

**Summary Handout****“This Is the Spirit of Revelation”**

Lesson  
**5**  
Summary

**Scripture Summary:** *Doctrine and Covenants 6; Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, April 1829. HC 1: 32—35. Oliver Cowdery began his labors as scribe in the translation of the Book of Mormon, April 7, 1829. He had already received a divine manifestation of the truth of the Prophet's testimony respecting the plates on which was engraved the Book of Mormon record. The Prophet inquired of the Lord through the Urim and Thummim and received this response. 1—6, Laborers in the Lord's field gain salvation; 7—13, There is no gift greater than the gift of salvation; 14—27, Witness of truth comes by the power of the Spirit; 28—37, Look unto Christ, and do good continually.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 8; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Oliver Cowdery, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, April 1829. HC 1: 36—37. In the course of the translation of the Book of Mormon, Oliver, who continued to serve as scribe, writing at the Prophet's dictation, desired to be endowed with the gift of translation. The Lord responded to his supplication by granting this revelation. 1—5, Revelation comes by the power of the Holy Ghost; 6—12, Mysteries of God and the power to translate ancient records come by faith.*

*Doctrine and Covenants 9; Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to Oliver Cowdery, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, April 1829. HC 1: 37—38. Oliver is admonished to be patient, and is urged to be content to write, for the time being, at the dictation of the translator, rather than to attempt to translate. 1—6, Other ancient records are yet to be translated; 7—14, The Book of Mormon is translated by study and by spiritual confirmation.*

*Joseph Smith History 1:8—17; The Father and the Son appear and Joseph is called to his prophetic ministry.*

**Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:** **Without Accepting Revelation, We Forget:** In Jewish thinking, “looking to God” and “revelation” are almost figurative and in modern times have become unexplainable. “God is said to ‘appear’ to the patriarchs and prophets, and the appearances are described by a series of anthropomorphic (i.e., human) expressions and concrete images. Sometimes God manifests Himself ‘in a vision’ or ‘in a dream’ . . . various phrases are used when describing appearances of the Divine, for example *kavod* (‘glory’) or *shekhinah* (. . . ‘Divine Presence’) or *davar* (‘word’ of God).” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Revelation Has No Time Limits:** It is a gift of seeing the past, present and future and may result in prophecy. There is also an assigned order for revelation; some revelation is for the people as authorized by the Lord through His prophet. “The phenomenon of prophecy is founded on the basic belief that God makes His will known to chosen individuals in successive generations. A prophet does not choose his profession but is chosen, often against his own will, as in the case of Jonah, to convey the word of God to the people regardless of whether they wish to hear it.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Past Revelation, a Guide for the Future:** “The same Prophets who have contemplated and described the . . . reunion of the tribes of Israel . . . have also predicted that, in connection with all these preparations, a new dispensation should be manifested, a new covenant established, ‘A standard’ for the nations, ‘An Ensign’ for the people. In short, ‘Swift Messengers,’ ‘Teachers,’ Prophets would be commissioned, revelations be manifested, and a new organization be developed, fitted to the times, and with the principles and laws adapted to the reorganization, order, and government of a renovated world.” (*Parley P. Pratt, Key to Theology, Ch.9, Pg.76 - Pg.77*)

**Study the Law and the Prophets:** “The Bible is holy to Jews because it represents the Word of God. This is particularly true of the Torah which is, so to speak, God's direct statement. The Halakhah, or Jewish law, which is the authoritative guide for a Jew's life, is mainly based on the Torah [first five Biblical books], so obviously study of the Torah as well as the rest of the Bible is one of the prime religious duties. “The custom of reading the Torah publicly is very, very ancient—originating with Ezra in the fifth-fourth centuries B.C.E. At some later date a reading from the Nevi'im was added; this corresponding passage from the Prophets is known as the Haftorah.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Duty of Ancient and Modern Prophets:** The Latter-day Saint's use of the “Pearl of Great Price” and the Doctrine and Covenants are the LDS *Haftorah*. Literally, it is the reading of the *Nevi'im*, the “Prophets,” with their explanations and heavenly insights. Isaiah and other prophets wrote about the Lord who “directs our paths.” The idea is repeated in Jewish teachings and also by latter day prophets.

**Public Study and Worship:** Jewish worship practices include reading the Torah (the Law) and Haftorah (the Prophets). Anciently, this was done publicly once a week on the Sabbath. In modern times there are three public readings each week; Monday, Thursday and Saturday (Sabbath). The entire Bible text (Old Testament) is covered in one year. By the way, when Jesus lived, apparently the Jews read the “Law and the Prophets” just once a week. “... he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.” (*Luke 4:16*)

**Jesus Relates to the Law and the Prophets:** It is likely that the reason Jesus’ ministry was three years long was so that He could read, review and instruct the Disciples through the entire Law and the Prophets once during those training years. His instruction brought back the spirit, reopening the purpose of the law. The spirit was replacing the wall of do’s and don’ts. The obsession with the “letter of the law” had drawn the Jews away from an understanding of and looking forward to the redemption.

**Prayer Circle:** When the Jews pray in a synagogue, they form a prayer circle (Minyan). It usually consists of at least ten participants. There is a tradition that if there are only nine persons, the prayer circle can be completed with an agreement that the presence of the Lord or the Spirit of the Lord is with them. In addition to group prayer and the prayer circle, it is still essential to have individual prayer.

**Most Prayers in Judaism Are Pre-written:** Many are created from the Psalms. It is common that the prayers were and still are said in the Hebrew language. In fact, the Hebrew language was largely preserved because of prayers and, of course, the scriptures. There is also a recent trend of thought that questions the pre-written structure of prayers. “Modern Jewish thinkers, even those with a deep faith in God, have raised many questions about prayer . . . do prayers, written so long ago, reflect the moral and religious ideas of modern Jews? Does God really ‘hear’ prayer; does He, or can He, change the processes of nature (for example, heal a dying person) in response to prayer?” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Holiness in Prayer:** The hasidic movement in Judaism places great emphasis on the necessity for *karvanah* [holiness] in prayer. “In prayer, mention of God's holiness should stimulate the worshiper to seek holiness in his own religious and moral life. Holiness is acquired by separation from evil, by the performance of *mitzvot* and by one's willingness to do even more than the law requires, ‘You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God, am holy’ (Leviticus 19:2).” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Kneeling Prayer:** Kneeling, a common form of prayer among Christians, is shunned by Jews, although scriptural references to kneeling do exist. “... Solomon had made an end of praying . . . from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven.” (*1 Kings 8:54*) “... let us kneel before the LORD our maker.” (*Psalm 95:6*)

**Getting Answers:** There is a reason it is called the “still small voice” because without a sense of reverence we won’t be able to hear it. In the Old Testament, reverence is often referred to as “fear.” Another meaning is “opposite of faith.” Fear is expecting what you “don’t want” while faith is expecting things you “do want.”

**Moses Farewell Speech to the Jews:** (Deuteronomy 10:12) [Moses] summed up what the Bible considers to be the entire purpose of human existence: ‘And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God demand of you? Only this: to revere (fear) the Lord your God, to walk only in His paths, to love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and soul.’ “The Hebrew word for ‘revere’ is (*yirah*) which is usually translated as ‘fear,’ and that for ‘love’ is (*aha'rah*). These two concepts, although they may seem contradictory at first glance, are the essence of Judaism’s view of man’s attitude to God. (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Fear of God:** “The ‘fear’ referred to is not the fright or scaredness which a person feels when he is confronted, for example, with a hungry lion. It is rather a feeling of awe or reverence felt when witnessing greatness or grandeur. The view of a major natural wonder, for instance, is breathtaking and inspires the beholder with awe. It is this kind of feeling that is meant by the ‘fear of God’; that is, awe at the thought of the infinity and greatness of God.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

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