

APRIL 12-18, 2021

Doctrine and Covenants 37–40

“IF YE ARE NOT ONE YE ARE NOT MINE”

Summary: *Doctrine and Covenants 37. Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon, near Fayette, New York, December 1830. Herein is given the first commandment concerning a gathering in this dispensation. 1–4, The Saints are called to gather at the Ohio.*

Doctrine and Covenants 38. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Fayette, New York, January 2, 1831. The occasion was a conference of the Church. 1–6, Christ created all things; 7–8, He is in the midst of His Saints, who will soon see Him; 9–12, All flesh is corrupted before Him; 13–22, He has reserved a land of promise for His Saints in time and in eternity; 23–27, The Saints are commanded to be one and esteem each other as brethren; 28–29, Wars are predicted; 30–33, The Saints are to be given power from on high and to 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 39. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to James Covell, at Fayette, New York, January 5, 1831. James Covell, who had been a Methodist minister for about forty years, covenanted with the Lord that he would obey any command that the Lord would give to him through Joseph the Prophet. 1–4, The Saints have power to become the sons of God; 5–6, To receive the gospel is to receive Christ; 7–14, James Covell is commanded to be baptized and labor in the Lord’s vineyard; 15–21, The Lord’s servants are to preach the gospel before the Second Coming; 22–24, Those who receive the gospel will be gathered in time and in eternity.

Doctrine and Covenants 40. Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon, at Fayette, New York, January 6, 1831. Preceding the record of this revelation, the Prophet’s history states, “As James [Covell] rejected the word of the Lord, and returned to his former principles and people, the Lord gave unto me and Sidney Rigdon the following revelation” (see section 39). 1–3, Fear of persecution and cares of the world cause rejection of the gospel.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

What is the significance of “gathering?”

The Jewish tradition of a latter-day “Joseph son of Joseph” is so significant to the “gathering” that it should be repeated. 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.” “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.](#))

How does one part of the family have clues of the other part of the family?

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!

How are we reassured that this is the time of the gathering of Israel?

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 7 million Jews in Israel. In the last decade of the twentieth century, almost a million Russian- speaking Jews have gathered to Israel. 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, as Russians were coming (from the north): “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](#))

How did the recent gathering of the Jews get started?

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’.”

([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

What is the background for the Balfour Declaration?

Subsequently, the Balfour Declaration, calling for the ingathering of the Jews, brought exhilaration to Jews and others who cherished the biblical prophesies 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.)

How is Balfour compared to Persia's King Cyrus?

The Balfour Declaration is 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." (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

How is the Messiah's presence in modern days a sign of the gathering?

"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.) 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. Since the appearance of the Lord several times to the Prophet Joseph Smith, 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 member of the Church for every 100,000 persons on the earth. Now, Prophet and President Russell M. Nelson is leading the Lord’s work with one member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for almost every 450 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 also making an exodus from the far-flung reaches of the world and are being gathered home, and their population ratio to the world population is the same as the Latter-day Saints! Jews and Members of the Church have each about 16,000,000 members, combined, just under ½ of 1% of the world population, Yet their combined influence on humanity is extraordinary. It is “*The Mystery of Kinship*” (the name for a TV-documentary being produced by Robert Hatch, Robert Starling and Daniel Rona).

What is the purpose of this “gathering?”

As the Jews are gathering to their homeland, Israel, 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**)

How does the earthly gathering have a symbolism of a heavenly gathering?

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.

Who believes that we are 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 anymore. “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.

(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

What explanation exists for mankind to be created last?

“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 banqueting 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.)

