

Doctrine and Covenants 46–48

“SEEK YE ERNESTLY THE BEST GIFTS”

Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 46. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to the Church, at Kirtland, Ohio, March 8, 1831. In this early time of the Church, a unified pattern for the conducting of Church services had not yet developed. However, a custom of admitting only members and earnest investigators to the sacrament meetings and other assemblies of the Church had become somewhat general. This revelation expresses the will of the Lord relative to governing and conducting meetings and His direction on seeking and discerning the gifts of the Spirit.

1–2, Elders are to conduct meetings as guided by the Holy Spirit;

3–6, Truth seekers should not be excluded from sacramental services;

7–12, Ask of God and seek the gifts of the Spirit;

13–26, An enumeration of some of these gifts is given;

27–33, Church leaders are given power to discern the gifts of the Spirit.

Doctrine and Covenants 47. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, March 8, 1831. John Whitmer, who had already served as a clerk to the Prophet, initially hesitated when he was asked to serve as the Church historian and recorder, replacing Oliver Cowdery. He wrote, “I would rather not do it but observed that the will of the Lord be done, and if he desires it, I desire that he would manifest it through Joseph the Seer.” After Joseph Smith received this revelation, John Whitmer accepted and served in his appointed office.

1–4, John Whitmer is designated to keep the history of the Church and to write for the Prophet.

Doctrine and Covenants 48. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, March 10, 1831. The Prophet had inquired of the Lord as to the mode of procedure in procuring lands for the settlement of the Saints. This was an important matter in view of the migration of members of the Church from the eastern United States, in obedience to the Lord’s command that they should assemble in Ohio (see sections 37:1–3; 45:64).

1–3, The Saints in Ohio are to share their lands with their brethren;

4–6, The Saints are to purchase lands, build a city, and follow the counsel of their presiding officers.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

How does worship decorum vary?

The members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have a worship etiquette that is unique throughout all religions. From time-to-time there are changes – always with the direction of Spirit through Priesthood Leaders. The other part of the family, the Jews (who are religious), have services and meeting lengths that: “vary widely from congregation to congregation, depending on a synagogue’s denomination (*Orthodox, Conservative, Reform* etc.), its leadership and its unique customs or traditions. Dress codes — and attitudes about small children and whether or not it is acceptable to whisper with your neighbor — also vary widely.” (See <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/what-to->

[expect-at-synagogue-services-on-saturday-morning/#:~:text=Keep%20in%20mind%20that%20services,or%20has%20been%20there%20recently](#))

Jews are aware that Priesthood functions as described in the Bible have to be restored. They pray before and after every meal and at every burial and grave service with a plea for Temple worship to return.

What should determine what my written history will contain?

The Book of Mormon gives us a history of Jews leaving the land of Israel and going to what is called now the land of America. This history is valuable because it is an unprejudiced account. Daniel Ludlow (1924–2009), Director of Correlation Review for the Church, taught that even true history is usually prejudiced by the writer and his perceptions as

he saw events happening. Conversely, true prophesy does not have prejudice, because it has not happened yet. He also taught that scriptural history has the least amount of prejudice because in most cases it carries a message of future events. It is prophesy in the form of history. Therefore, that history is accurate. The ancient prophets could not (and would not) write all that happened. They selected to write those things which would apply as lessons for the future. Here is an overview of what the “100th parts” contain.

– “A Hundredth Part” –

3 Nephi 26:6: And now there cannot be written in this book even a hundredth part of the things which **Jesus did truly teach** unto the people; (*Authorities’ testimonies that testify of Christ, especially in a local context.*)

Words of Mormon 1:5: Wherefore, I **chose these things**, to finish my record upon them, which remainder of my record I shall take from the plates of Nephi; and I cannot write the hundredth part of the things of my people. (*Using the Lord’s spirit to help you choose what to report. Consider, even create, several entries, then choose as directed.*)

Jacob 3:13: And a hundredth part of the proceedings of this people, which now began to be numerous, cannot be written upon these plates; but many of their proceedings are written upon the **larger plates**, and their **wars**, and their **contentions**, and the **reigns of their kings**. (*We learn by comparing contrasts*)

Ether 15:33: And the Lord spake unto Ether, and said unto him: Go forth. And he went forth, and beheld that the **words of the Lord had all been fulfilled**; and he finished his record; (and the hundredth part I have not written) and he hid them in a manner that the people of Limhi did find them. (*Reporting in such a way that reveals the fulfillment of the promises made to the Saints or the people of that country.*)

3 Nephi 5:8: And there had many things transpired which, **in the eyes of some, would be great and marvelous**; nevertheless, they cannot all be written in this book; yea, this book cannot contain

even a hundredth part of what was done among so many people in the space of twenty and five years; (*What was it that made the event extra-ordinary? The better history reports on the WHAT, HOW, WHEN, WHERE, WHO, in such a way that the WHY is revealed.*)

The following Jewish statement may help you in being a personal historian. “Prophecy comes to a person after he has refined himself and is free of sins: This explains the phenomenon of prophecy. For when a person is within a spiritually refined body, free of the filth of the evil inclination, of the drives of his foundational soul, and with no sin that pollutes any of the roots of his soul, he can, if he focuses on it, connect to his upper spiritual source and cling to it.” (https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/5183322/jewish/Prophecy-in-Judaism.htm#:~:text=When%20the%20Torah%20was%20given,will%20prophecy%2C%20young%20and%20old.)

What do Jewish historians offer in their writings?

It has been noted by (Jewish) scholars such as the historian Yosef Hayyim Yerushalmi (1932-2009), and Rabbi Jonathan Sacks (1948-2020), that while others speak of their connection to the past as “history,” Jews instead tend to speak of “memory.” The difference between the two terms is profound. History rightly records the great figures who oversaw the events that changed the world. Jewish memory insists on the debt we owe to all those who sacrificed in the past, and our obligation to remember them. (Menachem) Begin (1913-1992) himself, in his memoir *The Revolt*, reflected on the difference between history and memory.

(<https://www.commentary.org/articles/meir-soloveichik/remembering-dov-gruner-zionism-israel/#:~:text=It%20has%20been%20noted%20by,ourselves%20to%20this%20historic%20injustice>)

What is a Jewish view on Israel landownership?

While private ownership of land is common (mainly in urban areas), most of the land in Israel (over 90% of the land area) is in the ownership of either the State of Israel, the

Development Authority (*Rashut Hapituakh*) or the Jewish National Fund. According to the Basic Israel Lands Law ratified in 1960, the land owned by these three bodies is administered by the Israel Land Authority (ILA). That land is often leased to private persons, typically in a long-term lease for a period of 2, 49-year periods. For a nation wanting to be secular, Bible precedents are used in the Israeli law structure. Every 7th year is a Sabbatical year with no crops to be sown or harvested. "But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard." (**Leviticus 25:4**) In Israel, an Arab buys that land for a year with 1-shekel, (30-cents). Oh, for that year it's not Jewish! After seven Sabbatical cycles, a Jubilee year occurs. "At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the Lord's release. Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again but that which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release". (**Deuteronomy 15:1-3**). Both the Orson Hyde Memorial Garden and the Mount of Olives land upon which the Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies (BYU Jerusalem) are leased from Israel Land Authority for 2, 49-year periods. I heard Apostle Howard W. Hunter

(1907-1995) being asked if that was long enough. He smiled and said, "I wouldn't worry about it!" As the recent year have rolled on, this created a situation where, on the one hand, the land is privately held for most practical purposes; on the other hand, the ILA still wields a large measure of bureaucratic power over citizens, particularly during the transfer of lease from one person to another, or various other procedures related to land use and registration, where the law requires consent or ongoing involvement by the ILA. Beginning in the first decade of the 21st century, the Knesset has enacted laws encouraging the full transfer of ownership, for no additional payment, from the ILA-represented bodies to the lessees, who thereby become owners.

Which do I prefer, ownership or stewardship?

The principle that all things belong to God is a conviction among members in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It's based on the Bible, which says that God owns the heavens, the earth, and everything on it. (**Deuteronomy 10:14**), (**Psalms 24:1**), and (**Job 41:11**). "In gospel terms, the word "stewardship" designates a sacred spiritual or temporal responsibility to take care of something that belongs to God for which we are accountable." (**Elder Gérald Caussé, General Conference, October 2022**)