

APRIL 5-11, 2021

## Doctrine and Covenants 30–36

“YOU ARE CALLED TO PREACH MY GOSPEL”

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**Summary:** *Doctrine and Covenants 30. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to David Whitmer, Peter Whitmer Jr., and John Whitmer, at Fayette, New York, September 1830, following the three-day conference at Fayette, but before the elders of the Church had separated. Originally this material was published as three revelations; it was combined into one section by the Prophet for the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. 1–4, David Whitmer is chastened for failure to serve diligently; 5–8, Peter Whitmer Jr. is to accompany Oliver Cowdery on a mission to the Lamanites; 9–11, John Whitmer is called to preach the gospel.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 31. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Thomas B. Marsh, September 1830. The occasion was immediately following a conference of the Church (see the 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 32. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson, in Manchester, New York, early October 1830. Great interest and desires were felt by the elders respecting the Lamanites, of whose predicted blessings the Church had learned from the Book of Mormon. In consequence, supplication was made that the Lord would indicate His will as to whether elders should be sent at that time to the Indian tribes in the West. The revelation followed. 1–3, Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson are called to preach to the Lamanites and to accompany Oliver Cowdery and Peter Whitmer Jr.; 4–5, They are to pray for an understanding of the scriptures.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 33. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Ezra Thayre and Northrop Sweet, at Fayette, New York, October 1830. In introducing this revelation, Joseph Smith’s history affirms 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 34. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Orson Pratt, at Fayette, New York, November 4, 1830. 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 Sr. home. 1–4, The faithful become the sons of God through the Atonement; 5–9, The 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 35. Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon, at or near Fayette, New York, December 7, 1830. 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 (see verse 20). As a preface to the record of this revelation, Joseph Smith’s history states: “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.” 1–2, How men may become the sons of God; 3–7, Sidney Rigdon is called to baptize and to confer the Holy Ghost; 8–12, Signs and miracles are wrought by faith; 13–16, The Lord’s servants will thresh the nations by the power of the Spirit; 17–19, Joseph Smith holds the keys of the mysteries; 20–21, The elect will abide the day of the Lord’s coming; 22–27, Israel will be saved.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 36. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Edward Partridge, near Fayette, New York, December 9, 1830 (see the heading to section 35). Joseph Smith's history states that Edward Partridge "was a pattern of piety, and one of the Lord's great men." 1-3, The Lord lays His hand upon Edward Partridge by the hand of Sidney Rigdon; 4-8, Every man who receives the gospel and the priesthood is to be called to go forth and preach.*

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### Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

#### What is being patient, praying always, and following the Comforter?

"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." (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

#### What can I learn from some forms of prayer?

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.)

#### What are prayers to some people?

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.”  
([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

### **To the Jews, how does prayer affect God – and how does prayer affect me?**

“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 . . .” “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.”

([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

### **Words or feelings?**

“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](#)).” ([Encyclopedia 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.” ([Psalm 95:6](#))

### **How can I better understand the anticipation of the “Coming of the Lord?”**

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.”

([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#)) As believers of Jesus the Messiah, we know that in latter days, when the great Deliverer returns, He will announce His names and we will know He came to save. It bears repeating, as stated in the [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.)

### **Considering, 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,” (*Gat-shemen*) 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.

### **How will unbelievers learn who He is?**

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.

