

September 8-14, 2021

Doctrine and Covenants 98–101

“BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD”

Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 98. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, August 6, 1833. This revelation came in consequence of the persecution upon the Saints in Missouri. Increased settlement of Church members in Missouri troubled some other settlers, who felt threatened by the Saints' numbers, political and economic influence, and cultural and religious differences. In July 1833, a mob destroyed Church property, tarred and feathered two Church members, and demanded that the Saints leave Jackson County. Although some news of the problems in Missouri had no doubt reached the Prophet in Kirtland (nine hundred miles away), the seriousness of the situation could have been known to him at this date only by revelation.

- 1–3, The afflictions of the Saints will be for their good;*
- 4–8, The Saints are to befriend the constitutional law of the land;*
- 9–10, Honest, wise, and good men should be supported for secular government;*
- 11–15, Those who lay down their lives in the Lord's cause will have eternal life;*
- 16–18, Renounce war and proclaim peace;*
- 19–22, The Saints in Kirtland are reproved and commanded to repent;*
- 23–32, The Lord reveals His laws governing the persecutions and afflictions imposed on His people;*
- 33–38, War is justified only when the Lord commands it;*
- 39–48, The Saints are to forgive their enemies, who, if they repent, will also escape the Lord's vengeance.*

Doctrine and Covenants 99. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to John Murdock, August 29, 1832, at Hiram, Ohio. For over a year, John Murdock had been preaching the gospel while his children—motherless after the death of his wife, Julia Clapp, in April 1831—resided with other families in Ohio.

- 1–8, John Murdock is called to proclaim the gospel, and those who receive him receive the Lord and will obtain mercy.*

Doctrine and Covenants 100. Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon, at Perrysburg, New York, October 12, 1833. The two brethren, having been absent from their families for several days, felt some concern about them.

- 1–4, Joseph and Sidney to preach the gospel for the salvation of souls;*
- 5–8, It will be given them in the very hour what they should say;*
- 9–12, Sidney is to be a spokesman and Joseph is to be a revelator and mighty in testimony;*
- 13–17, The Lord will raise up a pure people, and the obedient will be saved.*

Doctrine and Covenants 101. Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, December 16 and 17, 1833. At this time the Saints who had gathered in Missouri were suffering great persecution. Mobs had driven them from their homes in Jackson County; and some of the Saints had tried to establish themselves in Van Buren, Lafayette, and Ray Counties, but persecution followed them. The main body of the Saints was at that time in Clay County, Missouri. Threats of death against individuals of the Church were many. The Saints in Jackson County had lost household furniture, clothing, livestock, and other personal property; and many of their crops had been destroyed.

- 1–8, The Saints are chastened and afflicted because of their transgressions;*
- 9–15, The Lord's indignation will fall upon the nations, but His people will be gathered and comforted;*
- 16–21, Zion and her stakes will be established;*
- 22–31, The nature of life during the Millennium is set forth;*

32–42, *The Saints will be blessed and rewarded then;*
 43–62, *The parable of the nobleman and the olive trees signifies the troubles and eventual redemption of Zion;*
 63–75, *The Saints are to continue gathering together;*
 76–80, *The Lord established the Constitution of the United States;*
 81–101, *The Saints are to importune for the redress of grievances, according to the parable of the woman and the unjust judge.*

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

How can persecution be a blessing?

Despite persecutions, the “Former-day” Saints were instructed to remain peaceful, emulating the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, He showed humility to His persecutors, and even chiding Peter for his resistance. “And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest’s, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.” (Matthew 26:52-56).

What could be results from continually “running-away” from persecution?

Consistent study, abandonment of pride, and following a true order of God increases our security from deception and increase our capacity for Godlike love. Through the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, we find that the motivation of those whom many call the Essenes was to move away from wickedness and

establish a separate, singular community of righteousness. Their organization even had a shadow of biblical organization. Their leader was referred to as the “teacher of righteousness” and he had “two assistants.” There was also a council of “twelve overseers.” They had a senior order named after a ‘righteous king’ which is said in Hebrew, “Melech Zedek,” and a junior order they called after Aaron, or “Aaronic.” The Dead Sea sect however, shunned unbelievers and probably evoked one of the Savior’s comments in the Sermon on the Mount. “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?” (Matthew 5:43-46)

What is an underlying reason to obey the “Law of the Land?”

Living a pattern of subservience and obedience creates a habit of being Christ-like. “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.” (Romans 13:1) Being in the habit of obedience is better than mistaking our judgement process. “Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s

ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. **(Romans 13:5-8)** Throughout the New Testament we read this same principle of obeying the law of the land. Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.” **(Titus 3:1)** “

How important is the need for human government?

It becomes obvious that the principle of human authority is essential to the creation of our world. He gave His children instructions to have dominion over this earth. “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” **(Genesis 1:28)** The mandate to subdue the earth for the glory of God required rules and guidelines so that men and women would cooperate more effectively to fulfill God's plan. Government is part of the Lord's plan for His original, excellent creation.

When can war be justified?

The fundamental purpose of Government includes the need to protect its public from evil within, and to protect its communities from outside evil. John the revelator saw this principle epitomized by the Son of God, “And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.” **(Revelation 19:11)** The use of war to invade, usurp or colonize another nation is opposite of God's purpose, after all, He intentionally scattered the nations, “So the LORD scattered them abroad from

thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.” **(Genesis 11:8)** An example of justifiable war might include the World-War II added plight that the America's invasion brought on the French population. It was justifiable, in comparison to the atrocities suffered under Hitler. There is a moral contrast between unjustifiable national conquest and captivity set against the hope and cost of national liberation. It is our duty – when prayerfully engaged. “Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts. To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than (temple) sacrifice.” **(Proverbs 21:2-3)**

What are the components in the parable of the Nobleman and twelve olive trees?

Olive trees are a wonderful imagery of God's chosen people, their diversity, and their effect on the rest of God's children. It takes 40 to 50-years for an olive tree to produce a harvest. Planting the olive tree is really to benefit the next generation. The olive branch has long been a symbol of peace, and the silvery-leaved olive tree has been considered sacred from at least as far back as the 17th century B.C.E. Native to the Mediterranean area, the olive is a small, oily fruit that contains a pit. All fresh olives are bitter, and the final flavor of the fruit greatly depends on how ripe it is when picked and the marinating process it receives.

How are Olive Trees like the Children of Israel?

Like the olives that originate in the Mediterranean area and spread throughout the world, so also did the Children of Israel originate in the Mediterranean and proliferate throughout the world. As olives vary in size and flavor, the Children of Israel grew to include many ethnic backgrounds. The olives must be ripened and processed,

the Children of Israel were given time to mature and prove their worthiness to be the covenant people.

Who is the Master of the vineyard and who are His servants?

The Lord is the Master, and the Apostles/Prophets are His first line servants. Unprotected by not following the true servants, the Children of Israel would develop a lack of faith, followed by disobedience, and they would begin to apostatize. Apostles/Prophets were and are sent to teach what the Master commands. "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret (Hebrew: *Sod*, also meaning, counsel, deliberation, consultation) unto his servants the prophets . . . the Lord GOD hath spoken . . . Publish in the palaces . . . Assemble yourselves . . . For they know not to do right, saith the LORD . . . An adversary there shall be even round about the land; and he shall . . . bring down thy strength from thee, and thy palaces shall be spoiled." (**Amos 3:7-11**)

How can the image of the watch tower help me to understand protection by true leadership?

Looking out over the land from a watch tower provides an early warning view if the enemy should come. In this parable, their approach was at a "time of peace." (The many ancient unfinished watch towers in Israel today make this parable very visible.) The trees were unguarded, the Children of Israel were scattered. The Master said, "What is the cause of this great evil? Ought ye not to have done even as I commanded you, and—after ye had planted the vineyard, and built the hedge round about, and set watchmen upon the walls thereof—built the tower also, and set a watchman upon the tower, and watched for my vineyard, and not have fallen asleep, lest the enemy should come upon you? (**Doctrine and Covenants 101:52-53**)

How does this parable teach of the scattering and gathering of Israel?

It seems clear that this is the last "gathering," just prior to the Lord's return. "And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, (young missionaries) and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house (senior missionaries), save those only whom I have appointed to tarry; And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money. Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen. And inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies, that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land." (**Doctrine and Covenants 101:55-58**) The last sentence shows that the "lost tribes," the residue, will be brought in by the Lord.

What is the connection of this parable to a previous similar parable?

The Savior responded to the Jewish Chief Priests in Jerusalem, "Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw

the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the

builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. **(Matthew 21:33-43)** This is the time of the last gathering and the Ephraimite Chief Priests, Apostle/Prophets, are leading the way for the Lord's return – with the residue, the ones He will bring with Him. **(Doctrine and Covenants 101:58)**