or competition but only this: that the righteous sit with crowns on their heads and delight in the splendor of ‘God's presence’ [Talmud]. The souls of the wicked enter hell, or Gehinnom, as it is known, where they undergo purification before they too can enter paradise.

“Some rabbis believed in resurrection. That is that at a certain point in time God will bring everybody back to life and then the world will be a perfect place and physical life will go on indefinitely. This doctrine poses some obvious difficulties: the body actually decomposes after burial so how can it be reconstituted; furthermore what about overpopulation of the world? Those who believe in resurrection claim that anyway the whole process will be miraculous and the miracle will solve all the problems. Other rabbis however denied physical resurrection entirely and understood the afterlife to be a completely spiritual experience.

“The argument about resurrection lasted well into the Middle Ages, and was one of the reasons for the sharp attacks against Maimonides. Many believed that he denied the doctrine and his views started a controversy that lasted for hundreds of years. In modern times most Jewish theologians do not subscribe to the doctrine of physical resurrection and movements such as Reform Judaism do not consider it to be a necessary belief for the Jew.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Remember that there are two things necessary to understand the scriptures 1. the learning of the Jews and 2. the Holy Spirit that reveals the subtleties, consider the scripturally described attributes of the Lord. One beautiful attribute is his being, his body that he gave for us. Could Isaiah have been suggesting that everything around us, even “body language,” refers to him? The Lord was called from the womb, a perfect body with attributes as eyes, ears, mouth, tongue, neck, heart, shoulder, hands, arms, belly, leg, knee, and foot.

“Lift up your eyes on high,” *Isaiah 40:26*, “To open the blind eyes,” *Isaiah 42:7*, “Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears . . .” *Isaiah 43:8*, Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he

heareth not.” *Isaiah 42:20*; “. . . thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;” *Isaiah 48:4*; “. . . for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.” *Isaiah 40:5*; “. . . the hand of the LORD hath done this. . .” *Isaiah 41:20*; “Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see.” *Isaiah 42:18*; “. . .for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand.” *Isaiah 44:18*; “. . . Thou hast heard, see all this . . .” *Isaiah 48:6*; “Kings shall see. . .” *Isaiah 49:7*; “And they shall be made perfect notwithstanding their blindness,” *JST Isaiah 42:20*; “. . . formed me from the womb . . . glorious in the eyes of the LORD,” *Isaiah 49:5*; “Lift up thine eyes round about,” *Isaiah 49:18*; “. . . say again in thine ears,” *Isaiah 49:20*; “. . . for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.” *Isaiah 40:5*; “. . . the word is gone out of my mouth . . . every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.” *Isaiah 45:23*; “I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them . . . and they came to pass.” *Isaiah 48:3*; “. . . my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me,” *Isaiah 49:2*; “. . . their tongue faileth . . .” *Isaiah 41:17*; “. . . yet he laid it not to heart.” *Isaiah 42:25*; “. . . considereth in his heart . . .” *Isaiah 44:19*; “. . . a deceived heart . . . my right hand . . .” *Isaiah 44:20*; thou didst not lay these things to thy heart,” *Isaiah 47:7*; “Then shalt thou say in thine heart,” *Isaiah 49:21*; “. . . He hath no hands . . .” *Isaiah 45:9*; “. . . and concerning the work of my hands . . .” *Isaiah 45:11*; “. . . my hands, have stretched out the heavens . . .” *Isaiah 45:12*; “I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands . . .” *Isaiah 49:16*; “. . . make bare the leg, uncover the thigh . . .” *Isaiah 47:2*; “. . . the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him,” *Isaiah 40:10*; “. . . he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom . . .” *Isaiah 40:11*; “. . . his arm shall be on the Chaldeans . . .” *Isaiah 48:14*; “. . . with the strength of his arms . . .” *Isaiah 44:12*; “I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders,” *Isaiah 49:22*; “. . . with his feet,” *Isaiah 41:3*; “And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet,” *Isaiah 49:23*; “. . . called him to his foot,” *Isaiah 41:2*

This constant use of “body” language can be seen as a metaphor of the “Body of Christ.”

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” (*1 Corinthians 12:27*)

References to Satan as a personage have also largely disappeared from Jewish thought. Talmudic teachings include the following descriptions:

“In the Talmud, Satan is at times identified with the yezer ha-rah (the evil inclination), but he also assumes certain aspects of a fully personalized entity. Thus, he is the angel of death, or he is the tempter lying in ambush not only for Job but also for Abraham and all the biblical personalities. Or he is the accuser, ha-mekatreg, constantly waiting for man to sin so as to bring down upon him the wrath of God.

“Several references to Satan have found their way into the liturgy, for example the plea in the hashkivenu prayer of the evening service to ‘remove from us the enemy, pestilence . . . and Satan.’

“Neither great personalities nor simple folk are immune to the power of the *yezer ha-ra*, which in rabbinic literature, is usually depicted as the influence of Satan. The function of Satan is to tempt all humanity and to test a person's sincerity. The rabbis taught that one must therefore always be aware of the power of temptation, for the *yezer ha-ra* can grow and become a bad habit. At first it resembles the thread of a spider's web, the wise men tell us—fragile and barely visible. If not controlled it will become as strong as a stout rope. Judaism places a high value on the good that results from man's victory over his evil inclinations. ‘Who is mighty?’ ask the sages. ‘One who subdues his inclinations.’

“In its original application in the Bible, ‘Satan’ appears not as a proper name, but rather as a common noun denoting an adversary who opposes or obstructs. Its related verb also has the function of describing the actions of an antagonist in the most general sense. However, in the later books of the Bible (Zechariah and Job), ‘The Satan’ can be found as the accepted name of a particular angel—a prosecutor in the heavenly court. Thus it is ‘The Satan’ who asks for and is given permission by God to test Job's piety by inflicting upon him a whole series of personal ordeals. He is, however, definitely subordinate to God and unable to act without divine permission.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The explainable concept of God and Satan have basically disappeared in modern Judaism. That, of course, would be Satan's main goal. Yet the concepts of good and evil are still basic to Jewish life.

“Basic to Judaism is the firm belief that all of life is good. The Bible proclaims: ‘And God saw all that He had made and found it very good’ (Genesis 1:31). Yet how can we fit catastrophe, pain, moral evil and sin into God's design of Creation? The earlier books of the Bible deal very little with the problem of the existence of evil. In the later books, however, questions concerning the prosperity of the wicked and the suffering of the righteous become familiar. The question appears in Jeremiah, in Isaiah, Job and Psalms, and various answers have been given by talmudists and philosophers.

“The rabbis of the Talmud taught that as good derives from God who is merciful and loving, so does evil. This also removes any idea of separate gods. The rabbis say that just as a man blesses God for the good bestowed upon him, so must he bless Him for evil. To the vexing problem of the seemingly unjust distribution of good and evil the replies are varied. One answer is that it is beyond the understanding of man's mind. Another opinion states that the righteous, suffering in this world, might be receiving punishments for the sins of their ancestors, while the wicked may be prospering because of *zekhut avot*, the merit of pious ancestors.

“The most widespread explanation is that the righteous receive their punishment for any small transgression so they can then enjoy their full reward in the world to come. The wicked are rewarded in this world for the slightest good deed but in the next world they will reap the full measure of punishment they deserve. The sufferings of the righteous are also a sort of test, ‘afflictions of love’ which develop in them patience and complete faith. The Book of Job and other biblical sources support this view. Evil initiated by man himself is considered the product of his evil inclination, the *yezer ha-ra*, a distinct part of man's nature. Yet, it is within man's power to restrain and redirect his evil inclination with the

guidance of Torah and its teachings, the only proven antidote. This self-control enables man to serve God with both his good and evil inclinations, helping him to live a good life, and to grow in holiness.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

On the subject of temptation and repentance, one of the most important theological doctrines of both the Bible and the Talmud is that if a sinner repents of his bad deeds, God will forgive him.

“Repentance consists of several stages—firstly the sinner must reflect on his actions and realize that he has indeed done the wrong thing. He must then make up his mind never to do it again, and confess his sin. This confession is not made to any other human being but is made by the sinner directly to God. On this basis the two confessions *Ashamnu* and *Al-Het* were introduced into the prayers for the Day of Atonement which is a special occasion for repentance and forgiveness. However, even when a sinner has done all these things, his repentance is still not final until he has been exposed to the same temptation and withstood it. Of course he should 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. A person who repents his sins is known as a *ba'al teshuvah*. Many rabbis of the Talmud believed that the real *ba'al teshuvah* is greater even than a person who has never sinned and they furthermore said that 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.*)

The Kingdoms of Glory

Lesson 20

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 Judaic Insights:

The concept of "Heaven and Hell" in most religions is very general and often vague. Even though there is little discussion of after life among the Jews, heaven and hell appear in much Jewish commentary. Again, in context to this lesson, let's review.

"The exact nature of this afterlife is the subject of great discussion in classical Jewish sources. All agree that after death the soul continues to live. The souls of the righteous enter paradise, or *Gan Eden* [Garden of Eden] as it is generally called. In that state 'there is no eating or drinking... no envy, hatred or competition but only this: that the righteous sit with crowns on their heads and delight in the splendor of God's presence' (Talmud). The souls of the wicked enter hell, or *Gehinnom*, as it is known, where they undergo purification before they too can enter paradise. The general view is that the stay in *Gehinnom* is not longer than 11 months and can only be permanent in the case of exceedingly wicked persons.

"The Mishnah states that the copper serpent (*nabash neboshet* in Hebrew) was not the power which cured the people. Rather it was when the people finally turned their eyes upward toward Heaven and listened to the will of God that they were cured. After the plague ended, the *nabash neboshet* served as an ever-present reminder of the dangers and evils which could befall the people in the desert were it not for God's constant loving care.

"The people kept the copper serpent when they settled in Erez Israel and remembered its significance. However, when they began to look up to it instead

of gazing beyond it to heaven, King Hezekiah had it destroyed so that it should not lead to idol worship.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

An image of heavenly living may be in the pattern of living in the “City of our Lord” with our Lord. The imagery of dwelling places such as tents with their poles (stakes) and curtains may represent the organized facilities and order of heaven.

“The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.” (*Isaiah 60:14*)

It seems that the “camp” of Israel was organized in a “City of the Lord” which was likened to the “House of the Lord.” 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). The Tabernacle became the place to which sacrifices were brought in times of joy and in times of sadness. 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; when they moved, the Tabernacle was taken apart, and was moved with them. Physically and spiritually it was the central object for the Children of Israel and it was through the Tabernacle that they felt their connection with God.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“The tabernacle, sometimes called the temple, was a very ornate though portable building, which the children of Israel carried with them in the wilderness. It was to this temple that Hannah went to pray and where Samuel ministered. It was the duty of the Levites to take care of this building and keep it in order. They took it apart, carried it and all that pertained to it from place to place as they journeyed in the wilderness, and then set it up again when a new camp was made.” (*Doctrines of Salvation, Joseph Fielding Smith, Vol.3, Pg.112*)

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*)

It is easy to imagine that ancient Israel lived this way as 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!’” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr. - Numbers 24:5*)

Is it possible that the areas of responsibility and assigned living were “staked” out, that there were 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.*)

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*)

“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.*)

In the latter-days, an organizational unit called “Stakes of Zion” 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*)

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. Originally, however, it referred to the actual bridal chamber, the tent or room of the groom to which the bride was brought in festive procession for the marital union . . . 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 . . . Among Orthodox Jews, the preferred custom is to erect the *huppah* outside, or at least in a spot open to the sky, underneath the stars, because of God's assurance to Abraham that He would make his descendants ‘as numerous as the stars of the heavens’ (Genesis 22:17).” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

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.

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

Lesson 21

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 Judaic Insights:

Religious Jews still practice many forms of ancient rites and rituals whose meanings may have become distorted or lost over many years without priesthood guidance. With the restoration of the priesthood, we are now privileged to glean from our study of the old practices a better understanding of the true principles embodied in the “Old Covenant” and to comprehend how the “New Covenant” restores the true doctrine that underlies those ancient practices. In these rituals are the very signs of the “Great Day of the Lord to Come.”

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 the eldest male blessing and partaking of a piece of broken bread, after which, again, the rest of the family partakes.

A rabbi once explained that if “kosher” wine was unavailable that “living water” should be used instead. In Judaic commentary, the term “bread and water” have been explained as “food and wine.” This may be the possible context of using water instead of “unkosher” wine, that is, wine from an unknown source.

“. . . And He will bless thy bread and thy water, as the ‘bread’ spoken of is a food that may be bought with the money of the Second Tithe so is the ‘water’ a liquid that may be bought with the money of the Second Tithe. Now such a liquid is, of course, wine, and yet it is called ‘water’.” (*Talmud, Eiruvim 65a*)

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 one particular time in the Passover meal when the children find a “lost piece of bread,” the “afikommen.” At the end of the meal, the “found” piece of bread 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.

A prominent rabbi in Israel recently suggested that even the wine should be “unleavened” or unfermented. This could be considered as “new wine.” The ancient metaphor of new wine was also used to anticipate the Deliverer. Ancient prophets said,

“Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine.” (*Joel 1:5*)

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine.” (*Joel 3:18*)

“No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.” (*Luke 5:39*)

Analyzing the symbolism, the Passover Seder meal is done in remembrance of the first Passover deliverance. At this occasion wine is poured before the bread is broken, the prayers look forward to a greater deliverance in the future. In the Seder, there are three times when the wine is blessed and sipped. Following each wine sip, a piece of unleavened bread is used. Each piece is blessed, broken, and eaten. There is a total of three pieces of bread, but they are used four times. Toward the beginning of the Seder, the middle of three pieces is first broken in two. One piece has to be hidden away, usually in an upper part of the house. In any case, it must be hidden “above” something, in other words, slightly above the children—yet within reach.

A complete meal is eaten with a door left open for Elijah who, by Jewish tradition, would announce the coming Messiah. After the meal, children search for the hidden piece of bread (*afikommen*) that is often wrapped in a red cloth. When found, the children receive a gift. This piece of bread is then blessed, broken, and eaten. Some traditions use this last piece of bread, the *afikommen*, to dip in the very sweet mixture of fruit and nuts, the *Charoseth*. After the *afikommen* is found the fourth cup of wine is poured and blessed. The master of the house then says, “Drink all of it.” The prayer spoken then invokes a hope for the Temple and Jerusalem to be rebuilt and anticipates a greater deliverance in the future.

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.

“... took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.”
(*Luke 22:19*)

“And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it . . .” (*Matthew 26:27*)

“For this is in remembrance of my blood of the new testament, which is shed for as many as shall believe on my name, for the remission of their sins.” (*Matthew 26:24^{JST}*)

The messianic symbolism can be further visualized in the three pieces of unleavened bread that could represent God, His Son, and the Holy Ghost. The three pieces are usually layered top, center, and bottom. Another chiasmus can be recognized as first it is “wine and bread” then, after the “hidden” center piece is found, it is “bread and wine.” The Atonement is the center focus. A tradition to place the hidden piece above something 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 “kalima” (guest chamber or inn) was filled with other family members. The second time he comes dressed in red and in great glory from above. It is the later generations (the children’s children) that find Him and “great shall be their reward.”

It bears repeating, as stated in the Book of Numbers (19:1-9), the Red Heifer ritual was for forgiveness of sins. This was made possible through the “red” atonement of the Lord 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).

In that sense, even the color of blood (red) has stayed 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 in perfect physical condition—‘a red heifer, faultless, containing no blemish and which has never been yoked.’ The rabbis interpreted ‘faultless’ to mean perfect in color also, ruling that even two non-red hairs in its hide were enough to disqualify it. Obviously such an animal was very rare and apparently the ceremony was performed only a very few times in all of ancient Jewish history.

“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 now, 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*)

“Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink— Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.” (*Doctrine and Covenants 19:18-19*)

“... I have trodden the wine-press alone, and have brought judgment upon all people; and none were with me; And I have trampled them in my fury, and I did tread upon them in mine anger, and their blood have I sprinkled upon my garments, and stained all my raiment ...” (*Doctrine and Covenants 133:50-51*)

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, travelling 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*)

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 they are asking indicates that they have not been instructed. They just don’t know the account of the Gethsemane suffering and of the crucifixion.

“And then shall the Jews look upon me and say: What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet? Then shall they know that I am the Lord; for I will say unto them: These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God.”

(Following their instruction and learning—things that we may be so familiar with . . .)

“ . . . then shall they weep because of their iniquities; then shall they lament because they persecuted their king.” (*Doctrine & Covenants 45:51-53*)

It will be a Godly sorrow and, better yet, from the captivity of all the sorrow and persecution they have endured, they will be set free. They will hear him, their king, whom they did not know, say—as Isaiah prophesied . . .

“The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;” (*Isaiah 61:1*)

There will be those who will not abide his presence, those who said they knew him, yet continued in their secret sins even though he has already atoned for them. Their self-serving, selfish lives result in an ungodly sorrow, lamenting because they knowingly persecuted their king.

The Word of Wisdom: “A Principle with Promise”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 89; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, February 27, 1833. HC 1: 327—329. As a consequence of the early brethren using tobacco in their meetings, the Prophet was led to ponder upon the matter; consequently he inquired of the Lord concerning it. This revelation, known as the Word of Wisdom, was the result. The first three verses were originally written as an inspired introduction and description by the Prophet. 1—9, Use of wine, strong drinks, tobacco, and hot drinks proscribed; 10—17, Herbs, fruits, flesh, and grain are ordained for the use of man and of animals; 18—21, Obedience to gospel law, including the Word of Wisdom, brings temporal and spiritual blessings.

Doctrine and Covenants 49:19—21; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Sidney Rigdon, Parley P. Pratt, and Leman Copley, at Kirtland, Ohio, March 1831. HC 1: 167—169. (Some historical sources give the date of this revelation as May 1831.) Leman Copley had embraced the gospel, but still held to some of the teachings of the Shakers (United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing) to which he had formerly belonged. Some of the beliefs of the Shakers were that Christ's second coming had already occurred and he had appeared in the form of a woman, Ann Lee; baptism by water was not considered essential; the eating of pork was specifically forbidden, and many did not eat any meat; and a celibate life was considered higher than marriage. In prefacing this revelation, the Prophet wrote, “In order to have a more perfect understanding on the subject, I inquired of the Lord, and received the following.” The revelation refuted some of the basic concepts of the Shaker group. The aforementioned brethren took a copy of the revelation to the Shaker community (near Cleveland, Ohio) and read it to them in its entirety, but it was rejected. 17—21, Eating of meat is approved.

Doctrine and Covenants 59:15—21; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, August 7, 1831. HC 1: 196—201. Preceding his record of this revelation, the Prophet writes descriptively of the land of Zion wherein the people were then assembled. The land was consecrated, as the Lord had directed, and the site for the future temple was dedicated. The Lord makes these commandments especially applicable to the saints in Zion. 9—19, By keeping the Lord's day holy, the saints are blessed temporally and spiritually; 20—24, The righteous are promised peace in this world and eternal life in the world to come.

Doctrine and Covenants 88:124; 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; 117—126, Seek learning, establish a house of God [a temple], and clothe yourselves with the bond of charity.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

In the Garden of Eden, there was a law of health—things you should and should not eat. The Lord gave the Children of Israel a law of health. It could be called a “Word of Wisdom.” The Jews call it the correct, proper or fit way of living, the Kashrut, or being kosher. The word kosher is also used as meaning correct. The Kashrut has been modified throughout the ages, yet some basics still remain as was given at Mount Sinai.

In this modern age, there are some Jews who will not eat meat because there are no sacrifices and the meat cannot be prepared in the correct way. Others will only eat meat that is kosher, that is, slaughtered in the way sacrifices were done and only eating the parts of the animal as prescribed in the Law of Moses. It may be very enlightening to know the modern explanation of Kashrut, so it is included for your reference:

“The dietary laws affect a Jew every day of his life and aim to insure that the holiness of the Jewish nation will be preserved through the consumption of food which is fit and proper.

“Fruits and Vegetables: From the point of view of the dietary laws, all fruits and vegetables are permitted. However, there are certain limitations on the drinking of wine, and in Erez Israel there are restrictions applying to agricultural produce,

such as the laws of tithes and Sabbatical years. However, the main concern of the dietary laws is which animals, birds and fish are fit to be eaten and how they must be prepared for consumption.

“Animals: The Bible classifies those animals permitted to be eaten as tahor (‘pure’) and those prohibited as tamei (‘unclean’). Animals which are permissible must have two characteristics: they must chew the cud and have cloven hooves. Among these are cattle, sheep, goats and deer. Animals which have only one of the required characteristics are prohibited; for example, the camel and rabbit which chew their cud but do not have cloven hooves, and the pig which has cloven hooves but does not chew the cud. Altogether the Bible enumerates 42 unclean animals which are forbidden.

“Birds: On the basis of the unclean birds mentioned in the Bible, the rabbis of the Talmud compiled a list of 24 birds which are forbidden, among them birds of prey such as the vulture, raven, eagle and hawk. Although the Bible does say which birds are not clean, it does not list the clean birds. The Mishnah, however, states their characteristics: they must have a crop, a gizzard which can be easily peeled off and an extra claw. Among these clean birds are domestic fowl, pigeon and dove. Eggs from unclean birds are regarded as unclean and even the eggs of permitted birds are forbidden if they have been fertilized (usually indicated by the presence of a blood spot).

“Fish: A fish is considered ‘clean’ if it has fins and scales, which usually indicate a fish found in freshwater areas. Those without fins and scales usually live in the muddy, swampy areas and are considered unclean. In the category of unclean fish which are forbidden are shellfish such as lobster, clams, shrimp and oysters.

“Insects: Nearly all insects are considered unclean and may not be eaten. Some species of locusts are permitted as the Talmud gives a detailed description of them. Nowadays, however not enough is known about them and they are all forbidden. It is therefore important to carefully clean and examine vegetables where insects are apt to hide (such as cabbage, cauliflower and romaine lettuce) in order to be sure that the insects will not be eaten with the vegetable. Although the bee is a forbidden insect, its honey is permitted to be eaten.

“Slaughtering: Dietary laws are more than mere enumerations of which animals, birds and fish may be eaten. Vital to the observance of kashrut are the laws regarding shehitah or ritual slaughter. The many complex and minute regulations about how an animal or bird may be slaughtered make it necessary that a carefully trained and licensed shohet perform the slaughter. It is his duty to carry out a careful examination of the animal after it has been slaughtered to make certain that there is no defect in any of its organs. Any defect that would have led to the animal's death within a year makes the animal considered a terefah. It is absolutely prohibited for consumption. An animal which has died a natural death or was killed by any other means than shehitah is called a nevelah and is forbidden to be eaten. None of the laws of shehitah apply to fish.

“Forbidden Portions: After an animal has been ritually slaughtered there are certain unclean portions which must be removed before the animal may be prepared for eating. The sciatic nerve and the fatty portions (helev) attached to the stomach and intestines of the animal are among these parts which are forbidden to be eaten.

“Koshering: After the shehitah and the removal of forbidden parts, the animal or bird must go through the process of ‘koshering.’ Based on the prohibition of eating blood, the purpose of koshering meat is to drain the meat and draw out the blood before it is cooked. This is accomplished by either soaking and salting the meat, or by broiling it over an open flame. If the salting-soaking process is used, the meat is soaked in clean cold water for 30 minutes, and then drained on a special grooved slanted board so that the blood may flow down. The meat is then sprinkled with salt (preferably coarse salt) which must be left on for one hour, and then it is rinsed in cold water two or three times. All the utensils for the procedure must be kept separately and used exclusively for the purpose of koshering. Such a procedure is not considered effective enough to kosher the liver which is full of blood. Therefore, liver may only be koshered over an open flame.

“Milk and Meat: The koshering process completed, the meat is now ready to be cooked. Here too, there are important dietary laws governing the preparation of meat. The Torah commands: ‘Thou shalt not cook a kid goat in its mother's milk,’ a command from which three distinct prohibitions are learned: cooking meat and milk together, eating meat and milk together, and deriving any benefit from their mixture. (Milk includes all dairy products such as butter, cheese and cream). In order to insure that these prohibitions would be properly observed, the rabbis ordained that separate cooking utensils, dishes and cutlery be used for dairy and meat respectively. These must be washed separately and stored separately. According to the Talmud, one may not eat milk after meat in the same meal. From this prohibition, various customs about the waiting interval between meat and milk arose in different Jewish communities. The Eastern European Jews observe an interval of six hours between meat and milk, while Western Europeans wait three hours, and the Sephardim and the Dutch one hour. The necessity of a waiting interval between meat and milk is explained by the fact that meat takes longer to digest and has a tendency to become lodged between the teeth. However, owing to the fact that milk products are digested quickly, it is permissible to eat meat directly after dairy, provided the mouth is rinsed thoroughly first. After hard cheese, though, it is customary to wait a longer period, since hard cheese takes longer to digest. Imitation ‘milk’ derived from coconuts and soybeans may be used with meat. Fruit, vegetables, eggs and fish are all ‘neutral’ (parve) foods which may be eaten with milk or meat dishes. However, the rabbis prohibited eating fish and meat together on the grounds that such a combination is unhealthy.

“Mixtures: If meat becomes mixed with dairy or if a forbidden food becomes mixed with a permitted food the ruling is as follows: If the quantity of the forbidden food is 1/60 or more of the mixture, it has ‘contaminated’ the permitted food and the whole mixture is therefore forbidden. If the quantity of forbidden food is less than 1/60, the mixture is permitted provided that the forbidden food was not added intentionally for the purpose of affecting the taste. Many packaged foods sold on the market today contain such forbidden mixtures and therefore are not kosher. Among these are cookies, cakes and bread which contain animal fats. In accordance with the prohibition of forbidden mixtures, the precaution that the milk of an unclean animal should not become mixed with the milk of a clean animal gave rise to the Jewish custom of drinking halav Yisrael, milk obtained and bottled under the supervision of a Jew. This ensures that no forbidden substances will be added to the milk. However, in modern times, since state laws prohibit such mixtures and since ‘unclean’ milk is more

expensive than ‘clean’ milk and would probably not be mixed, many authorities permit the use of milk which has not been supervised by Jews. Nevertheless, the very pious still observe the custom of using halav Yisrael.

“Throughout the ages Jews have endangered their lives and even died as martyrs to faithfully observe the dietary laws. During the period of the Greek rule of Erez Israel (second century B.C.E.) many Jews chose to die rather than eat the unclean foods which the Greeks forced upon them. In peril of their lives, Jews carried out the laws of ritual slaughter during the Crusades. The Marranos of the Inquisition, the Cantonists of Czarist Russia, and the inmates of Nazi concentration camps all remained steadfastly faithful to the laws of Kashrut, despite all threats.

“Attempts have been made to explain the dietary laws in various ways. Many thinkers (including Maimonides) have seen the dietary laws as hygienic precautions and have attempted to prove that all forbidden foods are unwholesome. Others have attempted to give the philosophical reasons for Kashrut. One such explanation is that Kashrut hallows the common act of eating and preserves the holiness of the soul through the cleanliness of the foods which the body consumes. However, the observance of Kashrut is not dependent on any explanation since the Torah commands the dietary laws without giving a reason. Therefore, a halakhic Midrash states ‘Let not a man say, ‘I do not like the flesh of swine.’ On the contrary, he should say, ‘I like it but must not eat it since the Torah has forbidden it.’” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

It is clear that the biblical account of Daniel shows his humble dedication to the Lord’s principles of proper living. His unswerving obedience to the “Word of Wisdom” is an example for many people today who are committed to keeping the Lord’s health code.

Lesson 23

“Seek Learning, Even by Study and Also by Faith”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 88:118; 121–126; 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. 117–126, Seek learning, establish a house of God [a temple], and clothe yourselves with the bond of charity.

Doctrine and Covenants 78:17–18; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, March 1832. The order given of the Lord to Joseph Smith for the purpose of establishing a storehouse for the poor. HC 1: 255–257. It was not always desirable that the identity of the individuals whom the Lord addressed in the revelations should be known by the world; hence, in the publication of this and some subsequent revelations the brethren were referred to by other than their own names. When the necessity had passed for keeping the names of the individuals unknown, their real names were thereafter given in brackets. Since there exists no vital need today to continue the code names, the real names only are now used herein, as given in the original manuscripts. 17–22, Blessed are the faithful, for they shall inherit all things.

Doctrine and Covenants 90:15; Revelation to Joseph Smith the Prophet, given at Kirtland, Ohio, March 8, 1833. HC 1: 329–331. This revelation is a continuing step in the establishment of the First Presidency (see heading to Section 81), and as a consequence thereof the counselors mentioned were ordained on March 18, 1833. 12–18, Joseph Smith and his counselors are to set in order the Church

Doctrine and Covenants 68:25–28; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, November 1831, at the request of Orson Hyde, Luke S. Johnson, Lyman E. Johnson, and William E. McLellin. HC 1: 227–229. Although this revelation was given in response to supplication that the mind of the Lord be made known concerning the elders named, much of the content pertains to the whole Church. 25–28, Parents are commanded to teach the gospel to their children.

Matthew 25:14–30; Jesus foretells the doom of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple—Great calamities shall precede his Second Coming—He gives the parable of the fig tree.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

As a reminder, the preface to these lesson supplements includes the first two verses of the Book of Mormon. Therein, the Prophet Nephi gave us the key to understanding the scriptures. We need the “learning of the Jews” along with the “knowledge of the mysteries of God.” In this case, the “mysteries” are simply the subtle, God-given instructions known by the gift of the Holy Ghost. The imagery of Isaiah can best be understood by knowing his political, cultural and geographic environment. He testifies of the Messiah through everything around him. After all, He is in all things.

“He that ascended up on high, as also he descended below all things, in that he comprehended all things, that he might be in all and through all things, the light of truth; Which truth shineth. This is the light of Christ. As also he is in the sun, and the light of the sun, and the power thereof by which, it was made. As also he is in the moon, and is the light of the moon, and the power thereof by which it was made; As also the light of the stars, and the power thereof by which they were made; And the earth also, and the power thereof, even the earth upon which you stand. And the light which shineth, which giveth you light, is through him who enlighteneth your eyes, which is the same light that quickeneth your understandings; Which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space—The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things.” (*Doctrine and Covenants 88:6-13*)

The Old Testament only has about 8,900 different words (English has about 850,000), yet the illustrative capacity of the prophets is expressed through the images that are

given. Hence, Daniel was able to interpret the king's dreams using "the learning of the Jews" as well as being "Highly favored of the Lord."

As stated previously, Jewish learning is based on the "Torah," that is, the first five books of the "Old Testament."

"The Bible is holy to Jews because it represents the Word of God. This is particularly true of the Torah which is, so to speak, God's direct statement. The halakhah, or Jewish law, which is the authoritative guide for a Jew's life, is mainly based on the Torah, so obviously study of the Torah as well as the rest of the Bible is one of the prime religious duties.

"The custom of reading the Torah publicly is very, very ancient—originating with Ezra in the fifth-fourth centuries B.C.E. At some later date a reading from the *Nevi'im* was added; this corresponding passage from the Prophets is known as the Haftorah." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The Latter-day Saints' use of the Doctrine and Covenants and the "Pearl of Great Price" constitutes the LDS *Haftorah*. Literally, it is the reading of the *Nevi'im*, the "Prophets," with their explanations and heavenly insights.

There is a popular saying in Israel that epitomizes the Jewish propensity for polemics. Jokingly, they say, "Two Jews in a conversation always come up with three opinions." It is Jewish nature to discuss and even make up opposite points of view in order to derive a learning experience from the resulting contrasts.

"A.J. Heschel (1907-1972) based his views on a Midrash stating that holiness is the only way to combat evil and that learning and obeying the precepts of Torah is the only way to gain holiness. The simplest advice in combating evil: 'Turn from evil and do good' is from the Book of Psalms (34:15)." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Three tools of learning that God gave us are seeing (visual), hearing (audio) and feeling (kinesthetic). One of the ways of recognizing these meta-programs (human perception modes) is in the words we use to describe our reactions: "I see," "Sounds right to me," "I feel all right about this."

"... then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." (*Genesis 3:5*)

"And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them." (*Deuteronomy 5:1*)

"Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing; and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment." (*Ecclesiastes 8:5*)

Isaiah used simple words as metaphors to reach those who can see, those who can hear, and those who perceive.

"Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." (*Isaiah 6:10*)

Please note the chiasmus: heart, ears, eyes, then eyes, ears, heart. The center point being eyes; Isaiah is giving us an “insight.”

Advertising experts appeal to our eyes, make it sound right, and have us feel the worth of their products. These are the most powerful meta-programs to teach about and experience life, even Eternal Life.

To improve our perception of “learning,” let’s consider the way Jesus taught through parables. Around the eastern and northern shores of the Sea of Galilee are numerous coves. They were created by erosion as the prolific rainfall in the winter months raced downward through small canyons to the lake, drawing the black igneous basalt stone and gravel out past the shoreline. One such cove is very close to Capernaum. There are boulders of stone, choking thorn bushes, and patches of fertile land, all situated close to the road that leads to Capernaum, where Jesus lived.

It is much easier to picture the parable in chapter thirteen of Matthew taking place in the setting of such a cove than imagining some one speaking from a boat to a multitude scattered across a straight shoreline. The shape of the cove allows more people to be close to a vessel anchored a little way out from the shore, and the acoustics of the water carrying the sound to the surrounding banks permits the listening crowd to hear every word clearly.

The most significant message in the parable of the sower is in verse twelve. It is the center of another chiasmus. It is a message of the Gift of the Holy Ghost. The parable uses the wayside, stony place, and the thorns as image points. Then in reverse, consider that the heart was not pricked, the ears were not unplugged (as if stones were in their ears), and their hearts couldn’t understand the way.

Reminding ourselves again, the inspired translation of those verses makes the lesson of using the gift of the Holy Ghost easier to understand.

“For whosoever receiveth to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever continueth not to receive, from him shall be taken even that he hath.” (*Matthew 13:12 JST*)

There is a modern proverb which repeats this message: “If you don’t use it, you’ll lose it.” By exercising the gift, it expands and grows. The parables that Jesus used offered learning experiences on the level of those listening, according to their sense of understanding. Parables are like paintings. They can be studied for more interpretation. Many of Jesus’ parables contained references to nature and human experiences.

“Rabbi Johanan the shoemaker is only one example. The ideal suggested and followed by most of the sages is to combine learning and work. Maimonides proposed that the day be divided into thirds, with equal time for learning, labor and other matters.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

There is a lesson in going back to the “learning of the fathers.” The Hebrew word for “going back” is the same as “repent.”

“Say nothing but repentance unto this generation; keep my commandments and assist to bring forth my work, according to my commandments, and you shall be blessed.” (*Doctrine & Covenants 6:9*)

There is a lesson in combining an understanding of the “Learning of the Jews” and knowing the “mysteries” of the Lord.

“For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in these times as in times of old, and as well in times of old as in times to come; wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round.” (*Nephi 10:19*)

“Books and learning are so much a part of Jewish tradition, that Jews are called ‘the people of the Book.’ Indeed, many of the violent acts of antisemitism throughout history were accompanied by the defacement and burning of books. The persecutors, knowing how much anguish this would cause, identified the book with the Jew. Today, all over the world, with books and paperback editions readily accessible, Jewish book collectors are common. Israel ranks second in the world in the number of books of all kinds bought per person.”

“‘The land between the rivers’ [Tigris and Euphrates], Mesopotamia, is the ancient name for the region today covered by Iraq, Iran and parts of Syria and Turkey. Western civilization (the establishment of written language, codified law, cities and trade) began in this region toward the end of the fourth millennium (i.e., four thousand years) B.C.E. when the Sumerians emerged as the dominant element in an intermingling of several migrant peoples. Sumer became the name of the land at the head of the Persian Gulf and Sumerian its language. To the Sumerians we owe the full development of writing, possibly the invention of bronze metallurgy . . .

“Writing had a profound effect on Judaism. The covenant between God and the Chosen People was transformed into a written text; the central religious object became the Ten Commandments, inscribed on stone; and later the Torah scroll was to be revered. The biblical society as a whole became ‘book centered.’ In contrast to many other societies, the Israelites did not limit the acquisition of the arts of reading and writing to the nobility—any tribesman, even a non-priest, could become a literate leader. Certainly by King Hezekiah's time (eighth century B.C.E.), a great deal of literary activity was taking place.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The principle of “return to the Lord” is a great motivating factor in Jewish life. Special ‘Yeshiva’ institutes have been established to help those who have “gone astray.” Someone who does not speak Hebrew may not recognize that “Yeshiva” and the word “teshuvah” have a common root.

“Repentance in Hebrew is known as teshuvah, which literally means ‘return,’ and signifies a return to God. A person who repents his sins is known as a ba'al teshuvah. Many rabbis of the Talmud believed that the real ba'al teshuvah is greater even than a person who has never sinned and they further more said that 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.*)

The connection to “family” is unending, even if one “goes astray.” The connection to this familial identity is unalterable:

“Yet according to Jewish law, . . . being born of a Jewish mother, [one] never [loses] his Jewish status . . . Indeed, as the Talmud teaches: ‘A Jew, even if he has sinned, remains a Jew’.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“. . . the mid-19th century . . . outstanding rabbinical authority . . . (Lithuanian) of his day, Israel Lipkin . . . felt that the Jews were seeing Judaism as a ritualistic religion and were observing the *mitzvot* in a mechanical manner and ignoring the fact that Judaism requires of man to be as good and ethical as he can possibly be. He believed that this could be corrected only by intensive study of texts which discuss the proper behavior required and the way to achieve it; and he inaugurated a movement to make such study an integral part of the curriculum of the yeshivot and to establish a small ‘*musar* room’ in every neighborhood where people would go for a short period every day to ‘check up on their spiritual well being.’

“Habad has developed a widespread network of schools, and it was the first Hasidic group to open yeshivot for the study of Torah and other religious subjects. They are also very active in attempting to help Russian Jews to emigrate to Israel. They run a strong ‘propaganda’ campaign and, in Jerusalem, the tourist visiting the Western Wall is likely to be approached by a Habad Hasid with a pair of *tefillin* in his hand, suggesting that he put them on then and there.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In learning about establishing a “City of Zion” and preparing ourselves to live in the “City of the Lord” some cleansing symbolism can be seen. As in the war of heaven when one third were cast out, so too, shall one third of Israel perish. Israel was once a Zion society. The “Camp of Israel,” was reduced to a series of large courtyards dedicated to the Lord which eventually became a House of The Lord. Even so, will it return again to the stakes of Zion and become the “Camp of the Lord,” or the “City of The Lord.” Every dwelling place will be sacred and cleansed for the Lord to be able to dwell there.

“For verily I say unto you, that after you have had sufficient time to build a house to me, wherein the ordinance of baptizing for the dead belongeth, and for which the same was instituted from before the foundation of the world, your baptisms for your dead cannot be acceptable unto me; For therein are the keys of the holy priesthood ordained, that you may receive honor and glory. And after this time, your baptisms for the dead, by those who are scattered abroad, are not acceptable unto me, saith the Lord. For it is ordained that in Zion, and in her stakes, and in Jerusalem, those places which I have appointed for refuge, shall be the places for your baptisms for your dead.” (*D&C 124:33-36*)

“And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defense.” (*Isaiah 4:5*)

In picturing this “city temple” scene from our own home in Jerusalem, my sweetheart, Marilyn, said to me, “Daniel, that means you’ll have to have a temple recommend to carry out the trash!” Our goal is to make our home worthy of being part of a temple city, always open to welcome our Savior.

“Be Not Deceived, but Continue in Steadfastness”

Lesson 24

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 26; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, Oliver Cowdery, and John Whitmer, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, July 1830. See HC 1: 104; see also heading to Section 24. 1, They are instructed to study the scriptures and to preach; 2, The law of common consent is affirmed.

Doctrine and Covenants 28; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Oliver Cowdery, at Fayette, New York, September 1830. HC 1: 109—111. Hiram Page, a member of the Church, had a certain stone, and professed to be receiving revelations by its aid concerning the upbuilding of Zion and the order of the Church. Several members had been deceived by these claims, and even Oliver Cowdery was wrongly influenced thereby. Just prior to an appointed conference, the Prophet inquired earnestly of the Lord concerning the matter, and this revelation followed. 1—7, Joseph Smith holds keys of the mysteries, and only he receives revelations for the Church; 8—10, Oliver Cowdery is to preach to the Lamanites; 11—16, Satan deceived Hiram Page and gave him false revelations.

Doctrine and Covenants 43:1—7; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, in February 1831. HC 1: 154—156. At this time some members of the Church were disturbed by people making false claims as revelators. The Prophet inquired of the Lord and received this communication addressed to the elders of the Church. The first part deals with matters of Church polity; the latter part contains a warning that the elders are to give to the nations of the earth. 1—7, Revelations and commandments come only through the one appointed.

Doctrine and Covenants 50; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, May 1831. HC 1: 170—173. The Prophet states that some of the elders did not understand the manifestations of different spirits abroad in the earth, and that this revelation was given in response to his special inquiry on the matter. So-called spiritual phenomena were not uncommon among the members, some of whom claimed to be receiving visions and revelations. 1—5, Many false spirits are abroad in the earth; 6—9, Woe unto the hypocrites and those who are cut off from the Church; 10—14, Elders are to preach the gospel by the Spirit; 15—22, Both preachers and hearers need to be enlightened by the Spirit; 23—25, That which doth not edify is not of God; 26—28, The faithful are possessors of all things; 29—36, Prayers of the purified are answered; 37—46, Christ is the Good Shepherd and the Stone of Israel.

Doctrine and Covenants 52:14—19; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, to the elders of the Church, at Kirtland, Ohio, June 7, 1831. HC 1: 175—179. A conference had been held at Kirtland, beginning on the 3rd, and closing on the 6th of June. At this conference the first distinctive ordinations to the office of high priest were made, and certain manifestations of false and deceiving spirits were discerned and rebuked. 12—21, Those enlightened by the Spirit bring forth fruits of praise and wisdom.

Doctrine and Covenants 112:2—3; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Thomas B. Marsh, at Kirtland, Ohio, July 23, 1837. HC 2: 499—501. The word of the Lord unto Thomas B. Marsh, concerning the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb. The Prophet records that this revelation was received on the day on which the gospel was first preached in England. Thomas B. Marsh was at this time president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. 1—10, The Twelve are to send the gospel and raise the warning voice to all nations and people.

Doctrine and Covenants 64:8—11; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to the elders of the Church, at Kirtland, Ohio, September 11, 1831. HC 1: 211—214. The Prophet was preparing to move to Hiram, Ohio, to renew his work on the translation of the Bible, which had been laid aside while he had been in Missouri. A company of brethren who had been commanded to journey to Zion (Missouri) was earnestly engaged in making preparations to leave in October. At this busy time, the revelation was received. 1—11, The saints are commanded to forgive one another, lest there remain in them the greater sin.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

My father's example of life gave me an understanding that could be illustrated by the phrase, "Never let what you cannot do get in the way of what you can do." I'll add to that, "Never let what you do not know get in the way of what you do know." Satan would have you become confused and deceived because you may not know the answers to every question. There's no excuse in not holding fast to the truths that have already built part of a solid wall of security.

The late Elder Theodore M. Burton once told me a story which I see around me all the time in Israel. The many natural terraces are constantly being reinforced by rock walls made by the farmers clearing their hillside farms. Elder Burton relates that a farmer was placing the rocks in his "hedge" each one placed on top of or next to another. Somehow they fit and supported themselves until at one location the rocks were just

misfit. They were either too large or too small. So the farmers left a gap and continued. At the end of his “hedge” or fence, there were some extra stones left over. The farmer took them back to the gap and made a perfect fit.

It is similar to our gospel study. There are times that we just don’t understand . . . so we should continue, leaving a gap. With patience and time there comes a moment in time when we have extra “rocks” that will fill the gap.

“In biblical times, Jerusalem was surrounded by thick, green forests of almond, olive and pine trees. But in the course of numerous wars and settlements, much of this lush greenery was destroyed and the soil left to dry out in the summer sun and wash away in the heavy winter rains. From earliest times, farmers have therefore been forced to terrace the ground and build stone fences along the slopes to hold back the soil. This stone terracing is still in evidence all along the Jerusalem landscape.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Is it possible that pride creates some of those gaps in our rock walls? Here are some interesting thoughts connecting pride and rocks.

The name of the ‘Tower of Babel,’ the unfinished tower, was called Babel, because God mixed up (Hebrew *balal*) man’s language. They “babbled.”

“According to some modern commentators, the building of the tower was an example of man’s extreme pride in his own ability. The building became such an obsession that, according to the Midrash, when a builder fell off the tower to his death, the other builders paid no attention, but when a brick fell, they would cry: ‘When shall another come in its place?’ According to this interpretation, every generation has its own Tower of Babel, when it begins to idolize its technology. The moral of the story is thus as applicable today as it was thousands of years ago.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The tower people wanted to ‘make a name’ for themselves rather than take the ‘name of God’ upon themselves. In Hebrew, the name of God, “Jehovah,” (English spelling) is unmentionable. It means “I AM.” That conjugation is not even used in modern Hebrew. Moses asked the Lord’s name:

“And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” (*Exodus 3:13-14*)

The practice of avoiding the use of “I am” in Hebrew seems to suggest a way to reduce pride. Ancient Joseph overcame his “pride” and served his brothers forgivingly (at first without identifying himself). He thereby established a pattern for a latter-day Joseph, who for the time being is keeping his identity from Judah and should avoid all forms of pride as he serves his family forgivingly.

In the Old Testament, Elisha’s example was that he was a servant of God. He even refused payment for healing Syria’s highest ranking officer in the Land of Israel at that time. The complication was that the Children of Israel strongly objected to the Syrian “occupying” forces. The prophet was probably teaching the same principle that Jesus taught and that has been revealed again in our day:

“Then saith he unto them, Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.” (*Matthew 22:21*)

“We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.” (*Articles of Faith 11*)

Recall that the faithful young woman, serving in Naaman’s household, was a believer and prompted the “occupying” Syrian officer to come to the prophet to be blessed. The prophet sent a message to do something simple—bathe in the Jordan River. When he finally “swallowed his pride,” he was blessed! Imagine—the “enemy” was blessed!

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” (*Matthew 5:44*)

We don’t know for sure if that even resulted in the conversion of Naaman, and it does not matter. The blessing was unconditional on that point. The lesson for the unbelieving Israelites was repeated by the Savior as he said:

“And many lepers were in Israel in the time of (Elisha) the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.” (*Luke 4:27*)

On the subject of pride, Latter-day Saints have been given special counsel. In 1989, President Ezra Taft Benson said, “Pride is ugly.” There is no justifiable use of the words pride or proud. Apparently every mention of pride in the scriptures is negative. As a replacement for the word pride or proud let us consider the highest compliment and honor as stated in the scriptures.

“While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” (*Matthew 17:5*)

“When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!” (*Joseph Smith History 1:17*)

In Hebrew the root meaning for pride is actually “excellence.” Who are we call ourselves, “excellent?” After I had spoken on this subject in a fireside, a couple named Brother and Sister Pride, came to me and said that they were now considering changing their names to Brother and Sister “Pleased!”

Study requires the ability to entertain several points of view without creating disputations. The history of disputations or polemics is common in Judaism, both biblically and in more recent times. The arguments, proving and disproving, appeared both positively and negatively, for and against the Jews. It is human nature, yet more so a characteristic of Jewish culture, to have two-sided debates.

“Throughout history Jews have often been called on to defend their faith against non-believers in public debates known as disputations or polemics. Often these disputations were conducted in friendly atmospheres of mutual respect, but all too often these debates took on aspects of bitterness.

“The developing rift between Christianity and Judaism and the animosity after their final split in the second century C.E. produced many great disputations. A crucial one occurred about the time of the Bar Kokhba revolt (c. 135 C.E.) between the Christian Justin Martyr and the Jew Tryphon. While the two adversaries expressed friendship toward each other, the argument became bitter.

“Christian-Jewish disputation continued and Muslim-Jewish debates, which began in the 10th century, developed as well. Questions concerning the text of the Bible and Jewish way of life were discussed. The Jews questioned the Koran's value and attacked Muhammad in the process.

“Nahmanides defended Judaism at the famous Disputation of Barcelona in 1263. Fearlessly questioning the nature of Christian authority and teaching, Nahmanides asked why, if the Messiah had come, the world was still torn by war. He was declared the victor and given a monetary prize for his efforts.

“Disputations still occurred in the 20th century. Franz Rosenzweig corresponded with the Christian philosopher Eugene Rosenstock Huessy, and Martin Buber was in disputation with Karl Ludwig Schmidt as the anti-Jewish laws were being implemented in Germany in 1933. In the face of Nazi Germany, Buber declared: ‘We also know, as we know that there exists air that we take into our lungs, that there exists the plane on which we move; nay, deeper, more truly we know that world history has not yet been probed to its roots, that the world is not yet redeemed.’ These disputations have traditionally seen some of history's most elegant and powerful defenses of the Jewish faith.

“Within Judaism the polemics, or scholarly arguments, have been almost as bitter. From the Talmudic period when the Sadducees and Samaritans were in dispute with traditional Judaism, disputes have been frequent. Purely halakhic and rabbinic disputes were usually dealt within question-and-answer and other literary forms. However, battles over Kabbalah, ordination of rabbis and Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed* were more substantial.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Another noteworthy disputation came from the “Satmar Rabbi.” He argued that the Aliyah to the Land of Israel was an evil trick and thus against God's will. He felt that the establishment of Israel as a modern nation was wrong.

“Satmar [is the] name of a small, contemporary Hasidic sect, distinguished by its fanatical opposition to Zionism and the State of Israel. It takes its name from the hometown of its leader, Joel Teitelbaum of Satmar (1888–1979), and most of its adherents reside in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, New York.

“Teitelbaum was an exceedingly sharp polemicist who combined extreme fanaticism with a forceful personality . . . he regarded the Holocaust of European Jews as a direct punishment for secular Zionism . . . Teitelbaum opposed the use of Hebrew as a spoken language, since he believed that it secularized and profaned the holy tongue. He forbade the Hasidim living in his community to cooperate with State institutions and he ordered those living in Israel not to take the oath of loyalty to the State, not to take part in elections, and not to make use of its law courts or legal system.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

These kinds of disputations have drawn Jews away from dialogues with believers in Jesus, the Messiah. Disputations require some learning of the other's point of view.

Jews know very little about Jesus' restoration of the original order that Father in Heaven gave Adam and his children. However, in the last days, more and more Jews are becoming aware that religious order was restored from time to time throughout history and that there may need for a final restoration that has to happen in these latter-days. These restorations consistently review the "beginning to the end," the plan of salvation, the true order of God.

That plan included the birth of the Deliverer occurring during the season that celebrates the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and an expectation of an even greater deliverance. The two deliverances are linked by a journey through time over the course of two millennia.

"On the first day of Passover (the first two days in the Diaspora) the *full Hallel* [full praise] prayer is recited. After that, during *hol ha-mo'ed*, and on the last day (or days) only part of *Hallel* [half praise] is recited. The practice differs from Sukkot on which the *full Hallel* is chanted every day. The reason given is that freedom was achieved as the result of the death of many Egyptians, and therefore Israel's rejoicing is not complete." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Consistent study, abandonment of pride, and following a true order of God increase our security from deception and increase our capacity for Godlike love. Through the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, we find that the motivation of those whom many call the Essenes was to move away from wickedness and establish a singular community of righteousness. Their organization had a shadow of biblical organization. Their leader was called the "Teacher of Righteousness" and he had two assistants. There was also a council of "Twelve Overseers." They had an order following the 'righteous king' which is said in Hebrew, "Melech Zedek." The Dead Sea sect however, shunned others and probably evoked one of the Savior's comments in the Sermon on the Mount.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" (*Matthew 5:43-46*)

Priesthood: “The Power of Godliness”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 84:33–44; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, September 22 and 23, 1832. HC 1: 286–295. During the month of September, elders had begun to return from their missions in the eastern states and to make reports of their labors. was while they were together in this season of joy that the following communication was received. The Prophet designates it a revelation on priesthood. 33–44, Men gain eternal life through the oath and covenant of the priesthood.

Doctrine and Covenants 121:34–46; Prayer and prophecies written by Joseph Smith the Prophet, while he was a prisoner in the jail at Liberty, Missouri, dated March 20, 1839. HC 3: 289–300. The Prophet with several companions had been months in prison. Their petitions and appeals directed to the executive officers and the judiciary had failed to bring them relief. 33–40, Why many are called and few chosen; 41–46, The priesthood should be used only in righteousness.

Doctrine and Covenants 107; Revelation on priesthood, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, dated March 28, 1835. HC 2: 209–217. On the date named the Twelve met in council, confessing their individual weaknesses and shortcomings, expressing repentance, and seeking the further guidance of the Lord. They were about to separate on missions to districts assigned. Although portions of this section were received on the date named, the historical records affirm that various parts were received at sundry times, some as early as November 1831. 1–6, There are two priesthoods: the Melchizedek and the Aaronic; 7–12, Those who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood have power to officiate in all offices in the Church; 13–17, The bishopric presides over the Aaronic Priesthood, which administers in outward ordinances; 18–20, The Melchizedek Priesthood holds the keys of all spiritual blessings; the Aaronic Priesthood holds the keys of the ministering of angels; 21–38, The First Presidency, the Twelve, and the Seventy constitute the presiding quorums, whose decisions are to be made in unity and righteousness; 39–52, Patriarchal order established from Adam to Noah; 53–57, Ancient saints assembled at Adam-ondi-Ahman, and the Lord appeared to them; 58–67, The Twelve are to set the officers of the Church in order; 68–76, Bishops serve as common judges in Israel; 77–84, The First Presidency and the Twelve constitute the highest court in the Church; 85–100, Priesthood presidents govern their respective quorums.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The Priesthoods restored in Latter-days are covenants between God and man. Consider that one of the many names that describe Him is “covenant.” He is the Messenger of the Covenant.

“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.” (*Malachi 3:1*)

To the Jews who have lost the priesthood and thereby have lost the true understanding of God, comes an encouraging promise—a covenant—that they will receive a new “covenant.” This could also mean that their current concept of God, “old” to them, will be replaced with a “new” (yet original) understanding of Him. The restoration brings back the Lord and His priesthood that was broken.

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (*Jeremiah 31:31-33*)

The original true religion had an order governed by the priesthood of God. Consider the leadership of the children of Israel, a council of three, with Moses, Aaron & Hur, a Council of Twelve Elders and a Council of Seventy. It is comparable to the leadership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The latter-day Israelites led now by the tribe of Ephraim (Joseph) are also organized with a “First Presidency of three, a Quorum of Twelve and a Council of Seventy.

Attempts to return to the original organization are seen in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The best preserved of these Qumran scrolls is called *The Manual of Discipline*, a sort of doctrines and covenants of these religious people. It describes their organization that included a Teacher of Righteousness and two assistants. There was also a council of twelve overseers. Their priestly system included two castes: One of a higher authority that connected with an order of the *Melech Zedek* (righteous king), and another of lesser authority that connected with the Levitical, or Order of Aaron. They were bound by a strict order of unity. An Essene’s membership in a kibbutz-like united order came into effect only after a two-year trial period. The Essenes kept copies of the scriptures, interpretations of the scriptures, and their own scrolls of doctrines and covenants.

It looks like that this governing system was copied by Jesus, and that he may have studied with this sect. Yet, it seems highly unlikely that this is really the case. However, Jesus did use the same system of government that was given to Moses, a system that partially continued to exist in other Jewish traditions up to and at the time of Jesus.

“And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;” (*Luke 6:13*)

“After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. (*Luke 10:1*)

“And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off.” (*Exodus 24:1*)

The Qumran community did not follow the Mosaic governmental pattern completely. Jesus did. For example, Moses had a governing leadership of three persons, Moses and his two assistants, Aaron and Hur.

“And he said unto the elders, Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you: and, behold, Aaron and Hur are with you: if any man have matters to do, let him come unto them.” (*Exodus 24:14*)

Moses had a governing body of twelve elders, one from each tribe.

“These are those that were numbered . . . and the princes of Israel, being twelve men: each one was for the house of his fathers.” (*Numbers 1:44*)

This order was continued after Moses as well.

“Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man.” (*Joshua 3:12*)

In Jesus’ time, Caiaphas was the High Priest over three councils that made up the grand Sanhedrin assembly. However, Caiaphas apparently was only meeting with one of the

three councils and not the entire Sanhedrin (seventy men). The Sanhedrin would have to judge in such a case (if it were a legal trial).

The organization and growth of the Church in the Meridian of Times parallels the organization of the Church in ancient and modern times. These were and are men, in their respective times, who had authority from God to bring light and truth to the people.

Both in the Bible and in The Book of Mormon the term “judge” has an ecclesiastical connection. They were the leading elders of the people. Latter-day Saints have “Elders” who are the “Judges of Israel.”

“Now the confessed offender is not left without hope, for he can obtain forgiveness by following the course outlined, and by forsaking sins comparable to that committed, as well as all other sin, and living before the Church and the Lord in such manner as to win approbation of both. The offender who has brought stigma and affront to the ward, the stake or the mission should seek the forgiveness of those he has thus offended. That may be had at times through the presiding authorities of the various divisions of the Church. At other times it may be appropriate and quite necessary to make amends for public offenses and seek forgiveness before organizations of the people. The Judges of Israel will determine this matter. (Conf. Rep., Apr., 1954, pp. 10-13.)” (**Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Vol.3, p.278***)

“Whenever God has called and authorized men to perform a work in any age or dispensation, it has been done by revelations, and not by mere impressions, or some undefinable, internal feelings, which leave the mind in uncertainty and doubt. Noah was called by the word of the Lord to be a preacher of righteousness, and to build an ark. Abraham, Lot, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, were called by revelation to perform a great variety of duties. Moses and Aaron were called to the priest's office by the word of the great Jehovah. Seventy elders of Israel were called by revelation to assist Moses. Joshua was appointed by the word of the Lord through Moses to be his successor in leading Israel. The successors of Aaron were appointed to the priesthood by revelation. The Judges of Israel were called by visions, by angels and by the inspiration of the Spirit. Samuel was called by the voice of the Lord. And finally, all their officers, wise men and prophets, down to the days of Malachi, were called by new revelation.” (**Orson Pratt *Divine Authenticity of BofM, No. 2 (1850), p.17***)

“Because of the experience of the aged, old age and wisdom are sometimes regarded as going together. Thus, throughout the Bible and Talmud, the word ‘elder’ means judge, leader, or sage. On the other hand, the Book of Job also stresses that there are young men who are wiser than old men.

“The *shofet*, or judge, had to meet strict qualifications, besides just knowing the law. Among these qualifications were piety, wisdom, humility, gentility and human understanding. When Moses set up the first courts, he looked for ‘able men such as fear God, men of truth, hating unjust gain’ (Exodus 18:21) and ‘wise men, and understanding and full of knowledge’ (Deuteronomy 1:13). They were charged to ‘hear the causes between your brethren and judge righteously between a man and his brother and the stranger,’ not to be partial in judgment but to ‘hear the small and the great alike, fear no man, for judgment is God's’ (Deuteronomy 1:16–17). A judge was forbidden to accept any gift from a person

being tried; no matter how disinterested he considered his own judgments, since 'bribes blind the eyes of the righteous . . . '."

"Even though the court for trying monetary cases consisted of the simple (*bediyot*) judges, a single expert (*mumheh*) judge, renowned for his judicial capability was sufficient. In the Talmud there are regulations about mistakes made by the court; under which circumstances the judges are required to reimburse a person wrongly made liable. For monetary cases the judges were chosen by the parties involved; each side choosing one and those two together choosing the third. But judges were also appointed by the communities. In the State of Israel, the rabbinical court judges (*dayyanim*, the word *shofet* is used for secular court judges) are appointed by a special committee presided over by the chief rabbis which includes representatives of the Ministry of Justice." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The Latter-day Saints have an ecclesiastical legal system that includes "Judges in Israel." They are the Branch Presidents, Bishops and the Stake Presidents. The modern Hebrew word for president is "nasi."

"In biblical use, *nasi* refers to a person of importance, a leader, a tribal ruler or a king. Under the Roman occupation of Erez Israel toward the end of the period of the second Temple, when there was no independent Jewish leadership, the term *nasi* was used by Jewish rulers to show their authority while not claiming kingship.

"The title is best known for its reference to the presiding judge of the Sanhedrin (high court) although some sources claim the term was first applied to Judah ha-Nasi who was head of the Sanhedrin toward the end of the second century. The *nasi* presided over court sessions . . ." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Lesson 26

“Go Ye into All the World and Preach My Gospel”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 112:19–22; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Thomas B. Marsh, at Kirtland, Ohio, July 23, 1837. HC 2: 499—501. The word of the Lord unto Thomas B. Marsh, concerning the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb. The Prophet records that this revelation was received on the day on which the gospel was first preached in England. Thomas B. Marsh was at this time president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. 16—20, Those who receive the First Presidency receive the Lord; 21—29, Darkness covers the earth, and only those who believe and are baptized shall be saved.

Doctrine and Covenants 42:6; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, February 9, 1831. HC 1: 148—154. It was received in the presence of twelve elders, and in fulfillment of the Lord's promise previously made that the “law” would be given in Ohio; see Section 38: 32. The Prophet specifies this revelation as “embracing the law of the Church.” 1—10, The elders are called to preach the gospel, baptize converts, and build up the Church.

Doctrine and Covenants 88:81; 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. 81—85, Every man who hath been warned should warn his neighbor.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The Word of The Lord is for ALL people. Although the Jews think there are fewer laws for the Gentiles, the Book of Mormon teaches that the Gentiles have to learn the Law; then they will depart from it. It will be restored, first to the Gentiles and then to the Jews.

“Seven laws which were supposed by the rabbis to have been binding on all mankind even before the revelation at Sinai. They are referred to as ‘Noachide’ because of their universality, since the whole human race was supposed to be descended from the three sons of Noah, who alone survived the flood. Exegetically derived from statements made by God to Adam and to Noah, six of them are negative:

Not To:

- 1) worship idols; 2) blaspheme the name of God; 3) kill; 4) commit adultery; 5) rob;
- 6) eat flesh that had been cut from a living animal.

Must Do:

- 1) to establish courts of justice.

These seven laws are binding on all non-Jews even today. Whoever observes them is considered to be among the ‘Righteous Gentiles.’” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Likewise, the Jews consider the Messiah as coming to redeem *them*. The Book of Mormon teaches that the Messiah is for ALL people.

“The Hebrew word for Messiah, *mashi'ah*, means ‘anointed’ and indicates that the Messiah has been chosen by God. The coming of the Messiah therefore has come to mean the redemption of the Jewish people and an end to its suffering and tribulations.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“And as I spake concerning the convincing of the Jews, that Jesus is the very Christ, it must needs be that the Gentiles be convinced also that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God;” (2 Nephi 26:12)

From time to time, social norms in gospel living have been updated. This is usually due to the readiness of God’s children to comprehend and adhere to His teachings. Unfortunately, the sense of time or timing for earthly mankind often obscures the heavenly meanings of God’s timing or His eternal clock.

“In answer to the question--Is not the reckoning of God's time, angel's time, prophet's time, and man's time, according to the planet on which they reside? I answer, Yes. But there are no angels who minister to this earth but those who do belong or have belonged to it.” (Doctrine & Covenants 130:4-5)

In New Testament times, the transition from “the times of the Jews” to include “the times of the Gentiles” was socially difficult for many members at that time, even though as Jesus had chosen His disciples, He sent them to teach; first the Jews, and then the Gentiles. To this day, Jews feel that the Torah (law) was for them and that Gentiles had a different standard (the Noahide laws). The true doctrine of salvation for all was lost. Sometimes, the term used for the Jews or Children of Israel was “the people” and non-Jews (Israelites) were referred to as “the Gentiles.”

“Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” (Acts 13:46)

“Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee,” (Acts 26:17)

“That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.” (Acts 26:23)

“Taking the dispensation of the meridian of time as a starting point, the gospel was preached first to the Jews and thereafter to the Gentiles. Then dropping down to the dispensation of the fulness of times we find the gospel message going first to the Gentiles, with a promise that it will hereafter go to the Jews. Thus the first shall be last and the last first.” (Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, Pg.721)

“And the time cometh that he shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.” (1 Nephi 13:42)

In a matter of dissent about a “mission against the Jews” and subsequent success is when the State of Israel’s government had approved the building of the “Mormon” center on Mount Scopus where the BYU Study program is currently located. The building was well under way when a small Orthodox Jewish group (dedicated to crushing Christian activities) started a twofold campaign. First was discrediting the government (which they did not support anyway) for allowing the BYU facilities to continue. Secondly, striking a chord of antisemitism, they called the center a “missionary activity.” (There are three kinds of antisemitism to the Jews; 1) kill the Jews, 2) let someone else kill the Jews, and

3) convert the Jews.) This same Orthodox group has attempted to pass a law against proselytizing in Israel and have failed. There is NO Israeli statute prohibiting missionary activity. Let it be known, however, missionary activity is deemed highly insensitive and frankly, antisemitic.

They did manage to pass a law that prohibits any type of bribe or payment to induce Jews to change their religion. (Mormons do not pay people to become members—they charge them!) BYU did sign a statement announcing they had no intention of doing missionary activities. President Howard W. Hunter also signed a statement to the same effect with the statement added, “. . . so long as such activity is prohibited by the government of Israel.” The real reason Latter-day Saints are not proselytizing in Israel is because it is the Lord’s will.

Israeli government leaders kept their commitment to allow the building. This Orthodox group did not manage to convince the government to stop the BYU project. No legal precedent was established that might affect the Latter-day Saints or for that manner, any other church.

To many Jews, Christian missionary work among the Jews is considered blasphemy and even anti-Semitic. There is a certain Rabbi Goldstein in Jerusalem who counteracts this activity by conducting seminars and lectures to refute missionaries and Christian polemics.

There are, however, religious rights in Israel. There are two legal systems, secular and religious so that religious people of some major religions in Israel can take disputes or legal processes to their own judges. The British set up this system before the State of Israel was formed. There are several different religious courts throughout Israel. They include the Orthodox Jews, Moslems, Greek Orthodox, Armenians, Catholics, Syrian Orthodox and the Bahais. The Bahai religious courts are the only ones established after the State of Israel was recognized.

Although there are Christian missionaries in Israel, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not engage in any proselytizing in Israel. It is their choice. The agreement signed by President Howard W. Hunter and added as an addendum to the lease of property where the BYU Jerusalem Center stands, clearly states that the Church would not engage in missionary activity if it were against the laws of Israel. That commitment supports the twelfth Article of Faith.

“We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.” (*Articles of Faith 12*)

“They Must Needs Be Chastened and Tried, Even as Abraham”

Lesson 27

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 101; 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. 1—8, The saints are chastened and afflicted because of their transgressions; 9—15, The Lord’s indignation shall fall upon the nations, but his people will be gathered and comforted; 16—21, Zion and her stakes shall be established; 22—31, The nature of life during the Millennium is set forth; 32—42, The saints shall be blessed and rewarded then; 43—62, Parable of the nobleman and the olive trees signifying the troubles and eventual redemption of Zion; 63—75, The saints are to continue their gathering together; 76—80, The Lord established the Constitution of the United States; 81—101, The saints are to importune for the redress of grievances, according to the parable of the woman and the unjust judge.

Doctrine and Covenants 103; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, February 24, 1834. HC 2: 36—39. This revelation was received after the arrival in Kirtland, Ohio, of Parley P. Pratt and Lyman Wight, who had come from Missouri to counsel with the Prophet as to the relief and restoration of the saints to their lands in Jackson County. 1—4, Why the Lord permitted the saints in Jackson County to be persecuted; 5—10, The saints shall prevail if they keep the commandments; 11—20, The redemption of Zion shall come by power, and the Lord will go before his people; 21—28, The saints are to gather in Zion, and those who lay down their lives shall find them again; 29—40, Various brethren are called to organize Zion’s Camp and go to Zion; they are promised victory if they are faithful.

Doctrine and Covenants 105; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, on Fishing River, Missouri, June 22, 1834. HC 2: 108—111. Mob violence against the saints in Missouri had increased, and organized bodies from several counties had declared their intent to destroy the people. The Prophet had come from Kirtland at the head of a party known as Zion’s Camp, bringing clothing and provisions. While this party was encamped on Fishing River, the Prophet received the revelation. 1—5, Zion shall be built up by conformity to celestial law; 6—13, Redemption of Zion deferred for a little season; 14—19, The Lord will fight the battles of Zion; 20—26, The saints are to be wise and not boast of mighty works as they gather; 27—30, Lands in Jackson and adjoining counties should be purchased; 31—34, The elders are to receive an endowment in the House of the Lord in Kirtland; 35—37, Saints who are both called and chosen shall be sanctified; 38—41, Saints are to lift an ensign of peace to the world.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The scattering and gathering of the early saints is very much a parallel to the experiences the Children of Israel had in Biblical times. It is also part of a pattern teaching us the plan of life where we leave Father’s presence, come to this earth to be tried, tempered and taught and then have the opportunity to return to Father’s presence.

Leading the Latter-day gathering of Israel is the tribe of Joseph. Anciently, Joseph, the son of Israel, was to lead Israel spiritually as the birthright son. Instead, he was sold as a slave, yet he became a servant that saved. He saved the people of Egypt (Gentiles) and he saved his family (Israelites). In modern times, the keys of the gathering and leading of Israel were given to Joseph Smith. He is a descendant of ancient Joseph. His role is summarized in the parable in Doctrine and Covenants 101:44-62. After the destruction of the twelve olive trees and the scattering of the watchmen, the Lord instructed a gathering.

“And the Lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, *save those only whom I have appointed to tarry . . .*” (Italics added) (**D&C 101:55**)

The verse can be viewed as an instruction of “gathering” activity by the young, the middle aged and the strength of older ones. In modern times, it includes Elders, Sisters, middle aged and older couples, (every member a missionary). The exception is that

some, for the time being, are told not to do mission work—*like in Israel*. In the end, the Lord would gather those that we have not been able to find.

“... that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land.” (*D&C 101:58*)

The imagery used in this parallel is still visible on the hillsides of Israel to this day. The unfinished watch towers, the hedges (terraces) and the olive trees are constant reminders of the Lord working to gather us home. The leadership of this gathering was always Joseph. In a parable with almost the same visual imagery, Jesus told the self-appointed leaders, the Pharisees, that the kingdom would be taken from them (Judah) and given to another (Joseph).

“Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.” (*Matthew 21:43-46*)

As you imagine the “Camp of Zion” you may see a “banner,” in the Bible, an “Ensign.” Each tribe had their banner hoisted at their location and tents around the Levites who surrounded the Lord presence in the Tabernacle. It could be called the “sacred tent” of the Lord. The ancient camp of Israel lived in a way that was a preparatory exercise of living with God.

“Balaam's eyes opened . . . he 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!’” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr. - Numbers 24:5*)

Is it possible that the areas of responsibility and assigned living were “staked” out, that there were 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.*)

The story of George A. Smith sleeping in the tent of the Prophet Joseph Smith in Zion’s Camp reminded me of George A. Smith’s experience later as an Apostle, dedicating the Land of Israel, again using a tent as a sacred enclave.

“After visiting the Garden of Gethsemane and other spots made sacred by the presence of Jesus centuries earlier . . . George A. Smith was relieved that so long a journey on horseback had ended without mishap for a man of his age and weight (three hundred pounds). During their month-long sojourn, they were often asked if they were planning to settle in the Holy Land. Smith replied that they were not, but he could take a thousand Mormons, dam up the Jordan River, and make several thousand acres very productive.

“ . . . President Smith delivered an account of his group's journey to a large crowd assembled in the Tabernacle on 22 June 1873. He expressed sentiments similar to those his predecessor, Orson Hyde, had uttered years before. He, too, was on the Lord's errand . . . empowered by . . . authority from God. ‘When they were on the Mount of Olives, with faces bowed toward Jerusalem, they felt the day was not far distant when Israel would gather and those lands would teem with a people who would worship God and keep his commandments, that the bounties and blessings of eternity would be poured out in abundance upon that desert land, and that all prophecies concerning the restoration of the house of Israel would be fulfilled’.” (*David B. Galbraith, D. Kelly Ogden, and Andrew C. Skinner, Jerusalem: The Eternal City [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1996], 343-344*)

Due to the persecution the early saints were subject to, the Prophet Joseph Smith instructed the saints to seek legal redress. Both the United States and the State of Israel have a few things in common. Both are established on a rule of law. Although Israel is basically a religiously “Jewish” nation and the United States is basically a religiously “Christian” nation, both allow freedoms including worship and enterprise, again, based on law. Both legal system's laws are based on a system that includes punishments for breaking the law. However, biblical law prescribed punishments based on breaking the law. The modern legal system in the USA is similar to the Roman system, much more slanted to the punishment of people . . . breaking the law.

“The American Bar Association has said that being guilty and rich is better than being innocent and poor . . . ‘[and] that the color of justice is green’.” (*Harland Stonecipher, CEO and Founder, Pre-Paid Legal Services, Inc.*)

As mentioned, biblical punishments were based on the crime, unlike today's punishments which are based on the person or the circumstances. Stoning was the punishment for a number of gross sins including murder (Numbers 35:30), adultery (Deuteronomy 22:22-24), blasphemy (Leviticus 24:16), breaking the Sabbath (Numbers 15:32-35), Apostasy (Deuteronomy 13:6-10), and rebellion against parents (Deuteronomy 21:18-21).

“Children may not abuse their parents. According to the Bible, if a son is extremely rebellious and incorrigible and refuses to mend his ways (*ben sorer u-moreh*), his parents may agree to bring him to the town elders for judgment and punishment, which could be death by stoning. However, there is no record of such punishment ever having been carried out.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica, Jr.*)

Lesson 28

“O God, Where Art Thou?”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 121:1–10; 29; Prayer and prophecies written by Joseph Smith the Prophet, while he was a prisoner in the jail at Liberty, Missouri, dated March 20, 1839. HC 3: 289–300. The Prophet with several companions had been months in prison. Their petitions and appeals directed to the executive officers and the judiciary had failed to bring them relief. 1–6, The Prophet pleads with the Lord for the suffering saints; 7–10, The Lord speaks peace to him; 26–32, Glorious revelations promised those who endure valiantly; 33–40.

Doctrine and Covenants 122; The word of the Lord to Joseph Smith the Prophet, while he was a prisoner in the jail at Liberty, Missouri, March 1839. HC 3: 300–301. 1–4, The ends of the earth shall inquire after the name of Joseph Smith; 5–7, All his perils and travails shall give him experience and be for his good; 8–9, The Son of Man hath descended below them all.

Alma 7:11–12; Christ shall be born of Mary—He shall loose the bands of death and bear the sins of his people—Those who repent, are baptized, and keep the commandments shall have eternal life—Filthiness cannot inherit the kingdom of God—Humility, faith, hope, and charity are required.

Doctrine and Covenants 19:16–19; Revelation given through Joseph Smith, at Manchester, New York, March 1830. HC 1: 72–74. In his history the Prophet introduced it as “a commandment of God and not of man, to Martin Harris, given by Him who is Eternal.” 13–20, Christ suffered for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent.

Hebrews 4:15–16; The gospel was offered to ancient Israel — Saints enter into the rest of the Lord — Though tempted in all points, Jesus was without sin.

1 Peter 5:6–11; The elders are to feed the flock of God—Humility and godly graces lead to perfection.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

A phrase come to mind that may help explain the apparent helplessness of many of God’s choicest leaders, it is “sinking to new heights.” The savior’s exquisite atonement for us has been somewhat foreshadowed or mirrored in the depths to which Job, Jonah, Nephi, Alma, Peter, Joseph Smith and many others, them sank.

The essence of the Book of Job (and the experiences of the Prophet Joseph Smith) really focuses on the Lord rather than on Job or any other individual. The agency that mankind was given allows a choice of following the Lord with progress that develops Godlike characteristics or of following our own inherent aptitudes and the less-than-maximum possibilities God gave us.

The following quotes give some Jewish insight on the subject of Job:

“The Book of Job is the story of one man, Job, and his acceptance of the sufferings God brings upon him and his family. But the problem of the final meaning and message of the book has over the centuries aroused a wide variety of responses. To some sages of the Talmud and Midrash, Job is to be regarded as one of the few truly God-fearing men of the Bible, the most pious non-Jew who ever lived. To others he was a blasphemer.

“Because of the experience of the aged, old age and wisdom are sometimes regarded as going together. Thus, throughout the Bible and Talmud, the word ‘elder’ means judge, leader, or sage. On the other hand, the Book of Job also stresses that there are young men who are wiser than old men. Nevertheless, respect for the aged is always a *mitzvah* . . . (righteous deed/commandment).

“The Talmud states that Moses wrote the Book of Job, and records a difference of opinion as to whether Job ever really existed, or whether the story is a parable.

“Job, like Abraham, had open doors on all four sides of his house so that strangers might have easy access. Breaches of hospitality, on the other hand, were considered punishable offenses.

“The Book of Job is one of the *ketuvim* (writings of the Prophets), which make up the third part of the canon of the Bible, is a profound expression of religious experience written by an unknown poetic genius, probably around the fifth century B.C.E. The problem posed by the book is how to reconcile seemingly unjustified suffering with belief in God who is all-powerful and just.

“The book's hero, the gentile Job (whose name possibly derives from *ay'av* - ('where father?') was an inhabitant of the land of Uz; his wealth in livestock and slaves exceeded that of any other man among the Edomites. Job was a righteous man and would offer sacrifices to expiate any possible sins of his ten children. Seeing his piety, an accusing angel argued with God that the true test of Job's loyalty required that he be stripped of his wealth. God agreed to test His subject, and so the story tells how Job loses all his property, his children and then his health and is reduced to disease and ruin. Yet in his suffering he utters no word of complaint against God. On the contrary, he declares ‘Naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked again will I depart. The Lord has taken what the Lord gave. The names of the Lord are blessed. His wife attempts to persuade him to denounce God but he replies ‘Can we both accept the good from God and not accept the bad?’ His three friends Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, journey to his home to console him in his sufferings, which they take to be a punishment for sin, but Job adamantly rejects their comforts as illusory and denies that he is guilty of anything. He cries out against his fate and challenges God directly to justify what appears to him as mere spite. How can God require purity from creatures who are by nature impure? God replies that man is impertinent to seek answers for his suffering. Job ultimately acknowledges his ignorance in the face of the inscrutable divine, ‘seeing I am but dust and ashes.’ God commends his stoic humility and restores him to wealth and health.

“Opinions regarding the meaning of the Book of Job have varied throughout the ages. To some sages of the Talmud and Midrash, Job was one of the few truly God-fearing men of the Bible, while to others he was a blasphemer. According to one sage of the Talmud, Job served God out of love, while another thought his motivation was fear. Maimonides thought that Job's anguished questioning of God arose from an inadequate understanding of the divine.

“Modern commentators are equally divided as to what the author of the Book of Job wanted to tell his readers. For in His reply to Job from the whirlwind, God majestically ignores the questions which most trouble the hero. To say that man is presumptuous is no real answer to the question of why innocence suffers. The book appears to make three main points: that there is no causal connection between earthly suffering and moral evil (that is, the good may suffer at least as much as the bad), that the vast beauty, power and complexity of Nature are a proof of an omnipotent order beyond human understanding, and that the gulf between man's actual fate and what he thinks he deserves is a fact about which God prefers to remain silent.

“Job's patience in his suffering has become proverbial and the phrase ‘the patience of Job’ is used to refer to anyone with a great deal of patience. In the *aggadah*, most references to the Book of Job do not consider its hero to have been a real person. Job's sufferings are considered to be a test rather than a punishment, and he is frequently compared with Abraham, who was also tested.

“One of the most serious challenges to religion is the problem of suffering. If God is all-powerful and good, as Judaism claims He is, how is it possible that He allows His creatures to suffer? This is not a new problem. The Bible is aware that suffering and pain are characteristic of human existence and many of the books of the Bible are concerned about the theological issues involved. The Book of Habakkuk, when it deals with one of the aspects of the problem, says that ‘the righteous man must live by his faith.’ This seems to mean that it is beyond the ability of human intelligence to understand the question and that man must have faith that God is doing the right thing . . .

“The rabbis of the Talmud and the medieval Jewish philosophers were also troubled about the problem of suffering. Some thinkers suggested that the innocent suffer in this world so that their share in the world to come will be greater, but other philosophers rejected this idea. Another solution suggested was that suffering comes on a man in order to warn him to mend his ways and that ‘when a man sees that he is suffering, let him examine his deeds.’ The rabbis of the Talmud believed that it is a great religious virtue to bear one's suffering ‘with love,’ i.e., patiently and without becoming rebellious.

“Whatever the solution to the theological problem of suffering, Judaism absolutely forbids inflicting suffering on other people and even on animals. Also, no man may ignore the suffering of others but must do everything in his power to help remedy the situation. This applies to physical suffering, to poverty and to psychological suffering. Furthermore, no man has the right to enjoy himself if the rest of the community is suffering.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In Judaism today, there is a definite trend away from an atonement of our sins by someone else. Obviously, the effort to steer away from Jesus who paid the ransom as the atoner has amplified this. That is probably why the Book of Job in Jewish thought is viewed as is expressed above. The Latter-day Saint view is beautifully expressed as follows.

“When the prophets speak of an infinite atonement, they mean just that. Its effects cover all men, the earth itself and all forms of life thereon, and reach out into the endless expanses of eternity. ‘The word atonement,’ it is written in the Compendium, ‘signifies deliverance, through the offering of a **ransom**, from the penalty of a broken law. The sense is expressed in Job 33:24: ‘Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a **ransom**.’ As effected by Jesus Christ, it signifies the deliverance, through his death and resurrection, of the earth and everything pertaining to it, from the power which death has obtained over them through the transgression of Adam. Redemption from death, through the sufferings of Christ, is for all men, both the righteous and the wicked; for this earth, and for all things created upon it.’ (Compendium pp. 8-9.)” (*Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, Pg.64*)

Jewish tradition indicates that a “scapegoat” was tied with a red ribbon and led out the “Gate of Mercy,” also known as the “Gate of Forgiveness” as well as the “Gate Beautiful.” It was led into the wilderness to “die on its own,” “bearing the sins of the

people.” What is even more interesting is that on the Day of Atonement, the Book of Job is read in its entirety.

Jonah’s account is a simple chiasmus - a lesson in opposition. Jonah was sent “up and north” to preach repentance. Instead, he went “down and south.” He went “down into the sea,” “down to his death.” Yet, he was saved. He came back up after three nights and three days. That was the only sign Jesus of Nazareth gave the Scribes and Pharisees of his Messianic role as their Redeemer, the author of the plan of Atonement.

“Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign. There shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” (*Matthew 12:38-40*)

The message of the atonement is symbolic. The one scapegoat carrying the sins of the people is led away, in His mercy, He forgives us. Believing and knowing that is beautiful. After three nights, on the third day, He arose!

“Jonah is known for the incident involving the whale, or large fish, but that episode is secondary to the lesson the Book comes to teach. Jonah learned through bitter experience that non-Jews are also God's creatures and one must not begrudge them God's love and forgiveness. Also to be learned is the fact that true repentance is accepted by God and earns His pardon for almost any sin. Because of its theme of sin, repentance, and forgiveness, the Book of Jonah is read every Day of Atonement at the *Minhab* service.

“In ancient literature there are several stories of people being rescued from inside fish (Heracles the Hesione, Perseus, and Andromeda); but only in that of Jonah was the rescue effected by prayer and not by force. The book is to be understood as a lesson in Divine forgiveness and mercy—to Jonah as well as to the people of Nineveh—and as a lesson in obedience to God's will. As a symbol of the effectiveness of repentance, it is read as the *haftarah* at the afternoon service of the Day of Atonement.

“Opinions as to the date of the Book of Jonah vary considerably. Some scholars date it as early as the eighth century B.C.E. and consider its hero to be Jonah the prophet who lived in the time of Jeroboam II. Others date it as late as the third century B.C.E.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

There are a few “sea and storm stories” in the scriptures. Their meanings and lessons for us, nowadays, have a common connection. Noah is saved by the Lord, Jonah is saved by the Lord, the Apostles on the Sea of Galilee are saved by the Lord. When “sinking,” remember, we are saved by the Lord.

The worst experience Peter had was when the cock had just crowed. In fulfillment of Jesus’ prophecy, Peter had just denied the Savior the third time. Then, turning and looking into Jesus’ face, Peter turned again and ran out into the break of dawn, weeping bitterly.

“Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.” (*Matthew 26:74-75*)

The next three nights may have been the lowest period of Peter’s life. Was this part of teaching the leading Apostle of the Savior’s great atonement? Were the three denials part of the experience to teach a “Special Witness” of what Jesus’ mission was all about? The Lord’s suffering had to be understood by Peter. How exquisite did this experience become as later the Savior allowed Peter to tell him, the resurrected Messiah, in person, “I love you?” Peter was being raised to new heights.

On one occasion, a professor of religion went to the Western (wailing) Wall, microphone in hand, and began asking religious Jews why they were chosen. One responded, “We are chosen to suffer.” Later, in making a point, about the suffering of the Savior, the professor said, “No one is chosen to suffer other than the Lord.” Yet, the difficulties, calamities, and sufferings of the Jews will ultimately bring them closer to the Lord who covenanted to remember and save His people. Our sufferings bring us closer to Him and those that have the highest responsibilities of serving Him often suffer greatly. They “sink to new heights.”

“And if thou shouldst be cast into the pit, or into the hands of murderers, and the sentence of death passed upon thee; if thou be cast into the deep; if the billowing surge conspire against thee; if fierce winds become thine enemy; if the heavens gather blackness, and all the elements combine to hedge up the way; and above all, if the very jaws of hell shall gape open the mouth wide after thee, know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good. The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?” (*Doctrine & Covenants 122:7-8*)

Building the Kingdom of God in Nauvoo, Illinois

Lesson 29

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 124:1–21, 87–90, 97–110; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Nauvoo, Illinois, January 19, 1841. HC 4: 274–286. Because of increasing persecutions and illegal procedures against them by public officers, the saints had been compelled to leave Missouri. The exterminating order issued by Lilburn W. Boggs, Governor of Missouri, dated October 27, 1838, had left them no alternative. See HC 3:175. In 1841, when this revelation was given, the city of Nauvoo, occupying the site of the former village of Commerce, Illinois, had been built up by the saints, and here the headquarters of the Church had been established. 1–14, Joseph Smith is commanded to make a solemn proclamation of the gospel to the president of the United States, the governors, and the rulers of all nations; 15–21, Hyrum Smith, David W. Patten, Joseph Smith, Sen., and others among the living and the dead are blessed for their integrity and virtues; 84–96, Hyrum Smith is called to be a patriarch and to receive the keys and stand in the place of Oliver Cowdery; 97–122, William Law and others are counseled in their labors.

Doctrine and Covenants 126; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in the house of Brigham Young, at Nauvoo, Illinois, July 9, 1841. HC 4: 382. At this time Brigham Young was president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. 1–3, Brigham Young is commended for his labors and is relieved of future travel abroad.

Doctrine and Covenants 118; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Far West, Missouri, July 8, 1838, in response to the supplication: “Show us thy will, O Lord, concerning the Twelve.” HC 3: 46–47. 1–3, The Lord will provide for the families of the Twelve; 4–6, Vacancies in the Twelve are filled.

Doctrine and Covenants 64:33–34; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to the elders of the Church, at Kirtland, Ohio, September 11, 1831. HC 1: 211–214. The Prophet was preparing to move to Hiram, Ohio, to renew his work on the translation of the Bible, which had been laid aside while he had been in Missouri. A company of brethren who had been commanded to journey to Zion (Missouri) was earnestly engaged in making preparations to leave in October. At this busy time, the revelation was received. 33–36, The rebellious shall be cut off out of Zion.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

Joseph Smith, the Prophet, was given the same vision of settling a Zion, building a society and establishing communities that would bless and renew the land. He carried out this heaven-inspired yearning wherever he went or was forced to go. This is a pattern reflected in Jewish history.

“Ever since the time of the first Babylonian exile over 2,000 years ago, Jews of the world have yearned for the return to Zion. This theme is reflected in the daily prayers, literature, and song of the Jewish people.

“Cyrus, king of Persia from 559 to 529 B.C.E., holds a special place in the history of Israel.

“The Jews, having been denied the right to return to their home in Erez Israel, anxiously and hopefully watched the steady advance of the Persian conqueror. Cyrus seized control of Media and then, in 539 B.C.E. conquered Nebuchadnezzar's huge Babylonian empire.

“Cyrus was a humane conqueror. In keeping with his general policy of benevolence toward his subject peoples, he not only granted permission to the Jews to return to their homeland, but he restored to the exiles the sacred vessels belonging to the Temple, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken and placed as trophies of victory in the temple of Bel. With the return of a large group of the exiles, a new chapter in the history of Israel began—the period of the Second Temple.

“The small community of Jews who had remained in Israel throughout the exile period was bolstered by the influx of a large number of the exiled who were now able to return and, under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah, began to rebuild the Temple, repair Jerusalem, and revive a sense of religious and national consciousness.

“The Talmud teaches that the ingathering of the exiled kingdoms will be part of the coming of the Messiah. The great exile to Babylonia in the sixth century B.C.E. was ended by Cyrus the Great of Persia. However, the rabbis did not consider his proclamation and the return at that time to be the Ingathering of the Exiles since it was incomplete. The day of the ingathering, the rabbis write, will be ‘as great as the day on which heaven and earth were created’.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Please note that with the proclamation Joseph Smith made about the keys of the gathering of Israel and restored temple work and the mission of Apostle Orson Hyde to the Holy Land in 1841, a gathering was started again paralleling the gathering of Latter-day Saints in America.

“In actual fact, the Land of Israel had never been without a Jewish community—no matter how small—and Jewish immigration to Erez Israel has never ceased. But the dream of re-establishing a Jewish homeland which would draw all of world Jewry to its midst served as a unifying force for the Jews of the Diaspora.

“This dream began to take on practical form during the last quarter of the 19th century, as Jews set about rebuilding Israel to serve as a refuge for victims of the pogroms and for other Jews the world over. In 1878 the first modern Jewish farm village, Petah Tikvah (Gate of Hope) was established and in 1882 the first officially organized group of immigrants, the Bilu arrived in Erez Israel. Most of these early pioneers were professionals and intellectuals, but they gave up their careers in order to work as farmers and laborers, tilling the soil and building the cities of the Promised Land. Members of this group together with other ‘First Aliyah’ immigrants, were unfamiliar with agricultural methods and lacking in economic means. They nearly failed but Baron Edmund de Rothschild took them under his wing and gave them support.

“Rishon Le-zion as its name (‘First in Zion’) implies, was the first permanent settlement established in Erez Israel by Zionist immigrants. It was founded in 1882 by ten pioneers from Russia who managed to acquire 835 acres of land southeast of Tel Aviv and set up a village there. They were soon joined by about 100 other settlers.

“Inexperienced in agricultural methods and plagued by an acute shortage of water, these original settlers faced a grave crisis. They were saved by the efforts of Baron Edmund de Rothschild who contributed money for a well, provided for the upkeep of the families, and sent experts to help with their agricultural problems. Though the Baron's participation in the internal affairs of the town often caused uneasiness among some of the settlers, his assistance proved crucial. Rishon le-Zion soon became well-known for its prosperous vineyards, wine cellars and citrus groves.

“Rishon le-Zion was the site of many ‘firsts’ in Erez Israel: the first Hebrew kindergarten and elementary school opened there in the 1880s, as did the country’s first orchestra. The population of Rishon le-Zion was some 140,000 in the early 1990s.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

In the birthing of modern day Israel, other cities began to spring up. It has always been the culture of Israelites to build up the land. Another modern city was Hadera. Like the Mormon Nauvoo, the area of Hadera was drained and improved to become a “City Beautiful.”

“Haderah a town in central Israel, situated between Haifa and Tel Aviv, was founded in 1890 by members of Hovevei Zion, a group of Zionist immigrants from Russia and Eastern Europe. The name Haderah comes from the Arabic al-Khadra (‘the Green’), referring to the color of the swamp vegetation of the area. The notorious swamps of Haderah caused more than half the settlers of Haderah to die of malaria during its first 20 years. The settlers received aid, however, in 1895 when Baron Edmond de Rothschild, a wealthy French philanthropist, gave them funds to drain the swamps by building canals and planting large eucalyptus groves. The eucalyptus tree soon became Haderah’s symbol.

“At first, agriculture was the main occupation of Haderah’s settlers. They planted field and vegetable garden crops and citrus groves. But as the population of Haderah increased, the economy expanded and industrialized. Today, industry has become the main element in the town’s economy. Situated in Haderah are the American Israel Paper Mills, and the Alliance Tire and Rubber Company, food-preserve plants and other enterprises. Agriculture, however, has continued to develop and there are now carp ponds, beehives, cattle, poultry, and flower and banana fields in Haderah. In the early 1990s, there were 46,000 inhabitants.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

These swampy or desolate lands, abandoned by absentee land owners, were purchased and settled for the eventual building up of Zion. Yet, difficulties ensued.

“The British proposal for the partition of Palestine into an Arab and a Jewish state was accepted by Ben-Gurion in the belief that even a small Jewish state would be a powerful instrument for the realization of Zionism. However, shortly afterwards the British government abandoned the partition plan and in 1939 issued the declaration of a new anti-Zionist policy (the White Paper of 1939) which restricted *aliyah* and Jewish rights to acquire land. Ben-Gurion condemned the White Paper and called for active resistance. He proposed the intensification of ‘illegal’ immigration, involving incidents with British coastal guards, and settlement of land in areas prohibited to Jews.

“After World War II Ben-Gurion led the political struggle against the British. “Encouraging ‘illegal’ immigration, he visited the camps of Jewish survivors in Germany, and at their conference in 1946 he declared: ‘We shall not rest until every one of you who so desires joins us in the land of Israel in building a Jewish state’.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Service and care for each other are hallmarks of God's covenant people. Latter-day Saints with their auxiliary organizations of Priesthood and Relief Society, Hadassah, are activities for men and women dedicated to serve others.

“Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, was also active in pioneer medical efforts in Erez Israel, and in 1939, Hadassah Hospital was opened in Jerusalem in conjunction with the Hebrew University. Hadassah has since developed into one of the world's leading research and medical facilities, and together with Israel's several other hospitals, provides the country with outstanding medical care.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

During the biblical conquest of Canaan, Joshua issued proclamations inviting the nations to choose peace and abandon idolatry. Joseph Smith issued proclamations and present-day living prophets continue to do the same.

“The Prisoners Shall Go Free”

Lesson 30

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 2; An extract from the words of the angel Moroni to Joseph Smith the Prophet, while in the house of the Prophet's father at Manchester, New York, on the evening of September 21, 1823. HC 1: 12. Moroni was the last of a long line of historians who had made the record that is now before the world as the Book of Mormon. Compare Malachi 4: 5—6; also Sections 27: 9; 110: 13—16; and 128: 18. 1, Elijah is to reveal the priesthood; 2—3, Promises of fathers are planted in hearts of children.

Doctrine and Covenants 124:25—55; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Nauvoo, Illinois, January 19, 1841. HC 4: 274—286. Because of increasing persecutions and illegal procedures against them by public officers, the saints had been compelled to leave Missouri. The exterminating order issued by Lilburn W. Boggs, Governor of Missouri, dated October 27, 1838, had left them no alternative. See HC 3: 175. In 1841, when this revelation was given, the city of Nauvoo, occupying the site of the former village of Commerce, Illinois, had been built up by the saints, and here the headquarters of the Church had been established. 22—28, The saints are commanded to build both a house for the entertainment of strangers and a temple in Nauvoo; 29—36, Baptisms for the dead are to be performed in temples; 37—44, The Lord's people always build temples for the performance of holy ordinances; 45—55, The saints are excused from building the temple in Jackson County because of the oppression of their enemies.

Doctrine and Covenants 127; An epistle from Joseph Smith the Prophet to the Latter-day Saints at Nauvoo, Illinois, containing directions on baptism for the dead; dated at Nauvoo, September 1, 1842. HC 5: 142-144. 1—4, Joseph Smith glories in persecution and tribulation; 5—12, Records must be kept relative to baptisms for the dead.

Doctrine and Covenants 128; An epistle from Joseph Smith the Prophet to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, containing further directions on baptism for the dead; dated at Nauvoo, Illinois, September 6, 1842. HC 5: 148—153. 1—5, Local and general recorders must certify to the fact of baptisms for the dead; 6—9, Their records are binding and recorded on earth and in heaven; 10—14, The baptismal font is a similitude of the grave; 15—17, Elijah restored power relative to baptism for the dead; 18—21, All of the keys, powers, and authorities of past dispensations have been restored; 22—25, Glad and glorious tidings acclaimed for the living and the dead.

Malachi 4:5-6; At the Second Coming the proud and wicked shall be burned as stubble — Elijah shall return before that great and dreadful day. 4—5, Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The last known Jewish Prophets testified of a time of restoration. They spoke of the Temple and of the Lord's Spirit.

“The rabbis regarded Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi as the last of the prophets, the ‘divine spirit’ having ceased in Israel with their deaths.

“Zechariah continued in the same task as Haggai; he too encouraged the Jews to rebuild the Temple. Zechariah reminded Israel that before God returned to the Temple the people must return to God through righteousness, justice, and mercy: ‘Return to Me, says the Lord of hosts, and I will return to you.’ The nation's future security would be guaranteed, ‘Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, says the Lord of Hosts’ (4:6), and Israel would flourish once again. Zechariah prophesied of the Golden Age of the Messiah when God's Kingdom would be established on earth.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The greatest return to Israel was from Egypt and every year two holidays are memorials of that deliverance as well as expectations of an even greater deliverance in the future. These holidays are celebrated on the first full moon after the first day of spring (Passover) and fall (Sukkot).

“This holiday (Sukkot) was also the occasion for the consecration of the Temple built by Solomon and every seventh year on Sukkot, the Torah was read by the

king before the assembled people. In his vision of the end of days, the prophet Zechariah foretells that all the nations of the world will assemble for the festival of Sukkot in Jerusalem to worship God.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

On both holidays, special arrangements are made in anticipation of expected guests who will come unexpectedly. They include Moses and Elijah! The prophet Malachi speaks of Elijah’s anticipated return and the work needed to prepare the people. The pattern is familiar today.

“The ecstasy of rebuilding the holy Temple passed and the Jews fell into disreputable ways once again. Intermarriage was common, as was divorce, and morals were weak. Malachi was faced with the task of awakening the people from their religious lethargy and bringing them back to God.

“He denounced their neglect of the Temple service and compared this unfavorably with the non-Jews who brought abundant offerings to God. Malachi announced the coming of the Day of Judgment which would remove the sinners from the nation and thus clear the way for the Messianic Age: ‘Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers; lest I come and smite the land with utter destruction’.”

“The Sabbath before Passover is known as Shabbat ha-Gadol. Tradition connects it with the tenth of Nisan, the day on which the Israelites in Egypt set aside the lamb which they were to slaughter on the first Passover (Exodus 12:3). On Shabbat ha-Gadol, a special *haftarah*, taken from the Book of Malachi and referring to the day on which Elijah the Prophet will reappear as forerunner of the great day of the Lord, is read. It is also customary on this Shabbat for the rabbi to devote his sermon to the laws of Passover.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

As previously mentioned, Passover is a time for Elijah to return. The ancient eating arrangement at the Passover meal (Seder) was “U” shaped with the oldest seated at the second seat with one of the youngest of his choice seated at his right hand, in the first seat. At the other end of the “U” shaped seating arrangement was an empty chair for Elijah. His place was directly opposite the youngest and the oldest, symbolic (if you please) of Elijah turning the hearts of fathers to children and the children to the fathers.

At one Passover I asked my youngest son at the appropriate time to open the door for Elijah. He refused. The seven-year-old said, “I don’t have to open the door for Elijah, he’s already come!” He knew of Elijah’s appearance in the Kirtland Temple on April 3, 1836, the Passover season that year!

Elijah’s return brought back temple functions and eternal ordinances including immersions done for and behalf of the dead – if they accept their spiritual habitat. Immersions are a familiar thing with Jews – precisely as an immersion. (The word baptism in a modern terminology may also be interpreted in other ways such as sprinkling.)

“Since the tribes of Israel under Joshua crossed the Jordan to enter Erez Israel after the Exodus from Egypt, the Jordan river has come to have a deep significance for Jews, symbolizing the gateway to the homeland after years of wandering in exile in the desert.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Some religious Jews who experience repeated immersions, (monthly for women and regularly for men) step into their immersion font from the east side, immerse themselves, and then exit to the west side. This could be a reminder of entering into the gateway of cleanness as the Children of Israel entered into their Promised Land.

In context with this lesson, let's review again that for the religious Jews, immersions are favored below ground level in flowing water that emanates from bedrock - the "Rock of Salvation." Consider that the lowest spot on the face of the earth where water flows that originated in bedrock is where the Children of Israel crossed into their erstwhile homeland. Judaism and Christianity agree that it is also the likely spot where Jesus came to John in Judea to be immersed.

The significance of water that emanates from springs, spring water, is "kosher." It is used for ritual purposes such as temple washings, immersions and other ceremonies. Immersions in Judaism require "Living Water;" that is, water from a spring, from bedrock, "The Rock of Salvation." That water must flow naturally and the immersion font (mikveh) is best suited below ground level. Incidentally, in present Judaism, there is no immersion for "forgiveness of sins," although instruction are to repent before going to a mikveh.

An immersion for the dead is included in the preparation of the deceased. The burial is entrusted to the Chevra Kadisha. Throughout Jewish history, serving on the Chevra Kadisha has been a great honor. These men and women are selected for their character, integrity and personal devotion and are specially trained to perform what is a *taharah*. Working in teams, these men or women, depending on the gender of the deceased insure the highest level of sensitivity and dignity in conformity with Jewish law and custom.

The deceased is washed and dried. Fingernails and toenails are cleaned, and all personal items such as jewelry are removed. After being washed, the deceased is ritually purified through immersion in a similar manner to the mikveh, or purification bath, that was required of worshippers entering the Temple in Jerusalem. The scriptural precedent is translated from the Hebrew Bible as follows.

"I will pour upon you pure water and you will be purified of all you defilements, and from all your abominations I will purify you" (*Ezekiel 36: 25*)

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. (*Ezekiel 36:25 KJV*)

“Sealed . . . for Time and for All Eternity”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 131:1–4 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.

Doctrine and Covenants 132:4–33; 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. 1–6, Exaltation is gained through the new and everlasting covenant; 7–14, The terms and conditions of that covenant are set forth; 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; 28–39, Promises of eternal increase and exaltation made to prophets and saints in all ages

Doctrine and Covenants 42:22; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, February 9, 1831. HC 1: 148–154. It was received in the presence of twelve elders, and in fulfillment of the Lord’s promise previously made that the “law” would be given in Ohio; see Section 38: 32. The Prophet specifies this revelation as “embracing the law of the Church.” 22; Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else.

Jacob 2:12–30; Jacob denounces the love of riches, pride, and unchastity—Men should seek riches to help their fellow men—Jacob condemns the unauthorized practice of plural marriage—The Lord delights in the chastity of women.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

One of the greatest rituals and covenants that Jews maintain is that of marriage and, subsequently, family life. Notice in the following excerpts the similarities of LDS practices to the Jewish practices that seem to come from ancient times. The ritual of marriage in Judaism is considered without end; there is no statement, “Until death do you part.” The canopy or huppah is reflective of the ancient temple. In some cases the huppah is a tallith, the garment that reminds a Jew of the covenants and commandments he has bound to himself. A minyan or “prayer circle” is formed at the marriage. Two witnesses are also present. As in all religious ceremonies, men are separated from women on two sides of the room or hall. Head covering is also required. Blessings are given to the bride and groom. Where polygamy was once accepted, it later was rescinded.

“In Jewish teaching, marriage is considered the ideal human state and a basic social institution established by God at the time of Creation. Both the Bible and the rabbis reject celibacy as unnatural and harmful to the human personality, and insist upon the need for marriage, not only for purposes of procreation, but also for companionship and human self-fulfillment: ‘It is not good that man be alone; I will make a help meet for him’ (Genesis 2:15) and ‘He who has no wife is not a proper man; he lives without joy, blessing and goodness.’ The successful marriage in the eyes of the prophets and the rabbis was the most perfect symbol of a meaningful and purposeful relationship and was taken by them as the closest approximation to the idealized relationship between God and Israel, and between Israel and the Torah. The laws of marriage and the customs and practices of the marriage ceremony which developed over the generations are numerous and varied, but all take as their goal the glorification of marriage as a sanctified state and the desire to facilitate to the greatest possible extent the maintenance of a successful and harmonious marriage.

“The biblical idea of marriage was essentially monogamous, although polygamy was common among the upper classes of society. Among the rabbis, polygamy

was almost unknown, but it was not until the 11th century that multiple marriages were legally prohibited. Then an enactment associated with the name of Rabbenu Gershom ben Judah was promulgated which established monogamy as the legal norm for all the Jews living in Europe.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Other details of Jewish marriage are included to explain interesting cultural and traditional practices.

“A Jewish marriage consists, from the point of view of rabbinic law, of two separate acts, called *kiddushin* and *nissu'in*, which were originally performed at an interval of a year or more apart, but which from the 12th century onward became united in one ceremony.

“Kiddushin is a legal act of acquisition of the bride by the groom: by handing over an object of value (usually a simple ring) to the bride in the presence of two witnesses and reciting the formula, ‘Behold you are consecrated unto me with this ring according to the law of Moses and Israel,’ the groom signifies his intent to reserve the bride exclusively to himself, and by accepting the ring the bride signifies her consent. (The *halakhah* also recognizes the validity of *kiddushin* performed through the writing of a contract or through actual cohabitation, but both these methods became obsolete at an early date and today *kiddushin* is uniquely performed through the transference of an object of value.)”

“Kiddushin is thus a legally binding form of betrothal, but it must be followed by *nissu'in*, the marriage proper, for the couple to be considered completely married. In the *nissu'in* ceremony, the bride is led under a canopy (*huppah*) symbolic of the groom's house, and benedictions are recited, after which the couple may legally live together.

“The separation of the two ceremonies in Talmudic times allowed the arrangement of long betrothals, but the uncertainties of life in medieval Europe made such an arrangement impractical and perilous, and it was for this reason that it became customary to perform both ceremonies together. The actual wedding ceremony as performed today is an amalgam of customs and traditions which developed over the generations, but its basic features can be summarized as follows:

“Before being led to the *huppah* the groom, in the presence of witnesses, undertakes by an act of *kinyan* the obligations of the *ketubbah* (marriage contract; see below). He is then escorted to the place where the bride is waiting and lets down the veil over her face, while the rabbi pronounces the blessing invoked on Rebekah, ‘O sister! May you grow into thousands of myriads’ (Genesis 24–60). (This ceremony is known in Yiddish as *bedeken di kale* (‘veiling the bride’) and is not practiced by Sephardi Jews.) The groom is then led to the *huppah* by his and the bride's father, while the bride is accompanied to the *huppah* by her and the groom's mother.

“The ceremony proper (customarily performed in the presence of at least a *minyan* of males—a precautionary measure eliminating the possibility of secret marriages) then begins with the recitation of the marriage blessing over a goblet of wine, from which both bride and groom drink. The groom then places the ring on the forefinger of the bride's right hand and in the presence of two witnesses repeats the marriage formula. *Kiddushin* has now been performed, and in order to separate it from the *nissu'in* which is to follow, the *ketubbah* is read out

loud. Seven marriage blessings are then recited over a second goblet of wine and the ceremony concludes with the groom crushing a glass under his right foot, as a sign of mourning over the destruction of the Temple. To the rejoicing of the invited guests, the couple are then led to a private room in which they spend some time together, while witnesses are stationed outside. After this *yihud* (being alone together) they are finally considered to be man and wife.

“Both the week before the wedding and the week after are celebrated in special fashion. In the synagogue on the Sabbath preceding the marriage, the groom is called to the reading of the Torah and, in some communities, while standing at the *bimah* is showered with nuts and candies, in symbolic representation of everyone's wish for his fruitfulness and happiness. This custom is called in Yiddish *aufrufen*. During the days immediately preceding the wedding, bride and groom customarily do not see each other (the actual period varies in different communities from a week to the day of the marriage), and both fast on the day of their wedding as an indication of the spiritual importance of marriage and the fact that they are about to start a new life together. Following the wedding ceremony a festive meal is served, during which the guests entertain the newly-wed couple and following which the seven wedding blessings are again recited. The seven days following the wedding are known as the *Sheva Berakhot*, for festive meals in honor of the couple are arranged each day, and at the conclusion of each the seven wedding blessings are recited in the presence of a *minyan* of invited guests.

“Although the act of marriage can be effected in different ways it has become the universal Jewish practice to use a ring (except in very few oriental communities where a coin is used). By law, the ring must belong to the bridegroom, and can be constructed of any material, as long as it is free of precious stones and its value is more than a *perutah*, the smallest denomination of currency in Talmudic times.

“(The Ketubbah) is the marriage contract, the document which records the financial obligations which the husband undertakes toward his wife consequent to their marriage. In principle, the obligations recorded in the *ketubbah* are imposed upon the husband by law, independent of the writing of the contract, but the *halakhah* still dictates that a deed be written and that it is ‘forbidden for the groom to live with the bride until he has written and delivered the *ketubbah* to her.’ According to the Talmud, the *ketubbah* was instituted in order to protect the woman, since it imposes a monetary punishment upon the husband in the case of a divorce, and it also assures the wife at least minimal compensation upon the death of her husband. In the *ketubbah* are spelled out the minimum compensation set by law, as well as all additional sums willingly offered by the husband.

“Today, the term *huppah* refers to the decorative canopy under which the wedding ceremony is performed. Originally, however, it referred to the actual bridal chamber, the tent or room of the groom to which the bride was brought in festive procession for the marital union. The custom of setting up a canopy for the wedding ceremony was apparently not widely practiced until late in the Middle Ages, for many medieval responsa deal with the question whether the act of entering the *huppah* [canopy] was sufficient to constitute marriage or whether it was to be regarded only as a symbol which would still require the couple to retire in privacy (as in today's practice of *yihud*; see above). 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. Generally, the *huppah* is erected inside the synagogue or the hall where the wedding is to take place, but among Orthodox Jews, the preferred custom is to erect the *huppah* outside, or at least in a spot open to the sky, underneath the stars, because of God's assurance to Abraham that He would make his descendants 'as numerous as the stars of the heavens' (Genesis 22:17).”
(*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

In some Jewish circles, a special garment is worn in remembrance of repentance and represents the purity of the covenant of marriage. It is also used to clothe the dead. It is called the *Kittel* in Yiddish meaning "gown" or garment.

“In Ashkenazi tradition it is not just the bride who wears white on her wedding day. The groom, too, stands under the canopy wearing his white *kitel*, or robe, over his wedding finery. The day of their marriage is a solemn one for the bride and groom. They pray that their past sins will be forgiven and they can start their life together afresh. The white of their clothing symbolizes the purity and the forgiveness of sin for which they are hoping. For this reason a similar garment is used to clothe the dead for burial. The *kitel* therefore also serves to remind the wearer of how brief life is, and of the necessity for atonement.”
(*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

Another interesting similarity to Latter-day Saint practice is the significance of a proper ritual marriage in the faith, even though a secular marriage has already been performed.

“A convert to Judaism is considered a new-born child, and, from the halakhic point of view, he has no father or mother. Thus, if a whole family converts, the children and the parents start their lives as Jews with no legal relationship. Because of this state of affairs, converts are always named as though they were the sons of Abraham, the first Jew. A husband and wife who convert must also have another wedding ceremony in order to be married under Jewish law.”
(*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

The holiness of marriage is a major part of the beliefs of both the Jews and the Mormons.

“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* (separation during the period of menstruation; which ensure that the couple does not indulge in sex on impulse but rather directs the act to holiness.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

Marriage is one of the greatest covenants God has given to man. The sanctity of marriage is evident in the Bible. The traditions of both Jews and Latter-day Saints similarly uphold the precious responsibilities and blessings of this covenant.

Lesson 32

“To Seal the Testimony”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 135; Martyrdom of Joseph Smith the Prophet and his brother, Hyrum Smith the Patriarch, at Carthage, Illinois, June 27, 1844. HC 6: 629—631. This document was written by Elder John Taylor of the Council of the Twelve, who was a witness to the events. 1—2, Joseph and Hyrum martyred in Carthage Jail; 3, Preeminent position of the Prophet acclaimed; 4—7, Their innocent blood testifies of the truth and divinity of the work.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

Joseph Smith’s martyrdom must be seen through the records of past prophets. Their persecutions and martyrdoms only reflected the future or the past and teach us something about the ultimate sacrifice of the Lord. These prophets were models of their Master, the Savior, who would prophesy against the corrupt part of the Jewish government and the people who followed their wickedness.

“And after all this, after working many mighty miracles among the children of men, he shall be led, yea, even as Isaiah said, as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. Yea, even so he shall be led, crucified, and slain, the flesh becoming subject even unto death, the will of the Son being swallowed up in the will of the Father.” (*Mosiah 15:6-7*)

Let me add some Jewish thought on martyrdom. It may have some significance in understanding the difference between righteous martyrdom and those would cause themselves to die in their evil intent destroying and killing others.

“Martyrdom is permitted only in the most exceptional circumstances; to lay down one’s life, even for the fulfillment of divine laws, when such sacrifice is not required by law, is regarded as a mortal offense.

“The willingness to sacrifice life rather than faith, is one of the most significant concepts of Judaism, and has paradoxically been a factor in Jewish survival, where other oppressed groups have assimilated and disappeared. The laws of martyrdom were first formulated at the rabbinic council of Lydda in the second century C.E. when *kiddush ha-Shem* (‘Sanctification of the Name [of God]’) was declared obligatory with regard to three situations: idolatry, unchastity, and murder. Rather than worship idols, commit an unchaste act, or murder, the Jew is commanded to choose death. All other commandments may be violated rather than suffer death. But should a Jew be forced into breaking any commandment in the presence of ten Jews (or more) in order to demonstrate his apostasy (abandonment of faith) he is obliged to sanctify God’s name by choosing death. If ten Jews are not present, he should transgress rather than be killed. These rules were to apply in ‘normal’ times. In periods of persecution of the whole community, however, death was to be chosen even if no other Jews were present. The rabbis understood the first verse of the *Shema*, ‘And you shall love the Lord your God . . . with all your soul,’ as meaning even if He demands your soul from you, and, indeed, the proclamation of the *Shema*, ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One,’ was the phrase with which martyrs went to their death.

“Jewish history is replete with examples of those willing to die for their faith from Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who in the Book of Daniel refused to

worship an idol and thus endangered their lives, up to the present generation of Soviet Jews who suffer indescribable hardships rather than give up their Jewishness. Under Antiochus Epiphanes, Hellenizers applied violent methods toward the Jews. The Fourth Book of Maccabees is almost entirely a sermon on the meaning and glory of self-sacrifice. Whereas in Christian and Muslim thought martyrdom is chiefly regarded as the act of individuals warranting canonization as saints, in Judaism it remains a task for each and every Jew to fulfill if the appropriate moment should come.

“Throughout the ages Jews have endangered their lives and even died as martyrs to faithfully observe the dietary laws. During the period of the Greek rule of Erez Israel (second century B.C.E.) many Jews chose to die rather than eat the unclean foods which the Greeks forced upon them. In peril of their lives, Jews carried out the laws of ritual slaughter during the Crusades. The Marranos of the Inquisition, the Cantonists of Czarist Russia, and the inmates of Nazi concentration camps all remained steadfastly faithful to the laws of Kashrut, despite all threats.

“Jews were forbidden to emulate gentile customs of an idolatrous or superstitious nature. The prohibition (*hukkat ha-goi*) was derived from the biblical commandment ‘ye shall not walk in the customs of the nation’ (Leviticus 20:23 and 18:13). Its purpose was to prevent Jews from being converted to other religions. In Talmudic literature the term ‘the customs of the Amorites’ (*darkhei ha-Emori*) was also used to cover all heathen practices of the gentiles of that time. Even gentile dress associated with non-Jewish religious practice was forbidden (‘martyrdom should be accepted rather than changing the style of a shoelace’). Jewish garb thus became an emblem of traditional Judaism, especially in eastern Europe, and modern dress was frowned on as a cunning method of Christianization. Many of the restrictions against involvement with gentiles made during Talmudic times were reduced as economic contact increased between the Jewish and gentile communities during the Middle Ages.

“Gentiles were expected to practice at least the seven Noachide Laws. These were considered by rabbinic tradition to be the minimum moral duties enjoined on all men and were derived from divine demands addressed to Adam and Noah. The laws consisted of prohibitions against idolatry, blasphemy, bloodshed, sexual sins, theft (including the taking of booty in war and dishonesty in economic life), and eating flesh from live animals, as well as the command to establish a legal system, presumably to enforce the prohibitions. The gentile was not obliged to acknowledge God, but was at least obliged to abandon the worship of false gods. Unlike Jews, Noachides were not required to suffer martyrdom rather than break the law against idolatry; they were, however, required to choose martyrdom rather than shed human blood. In some instances gentiles were also required to observe Sabbath and the festivals, and to fast on the Day of Atonement.

“Martyrdom when sacrifice was not obligatory became a matter of dispute. Maimonides held that one who chose death when the law decided for life was guilty of an offense. Others, like the tosafists and most medieval Jews of Germany, considered such voluntary death praiseworthy. The sages of the Talmud were divided as to whether gentiles are required to sanctify God's name by martyrdom. Rava maintained that rather than break one of the Noachide laws, the gentile should choose death.

“In modern times, the lessening of religious fanaticism, and growing secularization of Jewish life, accompanied by trends toward assimilation and emancipation, have led to the disintegration of Jewish values; as the necessity for self-sacrifice diminished, so the idea of *kiddush ha-Shem* appeared to lose its significance. However, renewed persecution under the Nazis revived the ancient tradition in the ghettos and concentration camps of Europe and very many cases of honorable death among the six million who perished must have gone unrecorded.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

There is a wall sculpture at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem, that carries a similar message. Naphtali Bezem’s sculpture includes a panel depicting the Jews being brought into the slave/extermination camps. Underneath is a “broken woman” representing the broken Jewish family line. Next to her is a broken fish with wings. A fish is sometimes used as an art metaphor for the spirit. Its wings seem to represent an ascension to heaven, a reward for martyrdom. It reminds me of Alma’s response to Amulek’s plea to have Alma use his prophetic priestly power to stop the carnage.

“And when Amulek saw the pains of the women and children who were consuming in the fire, he also was pained; and he said unto Alma: How can we witness this awful scene? Therefore let us stretch forth our hands, and exercise the power of God which is in us, and save them from the flames. But Alma said unto him: The Spirit constraineth me that I must not stretch forth mine hand; for behold the Lord receiveth them up unto himself, in glory; and he doth suffer that they may do this thing, or that the people may do this thing unto them, according to the hardness of their hearts, that the judgments which he shall exercise upon them in his wrath may be just; and the blood of the innocent shall stand as a witness against them, yea, and cry mightily against them at the last day.” (*Alma 14:10-11*)

Also in the Book of Mormon, one may get a glimpse of impending martyrdom as we picture Abinadi’s countenance rebuking the wickedness of the people listening to him. They rejected Abinadi. In reflection, the Children of Israel did not reject the Lord completely. They accepted a “lesser law,” one with strict rules and regulations rather than accept the spirit-guided “higher law.” In another case, the people of Nineveh repented when Jonah preached to them. Yet, hearing Abinadi, the people of King Noah rebelled even more, resulting in his martyrdom.

As Abinadi gave his life, he succeeded in reaching through the crowd of wickedness to one soul. One Alma hears the voice of the prophet. More importantly, he feels the spirit of the Lord and he becomes a prophet to speak to the people for God.

In the New Testament, both Zacharias and his son John were killed by a wicked generation and a priesthood (or priestcraft) that existed along side of righteous priestly men and women who anticipated the impending arrival of the Messiah.

In these modern times, evil pretenders “give their lives” to further their misguided cause. They pretend that they are using religion as a worthy reason for their and other’s deaths. These are false martyrs that tear down and destroy. True martyrs seal their testimonies of the Redeemer, the Savior, the Giver of Life with their lives. These are true prophets who leave a legacy of life. As tragic as their deaths may be for those so close to them, they build a future. They lead us to God.

President Brigham Young Leads the Saints

Lesson 33

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 107:22–24; Revelation on priesthood, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, dated March 28, 1835. HC 2: 209–217. On the date named the Twelve met in council, confessing their individual weaknesses and shortcomings, expressing repentance, and seeking the further guidance of the Lord. They were about to separate on missions to districts assigned. Although portions of this section were received on the date named, the historical records affirm that various parts were received at sundry times, some as early as November 1831. 21—38, The First Presidency, the Twelve, and the Seventy constitute the presiding quorums, whose decisions are to be made in unity and righteousness.

Exodus 16:12–15; Israel murmurs for want of bread, and lusts for the flesh pots of Egypt—The Lord rains bread from heaven, and sends quail for meat—Israel given manna each day, except the Sabbath, for forty years.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

To the mob, the martyrdom of Joseph Smith was thought to be the end of “Mormonism.” However, a perfect system of succession had been restored. It was the system God gave in ancient times. The similarity of the mission of Joseph Smith can be compared to Moses. The mission of Brigham Young could also be likened to Joshua.

“And again, the duty of the President of the office of the High Priesthood is to preside over the whole church, and to be like unto Moses.” (*Doctrine and Covenants 107:91*)

“Yea, Joseph truly said: Thus saith the Lord unto me: A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins. And unto him will I give commandment that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren, which shall be of great worth unto them, even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers. And I will give unto him a commandment that he shall do none other work, save the work which I shall command him. And I will make him great in mine eyes; for he shall do my work. And he shall be great like unto Moses, whom I have said I would raise up unto you, to deliver my people, O house of Israel. (*2 Nephi 3:7–9.*)

The selection of Joshua to replace Moses was anticipated by the Israelites. There was (and still is) a system that God established that there would always be a worthy “Prophet in waiting.” Known examples include Joseph for Jacob, Joshua for Moses, Nephi for Lehi and presently the President of the Quorum of the Twelve. These prophets were and are still led by the Lord. History sometimes only records the results of their decisions without elaborating on the revelatory decision making process.

“The actions of Joshua raise the moral issue of the right to take by conquest a land inhabited by another people. To this, the rabbis of the talmudic era argue that the land of Israel was divinely designated for the children of Israel, and that the Canaanites were merely acting as caretakers of the land until the Israelites arrived.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In the Book of Mormon, the advice Alma gives his son transcends parental responsibility. It is an instruction to the next prophet. At all times, there was a worthy prophet-in-waiting, much like Elder Thomas S. Monson is today.

“Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning let thy heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day.”
(*Alma 37:37*)

“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.” (*Amos 3:7*)

As Alma taught Heleman to counsel with the Lord in all his doings, so does God counsel with his prophets in all the doings that pertain to mankind.

In more recent times a pilgrimage happened as Israel received an influx of tens of thousands of black Jews from Ethiopia. They feel they are descendants of King Solomon through one of his wives, the Queen of Sheba.

“In Ethiopia, members of this group refer to themselves as Beta Israel . . . They practice an early form of Judaism; the chief rabbis of Israel have recognized them as Jews. Until brought to Israel, they lived in the provinces around Lake Tana. According to their tradition, their ancestors were Jerusalem notables who came with Menelik, the son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, when he returned home.

“They said that he brought Judaic customs and civil law to Ethiopia. The lion of Judah was the symbol of the emperor of Ethiopia.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“Operation Solomon” was the name of a remarkable plan to bring these Jews to Israel. In the early 90’s fifteen thousand Ethiopian Jews were airlifted to Israel in thirty-one hours. One 747 Jumbo had more than eleven hundred of them on one flight. In order to keep count and due to the basic illiteracy of Hebrew, each had a number stuck to his clothing. When they landed, there were two, unnumbered, newborn babies!

In the modern gathering of Israel, some were born in covered wagons, others in Boeing 747s!

Faith in Every Footstep

Lesson 34

**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 Judaic
Insights:**

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 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 seased: 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.

“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 (see Sukkot) it is said that ‘whoever has not witnessed the joy of the festival of the water-drawing has seen no joy in life.’

“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.

“‘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 Toy, 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.

“Dance is important in modern Israel. Immigrant groups have brought many dance forms, including the hora from Rumania, and the debka from the Arab countries. Community folk dancing is a part of the youth and pioneering movement and is usually common on kibbutzim. Modern Israel dance groups include the Inbal company of Yemenite dancers, and the Batsheva Ballet. The Daliyyah folk-dance festival, begun by the choreographer Gurit Kadman at Kibbutz Daliyyah in 1944 was held annually for decades. The Karmiel dance festival is popular.

“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), the priests used to fill a golden flagon with water drawn from the beautiful spring of Siloam in the valley to the south of the Temple Mount, and carry it up the hill for a ceremony at the altar. This ceremony was called Simhat Bet ha-Sho'evah (the joy of the water drawing). According to the Mishnah, whoever failed to witness this ceremony in his lifetime ‘never witnessed real joy.’ Golden candlesticks, 50 cubits high, were lit with wicks made out of worn-out garments of the priests, and the light emitted was so bright that ‘there was not a courtyard in Jerusalem that did not reflect the light of the Bet ha-Sho'evah.’ 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.

“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.*)

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.

“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.’

“Some evidence further suggests that King David organized guilds of Psalm singers in the Tabernacle (I Chronicles 6:16), which were certainly functioning during the period of the First Temple. The fact that the names of some of these groups (the ‘Korahites’ and the ‘Asaphites’) appear in the superscription of various psalms, indicate their strong involvement in the early public worship of Israel. Bible critics today (unlike those of 100 years ago) almost all agree that the Psalms represent a very early form of Israelite literature, bearing no Hellenistic influences and thus predating, at the very latest, early Second Temple times.

“Today, in the synagogue, on the first six days of Sukkot (except Shabbat), a single circuit is made around the bimah [pulpit] by the congregants . . . and chant hoshanot [praises to the Lord]. On the seventh day, Hoshana Rabba, the procession is repeated seven times. . . . Every adult male in the congregation is honored with carrying a Torah, and . . . there is much singing . . .” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

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 the early pioneers of the gathering Jews. That gathering is called “Aliya,” it means to go up.

“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’).

“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.

“As long as deep in the heart
The soul of a Jew yearns,
And towards the east
An eye keeps watch
upon Zion,
Our hope is not yet lost
The hope of two millenia
To be a free people in our land
The land of Zion and Jerusalem.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.*)

An inspiring instrumental rendition of Ha-Tikva was played and recorded by the LDS/Jewish concert pianist, Marvin Goldstein.

Pioneering is still going on throughout the LDS Church membership as people gather to their lands of origin and establish local “Zions.” A brief look at a biographical sketch of my own grandparents and parents and how it affected me may be of some value to you.

“Daniel Rona was born Daniel Denis Rosenthal in 1941. His German-Jewish parents fled the Holocaust then met and married in the British Mandate of Palestine where Daniel was born. Daniel spent his first years growing up in Israel then went to New York City with his father when his parents separated. Daniel’s father was deeply troubled—his parents (Daniel’s grandparents) had been killed at Auschwitz—and he was earnestly soul searching for answers.

As a child, Daniel was brought up in his Jewish heritage, traditions and holiday observance. Daniel’s father wondered how it was that six million Jews could have been allowed to perish without any warning from God. He found the message of living prophets at an LDS Ward meeting in a synagogue in their neighborhood in Manhattan. He was impressed with the truth and the amazing Israelite connection of 'Joseph and Judah.' Although desiring to be a member immediately, he was asked to wait until he was fully prepared and understood that this was a fulfilling step in his Jewish life.

Daniel and his father moved to Salt Lake City where Daniel grew up keeping his Jewish individuality. He developed a strong sense of gratitude for the freedoms and opportunities of America. When he and his father became U.S. citizens, they changed their family name to Rona. After serving a successful mission in Germany, Daniel had the opportunity to visit his mother and step-father in Israel. Upon his return to Utah, Apostle Ezra Taft Benson asked him to report

on his mission and more importantly, his Israel experiences at Church Headquarters.

After his mission he met Marilyn Minardi. They married and had five children (three born in the U.S. and two born in Israel). Daniel then launched into a successful career in broadcasting. In 1967 the Six-Day War in Israel had a great impact on Daniel and as a result of the experience, when the 1973 Yom Kippur War broke out he avoided contact with any news media. But the emotional pull came regardless. Marilyn supported him fully and although it wasn't easy. By August 1974 they had moved their family to Israel.

New immigrants to Israel are usually offered some kind of financial assistance. However, someone told the immigration authorities that the Rona's were not Jews but "Mormons coming to broadcast for the Mormon Church," and hence did not have the right to citizenship. This meant that they could not be employed. Fortunately, Daniel had packed tools, paint brushes and rollers in his suitcases. He did odd jobs and was able to support his family without any governmental assistance. Eventually, he was finally accepted as a returning Jew and was granted the assistance and rights afforded him.

Daniel's house painting business grew. At the same time, Daniel observed the steady flow of Latter-day Saint tourists coming to the Holy Land. They had hopes of experiencing the spirit of the land and learning more of the cultures and traditions of their brothers and sisters in the House of Israel. Unfortunately, they were often disappointed because most of the guides were not religious, and none had LDS doctrinal insights or perspectives. Being a local resident and ethnically rooted in Israel, Daniel became serious about providing a professional and spiritually-oriented touring experience for those visiting his homeland.

The career change came along with peace of mind and heart as he was accepted by the Ministry of Tourism Course for Guides. After two years of study and training, Daniel became the first and remains the only licensed LDS guide and tour operator in Israel. The tours developed into a regular program, with mainly LDS guests arriving almost every week. In over twenty years of service, Daniel has developed thousands of close relationships with Latter-day Saints, Rabbis, members of many diverse religious communities, and the ever-changing members of the Jerusalem Branch.

Daniel has had many responsibilities as a teacher, counselor and leader in various presidencies in the Jerusalem Branch and District. In addition to his tours, he founded the Ensign Foundation, a charitable, nonprofit organization. The Ensign Foundation fosters bridges of understanding and exchanges of science and technology, as well as cultural and educational ideas between Israel and other nations and peoples. This Foundation coordinates Daniel's various speaking engagements throughout the world. The Foundation has also been involved in archeological digs and other activities in harmony with its mission." *(Denise Metcalf - The Ensign Foundation)*

Lesson 35

“A Mission of Saving”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 4:3–7; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to his father, Joseph Smith, Sen., at Harmony, Pennsylvania, February 1829. C 1: 28. 1—4, Valiant service saves the Lord’s ministers; 5—6, Godly attributes qualify them for the ministry; 7, Things of God must be sought after.

Doctrine and Covenants 18:10–16; Revelation to Joseph Smith the Prophet, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer, given at Fayette, New York, June 1829. HC 1: 60—64. Then the Aaronic Priesthood was conferred, the bestowal of the Melchizedek Priesthood was promised. See heading to Section 13. In response to supplication for knowledge on the matter, the Lord gave this revelation. 1—5, Scriptures show how to build up the Church; 6—8, The world is ripening in iniquity; 9—16, The worth of souls is great; 17—25, To gain salvation, men must take upon them the name of Christ.

Doctrine and Covenants 52:40; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, to the elders of the Church, at Kirtland, Ohio, June 7, 1831. HC 1: 175—179. A conference had been held at Kirtland, beginning on the 3rd, and closing on the 6th of June. At this conference the first distinctive ordinations to the office of high priest were made, and certain manifestations of false and deceiving spirits were discerned and rebuked. 22—44, Various elders are appointed to go forth preaching the gospel, while traveling to Missouri for the conference.

Doctrine and Covenants 81:5–6; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, March 1832. HC 1: 257—258. Frederick G. Williams is called to be a high priest and a counselor in the Presidency of the High Priesthood. The historical records show that when this revelation was received in March 1832, it called Jesse Gause to the office of counselor to Joseph Smith in the Presidency. However, when he failed to continue in a manner consistent with this appointment, the call was subsequently transferred to Frederick G. Williams. The revelation (dated March 1832) should be regarded as a step toward the formal organization of the First Presidency, specifically calling for the office of counselor in that body and explaining the dignity of the appointment. Brother Gause served for a time, but was excommunicated from the Church in December 1832. Brother Williams was ordained to the specified office on March 18, 1833. 3—7, If Frederick G. Williams is faithful in his ministry, he shall have eternal life.

Doctrine and Covenants 138:58; A vision, given to President Joseph F. Smith in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 3, 1918. In his opening address at the eighty-ninth Semiannual General Conference of the Church, on October 4, 1918, President Smith declared that he had received several divine communications during the previous months. One of these, concerning the Savior’s visit to the spirits of the dead while his body was in the tomb, he had received the previous day. It was written immediately following the close of the conference; on October 31, 1918, it was submitted to the counselors in the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve, and the Patriarch, and it was unanimously accepted by them. 53—60, The righteous dead of this day continue their labors in the world of spirits.

3 Nephi 18:31–32; Jesus institutes the sacrament among the Nephites—They are commanded to pray always in his name—Those who eat his flesh and drink his blood unworthily are damned—The disciples are given power to confer the Holy Ghost.

Moroni 7:45–48; An invitation to enter into the rest of the Lord—Pray with real intent—The Spirit of Christ enables men to know good from evil—Satan persuades men to deny Christ and do evil—The prophets manifest the coming of Christ—By faith miracles are wrought and angels minister—Men should hope for eternal life and cleave unto charity.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

Let’s remind ourselves again that Jehovah is His name. Salvation is what He provides. Jehovah means “I Am” - and “I Am” is so sacred that it is not repeated; even modern Hebrew does not have a first person conjugation of “I am.” The shortened version of Jehovah is “Jeho” and connected to the abbreviation of “salvation” it is pronounced Jeho-Shua. By the time Jeho-shua was transliterated into Greek and then into Latin, it became pronounced “Jesus,” and in English, Jesus. He is the “I AM” who “saves.”

The experience of Abraham being saved and subsequently Isaac being saved from sacrifice is one of the most direct symbols of the Savior’s atonement. Both father and son shared powerful experiences of being saved.

“And as they lifted up their hands upon me, that they might offer me up and take away my life, behold, I lifted up my voice unto the Lord my God, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and he filled me with the vision of the Almighty, and the angel of his presence stood by me, and immediately unloosed my bands; And his voice was unto me: Abraham, Abraham,

behold, my name is Jehovah, and I have heard thee, and have come down to deliver thee, and to take thee away from thy father's house, and from all thy kinsfolk, into a strange land which thou knowest not of . . ." (*Abraham 1:15-16*)

The remarkable symbolism of time, places, and events seemed to have foreshadowed the Messiah, the Holy One of Israel. Abraham's life was chiastic: first to be offered as a human sacrifice and then to be saved, later to be commanded to offer his own son as a sacrifice and then to have him saved. All this was to teach us that God, also on Mount Moriah, was to offer his Son as a sacrifice to save us all.

In context to this lesson, let me repeat a story I've told before. On one occasion, a professor of religion went to the Western (wailing) Wall, microphone in hand, and began asking religious Jews why they were chosen. One responded, "We are chosen to suffer." Later, in making a point about the Savior's suffering, he said, "No one is chosen to suffer other than the Lord." Yet, the difficulties, calamities, and sufferings of the Jews will ultimately bring them closer to the Lord who covenanted to remember and save His people. Sufferings bring us closer to Him and those having the highest responsibilities of serving Him often suffer greatly. They "sink to new heights."

Previously we reflected on the "sea and storm stories" in the scriptures. I repeat, their meanings and lessons for us, nowadays, have a common "saving" connection. Noah is saved by the Lord, Enoch was saved by the Lord, Jonah was saved by the Lord, the Apostles on the Sea of Galilee were saved by the Lord. Nephi was saved by the Lord. Apparently, the lesson is, when "sinking," remember, we will be saved by the Lord.

"And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark." (*Genesis 7:23*)

"And it came to pass that when they were buried in the deep there was no water that could hurt them, their vessels being tight like unto a dish and also they were tight like unto the ark of Noah; therefore when they were encompassed about by many waters they did cry unto the Lord, and he did bring them forth again upon the top of the waters gain upon the top of the waters." (*Ether 6:7*)

"So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows. Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." (*Jonah 1:15-17*)

"And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith. Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm." (*Matthew 8:24-26*)

"And it came to pass after they had loosed me, behold, I took the compass, and it did work whither I desired it. And it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord; and after I had prayed the winds did cease, and the storm did cease, and there was a great calm." (*Nephi 18:21*)

"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." (*Psalms 107:29*)

In reading Jonah's account, it becomes obvious that he learned a great lesson. His four chapters are an interesting study in contrasts and opposites. His own poetry and literary style are a testimony that has one purpose: It is to witness that the Lord saves. He says that clearly in chapter 2, verse 9, "Salvation is of the Lord." The Hebrew word for salvation is rendered with the shortened sound "sha" or "shua," such as in "Elisha" (my God saves).

The word Hosanna comes from two Hebrew words. The first part "Ho" is a derived, shortened version of the unmentionable name of the Lord, "Jehovah." The second part refers to salvation. In other words, "Hosanna" is a happy acclaim of "The Lord who saves" or "Salvation is of the Lord!" Hosanna is a praise much like Hallelujah, which literally means "Praise the Lord." "Hallel" is "praise" and "Ya" is another form of Jehovah.

Another chiasmus shows that ancient Joseph saved his family, and they did not know who he was. Latter-day Joseph is saving his brothers again, (more foreign aid goes to Israel from the U.S.A., the land of Joseph, than from all other countries combined) and they don't know that it is "Joseph." In the meridian of times there was "One" who saved us all - and still most people don't know it.

The principle of saving is so strong that the Jewish Talmud even teaches that some commandments must be broken if it means saving a life.

"Sins can be divided into two categories—those of commission and those of omission. The former are more serious insofar as they involve a positive action—doing something which is forbidden. The latter consist of the failure to perform *mitzvot*. As far as the rabbis were concerned, the three most serious sins are murder, idolatry, and adultery or incest. They ruled that rather than commit these, a person must give up his life. In order to save his life, a person is allowed to commit the other sins." (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

Upon a closer look, the saving nature of Jesus' mission is reflected in his personality. He must have made many friends in the Galilee; after all, thousands followed Him. It is conceivable that the very first ones to gather around Him when He came out or arrived to speak were the little children. He might have had special names or nicknames for them, for he called Simon Bar Jonah, *Peter*, a name denoting rock, "Rocky!" (Maybe Simon's physique was like a rock. Later the "rock" would sink, and Jesus, the Rock of Salvation, would save him.)

The greatest saving miracle in Jewish history is the grand exodus from Egypt. The account is repeated every year at Passover, the feast (celebration) of deliverance. A handbook (*Haggadah*) explains the miraculous event.

"Since the overriding theme of the *Haggadah* is that God saved the Jewish people from their enemies, Moses' name is not mentioned in the *Haggadah* (except for one passing instance). This emphasizes that it was God Himself—not an angel and not a messenger—who redeemed Israel. Accordingly, a large part of the *Haggadah* is filled with songs of praise for the great miracles that God performed." (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

In latter-days, when the great Deliverer returns, He will announce His names and we will know He came to save. The dialogue to consider is in Lesson 21, "Looking Forth for the Great Day of the Lord to Come."

“The Desert Shall Rejoice, and Blossom as the Rose”

Lesson 36

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 58:2–4; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, August 1, 1831. HC 1: 190–195. On the first Sabbath after the arrival of the Prophet and party in Jackson County, Missouri, a religious service was held and two members were received by baptism. During that week, members of the Colesville saints from the Thompson Branch and others arrived. Many were eager to learn the will of the Lord concerning them in the new place of gathering. 1–5, Those who endure tribulation shall be crowned with glory.

Doctrine and Covenants 64:33–34; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to the elders of the Church, at Kirtland, Ohio, September 11, 1831. HC 1: 211–214. The Prophet was preparing to move to Hiram, Ohio, to renew his work on the translation of the Bible, which had been laid aside while he had been in Missouri. A company of brethren who had been commanded to journey to Zion (Missouri) was earnestly engaged in making preparations to leave in October. At this busy time, the revelation was received. 33–36, The rebellious shall be cut off out of Zion

Doctrine and Covenants 82:10; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Jackson County, Missouri, April 26, 1832. HC 1: 267–269. The occasion was a general council of the Church at which Joseph Smith the Prophet was sustained as the President of the High Priesthood, to which office he had previously been ordained at a conference of high priests, elders, and members, at Amherst, Ohio, January 25, 1832 (see heading to Section 75). Formerly unusual names were used in the publication of this revelation to conceal the identity of the persons named (see heading to Section 78). These unusual names have now been dropped, except in cases where the identification is not known (see verse 11). 8–13, The Lord is bound when we do what he says.

Doctrine and Covenants 93:1; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, May 6, 1833. HC 1: 343–346. 1–5, All who are faithful shall see the Lord.

Doctrine and Covenants 130:19–21; Items of instruction given by Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Ramus, Illinois, April 2, 1843. HC 5: 323–325. 18–19, Intelligence gained in this life rises with us in the resurrection; 20–21, All blessings come by obedience to law.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

Prosperity is a contrast or opposite of adversity and hardship. The greatest deliverance of the Children of Israel was from the adversities and hardships in Egypt. That great exodus was a learning experience. A complete generation had to die and only the next generation was willing to keep the commandments enough to be saved and able to enter the promised land to prosper there.

“Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.”
(*2 Chronicles 20*)

Lehi, Nephi, and those who left Jerusalem about 600 B.C. were sent to the “ends of the earth.” Their prophets continued teaching the same truths that were given in the original “prosperous” vineyard. What they recorded as their scriptures became an even clearer source of teaching materials for later generations. Even in the distant or “poorest” spot of land, the truths thrived and the righteous created a “genetic imprint” of true dealings with God. They prospered both temporally and spiritually.

As an additional example of poor land producing fruit, let me remind you that returning Jews are making the wilderness “blossom as a rose.” More roses are exported from Israel than any country in the world. They are growing in the desolate Jordan valley where the rainfall has been recorded at one inch or less per year. With the vast flower farms and date groves, the rainfall has increased to six or seven inches per year in the new agricultural areas. Israel’s genetic engineering has taken the genetic structures of date palms which grow well in depleted or poor soil and placed them into other domestic crop structures. This means that elsewhere in the world, the poor spot of land can also become fruitful.

Even though, ethnically, Israel looks like a tossed salad of mixed fruit, the roots still bear the genetic imprints of the original House of Israel. Connecting to those roots will trigger a recollection of the covenants made of old. So, when the fruit in the nethermost part of the vineyard becomes apostate, there still is a root connection to the old tree.

Looking at what can happen in a desert, let's examine En-gedi an oasis on the western shore of the Dead Sea and one of the most important archaeological sites in the Judean Desert.

"En-Gedi is actually the name of a spring which flows from a height of 656 feet above the Dead Sea. In the Bible, the wasteland near the spring where David sought refuge from Saul is called 'the wilderness of En-Gedi' and the enclosed camps at the top of the mountains, the 'strongholds of En-Gedi.' In the period before the Bar Kokhba War (132–135), the Jewish town of En-Gedi was imperial property and Roman garrison troops were stationed there. But in the time of Bar Kokhba, it was under his control, and was one of his military and administrative centers. In the Roman-Byzantine period, the settlement of En-Gedi is mentioned by the Church Fathers; Eusebius describes it as a very large Jewish village. En-Gedi was then famous for its fine dates and rare spices.

"Excavations in 1970 brought to light the remains of a Jewish community in the Byzantine period. Their synagogue had a beautiful mosaic floor depicting peacocks eating grapes, and the words 'Peace on Israel,' as well as a unique inscription consisting of 18 lines, part of which calls down a curse on 'anyone causing a controversy between a man and his fellows or who slanders his friends before the gentiles or steals the property of his friends, or anyone revealing the secret of the town to the gentiles . . .' (According to one authority, it was designed against those revealing the secrets of the balsam industry.) A seven-branched *menorah* of bronze and more than 5,000 coins (found in the synagogue's cash box near the Ark) were also uncovered.

"In 1953 a kibbutz was established nearby and took the name En-Gedi. Its primary function was initially defense; but it also successfully developed farming methods adapted to the local conditions of a hot desert climate and an abundance of fresh water from the En-Gedi Springs. An area surrounding the Springs has been declared a nature reserve. A field school of the Society for the Preservation of Nature, a youth hostel and a recreation home are all situated there." (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

Once the Jews began their "Aliyah," their physical return to the Land of Israel (Erez Israel), they began planting trees. To date, more than three hundred million trees have been planted. The weather has changed. The rains have increased and the land is prospering once again.

"Tu Bi-shevat [is] the fifteenth of the Hebrew month of Shevat (usually falling in January) which traditionally marks the festive 'New Year of Trees.' It is a joyous holiday celebrated by the donating of trees to Israel, the eating of fresh fruits, and the singing of psalms and songs.

"This date was chosen because it marks the beginning of a new cycle of blossoming and fruit-bearing for the trees in Israel. All *mitzvot* relating to the annual growing and harvesting of fruits are also applied as of the 15th of Shevat.

“In Ashkenazi communities in Europe it was customary to eat 15 different kinds of fruit on Tu bi-Shevat, special preference being given to the varieties grown in Erez Israel. The eating of fruits was accompanied by the recital of Psalms.

“The Sephardi Jews gave the New Year of Trees a greater significance. The day was called ‘The Feast of Fruits’ and special poems called ‘complas’ were sung. A special service, believed to have been compiled by the 17th-century kabbalist Nathan of Gaza for this holiday, was modeled on the Passover *seder* and included the drinking of four cups of wine. This service was expanded and published in the 18th century under the name *Peri Ez Hadar* (‘Citrus Fruits’).

“In Israel, the New Year of Trees has come to symbolize the modern transformation of the Land of Israel from desert sand to green fields and forests.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Rain is a powerful Biblical metaphor in emphasizing reward and punishment:

“In the Bible, reward and punishment—whether individual, national or universal—is described as appertaining to this world. It is recognized as axiomatic that God rewards the righteous by granting them prosperity and well-being, and punishes the wicked with destruction. This forms the basis of the passage from Deuteronomy which constitutes the second paragraph of the *Shema*: adherence to God's commandments will bring ‘the rain in its seasons’; disobedience will cause God ‘to shut up the heavens that there be no rain, and the land will not yield her fruit’.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 1:38; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, during a special conference of elders of the Church, held at Hiram, Ohio, November 1, 1831. HC 1: 221—224. Many revelations had been received from the Lord prior to this time, and the compilation of these for publication in book form was one of the principal subjects passed upon at the conference. This section constitutes the Lord’s Preface to the doctrines, covenants, and commandments given in this dispensation. 37—39, Search these commandments.

Doctrine and Covenants 21:1; 4—6; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Fayette, New York, April 6, 1830. HC 1: 74—79. This revelation was given at the organization of the Church, on the date named, in the home of Peter Whitmer, Sen. Six men, who had previously been baptized, participated. By unanimous vote these persons expressed their desire and determination to organize, according to the commandment of God; see Section 20. They also voted to accept and sustain Joseph Smith, Jun., and Oliver Cowdery as the presiding officers of the Church. With the laying on of hands, Joseph then ordained Oliver an elder of the Church; and Oliver similarly ordained Joseph. After administration of the sacrament, Joseph and Oliver laid hands upon the participants individually, for the bestowal of the Holy Ghost and for the confirmation of each as a member of the Church. 1—3, Joseph Smith is called to be a seer, translator, prophet, apostle, and elder; 4—8, His word shall guide the cause of Zion.

Doctrine and Covenants 43:2; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, in February 1831. HC 1: 154—156. At this time some members of the Church were disturbed by people making false claims as revelators. The Prophet inquired of the Lord and received this communication addressed to the elders of the Church. The first part deals with matters of Church polity; the latter part contains a warning that the elders are to give to the nations of the earth. 1—7, Revelations and commandments come only through the one appointed.

Doctrine and Covenants 68:3—4; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, November 1831, at the request of Orson Hyde, Luke S. Johnson, Lyman E. Johnson, and William E. McLellin. HC 1: 227—229. Although this revelation was given in response to supplication that the mind of the Lord be made known concerning the elders named, much of the content pertains to the whole Church. 1—5, Words of elders when moved upon by the Holy Ghost are scripture.

Doctrine and Covenants 20:21—26; Revelation on Church Organization and Government, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, April 1830. HC 1: 64—70. Preceding his record of this revelation the Prophet wrote: “We obtained of him [Jesus Christ] the following, by the spirit of prophecy and revelation; which not only gave us much information, but also pointed out to us the precise day upon which, according to his will and commandment, we should proceed to organize his Church once more here upon the earth.” 17—29, The doctrines of creation, fall, atonement, and baptism are affirmed.

Mosiah 8:13—18; Ammon teaches the people of Limhi — He learns of the twenty-four Jaredite plates—Ancient records can be translated by seers — The gift of seership exceeds all others.

Mosiah 13:33; Abinadi is protected by divine power — He teaches the Ten Commandments—Salvation does not come by the law of Moses alone — God himself shall make an atonement and redeem his people.

Doctrine and Covenants 107:22; 91—92; Revelation on priesthood, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, dated March 28, 1835. HC 2: 209-217. On the date named the Twelve met in council, confessing their individual weaknesses and shortcomings, expressing repentance, and seeking the further guidance of the Lord. They were about to separate on missions to districts assigned. Although portions of this section were received on the date named, the historical records affirm that various parts were received at sundry times, some as early as November 1831. 21—38, 85—100, Priesthood presidents govern their respective quorums.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The Bible is holy to Jews because it represents the Word of God.

“This is particularly true of the Torah which is, so to speak, God’s direct statement. The halakhah, or Jewish law, which is the authoritative guide for a Jew’s life, is mainly based on the Torah, so obviously study of the Torah as well as the rest of the Bible is one of the prime religious duties.

“The custom of reading the Torah publicly is very, very ancient—originating with Ezra in the fifth-fourth centuries B.C.E. At some later date a reading from the Nevi’im was added; this corresponding passage from the Prophets is known as the Haftorah.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The Latter-day Saints' use of the Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price and the Book of Mormon is the LDS *Haftorah*. Literally it is the reading of the *Nevi'im*, the "Prophets," with their explanations and heavenly insights.

"On Shabbat ha-Gadol, a special *haftarah*, [reading from the Prophets] taken from the Book of Malachi and referring to the day on which Elijah the Prophet will reappear as forerunner of the great day of the Lord, is read." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

For Judaism, "looking to God" and "revelation" are almost figurative and in modern times have become unexplainable. For this lesson, let's review some previous quotes.

"Revelation, the act by which the hidden, unknown God shows himself to man. There is no specific term corresponding to 'revelation' in the Bible or in rabbinic Hebrew. God is said to 'appear' to the patriarchs and prophets, and the appearances are described by a series of anthropomorphic (i.e., human) expressions and concrete images. Sometimes God manifests Himself 'in a vision' or 'in a dream' or he appears through the mediation of an angel. However, the Bible emphasizes that no direct, sensory perception of God is possible. Thus, various phrases are used when describing appearances of the Divine, for example *kevod* ('glory') or *shekhinah* (. . . 'Divine Presence') or *davar* ('word' of God).

"Any event in which the Divine presence is felt is called a revelation, but the term is applied more particularly to communications of the Divine will as revealed through God's messengers, the prophets. The Bible itself, and later the rabbis, discerned among the prophets a hierarchy of form and degree, with that of Moses as supreme and unique. At Sinai, the principal revelation of God to man took place. At that time, all the assembled 'heard' the Voice of God, and through the mediation of Moses (who, according to the rabbis, functioned there as a scribe), received the complete text of the Torah and its interpretation, the Oral Law.

"The phenomenon of prophecy is founded on the basic belief that God makes His Will known to chosen individuals in successive generations. A prophet is a charismatic individual endowed with the divine gift of both receiving and imparting the message of revelation. A prophet does not choose his profession but is chosen, often against his own will, as in the case of Jonah, to convey the word of God to the people regardless of whether they wish to hear it. The prophet, although conscious of being overwhelmed by the divine word and of being involved in an encounter with God, is still capable of reacting and responding, and may even engage God in dialogue.

"The individuality of the prophet is never affected. No two prophets prophesied in the same style. God speaks to the prophet and the prophet in turn speaks out.

"The early prophets played a prominent role in communal affairs and were consulted for advice and often influenced the political destiny of Israel; the prophet Samuel chose both Saul and David to be kings of Israel. Visions play an important role in the classical prophetic writings, but prophets did not merely predict the future. They often performed symbolic acts and used signs and wonders to authenticate their prediction of impending events. At times they had to bear the consequences of their own dire predictions—Jeremiah was put into stocks for his unpopular prophecies.

“Why was there often such opposition on the part of the prophet when called on to prophesy? Why, too, such an outpouring of divine encouragement? The prophetic office was not an easy one to bear. The distinction of being chosen by God was matched by rejection on the part of the people. The prophet was a solitary individual whose life was marked by loneliness and bitterness. The description of the prophet's emotional experience upon receiving a ‘stern vision’ is at times overwhelming and frightening; his body filled with anguish; his pain is comparable to birth pangs; he is tormented and terror-stricken.

“A prime function of the prophet was to defend his people and to act as a mediator on their behalf. He constantly pleaded with Israel to seek God that they might live. He prayed that repentance might have the desired effect of invoking mercy. A prophet was not charged with religious innovation: his function was to clarify the teachings of the Bible. Moses was the ‘master of the prophets.’ No prophet after him succeeded as he did in penetrating the nature of the Divine.” *(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)*

In the New Testament, John knew who the Savior was. Like all prophets, he bore witness of the Lord and desired to bring people to Him.

“Why did John send two of his disciples to Jesus to ask if he were the promised Messiah? (Matt. 11:2-6; Luke 7:19-23) Any inference that the Baptist was uncertain or doubtful in his own mind, as to the identity and mission of the Master, is totally unwarranted. In reality, the imprisoned Elias and forerunner of our Lord was using this means to persuade his disciples to forsake him and follow Jesus.” *(Bruce R. McConkie, Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Vol.1, p.251)*

In the religion of Islam, Moslems (or Muslims) have some concept of a Prophet, Muhammed. Yet he is considered to be the last of the prophets and did not testify of the Savior. In fact Mohammed taught that “God cannot have a son.”

“Islam, the name given by Muslims to their religion, means ‘submission’ (to the will of God). Muhammad, a seventh century C.E. merchant of Mecca, and founder of Islam, is considered by believers to have been the last of a line of prophets starting with Adam, and the one who revealed to the world the divine doctrine of the Koran, said to have been given him from God by the angel Gabriel. Acceptance of Muhammad's teaching implies belief in Allah as the only god; in the angels; in the divine inspiration of the holy books (including the Bible); in the prophets (including such Jewish and Christian figures as Abraham, ‘the merciful friend’ and the first to profess monotheism, Moses, and Jesus); in the day of judgment; and in Allah's predetermination of good and evil. Muslims are obliged to recite their creed and to pray five times daily; to fast from dawn to sunset in the month of Ramadan; to pay legal alms (charity); and to go on at least one pilgrimage to Mecca, site of the holy Black Stone, the Ka'aba.” *(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)*

Jews, on the other hand, feel that Prophets and Prophecy have ended yet they have an expectation of prophets returning, such as a Latter-day Joseph, Son of Joseph, a Latter-day David as well as Elijah and Moses.

A comparison of Aaron to Moses presents an image that may help us understand the Savior's power, entrusted to His apostles through the priesthood and gift of the Holy Ghost.

“Aaron was clearly given a lesser role than Moses. Aaron experienced revelations from God and, being an eloquent speaker, acted as prophet and miracle-worker before Pharaoh in the matter of the Plagues of Egypt. However, it is significant that even where he plays an active role in performing the miracles, it is not a result of his own ability or initiative, but solely by divine command given through Moses.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“... the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God.” (*2 Kings 17:13-14*)

“In Mine Own Way”

**Scripture
Summary:**

Doctrine and Covenants 38:30; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Fayette, New York, January 2, 1831. HC 1: 140—143. The occasion was a conference of the Church. 30—33, The saints are to be given power from on high and go forth among all nations; 34—42, The Church is commanded to care for the poor and needy, and to seek the riches of eternity.

Doctrine and Covenants 42; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, February 9, 1831. HC 1: 148—154. It was received in the presence of twelve elders, and in fulfillment of the Lord's promise previously made that the “law” would be given in Ohio; see Section 38: 32. The Prophet specifies this revelation as “embracing the law of the Church.” 1—10, The elders are called to preach the gospel, baptize converts, and build up the Church; 11—12, They must be called and ordained, and are to teach the principles of the gospel found in the scriptures; 13—17, They are to teach and prophesy by the power of the Spirit; 18—29, The saints are commanded not to kill, steal, lie, lust, commit adultery, or speak evil against others; 30—39, Laws governing the consecration of properties are set forth; 40—52, The sick are to be healed through administrations and by faith; 53—60, Scriptures govern the Church and are to be proclaimed to the world; 61—69, Site of the New Jerusalem and the mysteries of the kingdom shall be revealed; 70—73, Consecrated properties are to be used to support Church officers; 74—93, Laws governing fornication, adultery, killing, stealing, and confession of sins are set forth.

Doctrine and Covenants 58:26—28; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, August 1, 1831. HC 1: 190—195. On the first Sabbath after the arrival of the Prophet and party in Jackson County, Missouri, a religious service was held and two members were received by baptism. During that week, members of the Colesville saints from the Thompson Branch and others arrived. Many were eager to learn the will of the Lord concerning them in the new place of gathering. 24—29, Men should use their agency to do good.

Doctrine and Covenants 104:13—18; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, April 23, 1834, concerning the United Order, or the order of the Church for the benefit of the poor. HC 2: 54—60. The occasion was that of a council meeting of the First Presidency and other high priests, in which the pressing temporal needs of the people had been given consideration. The United Order at Kirtland was to be temporarily dissolved and reorganized, and the properties as stewardships were to be divided among members of the order. 11—16, The Lord provides for his saints in his own way; 17—18, Gospel law governs the care of the poor.

**Supplemental
Holy Land
and Judaic
Insights:**

True religion is based on true faith in the Lord. The Hebrew word for faith is *emunah* and that is probably derived from the word *imun* which means practice, procedure or work. Inherent in the word *emunah* is faith and works. Both are necessary to keep us in the right way.

“Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” (*James 2:17*)

The three attributes of God-fearing people are faith (*emunah*), hope (*tikvah*) and charity (*zedakah*) or (*hesed*). A Jewish look at these three words is illuminating. The word faith as discussed in the last lesson has the element of practice or work. Judaism has, however, evolved to the point that *immun* (practice or works) has become more important than belief.

“The purpose of these laws is to teach us that everything in the world belongs to God and man owns only what God has given to him. When a man has worked hard to raise a family or rear a herd of animals, and finally sees the first fruits of his labor, the Torah tells him that these first fruits belong to God. Therefore, if man wishes to own and enjoy these gifts, he must redeem them from their rightful owner.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

Judaism reflects a great history of instructions and traditions in giving charity and making offerings to assist the less fortunate. Philanthropy is a basic part of Biblical life, and hence, a religious life. To devout Jews, Biblical life means a Jewish life.

“The obligation to help the poor and the needy and to give them gifts is stated many times in the Bible and was considered by the rabbis of all ages to be one of the cardinal *mitzvoth* of Judaism.

“In the Bible there are several laws which are in effect a sort of tax for the benefit of the poor. Among these are *leket*, *shikhhah* and *pe'ah*, according to which the farmer could not pick up the ears of corn that had fallen during the harvest, or go back for forgotten sheaves or reap into the corners of the field. All these he was required to leave for the poor. Every third year the farmer was also required to put aside a special tithe for the needy. The institution of the Sabbatical Year and Jubilee was in order ‘that the poor of your people may eat’ as well as to cancel debts. The Torah also insists that the needy be remembered when the Festivals are celebrated, e.g., ‘You shall rejoice before the Lord your God, with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite in your communities, and the stranger, the fatherless and the widow in your midst.’ The Bible expects Israel to be aware of the needs of the poor and the stranger because Israel itself had experienced this situation in Egypt.

“Although the idea of charity and almsgiving is spread throughout the whole of the Bible, there is no special term for it. The rabbis of the Talmud, however, adopted the word (*zedakah*) for charity and it is used (but not exclusively so) throughout rabbinic literature in the sense of helping the needy by gifts. The word has since passed into popular usage and is almost exclusively used for charity. The term *hesed* (‘loving-kindness’), which is used widely in the Bible, has taken on the meaning of physical aid, or lending money without interest.

“Everybody is obliged to give charity; even one who himself is dependent on charity should give to those less fortunate than himself. The court can compel one who refuses to give charity—or donates less than his means allow—to give according to the court's assessment.

“To give a tenth of one's wealth to charity is considered to be a ‘middling’ virtue, to give a 20th or less is to be ‘mean’; but the rabbis decided that one should not give more than a fifth lest he become impoverished himself and dependent on charity.

“The rabbis were especially concerned about the manner in which alms are to be dispensed. The prime consideration is that nothing be done that might shame the recipient. About one pious man it was related that if he met a man of good family who had become impoverished he would say, ‘I have heard that a legacy has been left to you in such a place; take this money in advance and pay me back later.’ When the man accepted it he then said to him, ‘It is a gift.’

“Maimonides lists eight ways of giving *zedakah* which are progressively more virtuous: to give

- (1) but sadly;
- (2) less than is fitting, but in good humor;
- (3) only after having been asked to;
- (4) before being asked;
- (5) in such a manner that the donor does not know who the recipient is,
- (6) in such a manner that the recipient does not know who the donor is; and
- (7) in such a way that neither the donor nor the recipient knows the identity of the other.

“The highest form of charity is not to give alms but to help the poor to rehabilitate themselves by lending them money, taking them into partnership, employing them, or giving them work, for in this way the purpose is achieved without any loss of self-respect at all.

“This last way of helping the poor is known as *gemilut basadim*, ‘dispensing kindness.’ This term also includes aiding people who need help and encouragement and includes such matters as visiting the sick and looking after them and inviting needy guests to eat at your home. One of the greatest acts of charity is to provide for orphans.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

As mentioned previously, collecting offerings in a Jewish community is similar to a Latter-day Saint custom of fast offerings.

“In every town where there are Jews they must appoint ‘charity wardens,’ men who are well-known and honest that they should collect money from the people every Sabbath eve and distribute it to the poor . . . ‘We have never seen or heard of a Jewish community which does not have a charity fund’ (Maimonides). Because the charity warden was involved in the collection and distribution of public funds, special care was taken to ensure that there should not be even the slightest suspicion of dishonesty. The actual collection had to be made by at least two wardens who were not permitted to leave each other during the course of it. The distribution of the money was to be made by at least three wardens in whose hands lay the decision as to whom to give and how much. Besides money, food and clothing were also distributed. Apart from maintaining the poor, the fund was also used for redeeming captives and dowering poor brides, both of which were considered to be among the most virtuous of acts. In addition to the fund there were also communal soup kitchens at which any person with less than enough for two meals was entitled to eat.

“Throughout History the Jewish community has always been sensitive to the needs of the poor and established institutions to provide them with relief. This was a form of taxation which nobody could refuse if he wanted to be considered a member of the community. During the Middle Ages in some towns ‘meal tickets’ were distributed to the needy entitling them to eat at various homes, and there is hardly a synagogue even today without a charity box. Before festivals, charity is distributed so that the poor will also be able to enjoy the Holy Day; this is especially true of Passover when the charity is given a special name, *ma’ot bittim*, ‘money for wheat’ to make *matzot*.

“Many associations were formed for charitable purposes, particularly to look after the sick and provide proper burial. Some communities set up hospitals; this has its result in modern times in institutions like the Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York which was established by Jews. Often the charitable society would own and maintain a hostel where needy wayfarers could spend the night.

“Nowadays many communities integrate all their charitable endeavors into one central agency. In the State of Israel the needs of the poor are looked after by the Ministry of Welfare, which is a government agency. However, a great deal of private, non-governmental charity work still goes on.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In modern times, the principle of tithing has been modified to reflect the charity and alms given. It is a general Jewish understanding that three percent of one’s income

should be used for charitable purposes. I have found a few who prefer the tithing amount to be ten percent. In the Islamic religion, charity is one of the basic five pillars or tenants of faith. The charitable contribution is generally considered to be two percent.

“The exercise of mercy is an obligation for all Jews. By this it is meant that they must act with compassion and forgiveness towards all mankind, and perform deeds of charity and kindness. This quality is an essential characteristic of God who is known as *Rahum* (‘Merciful’) and, in accordance with the tradition which sets as man’s goal the imitation of God: ‘As He is merciful, so be you merciful.’ Just as God is bound by His covenant of mercy with His people, so is the Jew bound by specific commandments to act mercifully to the oppressed, the alien, the orphan, the widow, and indeed, every living creature.

“The Hebrew word for justice is *zedek*, and indicative of Judaism’s attitude is the fact that another form of the same root *zedakah*, means ‘charity.’ For justice must be tempered with mercy and indeed the main attribute of God is His integration of justice and mercy. Yet another Hebrew word derived from the same root is *zaddik*, which means ‘righteous.’ The righteous man is one who is both just and merciful.

“The stress placed upon this quality is evident both in the many charitable institutions existing in Jewish communal life, and in the daily prayers which implore God to deal compassionately even with the undeserving man. Human beings are frail, imperfect creatures constantly open to error, and so they are totally dependent on God’s mercy.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Lesson 39

“The Hearts of the Children Shall Turn to Their Fathers”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 2; An extract from the words of the angel Moroni to Joseph Smith the Prophet, while in the house of the Prophet's father at Manchester, New York, on the evening of September 21, 1823. HC 1: 12. Moroni was the last of a long line of historians who had made the record that is now before the world as the Book of Mormon. Compare Malachi 4:5—6; also Sections 27: 9; 110: 13—16; and 128: 18. 1, Elijah is to reveal the priesthood; 2—3, Promises of fathers are planted in hearts of children.

Doctrine and Covenants 110:13—16; Visions manifested to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery in the temple at Kirtland, Ohio, April 3, 1836. HC 2: 435—436. The occasion was that of a Sabbath day meeting. The Prophet prefaces his record of the manifestations with these words: “In the afternoon, I assisted the other Presidents in distributing the Lord's Supper to the Church, receiving it from the Twelve, whose privilege it was to officiate at the sacred desk this day. After having performed this service to my brethren, I retired to the pulpit, the veils being dropped, and bowed myself, with Oliver Cowdery, in solemn and silent prayer. After rising from prayer, the following vision was opened to both of us.” 1—10, The Lord Jehovah appears in glory and accepts the Kirtland Temple as his house; 11—12, Moses and Elias each appear and commit their keys and dispensations; 13—16, Elijah returns and commits the keys of his dispensation as promised by Malachi.

Doctrine and Covenants 138; A vision, given to President Joseph F. Smith in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 3, 1918. In his opening address at the eighty-ninth Semiannual General Conference of the Church, on October 4, 1918, President Smith declared that he had received several divine communications during the previous months. One of these, concerning the Savior's visit to the spirits of the dead while his body was in the tomb, he had received the previous day. It was written immediately following the close of the conference; on October 31, 1918, it was submitted to the counselors in the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve, and the Patriarch, and it was unanimously accepted by them. 1—10, President Joseph F. Smith ponders upon the writings of Peter and our Lord's visit to the spirit world; 11—24, He sees the righteous dead assembled in paradise and Christ's ministry among them; 25—37, How the preaching of the gospel was organized among the spirits; 38—52, President Smith sees Adam, Eve, and many of the holy prophets in the spirit world who considered their spirit state before their resurrection as a bondage; 53—60, The righteous dead of this day continue their labors in the world of spirits.

Joseph Smith History 1:37—39; Moroni appears to Joseph Smith—Joseph's name is to be known for good and evil among all nations—Moroni tells him of the Book of Mormon and of the coming judgments of the Lord, and quotes many scriptures—The hiding place of the gold plates is revealed—Moroni continues to instruct the Prophet. (Verses 27-54.)

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

As previously mentioned, for the Jews, Passover is a time for Elijah to return. The ancient eating arrangement at the Passover meal (Seder) was “U” shaped with the oldest seated at the second seat with one of the youngest of his choice seated at his right hand, in the first seat. At the other end of the “U” shaped seating arrangement was an empty chair for Elijah. His place was directly opposite the youngest and the oldest, symbolic—if you please—of Elijah turning the hearts of fathers to children and the children to the fathers.

At one Passover in Jerusalem when my mother and two sisters were in our home, I asked my youngest son at the appropriate time to open the door for Elijah. He refused. The seven-year-old said, “I don't have to open the door for Elijah, he's already come!” He was referring to Elijah's appearance in the Kirtland Temple on April 3, 1836, the Passover season that year! By the way, my mother leaned over and said to him, “Josh, he may have come for you but he hasn't yet come for me . . . Open the door!” Josh jumped up and said, “Okay, Savta!” (Grandma)

The “spirit of Elijah” is considered to be inspiring family history research. Jews have a remarkable thirst for family history. I have a large book describing Jewish genealogy. In the foreword, there is a not-so-obscure mention that the largest source of Jewish genealogy is safely preserved in a “granite mountain in Salt Lake City.”

“Genealogy is the listing of ancestors in the order of their succession, and occurs in the Bible as lists of ‘generations’ and as tribal, clan and family lists, such as those of the houses of David, Zadok (see Zadokites), and Saul. All were based on the assumption that nations, tribes and clans were descended from a single father.

“The tradition of listing family histories is an ancient one in Israel, for only by thus proving connection with some family or clan could a man claim the privileges of citizenship. If, as happened, members of the local population joined the Israelites (in the period of the Conquest or early monarchy) they were brought into the genealogical framework of the tribe as a means of assimilating them; similarly artisans, poets, and wise men not originally members of the tribe, were also generally linked with some ancient ancestor. Genealogies were not simply historic records but might be used in a national census (head count) or for military or tax purposes. They might also reflect political events: thus, the merging of two tribes might be represented by an account of a marriage between heads of their leading families; and the absorption of a newly settled tribe among a local population might be described by the marriage of a tribal leader to one of the native women.

“Genealogies of individual families seem to have been based on oral (spoken) tradition. In the period of the return to Zion (fifth to fourth century B.C.E.) it became especially important to prove the lineage of the priests and levites, for without such proof of priestly descent, claimants could not qualify for service in the Temple or the priestly privileges. Other families were also keen to have proof of descent in order to justify claims to abandoned family property.

“In the period of the Second Temple purity of descent was important chiefly for the *kohanim* [priests] and for those Israelite families who claimed the right of their daughters to marry *kohanim*.

“Since the various offices in the Temple service passed from father to son, the purity of those families whose priestly roles were known by long tradition was beyond question.

“But Judaism never claimed that wisdom was the monopoly of prominent families (‘A learned bastard takes precedence over an uneducated high priest’—Mishnah, Horayot 3:8). Indeed some sages were even said to have been descended from evil gentiles who repented their ways and became good Jews. However, purity of blood did play a part in the fight for political power between prominent rival Jewish families. Thus, the Hasmoneans, who had to defend themselves against the contention that only descendants of David could rule, in turn questioned the purity of David's blood, in view of his descent from Ruth the Moabite. According to the third century Christian historian Africanus, King Herod forged for himself a descent from David, having first destroyed the genealogical records in the Temple.

“After the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. the *kohanim* clung to their lineage as the only remaining symbol of their past glory. Babylonian Jewry considered that the purity of its descent was of a higher order than that of Erez Israel, basing its claim on the tradition that all whose lineage was in doubt had returned to Israel with Ezra. With the Temple no longer in existence, genealogy lost much of its meaning and became merely a symbol of social status. In the Middle Ages some sages, such as Rashi and his grandsons Jacob b. Meir Tam and

Samuel ben Meir, was claimed to have been of Davidic descent. From the 12th century on in Central and Eastern Europe the question of good birth (known as *yibhus*) became increasingly important with regard to arranging marriages. By the 19th century in Germany great pains were taken to prove how deep were the Jewish community's roots in the locality, and much material was published on the subject.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The Arabs as a people, on the other hand, have a much less unified identity. Although their families are important and many memorize generations of their family genealogy, they have not been able to carry on any major unity as communities or countries.

For the religious Moslems, going to Mecca is a once in a lifetime goal. Along with the washings done at Mecca and the wearing of white robe-like clothing, Moslems are given a “new name,” one that they must not reveal—for it is theirs to use in the next life when they approach Allah. It is interesting that Moslems are urged to return to Mecca again and again, but these pilgrimages are for or in behalf of other people, preferably relatives, who did not have the chance to go. They may get the “new name” for them as well. Mecca is the holiest spot for Moslems; it is where Mohammed was born. Close to Mecca is Medina, the second-holiest site for Moslems because it is the place where Mohammed was buried.

The ancient Israelite temple had similar rituals, a memory of which is still carried out in daily ritual. Clothing, washing, synagogue layout and seating arrangements reflect practices done in temple times. A hope for its return was and still is constantly repeated.

“The rabbis of that generation enacted new laws whose purpose was to fulfill the biblical verse, ‘If I forget thee, O Jerusalem . . .’ (Psalm 137). They decreed that a corner of every house, a part of every meal, even some of every woman's jewelry, be set aside—in memory of the Temple. Special prayers were formulated to express the yearning of the people to return to Zion and to worship once again in the Temple of God. Instrumental music was banned from the synagogue service, a glass was broken at every wedding, and the words ‘Next year in Jerusalem’ were recited on Passover and at the end of the Day of Atonement—all in memory of the Temple. Most historians believe that these prayers, customs, and hopes helped to unite the Jewish people and kept alive the hope of returning to Zion, a hope which was fulfilled in our days.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Finding Joy in Temple and Family History Work

Lesson
40

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 110:13–16; Visions manifested to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery in the temple at Kirtland, Ohio, April 3, 1836. HC 2: 435–436. The occasion was that of a Sabbath day meeting. The Prophet prefaces his record of the manifestations with these words: “In the afternoon, I assisted the other Presidents in distributing the Lord’s Supper to the Church, receiving it from the Twelve, whose privilege it was to officiate at the sacred desk this day. After having performed this service to my brethren, I retired to the pulpit, the veils being dropped, and bowed myself, with Oliver Cowdery, in solemn and silent prayer. After rising from prayer, the following vision was opened to both of us.” 1—10, The Lord Jehovah appears in glory and accepts the Kirtland Temple as his house; 11—12, Moses and Elias each appear and commit their keys and dispensations; 13—16, Elijah returns and commits the keys of his dispensation as promised by Malachi.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

Research of family history provides us with information to be “Saviors on Mount Zion.” On April 6, 1890, President Wilford Woodruff shared his testimony.

“We are called upon, as saviors on Mount Zion, while the Kingdom is the Lord’s, in the latter-days, to go forth and redeem our dead. We hold in our hands the keys and power of their redemption, by attending to the ordinances of God for them. It is a work that the Lord has blessed us with. I thank God for this privilege. It is one of the blessings that the Latter-day Saints enjoy. When I go into the spirit world I expect to meet my fathers, my mothers, my relatives. I have been in the Temple of the Lord. I have received endowments for over three thousand of them on my father’s and my mother’s side, all that I could get access to. I do not want to go into the spirit world to meet these people and have them say to me, ‘You had power to enter into these Temples to get redemption for me, but you have not done it.’

“Lay these things to heart. Be not afraid with regard to the work; only serve God and trust in Him. You cannot serve man, nor make flesh your arm, for your salvation. If we are saved, if we are delivered, if we have redemption, it will be by the power of the God of Israel. He sent His Son into the world to lay down His life for the redemption of the children of men.” (*Brian H. Stuy, ed., Collected Discourses of Wilford Woodruff, 5 vols. Burbank, Calif., and Woodland Hills, Ut.: B.H.S. Publishing, 1987-1992*)

Passover week is likely the best family Jewish holiday. There is a manual called the “Haggadah” which is usually followed. There are Haggadah booklets that have artistic creations to capture and anchor a child’s memory. The purpose is to bring our children back to a recollection of the greatest deliverance in our history. As a believing Jew, I see a great amount of symbolism.

The account of baby Moses being saved during an extermination order by the Pharaoh parallels the account of the baby Jesus being saved during an extermination order by King Herod. Moses becomes a “type” of the deliverer. He was raised to deliver Israel from bondage. Jesus of Nazareth raised all people from the bondage of physical and spiritual death. He is the real deliverer.

The seven-day deliverance feast of Passover is called the “Seder.” It is one of the most important and festive holidays in Judaism. Celebrated on the first full moon after the first day of spring, the first day is a “high day” and is treated as a Sabbath. To make the point clear, that “high-day Sabbath” can be on any day of the week, depending on the

lunar (biblical) calendar. The day before Passover is sometimes referred to as the first day of the feast of unleavened bread. It is the preparation day when all leavened products are removed from the home. It is even the custom in Israel for the Chief Rabbi to “sell” all the grain and leavened products to an Arab so that Israelis don’t own anything that has or might “rise.” Passover is to remember “rising” quickly and being delivered from Egyptian slavery. It is a symbol of a future “rising” or deliverance that would be even greater than the first Passover.

Jesus was born during Passover. There was no spring month of April when Jesus was born, so, according to the biblical calendar and because Passover always occurs at the first full moon after the first day of spring, April 6, 1830, the date the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, leads us to look at the biblical date. It was Passover that year!

“ . . . being one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh . . .” (*Doctrine & Covenants 20:1*)

The Deliverer was born at the season celebrating the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and celebrating an expectation of an even greater deliverance. The two deliverances are linked by a journey of time through two millennia.

“On the first day of Passover (the first two days in the Diaspora) the *full Hallel* [full praise] prayer is recited. After that, during *bol ha-mo'ed*, and on the last day (or days) only part of *Hallel* [half praise] is recited. The practice differs from Sukkot on which the *full Hallel* is chanted every day. The reason given is that freedom was achieved as the result of the death of many Egyptians, and therefore Israel's rejoicing is not complete.

“The Sabbath before Passover is known as Shabbat ha-Gadol. Tradition connects it with the tenth of Nisan, the day on which the Israelites in Egypt set aside the lamb that they were to slaughter on the first Passover (Exodus 12:3). On Shabbat ha-Gadol, a special *haftarah*, [reading from the Prophets] taken from the Book of Malachi and referring to the day on which Elijah the Prophet will reappear as forerunner of the great day of the Lord, is read.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

At the Passover meal, a door is opened for Elijah, a seat is reserved for him and songs are sung in expectation of Elijah. During Passover, on April 3, 1836, while millions of Jews were going through the festive ritual of anticipating Elijah, he came to Joseph Smith the prophet in Kirtland, Ohio.

The Passover story includes plagues brought on the Egyptians. The first plague parallels the first miracle of the Savior. His changing of water into new wine (better than the old) is opposite of the Egyptian’s water turning to undrinkable “blood.” The ten ancient plagues are mentioned in the Passover meal. (Some can be compared to modern plagues.)

“According to Exodus the plagues were:

1. BLOOD. The river Nile, the main source of water for ancient Egypt, turned to blood. Its pollution was disastrous: the river stank, fish died, and the Egyptians searched desperately for fresh water.
2. FROGS. They covered the land, and found their way into the people's homes, clothing and food.

3. LICE. 'As thick as the dust of the earth,' they attacked both man and beast.
4. SWARMS OF FLIES. [They] 'ruined all the land of Egypt.'
5. PESTILENCE. The livestock of the Egyptians perished from virulent diseases.
6. BOILS. They afflicted men and animals causing much discomfort.
7. HAIL AND FIRE. [This occurred with] such intensity that they destroyed not only plant life, but also beasts and men.
8. LOCUSTS. So numerous that they 'darkened the land,' and ate every growing thing that had survived the hail.
9. DARKNESS. [This was] a pitch darkness that lasted for three days and nights. It was so thick that the lamps lit by the Egyptians could not penetrate it.
10. DEATH OF THE FIRSTBORN. [It was] the last and most terrible of the plagues. Every firstborn child of man and beast perished in one night at midnight." (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

During the Passover meal, the master of the house will pour and bless wine (it should be "new Wine") three different times. He sips first, and then everyone else may sip. After each occurrence of wine there is a breaking and blessing of bread (unleavened) three different times. Again, each time the master blesses and eats a broken piece, then everyone else eats a piece. The remarkable exception is that at the beginning of the meal the middle of the three bread pieces is broken in two and a broken piece (largest of the two) is hidden for the children to find later in the Seder service. When it is found, that piece (fourth time bread is used) is blessed, broken, and the master eats the first part, then everyone follows his example. The fourth cup of wine is then poured full (more than the previous three "sips") and the master instructs everyone to "drink all of it."

The present Jewish Passover feast is in fact an annual event to remember Israel's deliverance. In a religious Jewish home, a weekly reminder of the first Passover is done with a "Kiddush." The master of the house always pours the wine with an appropriate blessing, sips first, followed by everyone else sipping the wine. He breaks a piece of bread and after the appropriate blessing, eats the first piece with everyone following his example. The prayers said include a promise that in the future another deliverance would occur greater than the first Passover.

Weekly, Latter-day Saints take a "sacrament" that consists of bread that is broken, blessed and the presiding Elder partakes first, then water (nowadays, water instead of wine) is blessed. Again the presiding authority partakes first and then everyone follows. This is done in "remembrance" of the greater deliverance provided by the Savior's atonement.

It should be considered that symbolically, the Jews take wine and bread in anticipation of a greater deliverance while Christians take bread and wine in remembrance of that great deliverance . . . a chiasmus—with the Savior's atonement in the middle.

Another Family memorial that Jews keep is called "Yahrzeit." It is a way of keeping a link with deceased family members.

"Yahrzeit is a Yiddish word which comes from the German meaning 'year-time' or anniversary. Among Ashkenazi Jews it has come to refer exclusively to the anniversary of the death of a relative for whom one was required to mourn. The anniversary is according to the Hebrew date of death, and so in the secular calendar it will be on different dates each year. Very pious people observe a fast on the *yahrzeit* of parents and it is the general custom that a candle or light is

kindled for the whole day, and that a mourner who is able to, leads the daily services on that day. Sons recite the *Kaddish* prayer on the *yahrzeit* of parents.

“Glorified and sanctified be God's great name throughout the world which He has created according to His will . . .

“This is the opening sentence of the *Kaddish* prayer which is recited more often than any other prayer. The word *kaddish* is Aramaic for ‘Holy’ and signifies the main theme of the prayer which is sanctification of God's name. The prayer is recited by the *bazzan* several times at various parts of every daily service and there are different versions of it for different parts of the service. However, the prayer is mostly thought of as being the mourners' prayer since mourners recite it at the end of each daily service as well as on other occasions. In its original usage, the *Kaddish* is a fervent plea for the coming of the Messiah and an expression of the Jew's steadfast belief that God ‘who makes peace in the heavens will make peace for us and for all Israel.’ As the mourner's prayer it is the reaffirmation of the Jew's faith and belief in God even though he has lost a loved one.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“Every Member a Missionary”

Lesson 41

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 1:4–5, 30; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, during a special conference of elders of the Church, held at Hiram, Ohio, November 1, 1831. HC 1: 221–224. Many revelations had been received from the Lord prior to this time, and the compilation of these for publication in book form was one of the principal subjects passed upon at the conference. This section constitutes the Lord’s Preface to the doctrines, covenants, and commandments given in this dispensation. 24–33, The Book of Mormon brought forth and true Church established.

Doctrine and Covenants 65; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, October 1831. HC 1: 218. The Prophet designates this revelation as a prayer. 1–2, Keys of the kingdom of God are committed to man on earth, and the gospel cause shall triumph; 3–6, The millennial kingdom of heaven shall come and join the kingdom of God on earth.

Doctrine and Covenants 88:81; 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. 81–85, Every man who hath been warned should warn his neighbor.

Doctrine and Covenants 109:72–74; Prayer offered at the dedication of the temple at Kirtland, Ohio, March 27, 1836. HC 2: 420–426. According to the Prophet’s written statement, this prayer was given to him by revelation. 68–80, May the saints be crowned with glory and honor and gain eternal salvation.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

In the previous Lesson 26, “Go Ye into All the World and Preach My Gospel,” we considered that to many Jews, Christian missionary work among the Jews is considered blasphemy and even anti Semitic. There is a certain Rabbi Goldstein in Jerusalem who counteracts this activity by conducting seminars and lectures to refute missionaries and Christian polemics.

“Throughout history Jews have often been called on to defend their faith against non believers in public debates known as disputations or polemics. Often these disputations were conducted in friendly atmospheres of mutual respect, but all too often these debates took on aspects of bitterness.

“In the Greco-Roman era, pagan polytheism challenged Jewish monotheism. The Mishnah records that pagans asked the Jewish elders in Rome: if God does not desire idolatry, why does He not destroy it? The Jews answered: If men had worshiped objects unnecessary for the cosmos He would have destroyed those objects, but they worship the sun and moon and the stars and the planets. Should He destroy His world because of fools?” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

There are, however, religious rights in Israel. There are two legal systems, secular and religious so that religious people of some major religions in Israel can take disputes or legal processes to their own judges. The British set up this system before the State of Israel was formed. There are several different religious courts throughout Israel. They include the Orthodox Jews, Moslems, Greek Orthodox, Armenians, Catholics, Syrian Orthodox and the Bahais. The Bahai religious courts are the only ones established after the State of Israel was recognized.

There is some Proselytizing done by the Jews to bring more Jews to a higher degree of Orthodoxy. One such group felt that their late Rabbi Schneersohn was likely the Messianic figure. The entire concept of Messianism is a difficult thing for Jews to accept.

“To some, Messianism undermines the first line of defense against Christian missionizing which has always been that Judaism cannot accept a Messiah who dies in the midst of his redemptive mission. To others, Rabbi Schneersohn is the one who will be resurrected to complete a process of redemption for the Jewish people.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The word “Zionism” is usually connected with the “gathering” of Jews. Some consider coming to Israel as a return to their ancient roots. Some feel it is a religious experience while others gather in a secular sense. Some of the Jews in the diaspora take years to make up their minds to “gather” while others make up their minds quickly. The State of Israel, although not “religious,” sends emissaries throughout the world to “gather” or assist Jews who wish to reestablish themselves in their ancient homeland. These are called a “Shaliach” and they are somewhat similar to the “Mission Presidents” who administer the work of “emissaries” who bring the blood of Israel “home.”

“The movement known as Zionism can be described as the national liberation movement of the Jews. As a formal, fully-organized movement, Zionism came into existence only in the last decades of the 19th century, at a time when nationalism had become the dominant political force throughout Europe, but the idea of Zionism—reclaiming Erez Israel (Zion) as the national homeland of the Jews—was then far from being new. Ever since the destruction of the sovereign Jewish state by the Romans in 70 C.E., the Jewish people hoped and prayed for its restoration. From that time onward, the return to Zion became a central theme of Jewish prayer, and even today the Jew, no matter where he is, turns towards the Land of Israel whenever he prays.

“A very important aspect of Zionism was the education of Jews throughout the world towards immigration (*aliyah*) to Erez Israel. For this purpose every group in the Zionist Organization set up youth movements which were described as halutzic (from the word *halutz*, which means a pioneer). These groups also provided practical training for life in Erez Israel. Many even set up training farms to teach the members agriculture.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Conversion to Judaism is also a literal adoption into the family of Israel. It involves a religious as well as a cultural change and subsequent involvement. Let’s consider again the Jewish view of conversion.

“A convert to Judaism is considered a newborn child, and, from the halakhic point of view, he has no father or mother. Thus, if a whole family converts, the children and the parents start their lives as Jews with no legal relationship. Because of this state of affairs, converts are always named as though they were the sons of Abraham, the first Jew. A husband and wife who convert must also have another wedding ceremony in order to be married under Jewish law.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In context with this lesson, let me repeat a few points that were stated in Lesson 26. A matter called “missionizing of the Jews” became an issue of dissent and subsequently faded away when the State of Israel’s government had approved the building of the “Mormon” center on Mount Scopus where the BYU Study program is currently located. The building was well under way when an Orthodox Jewish group (dedicated to crushing Christian activities) started a twofold campaign. First was discrediting the government (which they did not support anyway) for allowing the BYU facilities to continue. Secondly, striking a chord of antisemitism, they called the center a “missionary activity.” (There are three kinds of antisemitism to the Jews; 1) kill the Jews, 2) let someone else

kill the Jews, and 3) convert the Jews.) This same Orthodox group has attempted to pass a law against proselytizing in Israel and have failed. There is NO Israeli statute prohibiting missionary activity. In any case, missionary activity is deemed highly insensitive and frankly, antisemitic.

They did manage to pass a law that prohibits any type of bribe or payment to induce Jews to change their religion. (Mormons do not pay people to become members—they charge them!) BYU did sign a statement announcing they had no intention of doing missionary activities. Elder Howard W. Hunter as President of the Quorum of the Twelve also signed a statement to the same effect with the statement added, “. . . so long as such activity is prohibited by the government of Israel.” Repeating that there is no such law in Israel, the real reason Latter-day Saints are not proselytizing in Israel is because it is the Lord’s will.

“And the time cometh that he shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.”
(1 Nephi 13:42)

Israeli government leaders kept their commitment to allow the building. The Orthodox group did not manage to convince the government to stop the BYU project. No legal precedent was established that might affect the Latter-day Saints or for that manner, any other church.

Continuing Revelation to Latter-day Prophets

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 1:38; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, during a special conference of elders of the Church, held at Hiram, Ohio, November 1, 1831. HC 1: 221—224. Many revelations had been received from the Lord prior to this time, and the compilation of these for publication in book form was one of the principal subjects passed upon at the conference. This section constitutes the Lord's Preface to the doctrines, covenants, and commandments given in this dispensation. 37—39, Search these commandments.

Doctrine and Covenants 68:1—4; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, November 1831, at the request of Orson Hyde, Luke S. Johnson, Lyman E. Johnson, and William E. McLellin. HC 1: 227—229. Although this revelation was given in response to supplication that the mind of the Lord be made known concerning the elders named, much of the content pertains to the whole Church. 1—5, Words of elders when moved upon by the Holy Ghost are scripture.

Doctrine and Covenants 84:109—110; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, September 22 and 23, 1832. HC 1: 286—295. During the month of September, elders had begun to return from their missions in the eastern states and to make reports of their labors. It was while they were together in this season of joy that the following communication was received. The Prophet designates it a revelation on priesthood. 103—110, Let every man stand in his own office and labor in his own calling.

Doctrine and Covenants 107:25, 34, 93—98; Revelation on priesthood, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, dated March 28, 1835. HC 2: 209-217. On the date named the Twelve met in council, confessing their individual weaknesses and shortcomings, expressing repentance, and seeking the further guidance of the Lord. They were about to separate on missions to districts assigned. Although portions of this section were received on the date named, the historical records affirm that various parts were received at sundry times, some as early as November 1831. 21—38, The First Presidency, the Twelve, and the Seventy constitute the presiding quorums, whose decisions are to be made in unity and righteousness; 85—100, Priesthood presidents govern their respective quorums.

Doctrine and Covenants 132:8; 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. 7—14, The terms and conditions of that covenant are set forth.

Doctrine and Covenants — Official Declaration 2; On September 30, 1978, at the 148th Semiannual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the following was presented by President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency of the Church: In early June of this year, the First Presidency announced that a revelation had been received by President Spencer W. Kimball extending priesthood and temple blessings to all worthy male members of the Church. President Kimball has asked that I advise the conference that after he had received this revelation, which came to him after extended meditation and prayer in the sacred rooms of the holy temple, he presented it to his counselors, who accepted it and approved it. It was then presented to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who unanimously approved it, and was subsequently presented to all other General Authorities, who likewise approved it unanimously.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

With a lack of present-day revelation, the Jews have turned to revere the scripture scrolls in a more meticulous manner. To the Jews, the scriptures, the words of God, are so special they must never touch the ground. Many use a pointer to read the words rather than touch the scrolls with their fingers. The scroll cabinet, the “Ark,” is said to contain the “presence of God,” meaning the word of God.

“The Torah scroll, for example, has inspired much ritual art. As the Torah must not be touched with a bare hand, much work has gone into making beautifully decorated covers for it, and ornamental handles with which it may be held. Sephardi Jews prefer a case rather than a cloth cover for the Torah, the cases being made of carved wood, or perhaps even silver or gold. A pointer molded in the shape of a miniature hand (yad) is used to read with, and crowns, usually with bells whose tinkling symbolizes the joy of the Torah, rest on the handles. In the synagogue, the Torah is placed in a specially built Ark covered by a decorated curtain (*parokhet*), in front of which the eternal light (*ner tamid*) burns continuously in a decorative lampshade.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

In reviewing history, one of the oldest technologies for recording texts that become a library was writing on leather. As more space was needed for added texts, additional leather was sewn on to the existing scroll. One of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Isaiah, is about twenty-seven feet long! These scrolls are usually fastened to a stick at each end for better handling, rolling open and shut and for stability in storage. Since the Dead Sea Scrolls, a particular manner of copying scripture scrolls came into use. Each scroll has the same positioning of every page, line and letter. A scribe, called *sofer*, (*soferim*, plural) even preserved oddities because they might mean something that might be understood better at a later time.

“Of particular importance in the work of the *soferim* was the preservation of certain oddities in the text of the Bible itself. At some very early stage in the transmission of the Bible, features such as letters with dots over them, letters suspended above their normal position on the line, letters smaller and larger than usual, made their appearance in the text, and they came to be viewed as sacred components which could not be tampered with even though their significance was not always understood. In addition, a fairly large number of words in the Bible are written in a form that does not correspond exactly to the pronunciation which tradition requires and in some cases words are read that in fact do not appear in the text; it was the duty of the *soferim* to ensure both that the text continued to be written with all these hallowed, though anomalous, features, and that it be read in accordance with the understanding that tradition dictated.”
(*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Reading the scriptures is a very important part of Jewish Life. There are normally three days a week when the first five books of the Bible, the “Torah,” known as the Law, are read. Every congregation, whether Orthodox, Conservative or Reform reads the same Torah section on Mondays, Thursdays and Sabbaths (Saturdays). There are additional readings on High Days such as Yom Kippur, Passover, Sukkoth, Rosh Hannah, Shavuot, etc. In addition to reading the Torah segments, additional readings from the “Neviim,” the Prophets, and the “Ketuvim,” their writings, are added. Over the years, these additional readings have been added to assist in explaining the Torah portion being read.

At one time in history, approximately 150 B.C., the foreign occupying government of the Greeks and Syrians forbade the Jews to read the Torah, so they began reading the Psalms, part of the Ketuvim, instead. Nowadays, selected Psalms and other writings of the Old Testament constitute a regular part of daily Jewish reading.

As stated in a previous lesson, 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.

“The custom of reading the Torah publicly is very, very ancient—originating with Ezra in the fifth-fourth centuries B.C.E. At some later date a reading from the *Nevi'im* was added; this corresponding passage from the Prophets is known as the *Haftarah*.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

By the way, when Jesus lived, apparently the Jews read the “Law and the Prophets” just once a week .

“And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.”
(*Luke 4:16*)

Reading the past scriptural event of Peter’s Vision of the Sheet (Talith) in New Testament times, can help us understand the value of present day revelation. In the city of Jaffa, Simon Peter was staying at the home of Simon the Tanner when he received a remarkable vision. It was the sixth hour of the day (the sixth hour is what in modern times we call noon). Simon Peter apparently was praying (religious Jews pray three times a day, covering their heads and using a special prayer cloth, a *talith*, over their shoulders). During his prayers, Peter saw a sheet with knitted or knotted corners—maybe like the typical Jewish prayer shawl, a *talith* with its knotted corners—filled with all sorts of common or unclean foods. Today, the food would be called unkosher. An angel commanded Peter to eat of those foods, contrary to Jewish dietary law. The vision was a conflict (or contrast) in symbolism: The talith used in the temple as a holy garment, its 613 knots and strings symbolizing the laws given by Moses, was now filled with foods forbidden by the Law of Moses. Visions really do contain pictures and sounds that convey vital information.

Connecting Peter’s vision with another experience creates an even clearer picture. On the previous day some thirty-five miles to the north at Caesarea, a Roman centurion named Cornelius received a vision at the “ninth hour” of the day. (Again, in modern times that is three o’clock in the afternoon). In the vision an angel told Cornelius to send for Peter so that he could teach Cornelius the truth. Incidentally, the time to travel the distance of thirty-five miles would take the better part of two days, or at least an overnight journey.

Cornelius’ invitation to Peter arrived just as Peter was contemplating the meaning of the unusual vision of “unkosher” foods he had just been commanded to eat. He lodged his Roman guests overnight, then departed with them to Caesarea—which required another overnight stay. Peter was soon to learn of the correlation of these two heavenly manifestations. When Peter arrived to visit in the house of the Roman Cornelius, again contrary to Jewish law and custom, he related that God had updated or changed the food laws of Israel (showing Israel’s singularity), and said,

“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.” (*Acts 10:34-35*)

Not just Israelites, but all peoples were able to become children of the covenant. The three nights and three days is a subtle reminder of Jehovah saving Jonah at Jaffa, and later from Jaffa came the reminder that He saves all!

The scriptural report of the Peter and Cornelius events is written in a chiasmus: First we read of Cornelius’s vision; next we learn of Peter’s vision. But when Peter arrives in Caesarea, the vision of Cornelius is repeated. The center point is the Savior’s message: “Salvation is for all people.”

“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.”
(*Isaiah 12:2*)

The name of Jesus is Jeho-Shua. It comes from the words, "Jehovah saves" or "salvation is of the Lord" (Jehovah). Since salvation is of the Lord, the direction we need for our process of being saved comes from Him, too. That principle is constant as long as there are living prophets on the earth.

Gentiles being able to become full covenant members at the time of the Apostle and Prophet Peter was similar to "all worthy people" receiving the priesthood (or to be blessed by priesthood functions) at the time of President and Prophet Spencer W. Kimball.

"Priesthood limitation on blacks was changed by revelation. The things of God cannot be understood by the spirit of men. It is impossible to always measure and weigh all spiritual things by man's yardstick or scales. Admittedly, our direct and positive information is limited. I have wished the Lord had given us a little more clarity in the matter. But for me, it is enough. The prophets for 133 years of the existence of the Church have maintained the position of the prophet of the Restoration that the Negro could not hold the priesthood nor have the temple ordinances which are preparatory for exaltation. I believe in the living prophets as much or almost more than the dead ones. They are here to clarify and reaffirm. I have served with and under three of them. The doctrine or policy has not varied in my memory. I know it could. I know the Lord could change his policy and release the ban and forgive the possible error which brought about the deprivation. If the time comes, that he will do, I am sure. These smart members who would force the issue, and there are many of them, cheapen the issue and certainly bring into contempt the sacred principle of revelation and divine authority.

"... I am not sure that there will be a change, although there could be. We are under the dictates of our Heavenly Father, and this is not my policy or the Church's policy. It is the policy of the Lord who has established it, and I know of no change, although we are subject to revelations of the Lord in case he should ever wish to make a change." (*Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, Pages 448*)

Then came the marvelous proclamation that Priesthood blessings were available for all worthy members. It is quoted as follows: (emphasis added)

June 8, 1978, To all general and local priesthood officers of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints throughout the world:

Dear Brethren:

As we have witnessed the expansion of the work of the Lord over the earth, we have been grateful that people of many nations have responded to the message of the restored gospel, and have joined the Church in ever-increasing numbers. This, in turn, has inspired us with a desire to extend to every worthy member of the Church all of the privileges and blessings which the gospel affords.

Aware of the promises made by the prophets and presidents of the Church who have preceded us that at some time, in God's eternal plan, all of our brethren who are worthy may receive the priesthood, and witnessing the faithfulness of those from whom the priesthood has been withheld, we have pleaded long and

earnestly in behalf of these, our faithful brethren, spending many hours in the Upper Room of the Temple supplicating the Lord for divine guidance.

He has heard our prayers, and by revelation has confirmed that the long-promised day has come when every faithful, worthy man in the Church may receive the holy priesthood, with power to exercise its divine authority, and enjoy with his loved ones every blessing that flows therefrom, including the blessings of the temple. Accordingly, all worthy male members of the Church may be ordained to the priesthood without regard for race or color. Priesthood leaders are instructed to follow the policy of carefully interviewing all candidates for ordination to either the Aaronic or the Melchizedek Priesthood to insure that they meet the established standards for worthiness.

We declare with soberness that the Lord has now made known his will for the blessing of all his children throughout the earth who will hearken to the voice of his authorized servants, and prepare themselves to receive every blessing of the gospel.

Sincerely yours,
Spencer W. Kimball
N. Eldon Tanner
Marion G. Romney

The First Presidency (*Doctrine & Covenants -- Official Declaration 2*)

President Kimball went on to teach about the process of change that was directed by God.

“... millions of people will be affected by the revelation which came. I remember very vividly that day after day I walked to the temple and ascended to the fourth floor where we have our solemn assemblies and where we have our meetings of the Twelve and the First Presidency. After everybody had gone out of the temple, I knelt and prayed. I prayed with much fervency. I knew that something was before us that was extremely important to many of the children of God. I knew that we could receive the revelations of the Lord only by being worthy and ready for them and ready to accept them and put them into place. Day after day I went alone and with great solemnity and seriousness in the upper rooms of the temple, and there I offered my soul and offered my efforts to go forward with the program. I wanted to do what he wanted. I talked about it to him and said, ‘Lord, I want only what is right. We are not making any plans to be spectacularly moving. We want only the thing that Thou dost want, and we want it when you want it and not until.’

“... Finally we had the feeling and the impression from the Lord, who made it very clear to us, that this was the thing to do to make the gospel universal to all worthy people.” (*Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, Page 448-449*)

Just as in Peter’s time, there are those who find change, even prompted from the Lord, difficult to understand. Through various visual travel experiences that the ensuing chapters in the New Testament teach the same “sound doctrine” that salvation is for all, to the ends of the earth. Adjustments in the Word of Wisdom and the social acceptance of non-Israelites into the House of Israel actually amplify the responsibility of those who were first to share their blessings with everyone, as they are fulfilling a sign of the times.

“Take upon You My Whole Armor”

Lesson 43

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 76:25–29; 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. 25–29, An angel of God fell and became the devil.

Moses 4:4; How Satan became the devil—He tempts Eve—Adam and Eve fall and death enters the world.

Doctrine and Covenants 27:15–18; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, August 1830. HC 1: 106–108. In preparation for a religious service at which the sacrament of bread and wine was to be administered, Joseph set out to procure wine for the occasion. He was met by a heavenly messenger and received this revelation, a portion of which was written at the time, and the remainder in the September following. Water is now used instead of wine in the sacramental services of the Church. 15–18, Put on the whole armor of God.

Doctrine and Covenants 42:21–24; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, February 9, 1831. HC 1: 148–154. It was received in the presence of twelve elders, and in fulfillment of the Lord’s promise previously made that the “law” would be given in Ohio; see Section 38: 32. The Prophet specifies this revelation as “embracing the law of the Church.” 18–29, The saints are commanded not to kill, steal, lie, lust, commit adultery, or speak evil against others; 30–39, Laws governing the consecration of properties are set forth; 40–52, The sick are to be healed through administrations and by faith; 53–60, Scriptures govern the Church and are to be proclaimed to the world; 61–69, Site of the New Jerusalem and the mysteries of the kingdom shall be revealed; 70–73, Consecrated properties are to be used to support Church officers; 74–93, Laws governing fornication, adultery, killing, stealing, and confession of sins are set forth.

Doctrine and Covenants 59:6; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, August 7, 1831. HC 1: 196–201. Preceding his record of this revelation, the Prophet writes descriptively of the land of Zion wherein the people were then assembled. The land was consecrated, as the Lord had directed, and the site for the future temple was dedicated. The Lord makes these commandments especially applicable to the saints in Zion. 5–8, They are to love and serve the Lord and keep his commandments.

Doctrine and Covenants 63:16, 60–62; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, late in August 1831. HC 1: 206–211. The Prophet, Sidney Rigdon, and Oliver Cowdery had arrived in Kirtland on August 27, from their visit to Missouri. Prefacing his record of this revelation the Prophet wrote: “In these infant days of the Church, there was a great anxiety to obtain the word of the Lord upon every subject that in any way concerned our salvation; and as the land of Zion was now the most important temporal object in view, I inquired of the Lord for further information upon the gathering of the Saints, and the purchase of the land, and other matters.” 13–19, The adulterous in heart shall deny the faith and be cast into the lake of fire; 59–66, The Lord’s name is taken in vain by those who use it without authority.

Doctrine and Covenants 136:21, 24; 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. 17–27, The saints are commanded to live by numerous gospel standards; 28–33, The saints should sing, dance, pray, and learn wisdom.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

In reflecting on ancient Joseph’s high standards and principles, we read once again of the modern Jewish attitude for themselves and others (non-Jews) on sexuality and morality.

“Judaism believes that man must serve God with his soul and his body. A person’s soul is that part of him that loves God and His goodness 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. According to biblical law, a couple must abstain from sexual intercourse while the wife is a *niddah*, i.e., during her period of menstruation. The *halakhab* as it developed over the generations extended the biblical prohibition somewhat, and as it is presently codified, stipulates that sexual intercourse (as well as intimacies which may lead to it) is forbidden from the time the woman expects her menses until seven 'clean' days (that is, days on which no blood whatsoever is seen) have elapsed. A minimum of five days is fixed for the menses themselves, so that the minimum period of separation is 12 days. In the evening of the seventh clean day, the woman immerses herself in a *mikveh* and normal marital relations are resumed until the next menses are expected.

"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* (separation during the period of menstruation, which ensure that the couple does not indulge in sex on impulse but rather directs the act to holiness.

"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.)

In Judaism there are standards that do not always apply to Gentiles. However, laws of sexual purity and other moral issues do. Let's look at the following quote again.

"Gentiles were expected to practice at least the seven Noachide Laws. These were considered by rabbinic tradition to be the minimum moral duties enjoined on all men and were derived from divine demands addressed to Adam and Noah. The laws consisted of prohibitions against idolatry, blasphemy, bloodshed, sexual sins, theft (including the taking of booty in war and dishonesty in economic life), and eating flesh from live animals, as well as the command to establish a legal system, presumably to enforce the prohibitions. The gentile was not obliged to acknowledge God, but was at least obliged to abandon the worship of false gods. Unlike Jews, Noachides were not required to suffer martyrdom rather than break the law against idolatry; they were, however, required to choose martyrdom rather than shed human blood. In some instances

gentiles were also required to observe Sabbath and the festivals, and to fast on the Day of Atonement.

“Feelings of hatred, envy, self indulgence, sexual drives, greed are woven into man's nature as God created him. But these impulses can be redirected by the *yezer ha-tov*, (the good inclination) guided and disciplined by the laws of the Torah, so that instead of destructive forces they become creative powers for good.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

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.

The following statements are highlighted to emphasize the spiritual aspects of truthfulness.

“Then what is religion? James declares: ‘Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.’ This may be interpreted as meaning that a person who is religious is thoughtful to the unfortunate, and has an inner spirit that prompts to deeds of kindness and to the leading of a blameless life; who is just, truthful; who does not, as Paul says, think more highly of himself than he ought to think; who is affectionate, patient in tribulation, diligent, cheerful, fervent in spirit, hospitable, merciful; and who abhors evil and cleaves to that which is good. The possession of such a spirit and feeling is a true sign that a person is naturally religious.” (*Joseph Fielding Smith, Gospel Doctrine, p.121*)

“While prophets urged men to be just, the rabbis of the Talmud went into detail about what justice means in commercial life: employer-employee relationships, duties of workers to employers; legitimate prices, fair weight and measure; fair contracts; fair and unfair competition; the spoken word as a binding contract. The laws are infused with fairness in spirit as well as in fact. It is recognized that in a ruthless business world of mixed peoples, honest dealings are difficult, but the Jew should know and retain his ideals.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

Being Good Citizens

**Scripture
Summary:**

Doctrine and Covenants 58:21–22, 26–28; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, August 1, 1831. HC 1: 190–195. On the first Sabbath after the arrival of the Prophet and party in Jackson County, Missouri, a religious service was held and two members were received by baptism. During that week, members of the Colesville saints from the Thompson Branch and others arrived. Many were eager to learn the will of the Lord concerning them in the new place of gathering. 19–23, The saints are to obey the laws of the land; 24–29, Men should use their agency to do good.

Doctrine and Covenants 98:4–10; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, August 6, 1833. HC 1: 403–406. This revelation came in consequence of the persecution upon the saints in Missouri. It is natural that the saints in Missouri, having suffered physically and also having lost property, should feel an inclination toward retaliation and revenge. Therefore the Lord gave this revelation. Although some news of the problems in Missouri had no doubt reached the Prophet in Kirtland (nine hundred miles away), the seriousness of the situation could have been known to him at this date only by revelation. 4–8, The saints are to befriend the constitutional law of the land; 9–10, Honest, wise, and good men should be supported for secular offices.

Doctrine and Covenants 134; A declaration of belief regarding governments and laws in general, adopted by unanimous vote at a general assembly of the Church held at Kirtland, Ohio, August 17, 1835. HC 2: 247–249. The occasion was a meeting of Church leaders, brought together to consider the proposed contents of the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. At that time this declaration was given the following preamble: “That our belief with regard to earthly governments and laws in general may not be misinterpreted nor misunderstood, we have thought proper to present at the close of this volume our opinion concerning the same.” 1–4, Governments should preserve freedom of conscience and worship; 5–8, All men should uphold their governments, and owe respect and deference to the law; 9–10, Religious societies should not exercise civil powers; 11–12, Men are justified in defending themselves and their property.

Articles of Faith 1:12; We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.

**Supplemental
Holy Land
and Judaic
Insights:**

One of the traditional aspects of Judaism is to be involved in community and governmental affair. This may have a two-fold purpose, one to serve the community and another to preserve its own rights and identity.

“Va'ad Le'ummi (Hebrew for ‘National Committee’), (is) the National Council of Jews of Palestine, which functioned from October 10, 1920 until the establishment of the provisional government of the State of Israel in May 1948. Though elected in 1920 and recognized immediately as a representative body in a letter from the high commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, the Va'ad Le'ummi achieved formal legal status only on January 1, 1928 when Keneset Yisrael, the organizational framework of the Jewish community of Palestine was legally established under the Religious Communities Organization Ordinance, 1926.

“The Va'ad Le'ummi represented the Jewish community in its relations with the Mandatory government and the Arab leaders, and dealt with internal affairs (such as the school system). It cooperated closely with the Jewish Agency executive, as well as the chief rabbinate and the local community councils. It served as the main organ of the Jews of Palestine before the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission and the numerous inquiry commissions into the ‘Palestine Problem’ up to the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, which in 1947 proposed the partition of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

As the State of Israel was being established, modern Jewish communities began to reflect some of the similar cooperative efforts as was done anciently. One such community structure is called the Kibbutz.

“Kibbutzim with similar ways of thinking often group together in federations, which save their member-villages money by purchasing for them all in bulk, and arranging from one central office to sell all their crops. In addition, many kibbutzim cooperate with other kibbutzim in the same region, whether they share the same ideas or not, and together they are able to build central silos and arrange heavy transport. Likewise, the kibbutz associations have their own adult education courses, choirs, amateur orchestras, art collections, bulletins, publishing houses, and even their own teachers' training college. Thousands of members of certain older kibbutzim, after completing their three-year army service, volunteer a year's labor—unpaid, of course—in newer kibbutzim, in order to help them stand on their own feet.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

As mentioned in Lesson 14, “The Law of Consecration,” a similar unity and community bond can be seen in the scriptures.

“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. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” (*Acts 2:44-47*)

“And they taught, and did minister one to another; and they had all things common among them, every man dealing justly, one with another.” (*3 Nephi 26:19*)

Whether establishing themselves within or part of a community, Jewish ethics and hospitality are an important life style.

“Ethics are the principles by which man can live a good life in relation to his fellow man. The ethical life is basic to Jewish religious observance: ‘Love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord’ (Leviticus 19:18). Love of God is incomplete without love of man. This precept underlies the rules of conduct which the Torah prescribes . . .

“Hospitality is considered by Judaism to be one of the most important virtues that a person can develop. This has been true since the time of ancient Israel, when hospitality was not merely a question of good manners, but a moral institution which grew out of the harsh desert and nomadic existence of the people of Israel. The biblical customs of welcoming the weary traveler and receiving the stranger in one's midst developed into an important Jewish virtue. Isaiah states that one of the duties of the pious is to ‘deal thy bread to the hungry’ and to ‘bring the poor that are cast out to thy house.’

“A.J. Heschel (1907-1972) based his views on a Midrash stating that holiness is the only way to combat evil and that learning and obeying the precepts of Torah is the only way to gain holiness. The simplest advice in combating evil: ‘Turn from evil and do good’ is from the Book of Psalms (34:15).” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Some self-proclaimed Jewish leaders contend that gathering to Israel or being “assimilated” in governmental communities was not part of Jewish life because the system was not established by the Messiah. A noteworthy disputation came from the “Satmar Rabbi.” He argued that the Aliyah to the Land of Israel was an evil trick and

thus against God's will. He felt that the establishment of Israel as a modern nation was wrong.

"Satmar (is the) name of a small, contemporary Hasidic sect, distinguished by its fanatical opposition to Zionism and the State of Israel. It takes its name from the hometown of its leader, Joel Teitelbaum of Satmar (1888–1979), and most of its adherents reside in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, New York.

"Teitelbaum was an exceedingly sharp polemicist who combined extreme fanaticism with a forceful personality . . . he regarded the Holocaust of European Jews as a direct punishment for secular Zionism . . . Teitelbaum opposed the use of Hebrew as a spoken language, since he believed that it secularized and profaned the holy tongue. He forbade the Hasidim living in his community to cooperate with State institutions and he ordered those living in Israel not to take the oath of loyalty to the State, not to take part in elections, and not to make use of its law courts or legal system.

"From the political point of view, the people of Israel have more often been ruled by monarchies than by democratic forms of government. The Book of Deuteronomy makes provision for the people of Israel to have a king, but insists that the king must rule by law and 'that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren.' In biblical times, the Israelites believed that their government had to derive from God. Thus, when Moses accepted the advice of his father-in-law Jethro to appoint leaders, he first obtained God's permission and then, with God's authority, appointed judges. Later, the people rejected the advice of the prophet Samuel and insisted on having a king—this led to the reign of Saul, followed by that of David. In spite of this, Jewish law still states that decisions are to be made and conflicts to be resolved according to the principle of majority rule." (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

The efforts of the modern Jewish state to bring biblical theocracy together with democracy gives some noteworthy comparisons. Nowadays, the religious Jews, Bahais and Latter-day Saints anticipate an eventual theocracy. This is in stark contrast to the secularism and materialism so prevalent in modern society.

"Following the Six-Day War of June 1967 and the reunification of Jerusalem, all of the holy sites in the Land of Israel came under Israeli administration, and freedom of access was guaranteed to all religions. The Israel government resolved to safeguard all sacred sites, and gave the head of each religious community management of its own holy places." (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*)

The underlying considerations in establishing the modern State of Israel and its legal system go back to ancient times and the biblical system while embracing the principles of democracy. Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East. That probably justifies the government of the United States of America to be as protective and supportive of Israel as it is.

“The Family Is Ordained of God”

Lesson 45

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 31:1–4; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Thomas B. Marsh, September 1830. HC 1: 115–117. The occasion was immediately following a conference of the Church. See heading to Section 30. Thomas B. Marsh had been baptized earlier in the month, and had been ordained an elder in the Church before this revelation was given. 1–6, Thomas B. Marsh is called to preach the gospel and is assured of his family’s well-being.

Doctrine and Covenants 68:25–28; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, November 1831, at the request of Orson Hyde, Luke S. Johnson, Lyman E. Johnson, and William E. McLellan. HC 1: 227–229. Although this revelation was given in response to supplication that the mind of the Lord be made known concerning the elders named, much of the content pertains to the whole Church. 25–28, Parents are commanded to teach the gospel to their children; 29–35, The saints are to observe the Sabbath, labor diligently, and pray.

Doctrine and Covenants 93:40; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, May 6, 1833. HC 1: 343–346. 38–40, Children are innocent before God because of the redemption of Christ; Doctrine and Covenants 121:41–46; Prayer and prophecies written by Joseph Smith the Prophet, while he was a prisoner in the jail at Liberty, Missouri, dated March 20, 1839. HC 3: 289–300. The Prophet with several companions had been months in prison. Their petitions and appeals directed to the executive officers and the judiciary had failed to bring them relief. Why many are called and few chosen; 41–46, The priesthood should be used only in righteousness.

1 Corinthians 11:11; Paul speaks of certain customs of hair and grooming—Heresies will arise which test and prove the faithful—Sacramental emblems are partaken in remembrance of the flesh and blood of Christ—Beware of partaking unworthily.

Genesis 1:26–27; God creates this earth and its heaven and all forms of life in six days—Creative acts of each day set forth—God creates man, both male and female, in his own image—Man given dominion over all things, and commanded to multiply and fill the earth.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

It is clear to see the close relationships Jews and Latter-day Saints have in their families. Even with most theological differences, the family relationship remains. Family is one of Joseph and Judah’s strongest similarities.

“The Bible appears to be more concerned with social and family relations than with individual ones, and thus puts more emphasis on being a good neighbor than it does on friendship. The Bible also warns against false friendship, saying that people might be attracted to a person solely because of his wealth, and not out of motives of respect.

“Balaam’s eyes opened . . . , he 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!’” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr. - Numbers 24:5*)

Let’s take a look at Jewish culture as it applies to family, family leadership, children and their responsibilities and reverence for each other.

One of the most consistent rituals includes, at the Sabbath’s beginning, a weekly pouring of “kosher wine” by the eldest male in the family. He will say a blessing, take a sip of the wine and then each family member partakes thereafter. Another part of the Sabbath’s beginning is to bless a piece of broken bread. Again, the eldest male partakes first and the rest of the family partakes thereafter.

Jeremiah used the favorite image of an even earlier prophet, Hosea, comparing the relationship between God and Israel to that of husband and wife. Israel, in not keeping its responsibilities, deserted the true faith and had become like an unfaithful wife. Both husband and wife have a commitment to each other that should be like God's and Israel's dedication to one another.

“Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord; the fruit of the womb is a reward’ (Psalm 127:3). In Jewish tradition, the central purpose of marriage is to have children. Children are considered a great blessing; they are the hope and the promise of continuing life.

“Responsibilities of a man, a woman and of children are stated in the scriptures, Talmudic and oral traditions. In many religious Jewish families, the father blesses his wife and children on a weekly basis. Women and children are to be cherished and blessed. They have different responsibilities, yet they should share an honorable status without preference. Yet, as Judaism spread without the guidance of living prophets, some discrimination became evident.

“The woman's legal status, as defined in the Bible, is generally the same as that of man, as is her moral responsibility but certain laws do discriminate both for and against her. For example, special attention was paid to injury suffered by a pregnant woman, and the conditions applicable to a woman sold into slavery were far better than those of a male slave. The owner was expected to marry her himself or have one of his sons marry her and he had to treat her as a daughter-in-law.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

The strong Jewish tradition about women places them on a lofty pedestal.

“It is said that a man without a wife lives without joy, blessing and good, and that a man should love his wife as himself and respect her more than himself. Women have greater faith than men and greater powers of discernment. The Torah, the greatest joy of the rabbis, is frequently pictured as a woman and is represented as God's daughter and Israel's bride.

“In modern Israel, the Declaration of Independence ensures complete equality of political and social rights to all its inhabitants, regardless of religion, race, or sex, but the real Magna Carta of the Israeli woman was the Women's Equal Rights Law of 1951, giving women equal legal status with men. The only field of law in which there remains a degree of discrimination against women is that of personal status. Matters of marriage and divorce come within the exclusive jurisdiction of the religious courts and thus, for example, a divorce must be given by the husband to the wife. On the other hand, in accordance with the *halakhab*, children take the national identity of their mother and not that of their father.

“Woman (Eve) was created primarily to serve man (Adam) as a helper, and throughout the Bible she is expected to be a good wife and mother. But in ages when many cultures regarded their women as mere chattels, the Jews did not disregard the girl's wishes when a marriage arrangement was made. Womanly traits, good and bad, were proverbial in the Bible. Foolishness, contentiousness and indiscretion were censured. On the other hand, graciousness, industry and generosity were lauded, particularly in the psalm of praise to the woman in Proverbs, whose beginning is usually translated as ‘A woman of valor who shall find, and her worth is far above pearls.’

“The Talmud teaches that it is a woman's duty to beautify herself so as to appear pleasing to her husband. The rabbis said: ‘A woman beautifies herself by powdering herself, by parting her hair and leaving it loose over her shoulders, and by applying rouge to her face.’ Said Rav Huna: ‘Only the young ones do so, but not the old ones.’ Said Rav Hisda to him: ‘Even your mother does so, even your grandmother does so, and even a woman on the verge of the grave.’ Though the talmudic attitude toward the use of cosmetics is basically favorable, it is combined with warnings against its utilization for immoral purposes. Furthermore, cosmetics were not permitted during periods of mourning.”
(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

Jewish tradition places a strong responsibility on the husband and father. Further details of Jewish custom in the family parallel the Latter-day Saints’ lifestyle.

“The father's duty is to provide for his children, to give them a proper education, to teach them a trade, and to prepare them for marriage. Some authorities require that the father teach his son to swim. The father is morally accountable for the behavior and the sins of his children until they reach the age of their own responsibility—bat mitzvah at the age of 12 for girls, and bar mitzvah at the age of 13 for boys. The father retains responsibility in legal matters for his son until the age of 20 and for his daughter until she marries.

“Great emphasis is placed on the importance of education and religious training, which should begin early in the home. The mother's role is vital since she is the one who creates the home atmosphere in which basic values are fostered and transmitted. She trains her sons and daughters in *mitzvot* and prepares them for formal education. The rabbis advised parents to be loving but firm in the upbringing of their children, and warned against showing favoritism.

“In some communities it is customary for the father to bless his children on the Sabbath eve when he returns from the synagogue.

“Children are obliged to treat their parents with honor and respect. Children must provide dependent parents with food, clothing and personal attention if it is necessary. This obligation is removed from a daughter when she marries.

“Judaism considers the establishment of a family a holy task. Children are a gift from God and childlessness the greatest misfortune that could befall a marriage. The virtues of domestic bliss have been frequently extolled by the rabbis, and the close knit Jewish family, where the home has been the center of religious practice and ceremony, has greatly helped the survival of Judaism and preserved the moral integrity of the Jews.” *(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)*

Although there are many variances in Jewish religious interpretations and worship expressions, the family is always the central holding point. The sanctity of family is why Jews—even unobservant—always want to remain Jews. Latter-day Saints share that perspective. Even to His children that wander away from the path leading to salvation, He is still “Father” in Heaven.

“Zion—The Pure in Heart”

Scripture Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 45:66–67; 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.” 63–75, The saints are commanded to gather and build the New Jerusalem, to which people from all nations will come.

Doctrine and Covenants 57:1–3; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, July 20, 1831. HC 1: 189–190. In compliance with the Lord’s command (Section 52), the elders had journeyed from Kirtland to Missouri with many varied experiences and some opposition. In contemplating the state of the Lamanites and the lack of civilization, refinement, and religion among the people generally, the Prophet exclaimed in yearning prayer: “When will the wilderness blossom as the rose? When will Zion be built up in her glory, and where will thy Temple stand, unto which all nations shall come in the last days?” Subsequently he received this revelation. 1–3, Independence, Missouri, is the place for the City of Zion and the temple.

Doctrine and Covenants 64:33–43; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to the elders of the Church, at Kirtland, Ohio, September 11, 1831. HC 1: 211–214. The Prophet was preparing to move to Hiram, Ohio, to renew his work on the translation of the Bible, which had been laid aside while he had been in Missouri. A company of brethren who had been commanded to journey to Zion (Missouri) was earnestly engaged in making preparations to leave in October. At this busy time, the revelation was received. 33–36, The rebellious shall be cut off out of Zion; 37–40, The Church shall judge the nations; 41–43, Zion shall flourish.

Doctrine and Covenants 82:14–15; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Jackson County, Missouri, April 26, 1832. HC 1: 267–269. The occasion was a general council of the Church at which Joseph Smith the Prophet was sustained as the President of the High Priesthood, to which office he had previously been ordained at a conference of high priests, elders, and members, at Amherst, Ohio, January 25, 1832 (see heading to Section 75). Formerly unusual names were used in the publication of this revelation to conceal the identity of the persons named (see heading to Section 78). These unusual names have now been dropped, except in cases where the identification is not known (see verse 11). 14–18, Zion must increase in beauty and holiness; 19–24, Every man should seek the interest of his neighbor.

Doctrine and Covenants 97:8–28; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, August 2, 1833. HC 1: 400–402. This revelation deals particularly with the affairs of the saints in Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, in response to the Prophet’s inquiry of the Lord for information. Members of the Church in Missouri were at this time subjected to severe persecution, and on July 23, 1833, had been forced to sign an agreement to leave Jackson County. 6–9, Those who observe their covenants are accepted by the Lord; 10–17, A house is to be built in Zion in which the pure in heart shall see God; 18–21, Zion is the pure in heart; 22–28, Zion shall escape the Lord’s scourge if she is faithful.

Doctrine and Covenants 105:1–12; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, on Fishing River, Missouri, June 22, 1834. HC 2: 108–111. Mob violence against the saints in Missouri had increased, and organized bodies from several counties had declared their intent to destroy the people. The Prophet had come from Kirtland at the head of a party known as Zion’s Camp, bringing clothing and provisions. While this party was encamped on Fishing River, the Prophet received the revelation. 1–5, Zion shall be built up by conformity to celestial law; 6–13, Redemption of Zion deferred for a little season.

Moses 7:12–19, 61–63, 68–69; Enoch teaches, leads the people, moves mountains—The City of Zion is established—Enoch foresees the coming of the Son of Man, his atoning sacrifice, and the resurrection of the saints—He foresees the restoration, the gathering, the Second Coming, and the return of Zion.

Articles of Faith 1:10; We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.

Supplemental Holy Land and Judaic Insights:

The word Zion evokes very strong feeling among the Jews. As there are two gatherings, one spiritual and another physical, there are also two definitions of Zion, one in the heart and another in the place. What the Jews may not realize is that there are two chosen people that will have two Zion headquarters. Two centers in the “Tops of the Mountains” should be considered. Presently, there are two dedicated centers in the two “Zions” in the two “Tops of the Mountains,” Jerusalem and Salt Lake City. The Lord will speak from two Zions.

“Micah directed his prophecy against the rich who lived in ill-gotten splendor at the expense of the poor. He warned them that God would forsake His people and that the inevitable results of the corruption of Judah would follow: the ravaging of Judah by its enemies, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and exile. Micah stated God's demands simply: justice tempered with mercy. Micah's verses of consolation are beautiful in their vision of the glorious future of Zion: ‘For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem . . . And they the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid . . .’ (Micah 4:5).”
(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

The “two Zions” points to a unique geographical consideration. In this case, geography lends its testimony of the Lord. In ancient times, the word of the Lord came from the “tops of the mountains,” Jerusalem, where the tribe of Judah and the prophets of Israel lived. These mountains create a backbone of the country of Israel. In fact, the land of Israel has mountains from its northern to its southern borders. It is a mountain range that is “everlasting.”

In latter times, the word of the Lord comes from the “tops of the mountains,” Salt Lake City, where the prophets and leadership of the Lord’s kingdom and the tribe of Joseph are presently situated. The Ute Indians used the word Utah to denote the tops of the mountains. It is also the only other range of mountains that extends from the northern to the southern borders of the land. It is also the “land of everlasting hills.”

Judah and Utah even sound linguistically similar. There is an Arab village close to Hebron that is called Yatta. An old synagogue of the first century was found there with characteristics of Levitical use. Some even suggest it to be the wilderness area of Judah where John the Baptist (a Levite) might have lived.

The blessings of the “everlasting hills” have affected, are affecting and will continue to affect all the world.

“The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.” *(Genesis 49:26)*

“And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence.”
(Doctrine & Covenants 133:31)

“Everlasting is also used to signify the eternal, lasting, and enduring nature of some particular thing. For instance: the ‘everlasting covenant’ (D. & C. 1:15), ‘the everlasting gospel’ (D. & C. 36:5), ‘songs of everlasting joy’ (D. & C. 45:71), ‘an everlasting inheritance’ (D. & C 57:5), ‘the everlasting hills.’ (D. & C. 133:31.)”
(Mormon Doctrine, Bruce R. McConkie, Pg.243)

How beautiful upon the mountains of Judah and Joseph are the feet of Him who brought salvation to all of us! How beautiful are the garments of them that are worthy to bow at His feet. Jews use garments to remind them of ancient temple rituals. The garment is called a “Tallit” and it has four sets of Zizit (strings) with knots that are reminders of the binding covenants.

Although mentioned previously, let's consider again the image of heavenly living that is in the pattern of living in the "City of our Lord" with our Lord. The imagery of dwelling places such as tents with their poles (stakes) and curtains may represent the organized facilities and order of heaven.

"The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, 'The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.'" *(Isaiah 60:14)*

It seems that the "camp" of Israel was organized in a "City of the Lord" which was likened to the "House of the Lord." 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 celestial, terrestrial and celestial.

"... it seems, the ancient Israelites were commanded to build a sanctuary so that God may dwell amongst them (Exodus 25:8). The Tabernacle became the place to which sacrifices were brought in times of joy and in times of sadness. 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; when they moved, the Tabernacle was taken apart, and was moved with them. Physically and spiritually it was the central object for the Children of Israel and it was through the Tabernacle that they felt their connection with God." *(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)*

"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)*

"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* [Holy of Holies], 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.)*

In the latter-days, an organizational unit called "Stakes of Zion" 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)*

The Lord will return to a Jerusalem that will have the House of the Lord. The entire city will become the City of The Lord.

“And he spake also concerning the house of Israel, and the Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come--after it should be destroyed it should be built up again, a holy city unto the Lord; wherefore, it could not be a new Jerusalem for it had been in a time of old; but it should be built up again, and become a holy city of the Lord; and it should be built unto the house of Israel.” (*Ether 13:5*)

The Lord will also come to a Zion that will have a House of the Lord. Apparently it will become a City of the Lord as well.

“That you may come up unto the crown prepared for you, and be made rulers over many kingdoms, saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Zion, who hath established the foundations of Adam-ondi-Ahman;” (*Doctrine & Covenants 78:15*)

“ . . . Adam-ondi-Ahman means the place or land of God where Adam dwelt . . . Apparently the area included was a large one; at least, the revelations speak of the land, the valley, and the mountains of Adam-ondi-Ahman. They tell us that Christ himself ‘established the foundations of Adam-ondi-Ahman’ (D. & C. 78:15-16), and that it included the place now known as Spring Hill, Daviess County, Missouri. (D. & C. 116.) Far West, Missouri, also appears to be included in the land of Adam-ondi-Ahman. On April 17, 1838, the Lord commanded his saints to assemble at Far West, which place, he said, was holy ground; and there they were to build a city. (D. & C. 115)” (*Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, Page 20*)

Going back in history, turning around and looking at today, I begin to better understand the present and the future of temple buildings and the system of two capital cities, the Lord’s cities of new and old Jerusalem. I see the possibility of being the Lord’s people, dwelling with him in his city. We have additional insights from Elder Bruce R. McConkie.

“Up to now, through all of earth's long years, there has been one time, one time only, when the Lord's system of capital cities has worked perfectly. Such was in the day of Enoch, the seventh from Adam. In that holy day, so faithful were the saints that the Lord, the Great Jehovah, ‘came and dwelt with his people,’ even as he will in the millennial era that is to be. In that holy day, the saints ‘dwelt in righteousness,’ even as they shall when the Lord comes again to dwell among mortals.” (*Bruce R. McConkie, The Mortal Messiah, Vol.1, p.84*)

“And the Lord called his people ZION, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there were no poor among them. And Enoch built a city that was called the City of Holiness, even ZION. . . . And Enoch and all his people walked with God, and he dwelt in the midst of Zion; and it came to pass that Zion was not, for God received it up into his own bosom; and from thence went forth the saying, ZION IS FLED.” (*Moses 7:16-21, 69*)

There is a parallel of old Zion and new Zion. Prophecies of one may apply to both. One thing is for sure: The Lord will come and He will dwell in his cities. That means that a degree of sanctity and cleanliness must exist in these cities. It is the same sacredness that any temple building requires. It will require us to be a “temple society.”

“Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain.” (*Zechariah 8:3*)

The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “Judah must return, Jerusalem must be rebuilt, and the temple, . . . and all this must be done before the Son of Man will make His appearance” (History of the Church 5:337).

“Jerusalem of old, after the Jews have been cleansed and sanctified from all their sin, shall become a holy city where the Lord shall dwell and from whence he shall send forth his word unto all people. Likewise, on this continent, the city of Zion, New Jerusalem, shall be built and from it the law of God shall also go forth. There will be no conflict, for each city shall be headquarters for the Redeemer of the world, and from each he shall send forth his proclamations as occasion may require. Jerusalem shall be the gathering place of Judah and his fellows of the house of Israel, and Zion shall be the gathering place of Ephraim and his fellows, upon whose heads shall be conferred ‘the richer blessings’.” (*Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., Doctrines of Salvation, Vol.3, p.69 - p.70*)

“Isaiah describes a glorious age, the coming of ‘the day of the Lord.’ After the evil are punished, ‘it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people’ (11:11). With the coming of the Messiah, Jews will come home to Jerusalem, the everlasting city.

“The majority of religious leaders believed that there could be no return to Zion before the coming of the Messiah; and the active Zionists were mostly those who had abandoned their traditional religious roles and replaced them with secular, political activities.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

“Now many will feel disposed to say, that this New Jerusalem spoken of, is the Jerusalem that was built by the Jews on the eastern continent. But you will see, from Revelation 21:2, there was a New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband; that after this, the Revelator was caught away in the Spirit, to a great and high mountain, and saw the great and holy city descending out of heaven from God. Now there are two cites spoken of here. As everything cannot be had in so narrow a compass as a letter, I shall say with brevity, that there is a New Jerusalem to be established on this continent, and also Jerusalem shall be rebuilt on the eastern continent (see Book of Mormon, Ether 13:1-12). This may suffice, upon the subject of gathering, until my next.” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Section Two 1834-37 p.86*)

May we be prepared for His coming. May we learn from our forefathers and benefit from their mistakes. May we ever praise God for sending His Son to pay for all mistakes. May we live with Him, in His house, in His city, in His glory.

