

June 14-20, 2021

## Doctrine and Covenants 64–66

“THE LORD REQUIRETH THE HEART AND A WILLING MIND”

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**Summary:** *Doctrine and Covenants 64. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to the elders of the Church, at Kirtland, Ohio, September 11, 1831. 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; 12–22, The unrepentant are to be brought before the Church; 23–25, He that is tithed will not be burned at the Lord’s coming; 26–32, The Saints are warned against debt; 33–36, The rebellious will be cut off out of Zion; 37–40, The Church will judge the nations; 41–43, Zion will flourish.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 65. Revelation on prayer given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, October 30, 1831. 1–2, The keys of the kingdom of God are committed to man on earth, and the gospel cause will triumph; 3–6, The millennial kingdom of heaven will come and join the kingdom of God on earth.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 66. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, October 29, 1831. William E. McLellan had petitioned the Lord in secret to make known through the Prophet the answer to five questions, which were unknown to Joseph Smith. At McLellan’s request, the Prophet inquired of the Lord and received this revelation. 1–4, The everlasting covenant is the fulness of the gospel; 5–8, Elders are to preach, testify, and reason with the people; 9–13, Faithful ministerial service ensures an inheritance of eternal life.*

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### Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

#### What gifts did Joseph Smith possess to create a better translation of the Bible?

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.](#)) According to the late John Tvedtnes, then, 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). A better understanding of the eternal ordinances became apparent with the use of the heavenly tools, *Urim* and *Thummim*. “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](#)) “That temples and temple ordinances are essential to the (true) faith. 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)

### **What is meant by the term “mysteries?”**

The center point of Nephi’s instruction (1Nephi 1:1-2) 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)

### **How can I become forgiven as I forgive?**

Reflecting the Savior’s forgiveness in our own lives, brings us to be more like Him. Jewish tradition indicates that annually, a scapegoat received the sins of the people as they were recited and laid on the goat’s head. It was then tied with a red ribbon and led out the “Gate of Mercy,” also known by the names, “Gate of Forgiveness” as well as “Gate Beautiful.” It was led into the wilderness to “die on its own,” “bearing the sins of the people.” Forgiving is a gift that binds us to the Savior; He gives mercy, He forgives, it is beautiful! “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” (Ephesians 4:32) “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)

### **How can I sense tithing as a blessing, more than an obligation?**

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 farther than 90%. Yet God’s instruction is to bring the tithes, 10%, to him and that the remaining 90% will go farther than the 100% could. Tithing is an eternal principle, as related in the Bible, “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed *be* Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.” (Genesis 14:18-20) 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 a method

or an organized way of collecting and distributing tithes. Anciently, 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. To devout Jews, their contributions and charity often amount to their version of tithing. "After the exile from *Erez* Israel (land of 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.)

### **What was the Old Testament practice of cancelling debt?**

"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.' (Deuteronomy 16:11) 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." (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

### **Where are the Keys of the Kingdom?**

"I say to the Latter-day Saints the keys of the kingdom of God are here, and they are going to stay here, too, until the coming of the Son of Man. Let all Israel understand that. They may not rest upon my head but a short time, but they will then rest on the head of another Apostle, and another after him, and so continue until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven to "reward every man according to the deeds done in the body" (Wilford Woodruff (1807–98) History of the Church, 1:245). As discussed in the previous supplemental insight, Peter, witnessed by James and John, received the keys as God said, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 16:14–19) To this present day, Jews pray for the return of the "Keys of the Kingdom." "If one fails to mention 'covenant' [i.e., the phrase 'for Thy covenant which Thou has sealed in our flesh'] in the Blessing for the Land or 'the kingdom of the House of David' in the blessing 'who rebuildest Jerusalem' [both in the Grace after Meals], it must be repeated correctly." (Encyclopedia Judaica, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, P 225) "The main theme of the prayer (*Aleinu*) is the kingdom of God. In

the first part, God is praised for having singled out the people of Israel from other nations, for Israel worships the One God while others worship idols. The second paragraph expresses the fervent hope for the coming of the kingdom of God, and the universal ideal of a united mankind which will recognize the only true God, and of "a world perfected under the kingship of the Almighty." The juxtaposition of the two paragraphs provides a coherent theology connecting the idea of a chosen people (Israel) with the challenge that such distinctiveness has for its purpose, religious union and the perfection of mankind under the kingdom of God." (*Encyclopedia Judaica*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, P 609)

### **How ancient is the laying on of hands for healing?**

Sharing the gospel includes anointing and healing. It is still a custom among religious Jews to lay hands upon the sick and anoint them with oil invoking a *bracha*, a blessing. The word Messiah literally means "the anointed one." Anointing includes the practical and symbolic qualities of softening and healing. "Anointing with oil is a very ancient custom. It was done for both practical and symbolic reasons. The practical use was cosmetic, to soften and protect the skin, as well as medicinal, to heal various afflictions. Anointing also figured in the coronation of the king, in the ordination of Aaron and his sons as priests, and in the purification of a person suffering from leprosy. These anointings . . . symbolized the new rank and power given to the anointed person and they evoked God's blessing on him." "The anointing oil was holy and made according to a special formula. It could be used for no purposes other than those outlined above. In the case of leprosy, the oil used was not holy. According to the Talmud, the anointing oil was compounded only once in history ---

by Moses, who made enough to last for the whole period from the anointing of Aaron until the residue was hidden away by King Josiah. After that time, no anointing took place." "In the case of kings, the whole head was anointed, i.e., covered with the oil, whereas the priests had only a mark made on the head with the oil. For King David and his descendants the oil was poured out of a horn; for King Saul it was from a phial since "his kingdom was not a lasting one." The kings of the Northern Kingdom of Israel were not anointed with oil but with balsam." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*) The Hebrew term, *Ba'al Shem Tov*, is a descriptive title which means the "Good Master of the Name." "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.

### **What other effects do healings have on the recipient as well as the giver?**

Consider how the Savior was an "Wholistic" healer. For example, a palsied man was told that his sins were forgiven. Consider the man with his withered hand. What happened to the rest of his soul? The blood issue of the woman, unclean for twelve years, (untouchable under Mosaic law) was last in His healings. She was told that she was whole, to go in peace and then, be healed of her "plague." Is it possible that Jesus knew that her distress of bleeding was in fact the lesser of her challenges in life? She may not have had a hug, a touch or caress in twelve years! Sometimes we are sick one way so that the Lord can bless us another way. Often, the Lord sent the multitude away and asked that the miracle be kept private. It was His nature to ask that "no one know;" it was his way of showing a personal nature of His salvation. Viewing miracles in their private context will give us a greater insight to His mission--of saving each, and every one of us.