Lesson 9
Doctrine and Covenants 20:1–36, 68–69, 75–79; 21; 27; and 115:1–4

Doctrine and Covenants 20

**Verse 2:** Why is Joseph called the first elder?

**Verse 3:** Why is Oliver called the second elder?

**Verse 4:** To what does the word *this* refer in the first phrase of this verse?

What does it mean to say that something is “according to the grace of our Lord”?

What does the phrase “to whom be all glory, both now and forever” mean? What does that phrase tell us?

**Verses 5–12:** Notice that this is one long sentence. What is this sentence as a whole about? Deciding what the subject (or subjects) of the sentence is may help you understand better what the sentence says.

**Verse 5:** What does it mean to receive a remission of sin?

How do we get entangled in the vanities of the world? What does “vanities of the world” mean?

**Verse 6:** Do we know to what angelic visitation this verse refers?

**Verse 7:** How can commandments inspire us?
Verse 8: We probably all know what “power from on high” means. And we all know what it means to translate the Book of Mormon. But what does it mean that Joseph was given power to translate “by the means which were before prepared”?

Verse 10: When this verse says the Book of Mormon was given by inspiration, is it referring to the inspiration the Lord gave the Book of Mormon prophets or to the inspiration he gave Joseph Smith?

When the verse says the Book of Mormon “is confirmed to others by the ministering of angels,” of whom is it speaking?

Who is it that declares the Book of Mormon to the world?

Verse 11: What proves to the world that the scriptures are true? Is this verse referring to the Book of Mormon? To Joseph’s experience with repentance? To the commandments that inspired him? How might each of these possibilities prove that the scriptures are true?

Verse 12: This verse tells us that something mentioned in the sentence (verses 5–12) shows the Lord is the same God yesterday, today, and forever. What shows us that?

Verse 13: The world will be judged by the great witnesses it has, witnesses that have been mentioned. Who are those witnesses? (Does the last phrase of the verse help us?)

To what does “this work” refer? To the restoration of the Church? To the Book of Mormon? To the testimony of witnesses? To something else?
**Verses 14–15:** Those who receive it and work righteousness will receive a crown. Those who don’t receive it will be condemned. What is “it”?

**Verse 16:** What has God spoken?

**Verse 17:** By what things do they know there is a God in heaven?

**Verses 17–19:** How do the things they have seen and heard testify not only of God’s existence but that he is the Creator of the world and of human beings, that we are made in his image, and that he gave commandments for us to love and serve him and to worship only him?

**Verse 20:** Transgression of the laws (commandments) mentioned in verse 19 caused the fall. Specifically, which of the laws mentioned were transgressed? How so?

**Verse 21:** The word *wherefore* means something like “because of this.” Because of what?

**Verse 22:** What does it mean to suffer temptation, if he gave it no heed?

**Verses 23–26:** Here is another long and complex sentence. What is it about?

**Verses 23–24:** Why is this important for us to know?

**Verse 25:** Why aren’t ordinances or good works mentioned in this verse?

**Verses 26–27:** To be saved, those who came before Christ must have believed in the words of the prophets, spoken as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost. Those who come after
must believe in the gifts and callings of God by the Holy Ghost. How are these two the same? What is the difference?

Verse 28: What does it mean to say that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God?

What does it mean to say that God is infinite? Eternal? What does it mean to say that God is without end? (Is there a difference?)

Verse 29: What does it mean to repent? (Look up the word in a dictionary.)

What does it mean to believe on Jesus’s name?

What is worship? (Again, looking up the word worship may give some new ideas.)

What does it mean to endure to the end? What does it mean to endure in faith?

Verse 30: What is justification? How can it be just and true? What does it mean to say that it is? How does justification occur through grace?

Verse 31: What is sanctification? How can it be just and true? What does it mean to say that it is? How does sanctification occur through grace?

Why does the phrase “to all those who love and serve God with all their mights, minds, and strength” occur at the end of this verse and not at the end of verse 30?

Verse 32: What does it mean to fall from grace? What does it mean to be in grace?

How do we depart from God?
Verse 33: What does the phrase “fall into temptation” mean? Did Jesus fall into temptation? (Look back at verse 22.) What should we pray for to avoid falling into temptation? Of what should we take heed?

Verse 34: Those who are sanctified have to take heed as well. Who might that be? That the sanctified also have to take heed seems to indicate that verses 32 and 33 are primarily about those who are not sanctified. Who are they? Why are those verses primarily about them, and then also about the sanctified?

Verse 35: What are “these things”? In other words, this verse is a testimony of something—what? How is the Revelation of John relevant here?

Verse 36: What has the Lord spoken? How do we render honor to his name? Power? Glory? Is this a repetition, for effect, of the same idea three times, or are these three distinct things? What difference will it make either way?

Verse 68: What does this verse tell us about missionary work?

Verse 69: What is a godly walk? A godly conversation? (Look conversation up in a dictionary that tells the older meanings of words. You may be surprised at what it used to mean.)

How can our works and faith be agreeable to holy scripture? What does that mean?

How do we walk in holiness before the Lord? Why do you think the metaphor of walk is used so much to describe our life in the Church?
Verses 75–79: Since the sacrament prayers are given in the Book of Mormon, why are they repeated here? Why do the sacrament prayers follow immediately after the discussion of baptism?

We hear the sacrament prayers every week, but they are worth reviewing. Compare the sacrament prayers to see if there are things we might not be noticing.

**Blessing on the Bread**
O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it;

**Blessing on the Water**
O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this wine to the souls of all those who drink of it,

What does the phrase “bless and sanctify” mean? Is there a difference between blessing something and sanctifying it? Does this have anything to do with verses 30 and 31 of this section?

What does it mean to bless and sanctify something “to the souls” of those who eat or drink it? Why might the blessing on the bread use *partake* instead of “eat”?

**Blessing on the Bread**
that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee,

**Blessing on the Water**
that they may do it in remembrance of the blood of thy Son, which was shed for them; that they may witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father,
What does it mean to eat or drink in remembrance of something? Why might the prayer on the water include the description of the blood (“which was shed for them”) when the prayer on the bread refers to the body but doesn’t say something like “which was broken for them”? What might “which was shed for them” add?

Why might the prayer on the water address the Father again?

**Blessing on the Bread**
that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him, and keep his commandments which he hath given them,

**Blessing on the Water**
that they do always remember him,

The prayer on the water prays only that those drinking it will remember Jesus; the prayer on the bread prays also that they will take his name on them and keep his commandments. Why that difference? What does “remember him” include? Does it, perhaps, include taking his name and keeping his commandments?

**Blessing on the Bread**
that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.

**Blessing on the Water**
that they may have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.

Why might one prayer use *always* and the other not?
Does the fact that one of these prayers is always said before the other explain any of the differences between them? How?

**Doctrine and Covenants 21**

**Verse 1:** To what record is the Lord referring?

**Verse 2:** In what way was Joseph Smith “inspired by the Holy Ghost to lay the foundation” of the Church? Wasn’t he commanded by the Father to do so?

**Verses 4–5:** What does it mean to heed something? How is that different from listening to it?

Why are we admonished to receive his word “in all patience and faith”?

**Verse 8:** Why would Joseph have been weeping for Zion? Since the concept of Zion has not yet been clarified, either by the Book of Mormon or by further revelation, for what was Joseph weeping?

**Verse 9:** Is the blessing promised in this verse that those who work in the vineyard will believe?

**Verse 11:** To what does “This being an ordinance unto you” refer?

**Doctrine and Covenants 27**

**Verses 2–4:** Why do we use water in the sacrament? What else could we use?

**Verses 5ff.:** What do these verses describe?

**Verse 5:** What is Moroni’s particular authority?
Verse 6: Who is Elias? Elias is the Greek form of the name Elijah, so the two names mean the same (like Matthew, in English, and Matthieu, in French). But there are scriptural texts in which Elias and Elijah are differentiated, such as in Matthew 17:12–13, where Jesus calls John the Baptist “Elias.”

Verse 7: Who is John the son of Zacharias? Why would he be one of those to be at this gathering?

Verses 8–9: We are aware that Elijah’s mission is to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. We understand genealogical work and work for the dead to be that mission. But does that work include anything more? Review, for example, D&C 2:2. What promises have been made that must be remembered? How does the Book of Mormon fit into this mission?

Verse 13: Why were Peter, James, and John given the keys of the kingdom?

What does it mean that they were given “a dispensation of the gospel for the last times”? What is the literal rather than the doctrinal meaning of dispensation? Does that help us understand this verse?

What does it mean to gather all things together in one?

Verses 15–18: Notice that we must have the things described here if we are to be able to stand at the last days. What does the phrase “gird up you loins” mean? Why would truth be the thing we would gird our loins with?

Why is righteousness a breastplate?
What is “the preparation of the gospel of peace”? What would it mean to have that preparation for shoes?

Why is faith a shield? How does it give us power to “quench all the fiery darts of the wicked”?

In what sense is salvation a helmet? In what sense is the Spirit a sword?

What is “my word which I shall reveal unto you”?

What does it mean to “be agreed as touching all things whatsoever ye ask of me”?

Must we all pray for the same things?