

D&C Lesson 9

“THE ONLY TRUE AND LIVING CHURCH”

Prepared by Duane S. Crowther, March 2001

In His Preface to the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord Jesus Christ spoke of the Church as
“the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, . . .”

[D&C 1:30. Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, during a special conference of elders of the Church, held at Hiram, Ohio, November 1, 1831.]

1. What does the above statement mean:

- A. to you personally, to the general membership of the Church, to the world at large?
- B. What do these words of prior context mean to you: “And also [that] those to whom these commandments were given, might have *power to lay the foundation of this church, and to bring it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness, . . .*”?
- C. What do these words of following context mean to you: “. . . *with whom I, the Lord, am well pleased, speaking unto the church collectively and not individually*”?
- D. What do the next three verses [1:31-33] mean to you? “*He that repents not, from him shall be taken even the light which he has received; for my Spirit shall not always strive with man.*”

2. What are some of the Bible prophecies which Latter-day Saints believe speak of the restoration of the Lord’s Church in these latter days?

A. *Daniel 2:31-45: The prophet Daniel’s interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.*

- 1. Nebuchadnezzar saw **a great image in the form of a man**, with (a) a head of fine gold, (b) breast and arms of silver, (c.) belly and thighs of brass, (d) legs of iron, and (e) feet of part iron and part clay.
- 2. Nebuchadnezzar saw that **a stone was cut out without hands and hit the image on its feet**. The image broke into pieces, became as chaff, and the wind blew it away. **The stone became a great mountain, and filled the earth.**
- 3. **Basic interpretation:** The image is like a calendar, which tells when God’s kingdom will be set up on the earth for eternity. The stone is a kingdom which shall be set up by the God of heaven. The parts of the image represent kingdoms which will arise; Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold.
- 4. **Historical perspective:** The **head** = the **Babylonian Empire** (c. 625-539 B.C.); the **breast and arms** = the **Persian Empire** (c. 539-331 B.C.); the **belly and thighs** = the **Macedonian [Greek] Empire** (c. 331-161 B.C.); the **legs** = the **Roman Empire** (c. 161 B.C. - A.D. 431); the **feet** = the variety of **strong and weak kingdoms which formed after the collapse of the Roman Empire**.
- 5. The **stone** represents **the restored Gospel kingdom of Jesus Christ**. [See D&C 65:2.]
- 6. **The major messages of the prophecy:** (a) The time when God would set up His kingdom upon the earth was to be in the last days, not during Christ’s ministry in the first century A.D.

(b) The prophecy makes it clear that no church has a valid claim to being Christ’s kingdom if it maintains that it has continued in an unbroken succession since Christ’s earthly ministry, for such a belief violates the many Biblical prophecies of the apostasy. (c.) Christ’s kingdom will

be a great kingdom which will fill the whole earth (*Dan. 2:35*). It will break and consume earthly kingdoms (*Dan. 2:44*). It shall never be destroyed or left to another people; it shall stand forever (*Dan. 2:44*).

B. Isaiah 29:1-18, 24: A panorama of prophecy concerning the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the restoration of the Lord's Church:

1. [vv. 1-5] **A comparison** of the fall of Jerusalem to Rome [A.D. 70] and the fall of the Nephites to the Lamanites [A.D. 421]. The comparison: **It** shall be unto me **as** Ariel [Jerusalem]. Interpreted in *2 Ne. 26:14-18*: Nephi, prophesying of events that will take place after the final destruction of the Nephites [A.D. 421], describes their destruction.
 - a. [v. 3] I will camp against thee round about
 - b. [v. 4] Thou shalt be brought down
 - c. [v. 4] Thou shalt speak out of the ground
 - d. [v. 4] as a familiar spirit
 - e. [v. 5] It shall be at an instant suddenly.
2. [vv. 9-10] **The great apostasy**: the prophets and rulers and seers hath he covered.
3. [vv. 11] **The vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book**
4. [vv. 11-12] The words of the book are given to a man who is learned, who says, he cannot read the words because **the book is sealed**. The Charles Anthon incident, (*see JS-H 1:63-65*).
5. [v. 13] **The words of Jesus Christ to Joseph Smith in his first vision**: Forasmuch as this people draw near to me with their mouth, but have removed their heart far from me. (*See JS-H 1:19*).
6. [v. 14] **The restoration of the Lord's Church and gospel**: I will do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder. (See also *1 Ne. 14:7; 22:8; *25:17 [16-18]; *27:26 [1-35]; Al. 21:15; 3 Ne. 21:9 [1-29]; 28:32 [25-32]; D&C 6:1; 11:1; 12:1; 14:1; 18:44*.)
7. [v. 18] In that day the **deaf shall hear the words of the book**.
8. [v. 24] **They that erred shall come to understanding**, they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

C. Ezekiel 37:15-19: The stick of Joseph and the stick of Judah shall be one in mine hand.

1. The **stick of Judah** = the *Bible*.
2. The **stick of Joseph** and the tribes of Ephraim = the *Book of Mormon* (see *2 Ne. 29:12-13*)
 3. **Ezekiel's chronological context**: the two sticks are one in the hand before (a) Israel and Judah are gathered back to their land, (b) they become one nation, (c.) they have a king [David: see vv. 24-25], (d) they have a sanctuary [temple].
4. **Related scriptures**: See *2 Ne. 3:1-15*, especially 12-13. Also *1 Ne. 13:20-29; 2 Ne. 29:1-14*.

D. Isaiah 11:1-2, 10-12: The rod and root of Jesse, who shall set up an ensign to the nations.

1. See *JS-H 1:40*. **Moroni quoted all of Isaiah 11** and said it was about to be fulfilled. See *D&C 113:1-6*, for interpretive guidelines. Is. 11 is quoted in *2 Ne. 21. 2 Ne. 30:1-15* gives chronological insights: vv. 1-8 tell of events which will precede the fulfillment of vv. 9-11, which repeat Is. 11:4-5, but add further insights to the Isaiah passage.
2. *Isaiah 11:10-12* speaks of **the root [Joseph Smith] setting up an ensign for the nations**, and **gathering the house of Israel in the last days**. Moses appeared to Joseph Smith on April 3, 1836 and restored the keys of the gathering of Israel. [*D&C 110:11*]

E. Jeremiah 31:31-33: The Lord will make a new covenant with Israel. He will write it in their hearts. He will be their God, and they shall be His people.

1. See: *D&C 22:1*: This is a new and an everlasting covenant. *D&C 132:6*: The new and everlasting covenant was instituted for the fulness of the Lord's glory. *D&C 66:2*: Blessed are you for receiving mine everlasting covenant, even the fulness of my gospel. *Ezek. 36:26-28*: I will give you a new spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes. Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

Copyright © March 2001 by Duane S. Crowther