

October 12 – 18, 2020

3 Nephi 20–26

“YE ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE COVENANT”

Summary: *Jesus provides bread and wine miraculously and again administers the sacrament unto the people—The remnant of Jacob will come to the knowledge of the Lord their God and will inherit the Americas—Jesus is the prophet like unto Moses, and the Nephites are children of the prophets—Others of the Lord’s people will be gathered to Jerusalem. [About A.D. 34]*

Israel will be gathered when the Book of Mormon comes forth—The Gentiles will be established as a free people in America—They will be saved if they believe and obey; otherwise, they will be cut off and destroyed—Israel will build the New Jerusalem, and the lost tribes will return. [About A.D. 34]

In the last days, Zion and her stakes will be established, and Israel will be gathered in mercy and tenderness—They will triumph—Compare Isaiah 54. [About A.D. 34]

Jesus approves the words of Isaiah—He commands the people to search the prophets—The words of Samuel the Lamanite concerning the Resurrection are added to their records. [About A.D. 34]

The Lord’s messenger will prepare the way for the Second Coming—Christ will sit in judgment—Israel is commanded to pay tithes and offerings—A book of remembrance is kept—Compare Malachi 3. [About A.D. 34]

At the Second Coming, the proud and wicked will be burned as stubble—Elijah will return before that great and dreadful day—Compare Malachi 4. [About A.D. 34]

Jesus expounds all things from the beginning to the end—Babes and children utter marvelous things that cannot be written—Those in the Church of Christ have all things in common among them. [About A.D. 34]

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

What does “leading the sheep” mean?

An explanation of sheep and shepherding in Israel can help us understand

the imagery in these chapters of the Book of Mormon. In Israel, on the Mount of Beatitudes, used to be a farmhouse with more than a hundred sheep. A boy shepherd would lead them out every morning and returned them in the late afternoon. Leading sheep is typical in this country. Usually there are about a dozen leader sheep, older ones from last year’s flock. The shepherd usually has them marked with bells around their necks. It is common to hear the boy talk to his sheep. He calls them when it’s time to move on, and that’s when the lead sheep immediately respond, ringing their bells as they run toward their shepherd. The ringing noise alerts the other sheep, and then like a wave they begin to follow the others.

How does shepherding relate to ancient temple practice?

The shepherd’s model is similar to an ancient biblical temple practice. For example, in the inner courtyard of the temple the chief priest would light a fire and burn incense to signal his readiness for a sacrifice. That would alert the twelve priests in the next courtyard to wash, anoint and ready themselves. Their signal to the congregation was the ringing of bells. The multitudes would then gather to follow the priests to participate in the ritual.

How does speaking to the sheep really work?

Additionally, I have noticed how the shepherds in Israel develop a language for their sheep. The grunts, whistles and sounds are recognized by the flock. I have also seen two shepherds meet on the hillsides as they lead their sheep. The shepherds stop, chat, and typically make a small fire and prepare a hot

drink. In the meantime their sheep begin to mingle. You could imagine the ownership confusion that might follow. Yet, when one shepherd departs, he simply begins talking and making his “sounds,” his sheep follow him. “For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today if ye will hear his voice . . .” (Psalms 95:7) “And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.” (John 10:4) “And now I say unto you that the good shepherd doth call after you; and if you will hearken unto his voice he will bring you into his fold, and ye are his sheep; and he commandeth you that ye suffer no ravenous wolf to enter among you, that ye may not be destroyed.” (Alma 5:60)

How can I recognize and choose the right voice?

“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)

What is my preference, being driven or being led?

One of my guests, Lorin Moench, a sheep rancher, while visiting Israel pointed out the significant difference between shepherds and sheep herders. Sheep herding is usually driving the flock. But, in Israel, the shepherd leads the flock. Leading the 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.*” (D&C 101:55) (Italics added)

How is “gathering” more preferable than “missionizing?”

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 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)

How does a city become a temple?

An important image of the future is given about Jerusalem, both old and new. The Holy Cities are the Lord's Cities. Each will become a "Temple City." "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 124:36) "And then shall be brought to pass that which is written: Awake, awake again, and put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city, for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." (3 Nephi 20:36) The Lamb of God will live in His cities. They will be His earthly homes. He will lead us (gather us) home, to His Father, in our heavenly home.

How do we know that the Camp of Israel was a temple?

Carrying on the theme of the "Cities of the Lord," let us reflect that the original temple was the camp of Israel. The stakes and curtains or banners identified the various tribes' habitation. The eleven tribes surrounded the tribe of Levi who, in turn, surrounded the Lord's habitation. In addition to the stakes identifying each tribal area, the stakes around the tabernacle had curtains creating a presence of sacred privacy, a habitation for the Lord. "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)

What happened to the Camp of Israel?

The sacredness and worthiness of the Camp of Israel was compromised, and the Lord's "presence" was taken to a special site of Shiloh which is less than 30-miles north of Salem. The Prophet Joshua redistributed the "Camp of Israel" by making Shiloh the House of the Lord and giving land assignments to the tribes of Israel for their personal houses. "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them." (Joshua 18:1) "And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: and there Joshua divided the land

unto the children of Israel according to their divisions." (Joshua 18:10) "And they spake unto them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, The LORD commanded by the hand of Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for our cattle." (Joshua 21:2) Later, when the Jebusite city of Salem came into the hands of King David, it became the City of David, Jerusalem. He purchased the threshing floor of a Jebusite for the future "House of the Lord." "And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To buy the threshing floor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people." (2 Samuel 24:21)

How did buildings become the "House of the Lord?"

Later, through the modern-day restoration of the gospel, buildings were erected as Houses of the Lord. 'The Prophet Joseph Smith, and my father, Hyrum Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and other choice spirits who were reserved to come forth in the fulness of times to take part in laying the foundations of the great latter-day work, Including the building of the temples and the performance of ordinances therein for the redemption of the dead, were also in the spirit world."

(D&C 138:53-54)

How will the "House of the Lord" become "City of the Lord?"

As mentioned above, in the future, the temple-work will return to the Stakes of Zion, and, in fact, some cities will become temples. So, in addition to the title "House of the Lord," it will become "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 . . ." (Ether 13:5)

Who prays daily for the rebuilding of the Temple?

In year 70 A.D. when Titus destroyed Jerusalem, the Jews lost their temple and the city of Jerusalem. Ever since, religious Jews have prayed three times daily at each meal and at every burial for the rebuilding of the temple. That tradition continues into modern times. I have found three Jewish trends of

thought about this. First, there are some who think the temple will come from heaven as the Messiah manifests himself. The second is a foreboding thought that few Jews espouse, of destroying the present Moslem shrine, the Dome of the Rock, and the nearby Al Aksa mosque and build the temple as last remembered, on more than thirty-acres. The third has some truthful possibilities, more recently espoused by the late Rabbi Abraham HaKohen Kook, as he referred to a tradition of rebuilding the temple. When asked if the Temple could be built soon, he deferred to a "latter-day Joseph" and purportedly, quoted the twelfth century Rabbi Moses Maimonides, who said about a latter-day Joseph, ". . . to him will be given the keys of the gathering of Israel, he will restore Temple worship."

How do Latter-day Saints play a role in building that temple?

Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints claim to be descendants of ancient Joseph and testify that the keys of the gathering of Israel and temple work have been restored. They also have some information that the Jews will build the temple in Jerusalem. At the beginning of the century, when Latter-day Saint President John Taylor showing Baron Rothschild the Salt Lake Temple, Rothschild said, "Elder Taylor, what do you mean by this temple? What is the object of it? Why are you building it?" President Taylor answered, "Your fathers had among them prophets, who revealed to them the mind and will of God; we have among us prophets who reveal to us the mind and will of God, as they did. One of your prophets said – The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, but who may abide the day of his coming? For he shall sit as a refiner's fire and a purifier of silver! . . . Sir,

will you point me out a place on the face of the earth where God has a temple?" Rothschild said, "Do you consider that this is that temple?" President Taylor answered, "No, sir, it is not. The Lord has told us to build this temple so that we may administer therein [ordinances] for our dead and also to perform some of the sacred matrimonial alliances and covenants that we believe in, that are rejected by the world generally, but which are among the purest, most exalting and ennobling principles that God ever revealed to man." Rothschild asked, "Well, then, this is not our temple?" And President Taylor responded, "No, you will build a temple, for the Lord has shown us, among other things, that you Jews have quite a role to perform in the latter days, and that all the things spoken by your old prophets will be fulfilled, that you will be gathered to old Jerusalem, and that you will build a temple there; and when you build that temple, and the time has arrived, the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple."

(Gospel Kingdom, John Taylor, Page 293)

How will the Temple bring our families together?

It becomes obvious that both Jews and Latter-day Saints have "temple" and "gathering" perceptions. To fulfill our prophetic destinies we must learn more about each other. Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can already lead out by learning more about Judah and his customs and ancient religious procedures. The gift of the spirit with the learning of the Jews will assist in expounding the very teachings given to our ancient forefathers so that we can understand them and apply them to our present and future lives.