

Doctrine and Covenants 60–63

"I AM WITH THE FAITHFUL ALWAYS"

Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 60. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Independence, Jackson County, Missouri, August 8, 1831. On this occasion the elders who had traveled to Jackson County and participated in the dedication of the land and the temple site desired to know what they were to do.

1–9, The elders are to preach the gospel in the congregations of the wicked;

10–14, They should not idle away their time, nor bury their talents;

15–17, They may wash their feet as a testimony against those who reject the gospel.

Doctrine and Covenants 61. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, on the bank of the Missouri River, McIlwaine's Bend, August 12, 1831. On their return trip to Kirtland, the Prophet and ten elders had traveled down the Missouri River in canoes. On the third day of the journey, many dangers were experienced. Elder William W. Phelps, in a daylight vision, saw the destroyer riding in power upon the face of the waters.

1–12, The Lord has decreed many destructions upon the waters;

13–22, The waters were cursed by John, and the destroyer rides upon their face;

23–29, Some have power to command the waters;

30–35, Elders are to journey two by two and preach the gospel;

36–39, They are to prepare for the coming of the Son of Man.

Doctrine and Covenants 62. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, on the bank of the Missouri River at Chariton, Missouri, August 13, 1831. On this day the Prophet and his group, who were on their way from Independence to Kirtland, met several elders who were on their way to the land of Zion, and, after joyful salutations, received this revelation.

1–3, Testimonies are recorded in heaven;

4–9, The elders are to travel and preach according to judgment and as directed by the Spirit.

Doctrine and Covenants 63. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, August 30, 1831. The Prophet, Sidney Rigdon, and Oliver Cowdery had arrived in Kirtland on August 27 from their visit to Missouri. Joseph Smith's history describes this revelation: "In these infant days of the Church, there was a great anxiety to obtain the word of the Lord upon every subject that in any way concerned our salvation; and as the land of Zion was now the most important temporal object in view, I enquired of the Lord for further information upon the gathering of the Saints, and the purchase of the land, and other matters."

1–6, A day of wrath will come upon the wicked;

7–12, Signs come by faith;

13–19, The adulterous in heart will deny the faith and be cast into the lake of fire;

20, The faithful will receive an inheritance upon the transfigured earth;

21, A full account of the events on the Mount of Transfiguration has not yet been revealed;

22–23, The obedient receive the mysteries of the kingdom;

24–31, Inheritances in Zion are to be purchased;

32–35, The Lord decrees wars, and the wicked slay the wicked;

36–48, The Saints are to gather to Zion and provide moneys to build it up;

49–54, Blessings are assured the faithful at the Second Coming, in the Resurrection, and during the Millennium;

55–58, This is a day of warning;

59–66, The Lord's name is taken in vain by those who use it without authority.

**Supplemental
Jewish and
Holy Land
Insights**

**What can I learn from
the scriptural contrasts
of water?**

"Waters" can convey
differences; the

difficulties and dangers used by Satan and conversely the cleansing and freedom used by the "Fountain of Living Waters." Guided by your inquiry with the Holy Ghost you can recognize the a few "sea and storm stories" in the scriptures. Their meanings and lessons for us, nowadays, have a common connection. Noah is saved from a destructive flood by the Lord on the waters, the Apostles on the Sea of Galilee are saved by the Lord. When "sinking," remember, we are saved by the Lord. Let's remind ourselves how we previously reflected on the "sea and storm stories" in the scriptures. "And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark." (**Genesis 7:23**) "And it came to pass that when they were buried in the deep there was no water that could hurt them, their vessels being tight like unto a dish and also they were tight like unto the ark of Noah; therefore when they were encompassed about by many waters they did cry unto the Lord, and he did bring them forth again upon the top of the waters gain upon the top of the waters." (**Ether 6:7**) "So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows. Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." (**Jonah 1:15-17**) "And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith. Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm." (**Matthew 8:24-26**) "And

it came to pass after they had loosed me, behold, I took the compass, and it did work whither I desired it. And it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord; and after I had prayed the winds did cease, and the storm did cease, and there was a great calm." (**1 Nephi 18:21**) "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." (**Psalms 107:29**)

How important is it to "Be of Good Cheer?"

In the New Testament, another unnerving and frightful experience turned into a message of good cheer. On a stormy see of Galilee, the Apostles faced what they supposed was a forewarning of evil spirits. Prior to that, the only instruction they might have had was that fasting and prayer was necessary to drive evil spirits away. However, they had eaten a miraculous meal the previous evening where thousands were fed from five loaves and two fish and they were likely full, not fasting! Therefore, they may have thought, "We cannot command the spirit." The troubling waters defied salvation. "But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshiped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." (**Matthew 14:27-33**) When we hear His voice, we are comforted, we are cheered, we are happier

**How may I see the transfiguration
connection between and Lord and our
world – His footstool?**

The answer may be in the circumstance that both He and the world will be transfigured. "When the earth shall be transfigured, even according to the pattern which was shown unto

mine apostles upon the mount; of which account the fulness ye have not yet received.” **(Doctrine and Covenants 63:21”)** The following verses show the chiasmic teaching pattern of Matthew. The dialogue begins in the area of Caesarea Philippi, one of the northernmost towns in the land of Israel. “When Jesus came into the coasts (border) of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And Simon . . . answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed [it] unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 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 . . . From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. **(Matthew 16:13-21)** Note that a promise of keys and a prophecy of three days is stated. This Gospel account is followed by the transfiguration. It happened six days later, the walking time to Mount Tabor, and, according to President Spencer W. Kimball, occurred on Mount Tabor about sixty-five miles south of Caesarea Philippi. There, the highest witness of Jesus as the Jehovah, Son of God, was given.

(Matthew 17:1-7)

1 And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, **2** And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment

(Mark 9:2-7)

2 And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. **3** And his raiment became shining, exceeding

was white as the light. **3** And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. **4** Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. **5** While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. **4** And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. **5** And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. **6** For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. **7** And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

Make a note in the quest to transform ourselves. These highest compliments rendered by the Father, “beloved” and “I am well pleased,” are an example for us to use in place of “pride” or “I am proud of you.” In 1989, Prophet and President Ezra Taft Benson gave a profound talk about removing “pride” and “proud” from our language. He taught that there is no justifiable use of the word “proud.” He also said, “Pride is ugly.” Being pleased is a compliment; being proud seems selfish.

How may I better understand the transfiguration?

As added insight, it is helpful to know about the seasonal and ritual traditions accompanying the transfiguration. It is likely that Jesus’ remarkable transfiguration occurred during the very Sukkoth season when Jews expect the Prophet Moses (and others) to return, preceding the Messiah’s advent. It is the custom to build small booths called tabernacles or in Hebrew, a *sukkah*. *Sukkoth* is a Fall sequel to *Passover* (the first full moon after the

first day of spring) when Elijah is expected. It begins on the first full moon after the first day of fall. The transfiguration may have been a special temple-like endowment for Peter, James, and John. "When Elijah came to the Prophet Joseph Smith, he was not a translated being, He was a resurrected being. He had received his resurrection, and he came to Joseph Smith just as did Peter, James, and John, and gave to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery--as he did to Peter, James, and John at the transfiguration--the keys of sealing power, so that the work now, not only for the living but also for the dead, may be done. Since the same ordinances are required for the dead as for the living, these keys also pertain to the salvation of the dead." (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation, Vol.2, Pg .119*) "I am convinced in my own mind that when the Savior took the three disciples up on the mount, which is spoken of as the "Mount of Transfiguration," he there gave unto them the ordinances that pertain to the house of the Lord and that they were endowed. That was the only place they could go. That place became holy and sacred for the rites of salvation which were performed on that occasion." (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation, Vol.2, Pg .170*) "The Savior took Peter, James, and John upon a high mountain and there he, with Moses and Elias, conferred upon these apostles the keys of the priesthood. At that time many things pertaining to the earth and its inhabitants were revealed to these apostles, for the earth was transfigured before them as it will appear when it receives its glory. The Lord consecrated and made holy the mountain top, instead of taking the apostles to the temple in Jerusalem, because the temple had become a "den of thieves," having fallen into the hands of apostate Jews who did not worship the true and living God." (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation, Vo l.2, Pg .233*)

What does "going up to Jerusalem" include?

There are traditions of going to the temple at *Sukkoth*, as noted in biblical Jewish writings. Note the "foot festivals," that is "going to the temple," as well as the festival of Hannukah

commemorating Jews regaining access to the temple area by *Judas the Macabee* in 164 B.C.E. "In the *Torah* there are three festivals that are known as (*regalim*), foot festivals or pilgrim festivals. These are Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot. On each of them every male Jew was expected to make a pilgrimage to the Temple in Jerusalem." "Interestingly, the rededication of the Temple and the re-celebration of Sukkot paralleled the consecration of Solomon's Temple, which was also an eight-day dedication ceremony held on the festival of *Sukkot*." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*) The following information explains one of the two holiest convocations the Children of Israel were commanded to keep. The spring convocation is *Passover* and *Sukkoth* is in the fall. (In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints holy convocations called General Conference also coincide seasonally.) "*Sukkot* (Hebrew for "huts" or "tabernacles"), a seven-day festival beginning on the 15th day of the month of *Tishrei*, which usually falls in September or October in the modern calendar. (In the Diaspora an extra eighth day is celebrated.) One of its main observances is living temporarily in huts, called *Sukkot*, resembling those in which the Children of Israel dwelt during their forty years in the wilderness after the Exodus from Egypt."

Prophets returning?

"This autumn festival was the last of the three "pilgrim" festivals connected with the farming year. From all corners of the Land of Israel throngs of pilgrims used to make their way up to Jerusalem carrying the gaily decorated baskets of fruit and grain which they brought to the Temple as a thanksgiving offering. At the gates of the city the townsfolk greeted them with music. The pilgrims then ascended the broad marble staircase that led from the City of David to the summit of the Temple Mount, where they would present their offerings to the Priests." "This holiday was also the occasion for the consecration of the Temple built by Solomon and every seventh year on *Sukkot*, the *Torah* was read by the king before the assembled people. In his vision of the end of days, the prophet Zechariah foretells that all

the nations of the world will assemble for the festival of *Sukkot* in Jerusalem to worship God.” “The *Sukkah* is a structure with at least three walls, made of any material. It must be at least ten handbreadths in height, and in area at least seven handbreadths square. The roof covering, or *sekhakh*, is usually leafy branches, and these must be arranged so that there is more covered than open space.” “In present-day Israel, as in other countries, Jews construct *Sukkot* in their gardens, on the sidewalks, and on the roofs and balconies of their houses, just as they did at the time of the return from the Babylonian exile, as described in the Book of Nehemiah: “So the people went forth . . . and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God . . . and there was very great gladness.” “When a family performs the mitzvah of the sukkah joyfully, they are said to be visited in the sukkah by seven "guests of the festival" (the *Ushpizin*) who are present in spirit. Each day it is customary to invite and welcome one of these seven guests --- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, (Joseph), Moses, Aaron and David --- by an appropriate recitation.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

The verses before and after the transfiguration envelop the chiasmus. Again, we list them for a comparison.

<p>Before: “From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. (Matthew 16:21)</p>
<p>Transfiguration</p>
<p>After: “And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. (Matthew 17:23)</p>

Following the transfiguration, the prophecy of three days and the promise of keys is repeated by Matthew and just the three days is repeated by Mark. Both create a chiasmus emphasizing the Lord’s grand role, as well as including the principles of eternal keys and the three-days atonement as explanations of the experience Peter.

On whom do I focus?