

November 15-21, 2021

Doctrine and Covenants 133–134

“PREPARE YE FOR THE COMING OF THE BRIDEGROOM”

Summary:

Doctrine and Covenants 133. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Hiram, Ohio, November 3, 1831. Prefacing this revelation, Joseph Smith’s history states,

“At this time there were many things which the Elders desired to know relative to preaching the Gospel to the inhabitants of the earth, and concerning the gathering; and in order to walk by the true light, and be instructed from on high, on the 3rd of November, 1831, I inquired of the Lord and received the following important revelation.” This section was first added to the book of Doctrine and Covenants as an appendix and was subsequently assigned a section number.

1–6, The Saints are commanded to prepare for the Second Coming;

7–16, All men are commanded to flee from Babylon, come to Zion, and prepare for the great day of the Lord;

17–35, He will stand on Mount Zion, the continents will become one land, and the lost tribes of Israel will return;

36–40, The gospel was restored through Joseph Smith to be preached in all the world;

41–51, The Lord will come down in vengeance upon the wicked;

52–56, It will be the year of His redeemed;

57–74, The gospel is to be sent forth to save the Saints and for the destruction of the wicked.

Doctrine and Covenants 134. A declaration of belief regarding governments and laws in general, adopted by unanimous vote at a general assembly of the Church held at Kirtland, Ohio, August 17, 1835. Many Saints gathered together to consider the proposed contents of the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. At that time, this declaration was given the following preamble: “That our belief with regard to earthly governments and laws in general may not be misinterpreted nor misunderstood, we have thought proper to present, at the close of this volume, our opinion concerning the same.”

1–4, Governments should preserve freedom of conscience and worship;

5–8, All men should uphold their governments and owe respect and deference to the law;

9–10, Religious societies should not exercise civil powers;

11–12, Men are justified in defending themselves and their property.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

Where am I supposed to be gathering to?

When President
Howard W. Hunter

(1907-1995) came to dedicate the Jerusalem Center in 1986, he spoke to us a few minutes prior to the prayer of dedication. I heard him give the instruction that “the Center would be the headquarters of the Church in this part of the world and a place for the Lord to speak from.” This echoes the words of Isaiah, “for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from

Jerusalem” (**Isaiah 2:3**). The Lord is the “Word.” (**John 1:1**) There are two gatherings-of-Israel going on, a ‘new’ one to Zion (where the Stakes of Zion are being built), and another where the ‘old’ part of Israel is assembling. “Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles flee unto Zion. And let them who be of Judah flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord’s house. (**Doctrine and Covenants 133:12-13**) The Prophet Joseph Smith (1805-1844), taught that Latter-day Saints were descendants of the Twelve Tribes of Israel – specifically the tribe of Ephraim, and as such shared

“Israelite ancestry with the Jews. (Mauss, *All Abraham's Children*, 164; see also Rudolf Glanz, *Jew and Mormon: Historic Group Relations and Religious Outlook* (New York: Waldon Press, 1963), 51-55.) The prophet said, “We [the house of Israel] are the favored people that God has made choice of to bring about the Latter-day glory; it is left for us to participate in and help to roll forward the Latter-day glory, “the dispensation of the fulness of times, when God will gather together all things that are in heaven, and all things that are upon the earth,” “even in one,” when the Saints of God will be gathered in one from every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue, when the Jews will be gathered together into one.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1938), 231.)

What official action did the Church direct to facilitate the gathering of the Jews?

Already in the first year of the restoration, 1831, the Prophet Joseph Smith gave Apostle Orson Hyde (1805-1878), a blessing that he would be an important part of the gathering of the Jews. As an original member of the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Orson Hyde said, “Joseph Smith, a prophet and servant of the Most High God, did predict upon my head, that I should yet go to the city of Jerusalem, and be a watchman unto the house of Israel, and perform a work there which would greatly facilitate the gathering together of that people.” (*History of the Church* 4:375, *A voice from Jerusalem, or a sketch of the travels and ministry of Elder Orson Hyde*, p III)

How do the scriptures teach the reason for *NOT* actively proselytizing to the Jews at this time?

“Send forth the elders of my church unto the nations which are afar off; unto the islands of the sea; send forth unto foreign lands; call upon all nations, first upon the

Gentiles, and then upon the Jews.” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 133:8) A matter called “missionizing of the Jews” became an issue of dissent and subsequently faded away when the State of Israel’s government had approved the building of the Jerusalem Center for Near East Studies on Mount Scopus where the Jerusalem BYU Study program is currently located. The building was well under way when an Orthodox Jewish group (dedicated to crushing Christian activities) started a twofold campaign. First was discrediting the government (which they did not support anyway) for allowing the BYU facilities to continue. Secondly, striking a chord of antisemitism, they called the center a “missionary activity.” (There are three kinds of antisemitism to the Jews; 1) kill the Jews, 2) let someone else kill the Jews, and 3) convert the Jews.) This same Orthodox group has attempted to pass a law against proselytizing in Israel and have failed. There is NO Israeli statute prohibiting missionary activity. In any case, missionary activity is deemed highly insensitive and frankly, antisemitic. They did manage to pass a law that prohibits any type of bribe or payment to induce Jews to change their religion. (The Church does not pay people to become members—it charges them!) BYU did sign a statement announcing they had no intention of doing missionary activities. Elder Howard W. Hunter (1907-1995), as President of the Quorum of the Twelve also signed a statement to the same effect with the statement added, “. . . so long as such activity is prohibited by the government of Israel.” Repeating that there is no such law in Israel, the real reason Latter-day Saints are not proselytizing in Israel is because it is the Lord's will. “And the time cometh that he shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has manifested

himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.” (1 Nephi 13:42) Israeli government leaders kept their commitment to allow the building. The Orthodox group did not manage to convince the government to stop the BYU project. No legal precedent was established that might affect the Latter-day Saints or for that manner, any other church.

What places are included in the Savior’s return and how will he appear?

“For behold, he shall stand upon the mount of Olivet, and upon the mighty ocean, even the great deep, and upon the islands of the sea, and upon the land of Zion. And he shall utter his voice out of Zion, and he shall speak from Jerusalem, and his voice shall be heard among all people; (Doctrine and Covenants 133:20-21) “And the Lord shall be red in his apparel, and his garments like him that treadeth in the wine-vat.” (Doctrine and Covenants 133:48) It bears repeating, as stated in Numbers 19:1-9, there was an unusual red heifer ritual for forgiveness of sins. This was made possible through the ‘red’ atonement of the Lord on the Mount of Olives. Jews have a tradition that this red calf offering had to be high on the Mount of Olives, above the Temple itself and opposite the Gate Beautiful. Those who have had the experience of sitting on the upper part of the Mount of Olives opposite of the present-day Gate Beautiful can attest to the spirit of Gethsemane (well away from the traditional Church of Gethsemane on the lower part of the mount). In that sense, even the color of blood (red) has stayed symbolic for Jews. “. . . there are Ashkenazim who attempt to protect their toddlers from harm by tying a red ribbon around their wrists.” “The Bible

is very specific about the kind of (calf or heifer) to be used. It had to be in perfect physical condition—‘a red heifer, faultless, containing no blemish and which has never been yoked.’ The rabbis interpreted ‘faultless’ to mean perfect in color also, ruling that even two non-red hairs in its hide were enough to disqualify it. Obviously, such an animal was very rare and apparently the ceremony was performed only a very few times in all of ancient Jewish history.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

Who will recognize him and who will not, and how do they respond?

There will be questions as he appears to those who have waited so long for him. The questions indicate a lack of even knowing who he is: “Who is this that cometh from *Edom*, with dyed garments from *Bozrah*? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?” [He will answer them,] “I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” [They will continue to question,] “Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?” (Isaiah 63:1-2) The old English word “winefat” is from the Hebrew word “*gat shemanim*,” where you’ll find “wine press,” and an “olive press.” It is from that word we get “Gethsemane,” where the Savior bled from every pore. His stained clothing is reflected in his return to the Mount of Olives in red. The fact that some are asking indicates that they have not been taught. They just don’t know the account of the Gethsemane suffering and of the crucifixion. “And then shall the Jews look upon me and say: What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet? Then shall they know that I am the Lord; for I will say unto them: These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God.” [Following their teaching and learning,

things that we may be so familiar with] “. . . shall they weep because of their iniquities; then shall they lament because they persecuted their king.” (**Doctrine & Covenants 45:51-53**) It will be a Godly sorrow and, better yet, they will be set free from the captivity of all the sorrow and persecution they have endure,. They will hear him, their king, whom they did not know, say – as Isaiah prophesied, “The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;” (**Isaiah 61:1**) There will be those who will not abide his presence, those who said they knew him, yet continued in their secret sins even though he has already atoned for them. Their self-serving, selfish lives result in an ungodly sorrow, lamenting because they knowingly persecuted their king.

How have the Children of Israel acted in response to their local and regional governments?

One of the traditional aspects of Judaism is to be involved in community and governmental affair. This may have a two-fold purpose, one to serve the community and another to preserve its own rights and identity. “*Va’ad Le’ummi* (Hebrew for ‘National Committee’), (is) the National Council of Jews of Palestine, which functioned from October 10, 1920 until the establishment of the provisional government of the State of Israel in May 1948. Though elected in 1920 and recognized immediately as a representative body in a letter from the high commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, the *Va’ad Le’ummi* achieved formal legal status only on January 1, 1928 when *Keneset Yisrael*, the organizational framework of the Jewish community of Palestine was legally established under

the Religious Communities Organization Ordinance, 1926.” “The *Va’ad Le’ummi* represented the Jewish community in its relations with the Mandatory government and the Arab leaders, and dealt with internal affairs (such as the school system). It cooperated closely with the Jewish Agency executive, as well as the chief rabbinate and the local community councils. It served as the main organ of the Jews of Palestine before the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission and the numerous inquiry commissions into the ‘Palestine Problem’ up to the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, which in 1947 proposed the partition of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

What should be an Israelite’s way of community life?

Whether establishing themselves within or part of a community, Jewish ethics and hospitality are an important lifestyle. “Ethics are the principles by which man can live a good life in relation to his fellow man. The ethical life is basic to Jewish religious observance: ‘Love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord’ (**Leviticus 19:18**). Love of God is incomplete without love of man. This precept underlies the rules of conduct which the Torah prescribes . . .” “Hospitality is considered by Judaism to be one of the most important virtues that a person can develop. This has been true since the time of ancient Israel, when hospitality was not merely a question of good manners, but a moral institution which grew out of the harsh desert and nomadic existence of the people of Israel. The biblical customs of welcoming the weary traveler and receiving the stranger in one’s midst developed into an important Jewish virtue. Isaiah states that one of the duties of the pious is to ‘deal thy bread to the hungry’ and to ‘bring the poor that are cast out to thy house.’” “A.J. Heschel (1907-1972) based his views on a

Midrash stating that holiness is the only way to combat evil and that learning and obeying the precepts of Torah is the only way to gain holiness. The simplest advice in combating evil: 'Turn from evil and do good' is from the Book of **Psalms 34:15.**" (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

What Jews protested from civil governments?

Some self-proclaimed Jewish leaders contend that gathering to Israel or being "assimilated" in governmental communities was not part of Jewish life because the system was not established by the Messiah. A noteworthy disputation came from the "*Satmar* Rabbi." He argued that the Aliyah to the Land of Israel was an evil trick and thus against God's will. He felt that the establishment of Israel as a modern nation was wrong. "*Satmar* (is the) name of a small, contemporary Hasidic sect, distinguished by its fanatical opposition to Zionism and the State of Israel. It takes its name from the hometown of its leader, Joel Teitelbaum of Satmar (1888–1979), and most of its adherents reside in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, New York." "Teitelbaum was an exceedingly sharp polemicist who combined extreme fanaticism with a forceful personality . . . he regarded the Holocaust of European Jews as a direct punishment for secular Zionism . . . Teitelbaum opposed the use of Hebrew as a spoken language, since he believed that it secularized and profaned the holy tongue. He forbade the *Hasidim* (pious or saintly) living in his community to cooperate with State institutions and he ordered those living in Israel not to take the oath of loyalty to the State, not to take part in elections, and not to make use of its law courts or legal system." "From the political point of view, the people of Israel have more often been ruled by monarchies than by democratic forms of government. The Book of Deuteronomy makes provision for the

people of Israel to have a king, but insists that the king must rule by law and 'that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren.' In biblical times, the Israelites believed that their government had to derive from God. Thus, when Moses accepted the advice of his father-in-law Jethro to appoint leaders, he first obtained God's permission and then, with God's authority, appointed judges. Later, the people rejected the advice of the prophet Samuel and insisted on having a king—this led to the reign of Saul, followed by that of David. In spite of this, Jewish law still states that decisions are to be made and conflicts to be resolved according to the principle of majority rule." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

When does a theocracy replace a democracy?

The efforts of the modern Jewish state to bring biblical theocracy together with democracy gives some noteworthy comparisons. Nowadays, the religious Jews, Bahais and Latter-day Saints anticipate an eventual theocracy. This is in stark contrast to the secularism and materialism so prevalent in modern society. "Following the Six-Day War of June 1967 and the reunification of Jerusalem, all of the holy sites in the Land of Israel came under Israeli administration, and freedom of access was guaranteed to all religions. The Israel government resolved to safeguard all sacred sites and gave the head of each religious community management of its own holy places." (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**) The underlying considerations in establishing the modern State of Israel and its legal system go back to ancient times and the biblical system while embracing the principles of democracy. Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East. That probably justifies the government of the United States of America to be as protective and supportive of Israel as it is.