

## D&C#10 "This Is My Voice Unto All"

Outline:

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### I. Introduction

There are occasions when counsel is given to others, even in our presence, but we conclude it has no reference to us. Most often, however, when the Lord speaks to individuals, as found in the scriptures, its application is always beneficial to more than just the individual being addressed. If we fail to read the scriptures with this principle in mind, we may dismiss the counsel given in the scriptures as being irrelevant to our lives. We will then miss important lessons the Lord has to teach us.

Some years ago, while teaching the Old Testament to a group of young teenagers, many would complain that because the Old Testament had been written so many years ago, it had little application to their current circumstances. "Why, they would ask, "can't we study a subject more relevant to our lives? As we proceeded with our study, their complaints diminish as they began to see that the challenges many faced in the Old Testament were similar to those they were facing today.

Nephi offered us this counsel.

1 Nephi 19:23 [underline added]

**23 And I did read many things unto them which were written in the books of Moses; but that I might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah; for I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning.**

As we read, likening "all scripture unto us," we will also find that the words of the Lord as recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants also have application to our lives today. Like the former students in the Old Testament class, it is

also valuable for each of us to read the scriptures, as it were, with a different set of glasses. As we liken what we are reading to our own lives we, too, will see that the words of the Lord also have direct application to our lives. Our excitement about daily reading the scriptures will increase as we seek to learn the lessons the Lord has to teach us personally.

Jay E. Jenson offers the following suggestion,

"When I read a verse [in the scriptures], I often insert my name in it. [I did so with D&C 3:5], 'Behold, you--Jay Jensen--have been entrusted with these things, but how strict were your commandments; and remember also the promises which were made to you--Jay Jensen.'

"The words 'remember also the promises' struck me with unusual power...[For]four days I had focused on nothing but problems. I had not stopped to consider one single promise." ("Remember Also the Promises," in *Ensign*, November 1992, 80).

\*How can this idea of inserting our own names into the verses help us [personalize the scriptures] as we read them?

As we liken the scriptures to ourselves and personalize them by putting in our own names, their messages will find application to our own lives.

### **I. Husbands and Wives To Support and Comfort Each Other**

In Section 25, the Lord is specifically speaking to Emma Smith. He is also speaking to all husbands and wives.

Doctrine and Covenants 25:5

**5 And the office of thy calling shall be for a comfort unto my servant, Joseph Smith, Jun., thy husband, in his afflictions, with consoling words, in the spirit of meekness.**

One of the responsibilities each wife and husband have to their partners is to be a comfort to them, especially during times of affliction. At this time in Church History, the afflictions Joseph Smith was experienced were related to his physical well-being. While most of us are not

concerned regarding threats to our lives, we may nevertheless be experiencing emotional concerns. These may include: stress at work, concerns regarding a wayward child, financial pressures, health issues, and a number of others. It is during these times when the support and comfort of a caring wife or husband can make all the difference. As one man stated, "When my wife put her arms around me and told me everything was going to be Ok; in reality, nothing had changed, but for me, everything had."

\*What did the Lord counsel Emma Smith in this verse?

\*What are some ways that husbands and wives can help each other in times of difficulty?

Confirm their love and trust; Reiterate their commitment to support them and stand by them; remind them of the Lord's love for them; With faith we will get through this.

Joseph Smith gave this counsel to wives regarding their husbands,

"[Wives should treat their husbands] with mildness and affection. When a man is borne down with trouble, when he is perplexed with care and difficulty, if he can meet a smile instead of an argument or a murmur--if he can be met with mildness, it will calm down his soul and soothe his feelings." (*Teaching of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, [1977], 228).

Joseph Smith gave this counsel to husbands,

"It is the duty of a husband to love, cherish, and nourish his wife, and cleave unto her and none else; he ought to honor her as himself, and he ought to regard her feelings with tenderness." (*Elder's Journal*, August, 1838, 61).

Spencer W. Kimball added,

"[Referring to Genesis 2:24, he stated], 'to cleave unto him' means that the spouse then becomes pre-eminent in the life of the husband or wife and neither social life nor occupational life nor political life nor any other interest nor person nor thing shall ever take precedence over the companion spouse." (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969, [13<sup>th</sup> Printing, 1972], 250).

An LDS Bishop offered this observation,

"Unfortunately many of us shortly after the marriage ceremony, being to take each other for granted. We act as if our love for each other will increase and grow without our having to do anything to nourish it. We erroneously believe that we can spend an inordinate number of hours apart from each other engaged in other areas of importance and all will be well with our marital relationship. Don't be fooled. It will not. Like a delicate seed, love must be nourished or it will not grow. It is only the common garden variety weeds, not flowers, that grow without any care or attention. It was Our Lord Jesus Christ who stated, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Luke 12:34)." (Personal communication on file).

Doctrine and Covenants 25:14

**14 Continue in the spirit of meekness, and beware of pride. Let thy soul delight in thy husband, and the glory which shall come upon him.**

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Craig J. Ostler state,

"*Beware of pride.* As the wife of Joseph Smith and as a woman of great ability, Emma is especially warned, [as are each of us], against pride. Perhaps the murmuring for which she was admonished (v.4) included envy of the circle of faithful brethren that had with Joseph entertained angels, received revelations, and performed miracles. Of necessity they had shared confidences and counsel to which she could not be privy." (*Revelation of the Restoration*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2000, 195).

\*What did the Lord counsel Emma Smith in this verse?

\*How can spouses show that they delight in each other?

Joseph and Emma Smith were a great support to each other during the times of affliction they faced. In 1842, when Joseph was in hiding because his life was in danger, Emma was able to visit him.

Joseph Smith recorded of this occasion,

"With what unspeakable delight, and what transports of joy swelled my bosom, when I took by the hand, on that night,

my beloved Emma--she that was my wife, even the wife of my youth, and the choice of my heart. Many were the conversations of my mind when I contemplated for a moment the many scenes we had been called to pass through, the fatigue and the toils, the sorrows and sufferings, and the joys and consolations, from time to time, which had strewn our paths...Oh what a commingling of thought filled my mind for the moment, again she is here,...undaunted, firm, and unwavering--unchangeable, affectionate Emma." (*History of the Church*, Vol. 5. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1951, [Second Revised Edition, 1969], 107).

Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual states,

"Joseph and Emma also supported and comforted each other as they endured the death of many of their children. In four years, they had four infant children die. Out of eleven children (two adopted), only three sons and one daughter lived into late adulthood.

"At a time when the Prophet was carrying heavy burdens in connection with the growing Church in Kirtland, Ohio, Emma gave birth to twins, a boy and a girl, both of whom died within hours of their birth. At nearly the same time, in the nearby city of Orange, Ohio, twins were born to John and Julia Murdock, new converts to the Church. Within six hours of Murdock twins' birth, Sister Murdock died. When Emma and Joseph learned of this, they asked Brother Murdock if they might adopt the twins. Soon the two babies, Joseph and Julia Murdock, were taken to the Smith's home." (*Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1999, 55).

Lucy Mack Smith, Joseph Smith's mother, states regarding Emma,

"I have never seen a woman in my life, who would endure every aspect of fatigue and hardship, from month to month, and from year to year, with that unflinching courage, zeal and patience, which she had ever done; for I know that which she had had to endure...She has breasted the storms of persecution, and buffeted the rage of men and devils, which would have borne down almost any other woman." (*History of Joseph Smith by His Mother, Lucy Mack Smith*. Edited by Preston Nibley. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958, 190-191).

\*What can husbands and wives learn from the example of Joseph and Emma Smith to help them be more loving and supportive?

### **III. We Should Be Meek and Avoid Pride**

We begin this section with the dictionary definitions of Meek and Pride.

Webster's New World Dictionary, Third College Edition states,

**"Meek.** patient and mild; not inclined to anger or resentment.

**"Pride.** an unduly high opinion of one's own dignity or worth; self-respect." (*Webster's New World Dictionary. Third College Edition.* New York: Prentice Hall, 1988, [1994], 843, 1068).

As one considers these two attributes, one can see how the quality of meekness would lend itself to the whispering of the spirit. The characteristic of pride is in opposition to the quality of meekness for the focus of the individual is upon themselves and their abilities, rather than their giving a listening ear to the Lord for guidance and direction.

Emma Smith had been admonished "to continue in the spirit of meekness, and [to] beware of pride" (D&C 25:14). She was not alone in receiving this admonishment.

Doctrine and Covenants 23:1

**1 [To Oliver Cowdery:]...beware of pride, lest thou shouldst enter into temptation.**

In the 2013 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, the heading for Section 23 states, "A series of five revelations given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Manchester, New York, April 1830, to Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Samuel H. Smith, Joseph Smith Sr., and Joseph Knight Sr. As the result of earnest desire on the part of the five persons named to know of their respective duties, the Prophet inquired of the Lord and received a revelation for each person." (Heading: Section 23. *The Doctrine and*

*Covenants*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981, [2013], 41-42).

In Section 23, the direction to the five noted individuals is brief. Oliver (vs.1-2); Hyrum (vs.3); Samuel (vs.4); Joseph Smith, Sr. (vs.5); and, Joseph Knight, Sr. (vs.6-7). It is important to remember that it is not the length of the words of the Lord, but the counsel that is meaningful.

Given the history of Oliver Cowdery, and the period of time he spent outside Church membership, it would appear that pride continued to plague him throughout his life. Finally, in October, 1848, after a decade outside the Church, he humbly submitted himself for rebaptism. He never did deny his testimony of the Book of Mormon and died in full fellowship in the Church, March, 1850.

Doctrine and Covenants 38:39 [Saints in Church conference]

**39 And if ye seek the riches which it is the will of the Father to give unto you, ye shall be the richest of all people, for ye shall have the riches of eternity; and it must needs be that the riches of the earth are mine to give; but beware of pride; lest ye become as the Nephites of old.**

In the 2013 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, the heading of Section 38 states, "Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Fayette, New York, January 2, 1831. The occasion was a conference of the Church." (Heading: Section 38. *The Doctrine and Covenants*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981, [2013], 63).

In this verse the Lord is addressing those who are seek for the riches of the world. With the understanding that the riches of the earth are the Lord's to give, He reminded them that riches can lead the individual to become prideful. Many of the Nephites, upon gaining riches, looked down upon those who were poor and needy. They used their riches for their own gain, rather than to build up the kingdom of God on earth. (see B/M, Jacob 2:13.)

It was the Prophet Jacob who reminded each of us that if we seek after riches in order to build the kingdom of God and to share with the poor, we will receive the blessings of the Lord. (see B/M, Jacob 2:18-19.)

Doctrine and Covenants 90:17 [Counsel to First Presidency]

**17 Be not ashamed, neither confounded; but be admonished in all your high-mindedness and pride, for it bringeth a snare upon your souls.**

In the 2013 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, the heading of Section 90, states, "Revelation to Joseph Smith the Prophet, given at Kirtland, Ohio, March 8, 1833. This revelation is a continuing step in the establishment of the First Presidency [Section 81 states Jesse Gause was called to be a counselor in the First Presidency, but when he failed to honor the call, it was transferred to Fredrick G. William]...the counselors mentioned [Sidney B. Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams] were ordained on March 18, 1831." (Heading: Section 90. *The Doctrine and Covenants*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981, [2013], 176).

The admonishment is given by the Lord to the members of the First Presidency. It confirms that those who hold leadership responsibility in the Church of Jesus Christ are to avoid pride. It matters not if you are a member of the First Presidency or the Deacon Quorum President, you are to be humble and submissive to the direction of the Lord. The following verses in Doctrine and Covenants 121:35-36 apply to all holders of the priesthood of God, regardless of their calling or responsibility in the kingdom.

Doctrine and Covenants 121:34-36

**34 Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?**

**35 Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson--**

**36 That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness.**

Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl add,

*"High-mindedness and pride.* God warns His servants against these sins. Man is prone to the proud of talents, of family connections, or education, of social position, of wealth. Nothing is more detrimental to spiritual development and

usefulness. 'In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be loves of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers,' etc. (2 Timothy 3:1-2). here, pride has its proper place among such sins as covetousness, boasting, and blasphemy. There is where it belongs." (*The Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1951, [Revised Edition, 1962], 581).

Doctrine and Covenants 98:19-20 [Saints in Kirtland]

**19 Behold, I, the Lord, am not well pleased with many who are in the church at Kirtland;**  
**20 For they do not forsake their sins, and their wicked ways, the pride of their hearts, and their covetousness, and all their destestable things, and observe the words of wisdom and eternal life which I have given unto them.**

The Doctrine and Covenants Student manual states,

"Against the terrible and unjust actions of the mobs in Jackson County...the natural response of the Saints would have been a desire for revenge and retaliation. But such reactions are not in harmony with the godliness required of Saints, and here the Lord outlines the laws which must govern Christians in time of persecutions. He outlines the law of retaliation (vss. 23-32), the law of war (vss. 33-38), and the law of forgiveness (vss. 39-48)." (*The Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981, 233).

Joseph Fielding Smith and Craig J. Ostler state,

"Here the Lord assures the Saints in Missouri that he is no respecter of persons and that their counterparts in Ohio are accountable to the same standard that they are. If the Ohio Saints do not repent they will reap the same devastation that the Missouri Saints are experiencing." (*Revelations of the Restoration*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2000, 714).

In these verses, we learn specifically that pride and covetousness are sins found among the Saints in Ohio and Missouri. Without repentance, punishment would follow. Unfortunately, the Saints in Ohio did not heed the warning of the Lord. Their unrighteousness, speculation,

covetousness, and pride, prevented many from heeding the words of the Prophet Joseph. Finally their anger resulted in their apostasy. As a result, the anger toward Joseph and his family, eventually resulted in mob violence, and in January, 1838, Joseph and his family were forced to leave Kirtland. The headquarters of the Church was then established in Far West, Caldwell Country, Missouri.

Upon reflection of the years of the Church in Ohio, we may say, "it was the best of times--more revelations were given by the Lord to the Prophet Joseph in Ohio and recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants than at any other location; a House of the Lord was built by sacrifice and great effort where the Lord and ancient prophets came to restore essential keys; it was also the worst of times--great apostasy resulted due to speculation, dishonesty and for many, the loss of the spirit.

\*What is pride?

\*Why do you think the Lord's warnings about pride are so strong and so frequent?

Ezra Taft Benson states,

"Most of us think of pride as self-centeredness, conceit, boastfulness, arrogance, or haughtiness. All of these are elements of the sin, but the heart, or core, is still missing.

"The central feature of pride is enmity--enmity toward God and enmity toward our fellowmen. *Enmity* means 'hatred toward, hostility to, or a state of opposition. It is the power by which Satan wishes to reign over us.'" ("Beware of Pride," in *Ensign*, May 1989, 4).

\*How does pride affect our relationship with God?

Ezra Taft Benson continued,

"Pride is essentially competitive in nature. We pit our will against God's...in the spirit of 'my will and not thine be done...'

"Our will in competition with God's will allows desires, appetites, and passions to go unbridled (see B/M, Alma 38:12; 3 Nephi 12:30)...

"Our enmity toward God takes on many labels, such as rebellion, hard-heartedness, stiff-neckedness, unrepentant, puffed up, easily offended, and sign seekers. The proud wish God would agree with them. They aren't interested in changing their opinions to agree with God's." ("Beware of Pride," in *Ensign*, May 1989, 4).

\*How does pride affect our relationship with others?

Ezra Taft Benson continues,

"Another major portion of this very prevalent sin of pride is enmity toward our fellowmen. We are tempted daily to elevate ourselves above others and diminish them (see B/M, see Helaman 6:17; and, D&C 58:41)...

"Pride...is manifest in so many ways, such as fault-finding, gossiping, back-biting, murmuring, living beyond our means, envying, coveting, withholding gratitude and praise that might lift another, and being unforgiving and jealous...

"Selfishness is one of the most common faces of pride. 'How everything affects me' is the center of all that matters--self-conceit, self-pity, worldly self-fulfillment, self-gratification, and self-seeking...

"Another face of pride is contention. Arguments, fights, unrighteous dominion, generation gaps, divorces, spouse abuse, riots, and disturbances all fall into this category of pride." ("Beware of Pride," in *Ensign*, May 1989, 4-5).

\*How can we overcome pride and cultivate a spirit of meekness?

Ezra Taft Benson concludes,

"The antidote for pride is humility--meekness, submissiveness (see B/M, Alma 7:23). It is the broken heart and contrite spirit... We can choose to humble ourselves by loving God, submitting our will to His, and putting Him first in our lives." ("Beware of Pride," in *Ensign*, May 1989, 6-7).

\*As we read the following passages in the Doctrine and Covenants, let us consider the blessings that come to us when we choose to be meek and humble.

Doctrine and Covenants 1:28

**28 And inasmuch as they were humble they might be made strong, and blessed from on high, and receive knowledge from time to time.**

The world views humility as a sign of character weakness. The Lord sees humility as one of the most important qualities for His children to develop. It is only when we are humble that we are submissive to the will of the Lord. Through our humility, we wax strong in our faith and obedience to the Lord and He is then able to bless us with spiritual direction and knowledge of divine truths. It is more blessed to be humble.

Doctrine and Covenants 19:23

**23 Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit, and you shall have peace in me.**

One of the greatest obstacles, many of us have to overcome is to 'learn' of me, or to submit, in all things, our will to God. We tend to feel that we know more than He knows, even more that Our Heavenly Father knows and, therefore, only in our adversity, do we truly turn to God for His guidance and direction.

Susan Easton Black states,

Martin Harris, despite his many sacrifices and support of Joseph Smith, "failed to heed the warnings in his patriarchal blessing to 'be humble and meek in heart or Satan will seek to raise thee up to pride and boasting.'" (Susan Easton Black. "Martin Harris," in *Who's Who in the Doctrine and Covenants*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997, 126).

Like Martin, we too need to cultivate the qualities of humility and meekness so that in turn the Lord may bless us with His Spirit. As we do so, we will experience the peace within that can only come from God Himself.

Doctrine and Covenants 112:10

**10 Be thou humble; and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers.**

On Saturday, February 14, 1835, one of the most important events of the restoration occurred, as the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was again organized in these latter days.

The Church History in the Fulness of Times states,

"...the three witness of the Book of Mormon, [Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris], under the direction and consent of the First Presidency, were to choose the Twelve Apostles who were to serve as special witnesses of the Savior in this dispensation. The Prophet Joseph Smith [had] invited the veterans of Zion's Camp, and others [on this date] to attend a special conference...Following the Prophet's remarks, the meeting was adjourned for an hour. As the meeting reconvened, the Three Witnesses prayed and were blessed by the First Presidency. The witnesses then proceeded to select the Twelve Apostles. [Thomas B. Marsh, as the oldest was the senior member of the Twelve and President of Twelve Apostles.] (*Church History In The Fulness Of Times*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1989, 153-154).

Unfortunately, by July, 1837, Thomas B. Marsh, had displeased the Lord in his service and this revelation served as a call for his repentance.

Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl state,

"10. *Be Thou humble*. Pride was a weakness of Thomas B. Marsh. If he had been humble, he would not have fallen. He began by defying the righteous decisions of the High Council and the First Presidency, in a trivial case in which his wife was interest, and he ended by becoming a traitor in the Church." (*Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1951, [Revised Edition, 1962], 733).

Thomas B. Marsh held a position of important responsibility in the Church as the President of the Quorum of the Twelve. He, however, failed to humble himself and to follow the direction of those who presided over him. As a result, he lost the blessings he might have received had he heeded the Lord's call to repentance and in humility accepted the Lord's counsel. We must remember that none of us are beyond the reach of pride. It is, therefore, essential that we are humble in our service in the kingdom, ever mindful to

faithfully follow the direction of those whom the Lord has called to serve.

Doctrine and Covenants 124:97

**97 Let my servant William Law also [See Vs.91] receive the keys by which he may ask and receive blessings; let him be humble before me, and be without guile, and he shall receive of my Spirit, even the Comforter, which shall manifest unto him the truth of all things, and shall give him, in the very hour, what he shall say.**

In the 2013 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, the heading to Section 124 states, "Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Nauvoo, Illinois, January 19, 1841. Because of increasing persecutions and illegal procedures against them by public officers, the Saints were compelled to leave Missouri. The exterminating order issued by Lilburn W. Boggs, governor of Missouri, dated October 27, 1838, had left them no alternative. In 1841, when this revelation was given, the city of Nauvoo, occupying the site of the former village of Commerce, Illinois, had been built up by the Saints, and here the headquarters of the Church had been established." (Heading: Section 124. *The Doctrine and Covenants*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981, [2013], 245-246).

Joseph Fielding Smith and Craig J. Ostler state,

"[In the Church as this time, Joseph Smith held the position of Prophet and President of the Church, and Oliver Cowdery held the] "office of Priesthood,...[which was] peculiar to Joseph and Oliver [and] centers in the fact that these two men were present whenever keys or authority were restored. That two men should always be present on such occasions was necessitated by the law of witnesses. By virtue of this office, Oliver functioned as an Assistant or Associate President of the Church and, as such, stood above the counselors in the First Presidency and the members of the Quorum of the Twelve. Had Joseph Smith died while Oliver Cowdery was still in good standing, it would have been Oliver's right and responsibility to assume the leadership of the Church (D&C 124:94-95). [Because Oliver had been excommunicated from the Church in 1838], in addition to 'the office of the Priesthood,' Hyrum was [also called to]...hold the office of the Church Patriarch...William

Law [was] being called to take the place of Hyrum Smith as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church." (*Revelations of the Restoration*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2000, 980-981).

In response to William Laws call to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency [124:91], he is admonished to "be humble,...and without guile" (D&C 124:97).

Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl state,

"The Spirit of Revelation again calls William Law to consider what he might gain by humility and lose by following his own inclination. Our Lord, who was full of compassion for Jerusalem, undoubtedly pitied this man, who was greatly exalted but fell so low. He was offered the choicest blessings of heaven; they would be his, if he would pray, be humble, and without guile. God knew his weaknesses. One of them was 'guile,' which means 'deceitful cunning,' 'duplicity.' By prayer, these might have been overcome." (*The Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1951, [Revised Edition, 1962], 787).

Susan Easton Black states,

"From 1842 to 1843 he faithfully fulfilled this office by vigorously defending the Prophet's character against the anti-Mormon sentiments of John C. Bennett and offering to risk his own life to rescue the Prophet from Missouri captors. But his loyalty faltered by the winter of 1843...On 18 April 1844 William Law was excommunicated...Embittered on 1 June 1844 he wrote of his intent to publish the *Nauvoo Expositor*...The printing and destruction of the fraudulent newspaper [would lead]...to the arrest, imprisonment, and martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum. (*Who's Who in the Doctrine and Covenants*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997, 175-176).

As a direct result of his lack of humility and guile, William Law was excommunicated from the Church. Unrepentant, his slanderous actions toward leaders of the Church contributed to the death of both the Prophet and his brother, Hyrum. How tragic are the actions of one who was promised special blessings by the Lord, if he would repent, but chose instead to reject the words of the Lord thereby leading him to join forces with Satan and his minions. He went from defender of the prophet to traitor.

\*What are some blessings that can come to us when we choose to be meek and humble and not proud?

#### **IV. We Should Rejoice and Be of Good Cheer**

The Lord admonished Emma Smith, "Lift up thy heart and rejoice" (D&C 25:13). Even as the early Saints of this dispensation faced great tribulation, the Lord repeatedly gave similar admonitions to them. How is it possible that in tribulation, we can rejoice and be of good cheer?

Doctrine and Covenants 29:5 [to the Prophet Joseph Smith and others]

**5 Lift up your hearts and be glad, for I am in your midst, and am your advocate with the Father; and it is his good will to give you the kingdom.**

In Section 29:14-21, the Lord enumerates the signs, plagues, and desolations that will precede His Second Coming. While it is prophesied that the wicked will be destroyed, it is likely that those who are righteous will also suffer from the upheaval and desolations that will occur. How will they be able to survive the events of these latter days?

Doctrine and Covenants 61:36 [to the Prophet Joseph Smith and others]

**36 And now, verily I say unto you, and what I say unto one I say unto all, be of good cheer, little children; for I am in your midst, and I have not forsaken you;**

In the 2013 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, the heading for Section 61 states, "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 [from Missouri], 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." (Heading: Section 61. *The Doctrine and Covenants*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981, [2013], 111).

Doctrine and Covenants 68:6 [to Orson Hyde, Luke S. Johnson, Lyman E. Johnson, and William E. McLellin]

**6 Wherefore, be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you; and ye shall bear record of me, even Jesus Christ, that I am the Son of the living God, that I was, that I am, and that I am to come.**

Doctrine and Covenants 78:18 [to the Prophet Joseph Smith and others]

**18 And ye cannot bear all things now; nevertheless, be of good cheer, for I will lead you along. The kingdom is yours, and the blessings thereof are yours, and the riches of eternity are yours.**

In the 2013 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, the heading for Section 78 states, "Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, March 1, 1832. On that day, the Prophet and others leaders had assembled to discuss Church business. This revelation originally instructed the Prophet, Sidney Rigdon, and Newel K. Whitney to travel to Missouri and organized the Church's mercantile and publishing endeavors by creating a 'firm' that would oversee these efforts, generating funds for the establishment of Zion and for the benefit of the poor. This firm, known as the United Firm, was organized in April 1832 and disbanded in 1834 (see section 82). Sometime after its dissolution, under the direction of Joseph Smith, the phrase 'the affairs of the storehouse for the poor' replaced 'mercantile and publishing establishments' in the revelation and the word 'order' replaced the word 'firm'." (Heading: Section 78. *The Doctrine and Covenants*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981, [2013], 147).

Doctrine and Covenants 136:29, 31 [to the Camp of Israel at Winter Quarters]

**29 If thou art sorrowful, call on the Lord thy God with supplication, that your souls may be joyful.**

**31 My people must be tried in all things, that they may be prepared to receive the glory that I have for them, even the glory of Zion;...**

\*In the noted verses, what reason does the Lord give for our being of good cheer?

In D&C 61:36, we learn that during times of adversity and persecution, the Lord will be "in [our] midst, [and not forsake] us." Our circumstances may be difficult, but the Lord has promised to be with us and no matter our experiences, we will never be alone.

Also in D&C 68:6, we are counseled "not to fear [for] I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you." We may feel that we are outnumbered, but the Lord promises that He will not only be with us, but He will stand by us. If we are fully engaged in doing the will of the Lord, we need not fear.

Again, in D&C 78:18, we are told that the Lord knows that we can't bear all things, but He will lead us. All we need to do is to follow His direction and in time, the kingdom of heaven will be our destination, along with the riches of eternity.

Also in D&C 136:29, we are directed, if we are sorrowful, to call upon the Lord, and He will hear our pleadings and we will receive joy. I am reminded that when the people of Alma were under subjection, and could not utter a verbal prayer, the Lord heard their prayers. He did not, however, immediately free them, but He did "ease the burdens which are put upon [their] shoulders, that even [they could not] feel them upon [their] backs" (Mosiah 24:14).

Concluding with D&C 136:31, we learn that we do not experience trials and adversity without purpose. One of these purposes is to prepare us for the glory that will one day be ours. I believe also our experiences teach us gratitude for the blessings we have received from the Lord, and in turn, help us to better understand the suffering that comes to others.

\*What can we do to develop and maintain good cheer?

\*How can we help others be of good cheer?

\*What are some consequences of our dwelling on the negative aspects of life, even though they may be serious and prevalent?

Marvin J. Ashton states,

"None of us will escape tragedy and suffering. Each of us will probably react differently. However, if we can recall the Lord's promise, 'for I the Lord am with you,' [D&C 68:6] we will be able to face our problems with dignity and courage. We will find the strength to be of good cheer instead of becoming resentful, critical, or defeated. We will be able to meet life's unpleasant happenings with clean vision, strength, and power...

"What joy it is to see someone of good cheer, who, when others, because of an unpleasant happening or development, live in angry silence or vocal disgust, meet the situation with cheerful endurance and good spirits." ("Be of Good Cheer," in *Ensign*, May 1986, 66).

Marvin J. Ashton adds,

"Good cheer is a state of mind or mood that promotes happiness or joy" ("Be of Good Cheer," in *Ensign*, May 1986, 66).

While we often do not have choices regarding many of the events or circumstances that occur in our life, we do have a choice about how we will respond to them. If we are prone to see ourselves as victims of our surroundings, it is likely that we will continue to be adversely affected by these events. If, however, we view adversity and disappointment as events that happen in everyone's life, we will likely be able to maintain a positive attitude and thus face our life with joy and optimism. As we do so, the chances are in our favor, that good things will also occur. When our attitude is strengthened by a firm faith in God, we will better be able to be of good cheer, knowing that we are not alone in facing life's challenges. Brighter days yet lie ahead.

## **V. Conclusions**

In this lesson, we have been taught important concepts and principles that can enhance our lives and strengthen our testimony, if we will apply them. As we follow Nephi's counsel, and "liken the scriptures" unto our own lives, we will find messages in the scriptures that will also have

application in our lives. As we do so, the words of the Lord will have personal meaning to us.

**Husbands and Wives To Support and Comfort Each Other:**

The words spoken to Emma also apply to our marriages. Being able to provide support and comfort to each other will serve to strengthen our love for one another. Who would not appreciate the sincere support of their spouse when discouragement and disappointment came into their lives? To be on the receiving end of support and encouragement is almost as satisfying as it is to be the one who is providing the listening ear. As one wife shared, "I don't need your advice, I have many who are willing to do that for me; What I need is for you to give me your undivided attention and just listen."

It is important for each of us to remember that no one, no activity, no project, is more important than attending to our spouse. If love is to grow, it must be nourished by our attention and devotion. Without our care and concern, love will dwindle.

**We Should Be Meek and Avoid Pride:** The antidote to pride is humility and meekness. Our turning toward the Lord as opposed to away from Him, makes all the difference. When we turn our will from the Lord, we are spiritually on slippery ground. In the extreme, if we do not repent, not only will we find ourselves outside the Church, we may even raise our voices and turn our energy against the Lord Himself. None of us are immune to this temptation as the history of the Church teaches. There were many who were faithful, but by their failure to repent and be humble and meek, they lost their way. Thomas B. Marsh and William Law are just two examples.

**We Should Rejoice and Be of Good Cheer:** When faced with great tribulation, how can we be of good cheer?

We know: (1) During time of adversity, the Lord will be in our midst; we will not be alone; (2) The Lord knowing we can't yet bear all things, will lead us. As we follow His directions, we will one day obtain the riches of eternity; (3) The Lord will hear all our pleadings, and, according to His will, ease our burdens; and (4) Our trials and adversity serve to prepare us for the glory that will one day be ours. Other benefits include, teaching us both

gratitude for the blessings we have received, as well as empathy towards others and their suffering.

While we often have little control over our circumstances, we do have control regarding how we will respond to them.

Our next lesson [D&C#11] addresses the subject, "The Field is White Already to Harvest." It is a reminder to us of the opportunity we have to share the Lord's truths with others. As the hymn states, "Because I have been given much, I too must give" (Hymn #219 "Because I Have Been Given Much," in *Hymns of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, 1985).