

June 5-11, 2023

John 14–17

“CONTINUE IN MY LOVE”

Summary: *John 14. Jesus speaks of many mansions—He says that He is the way, the truth, and the life and that to see Him is to see the Father—He promises the first and second Comforters.*

John 15. Jesus is the vine; His disciples are the branches—He discourses on the perfect law of love—His servants have been chosen and ordained by Him—The world hates and fights true religion—He promises the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth.

John 16. Jesus discourses on the mission of the Holy Ghost—He tells of His death and resurrection, announces that He is the Son of God, and says that He has overcome the world.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

What does the “One God” mean?

The basic Jewish beliefs about God come from the

Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament – which is the Jewish written law. The most important belief is that there is “one God.” This is called monotheism and the significance is emphasized in the first commandment which states: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” (**Exodus 20:3-5**) Christianity in general has become confused about the identity and purpose of God the Father in Heaven, his son Jesus (the Messiah) and the Holy Ghost. Their unity and purpose was explained many times by the mortal Son of God. “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak

unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it*. If ye love me, keep my commandments. (**John 14:6-15**)

How can the “One God” be explained?

In a Doctrinal Exposition by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, published in the Improvement Era, Aug. 1916, 934–42; (<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/2002/04/the-father-and-the-son?lang=eng>), we learn that there are four purposes of the scriptures explaining that God the Eternal Father, “whom we designate by the exalted name-title “Elohim.” **One**, “He is the actual Parent of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Messiah and of all the spirits of humanity.” Elder Christoffel Golden Jr. of the Seventy, said; “Our quest for eternal life is nothing other than a quest to understand who God is and for us to return to live with Him. The

Savior prayed to His Father, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3) **Two**, “A second scriptural meaning of “Father” is that of Creator, e.g., in passages referring to any one of the Godhead as “the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are” (Ether 4:7; see also Alma 11:38–39; Mosiah 15:4). “He was assisted by his Son. “Jesus Christ, whom we also know as Jehovah . . . the executive of the Father, Elohim. In the work of creation is set forth in the book *Jesus the Christ*, chapter 4 [by (Apostle) James E. Talmage]. Jesus Christ, being the Creator, is consistently called the Father of heaven and earth in the sense explained above; and since His creations are of eternal quality, He is very properly called the Eternal Father of heaven and earth.” **Three**, “Jesus Christ . . . regarded as the “Father” has reference to the relationship between Him and those who accept His gospel and thereby become heirs of eternal life.” Jesus, the Son of God ‘adopts’ us and in that sense becomes a father to us. “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself . . .” (Ephesians 1:5) “But to as many as received me, gave I power to become my sons; and even so will I give unto as many as will receive me, power to become my sons” (Doctrine & Covenants 39:1–4). **Four**, Jesus Christ (is) the “Father” by Divine Investiture of Authority . . . the title “Father” to Jesus Christ is found in the fact that in all His dealings with the human family Jesus the Son has represented and yet represents Elohim His Father in power and authority.”

Who, then, is the Holy Ghost?

The Old Testament refers to the Holy Ghost as “Spirit of God” and “Spirit of Elohim.” In the *Talmud* (written Jewish biblical interpretations) and *Midrash* (a mode of biblical interpretation prominent

in Talmudic literature), “Holy Spirit” is called, *ruach ha-kodesh*, the holy “wind” or holy “breath.” Jesus taught; “But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” (John 14:26) “The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead. He is a personage of spirit, without a body of flesh and bones. He is often referred to as the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Lord, or the Comforter. The Holy Ghost works in perfect unity with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, fulfilling several roles to help us live righteously and receive the blessings of the gospel. He “witnesses of the Father and the Son” (2 Nephi 31:18) and reveals and teaches “the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5). We can receive a sure testimony of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ only by the power of the Holy Ghost. His communication to our spirit carries far more certainty than any communication we can receive through our natural senses.”

(<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/holy-ghost?lang=eng>)

What testimony comes with the title, “vine?”

In Jesus’ statement, “I am the true vine . . .” (John 15:1) there is the implication of “fruit of the vine.” “Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.” (John 15:2) The fruit can be made into “wine,” another name of the Lord. The biblical metaphor of “old wine” may be what the Jews still follow every Sabbath as they partake of a sip of wine followed by a piece of bread. The prayers connected with this practice await a future deliverance, greater than from Egypt under Moses’ direction. After Jesus’ atonement, the practice among His believers became the “new wine” with bread taken first and followed by wine.

This is done in remembrance of the greatest deliverance. An insight about the “new wine” can be derived from the prophet Joel’s statements: drunkards (wine drinkers) prefer old wine, the new wine is taken away (dried up), and then new wine will be returned when the temple is built again. “Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth.” (Joel 1:5) “The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth.” (Joel 1:10) “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the LORD . . .” (Joel 3:18) The New Testament uses “New Wine” as a name of the Lord. Jesus’ atonement is now commemorated with the new presentation of an eternal ordinance (bread and Wine), “This do in remembrance.” (Luke 22:19). That replaced the old practice the Jews still have held on to, wine and bread – still in expectation of the greater deliverance.

How aged is the invitation “Ask and Receive?”

The eternal nature of God’s desire to answer our prayers can be seen in the following Old Testament invitations. “Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.” (Psalms 37:4) “In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night:

and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.” (1 Kings 3:5) “Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” (Jeremiah 29:12-13) Years ago, Rabbi Yehuda Goetz, who oversaw the Western Wall, told me that the pieces of papers stuffed by the Orthodox Jews into the cracks of the wall are lists of names for whom they pray. However, to many others, this has become a “wishing wall.” Notwithstanding, reverently the papers are removed a few times of the year and buried on the Mount of Olives. Although, not to be read, Rabbi Goetz told me that he saw a few, fallen open notes and it occurred to him that in all the years he rarely had seen a “thank you” note!

How should I “ask?”

“It might sound contrary to the wisdom of the world to suggest that one who is burdened with sorrow should give thanks to God. But those who set aside the bottle of bitterness and lift instead the goblet of gratitude can find a purifying drink of healing, peace, and understanding.” (Apostle Dieter F. Uchtdorf, *Of the First Presidency, Grateful in Any Circumstances*, April 2014) When the Lord says to give thanks in all things, He is inviting us to thank the Father for blessings both visible and invisible. When He blesses, thank Him, for things seen and unseen in which we place our hope. That how to continue in His love.