

Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 62

Joseph Smith and company traveling North meet up with Hyrum Smith and company traveling South.

1 Behold, and hearken, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, even Jesus Christ, your advocate, who knoweth the weakness of man and how to succor them who are tempted.

v1 Introduction with the typical authority statements.

2 And verily mine eyes are upon those who have not as yet gone up unto the land of Zion; wherefore your mission is not yet full. 3 Nevertheless, ye are blessed, for the testimony which ye have borne is recorded in heaven for the angels to look upon; and they rejoice over you, and your sins are forgiven you. 4 And now continue your journey. Assemble yourselves upon the land of Zion; and hold a meeting and rejoice together, and offer a sacrament unto the Most High. 5 And then you may return to bear record, yea, even altogether, or two by two, as seemeth you good, it mattereth not unto me; only be faithful, and declare glad tidings unto the inhabitants of the earth, or among the congregations of the wicked. 6 Behold, I, the Lord, have brought you together that the promise might be fulfilled, that the faithful among you should be preserved and rejoice together in the land of Missouri. I, the Lord, promise the faithful and cannot lie.

v2-8 These verses distill the more important subjects of the preceding week's revelations (D&C 59-61). Verses 2-6 summarize the Lord's commands to them, and v. 7-8 summarize His telling them to do their own thinking on non-essential issues.

v2-6 This section of text presents the themes of the preceding sections of the D&C, namely that they should be gathering into Zion and preaching the gospel to the world so the elect might be gathered as well.

The text can be arranged as a relatively simple parallelism:

- A - (v. 2) Not yet gone up to Zion
- B - (v. 3) Blessed for the testimony borne
- A - (v. 4) Assemble upon Zion
- B - (v. 5) Continue to bear record and preach gospel
- A - (v. 6) Brought to Missouri (Zion) so promise is fulfilled

v3 Unlike those berated in 60:2, these Elders are faithful and

diligent.

v4 The four Elders are permitted to travel to Zion and organize a meeting, then they are to return to proselyting. Presumably they would travel to the newly identified sites at Zion and learn of the recent happenings from those who were presently there.

v5 "declare glad tidings", i.e., preach the gospel, cp. Isa. 40:9, Luke 2:10.

The "inhabitants of the earth" are equated with the "congregations of the wicked" by parallelism. Thus, the phrase is descriptive of the generally worldly people around them. The usage in sections 60-62 is probably intended to contrast the world with the Zion the saints are tasked with creating. They are called to preach to those who will leave the congregations of the wicked to come and assist in the establishment of Zion.

It is interesting to note the Greek term "poneria" translated to "wickedness" in the KJV NT most literally translates to "misery-drenched". This follows the well-known phrase "wickedness never was happiness".

v6 "that the promise might be fulfilled", cp. D&C 2:2.

"I, the Lord, promise the faithful and cannot lie", cp. D&C 82:10.

7 I, the Lord, am willing, if any among you desire to ride upon horses, or upon mules, or in chariots, he shall receive this blessing, if he receive it from the hand of the Lord, with a thankful heart in all things. 8 These things remain with you to do according to judgment and the directions of the spirit.

v7-8 The Lord tells them they may do as they choose when it comes to the means of travel, cp. D&C 60:5.

v7 "in chariots", the KJV rhetoric for wagons, stage coaches, or any horse drawn carriage.

v8 Compare D&C 58:25-29.

9 Behold, the kingdom is yours. And behold, and lo, I am with the faithful always. Even so. Amen.

v9 The conclusion, a guarded benediction, cp. D&C 61:36-39.

D&C 62.3

Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 62

Those traveling north to Kirtland, having left Independence, MO come into contact with those traveling south towards Missouri who were too late to join the conference. This group was apparently composed of John Murdock, Hyrum Smith, Harvey Whitlock, and David Whitmer (cf. Lyndon W. Cook's Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith, see also D&C 52:8).

The meeting was probably joyous for Joseph because he had recently separated himself from a group of Elders who were less than zealous for the work, and meets a group who are zealous, including his beloved older brother.

Excerpt from History of the Church

On the 13th [August] I met several of the Elders on their way to the land of Zion, and after the joyful salutations with which brethren meet each other, who are actually "contending for the faith once delivered to the Saints," I received the following:

[text of D&C 62 quoted]

After this meeting with the Elders, Sidney Rigdon, Oliver Cowdery, and myself, continued our journey by land to St. Louis, where we overtook Brothers Phelps and Gilbert. From this place we took stage, and they went by water to Kirtland, where we arrived safe and well on the 27th [August, 1831]. Many things transpired upon this journey to strengthen our faith, and which displayed the goodness of God in such a marvelous manner, that we could not help beholding the exertions of Satan to blind the eyes of the people, so as to hide the true light that lights every man that comes into the world. (Joseph Smith, History of the Church, volume 1, pages 206-207)

Excerpt from Journal of John Murdock

Met Brother J. [Joseph] Smith, Jr., S. [Sidney] Rigdon and others, and received the revelation recorded in the Book of Covenants [D&C] on page 202 or 308. We also fell in company with Brother Harvey Whitlock and David Whitmore [Whitmer], and we four put our money together and bought a pony. (Milton V. Backman, Writings of Early Latter-day Saints, John Murdock, Journal, page 10)

Excerpt from Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants

As Joseph Smith and his party were on their way home from Missouri during August 1831, they met some of the elders who had been on their way, and were late in arriving at Independence. It must have been a source of discouragement for them to have missed all of the events that took place while the Prophet was there, and they probably wondered what they should do now that Joseph was on his way home. Joseph Smith wrote:

On the 13th [August] I met several of the Elders on their way to the land of Zion, and after the joyful salutations with which brethren meet each other, who are actually "contending for the faith once delivered to the Saints," I received the following:
[Section 62]

These elders remain unidentified in the Prophet's history, but Reynolds Cahoon named them as follows: Hyrum Smith, John Murdock, Harvey Whitlock, and David Whitmer (Journal History, August 13, 1831, located in the History Department of the Church).

John Murdock, who had as strenuous a journey as any of those who made the trip, recorded that the revelation was given at the meeting of the elders. He wrote:

We Preached after which I being Sick went to bed & we continued here near one week & I gave my watch for Wm. Ivy to carry me to Chariton 70 mls in a wagon we stayed there two days & met J. Smith the Prophet S. Rigdon & others & received the Revelation in the book of covenants Page 202 (John Murdock Autobiography, page 21, located in the History Department of the Church)

After meeting with Joseph Smith, these elders continued their journey to Independence, for each was instructed by the Prophet to obtain a spiritual witness of the center place. They must have carried a copy of this revelation with them for the other elders who arrived even later were able to read it once they were in Zion. Levi Hancock wrote:

I also saw Other Revelations he had given. She [A. Sidney Gilbert's wife] showed me once and said, "There is a

place for you and Zebedee" it read "And now I speak of those Elders who have not yet come to the Land of Zion For the testimony you have borne is recorded in heaven for the Angels to look upon and your sins are forgiven you She said some were tried when these worse Cume and their faith almost failed them because they had heard that nothing was done [missionary work on their way to Missouri] many had apostatized and but four behind [four men still on their journey]. Solomon Hancock, Simeon Carter, Zebedee, and myself---As soon as the news had come that Solomon and Simeon had baptized between twenty and thirty it revived their drooping Spirits and as soon as they heard that Zebedee and Levi had baptized upwards of a hundred; Sidney Rigdon gave glory to the God of Heaven and said I did not know what those revelations meant before (Levi Hancock Journal, pages 40-41, located in the History Department of the Church).

(Robert J. Woodford, Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants, BYU PhD Dissertation, April 1974, pages 783-784)

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