

MARCH 1-7, 2021

Doctrine and Covenants 20–22

“THE RISE OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST”

Summary: *Doctrine and Covenants 20. Revelation on Church organization and government, given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at or near Fayette, New York. Portions of this revelation may have been given as early as summer 1829. The complete revelation, known at the time as the Articles and Covenants, was likely recorded soon after April 6, 1830 (the day the Church was organized). 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; 17–28, The doctrines of creation, fall, atonement, and baptism are affirmed; 29–37, Laws governing repentance, justification, sanctification, and baptism are set forth; 38–67, Duties of elders, priests, teachers, and deacons are summarized; 68–74, Duties of members, blessing of children, and the 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. This revelation was given at the organization of the Church, on the date named, in the home of Peter Whitmer Sr. 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 Jr. 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 will guide the cause of Zion; 9–12, The Saints will believe his words as he speaks by the Comforter.

Doctrine and Covenants 22. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Manchester, New York, April 16, 1830. This revelation was given to the Church in consequence of some who had previously been baptized desiring to unite with the Church without rebaptism. 1, Baptism is a new and everlasting covenant; 2–4, Authoritative baptism is required.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

What could be a reason that the restoration was at Passover?

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 during Passover week in 1830. That means that the Son of God was born to Mary during 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.

What priestly power is represented by an organization structure including a prophet?

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.”

(**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

Who else believes that the priesthood must be restored with Prophets, Seers, and Revelators?

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. A well preserved 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**)

What attempts at a restoration occurred in New Testament times?

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.

What represents the Old Covenant vs the New covenant

Each Sabbath meal is started with *Kiddush* and *Motzi*, wine is poured, blessed, sipped (first by the father) and then bread is broken, blessed and eaten (first by the father). 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**) ". . . 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**)

What Jewish practice seems to anticipate a restoration of a new covenant?

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) A complete Passover (Seder) 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.

What symbolism reflects the true Godhead?

The *seder's* 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." (and the children receive a prize) The Atonement is the center focus. A common 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."

Who is the Holy Ghost?

"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) 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.

How is the Holy Ghost like the "breath of God?"

"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, 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-emet*) 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 vadam* (‘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.**)

How can I know that biblical purification also means baptism by immersion?

“A convert to Judaism is considered a newborn child, and, from the *halakhic* (biblical law) 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* [laws and commandments] 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. New Testament John (the Baptist), 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. Nowadays, for 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.

How does “restoration” infer that there was an “original?”

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, east from Moab in the promised land, west. 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. In **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 remains of the Gate Beautiful can attest to the spirit of Gethsemane (higher than the Temple Mount, and well above the traditional Church of Gethsemane on the lower part of the mount).

How does water and sins have a connection with repentance in Jewish traditions:

“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**)

How do Jews repeat washing sins away?

“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' (waters). (**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. “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.**)

How is authority to act in God's name reflected throughout the scriptures?

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 the above excerpts can give “modern Joseph” a little insight to what the Jews are still anticipating, and that member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints joyfully proclaim.