Lesson 16
Doctrine and Covenants 59

Verses 1–4: This is a blessing for those who had moved into Jackson County, Missouri. How is it relevant to us in a time when we are commanded to remain in our stakes rather than to immigrate to Jackson?

Verse 1: Where is the land of Zion today? How do people come up to that land today? How would a person come to Zion with an eye single to the Lord’s glory?

Verse 2: In this context, what does it mean to inherit the earth?

What does it mean to say that those who die will rest from their labors? Don’t those in the spirit world and in the celestial kingdom have to work?

The verse says “they shall receive a crown.” To whom does the word they refer in that phrase: to those who die, to those who live, or to both?

Verse 3: Notice that the parallel phrases at the beginning of this verse indicate that those who obey the gospel are those whose “feet stand upon the land of Zion.” Why is standing on the land of Zion a good metaphor for obedience? And, how does one obey the gospel anyway? How can one obey good news?
Verse 4: Notice that this verse equates obedience with being faithful and diligent. What might that say to us about what it means to be obedient? On that understanding, were the Pharisees obedient? When are we like the Pharisees? How can we avoid being like them?

Notice too the three points of the crown that is given to the faithful and diligent: blessings, commandments, and revelations. Sometimes we think of commandments as constraints, but here they are portrayed as the reward of faithfulness. Why is it a reward to receive commandments?

Verse 5: Is the word wherefore just used to continue the flow of the verses, or does it mark a logical relation between the previous verses and this one? If the latter, how does the blessing of verses 1–4 lead to this commandment?

Compare this verse to Mark 12:30: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength” (which is, itself, a repetition of Deuteronomy 10:12). What do you make of the fact that in this verse soul has been replaced by mind? Do you think that the grouping of these words is significant, with the word heart by itself and “might, mind and strength” together? If so, what does that grouping suggest?

The passage in Mark doesn’t refer to service. In Deuteronomy the words love and serve are parallel. In this verse, service to God gets its own clause. What do you make of those differences?

Why does latter-day revelation qualify our service to God by adding “in the name of Jesus Christ”?
In summary: How is love connected to service? What has that to do with obedience? What does it mean to love God with all our heart, might, and strength?

**Verse 6:** Why do you think the Lord chose these particular three sins—theft, adultery, murder—as illustrations of the commandment to love thy neighbor as oneself?

Does the phrase “nor do anything like unto it” modify only *kill* or does it modify each of the three sins mentioned?

**Verse 7:** This verse introduces the theme of most of the rest of this section, giving thanks to the Lord. What does it mean to thank God in *all* things? How do we do that?

**Verse 8:** Can you say specifically and concretely what a broken heart and a contrite spirit is? Have you experienced it? Why does the Lord speak of a broken heart and a contrite spirit as a sacrifice? What does it mean to offer that sacrifice up in righteousness? Could a broken heart and contrite spirit be offered any other way?

**Verses 9–10:** The Lord has listed the commandments that are important to those who are blessed to dwell in Zion. Why does he expand so much on this particular commandment? How is keeping the Sabbath related to dwelling in Zion?

Why does the Lord refer to our meeting house as a house of prayer? What does that description imply?

What does “offer up thy sacraments” mean? What does the word *sacrament* mean? Look in a dictionary, perhaps a historical dictionary like the *Oxford English Dictionary* to answer that question. Notice the plural of *sacraments*. Why is it plural?
How does going to the house of prayer and offering up our sacraments “more fully keep [us] unspotted from the world”? What does it mean to be “unspotted from the world”?

What are our devotions? Are they the same as our sacraments? What does the word devotion suggest? Think about what it means to be devoted to something.

**Verses 11–12:** Is vows used here to mean the same thing as devotions and sacraments? If our vows are to be offered up on all days, how is the Sabbath different?

What does it mean to confess our sins before our brethren as well as before the Father? How do we do that?

**Verse 13:** On the Sabbath, we should do no other thing. No other thing than what?

What does it mean to prepare something with singleness of heart?

The word perfect can sometimes mean full or complete, so that part of the last of this verse isn’t unusual. But how are fasting and joy the same?

**Verse 14:** Verse 13 identified fasting with the state of joy. This verse takes that comparison further, comparing it not only to the state of joy, but to the activity of rejoicing. Compare this verse to Isaiah 58:3–7. (The whole of that chapter of Isaiah is another beautiful piece on the Sabbath.) What should our fasting be like? What should it not be like?

**Verses 15–19:** If we do these things (what things?), the fulness of the earth is ours. What is the fulness of the earth?
These verses return to the statements in verses 2–3 that those who live will “inherit the earth” and “receive for their reward the good things of the earth, and it shall bring forth its strength.” Presumably the list that follows tells us more about that blessing. What does it mean for these things—beasts, fowls, herbs—to be ours? What does it mean that these things are to please the eye? That they are to gladden the heart? How might such things strengthen the body? How might they enliven the soul? What kind of relation to the natural world is indicated here, and why does it follow immediately on a revelation on the Sabbath in verses 9–14?

**Verse 20:** How do we use the things of the earth with judgment? When do we use to them excess? Is it extortion to use them wastefully or merely for our personal pleasure? When do we use them by extortion? What is our responsibility as to the things of the earth?

**Verse 21:** God is only angry with those who don’t confess his hand in all things and those who don’t obey. Is obedience the same as confessing his hand in all things? Does that mean that obeying is a means of thanking?

**Verse 23:** What peace is promised those who live righteously? Does this verse contradict D&C 58:4, where it says blessings come only after tribulation? How could the Lord promise peace to those who were about to be chased from the state and murdered?