



# The Gospel Doctrine Class



Doctrine & Covenants - Lesson 36

The Desert Shall Rejoice

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*“Whenever men can find out the will of God and find an administrator legally authorized from God, there is the kingdom of God; but where these are not, the kingdom of God is not.” (Joseph Smith)*

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A study of this lesson will help us understand how we have been blessed by the sacrifices of the early Saints in the Salt Lake Valley and to encourage us to follow the example of these faithful members.

Joseph Smith: "Whenever men can find out the will of God and find an administrator legally authorized from God, there is the kingdom of God; but where these are not, the kingdom of God is not. All the ordinances, systems, and administrations on the earth are of no use to the children of men, unless they are ordained and authorized of God; for nothing will save a man but a legal administrator; for none others will be acknowledged either by God or angels." (History of the Church, 5:256)

Joseph Smith: "I calculate to be one of the instruments of setting up the kingdom of Daniel by the word of the Lord, and I intend to lay a foundation that will revolutionize the whole world. I once offered my life to the Missouri mob as a sacrifice for my people, and here I am. It will not be by sword or gun that this kingdom will roll on: the power of truth is such that all nations will be under the necessity of obeying the Gospel." (Ibid., 6:365)

Priddy Meeks wrote about conditions during the winter of 1847-48: "My family went several months without a satisfying meal of victuals. I went sometimes a mile up Jordan to a patch of wild roses to get the berries to eat which I would eat as rapidly as a hog, stems and all. I shot hawks and crows and they ate well. I would go and search the mire holes and find cattle dead and fleece off what meat I could and eat it. We used wolf meat, which I thought was good. I made some wooden spades to dig seagoes [Sego Lily] with, but we could not supply our wants.

"We had to exert ourselves to get something to eat. I would take a grubbing-hoe and a sack and start by sunrise in the morning and go, I thought six miles before coming to where the thistle roots grew, and in time to get home I would have a bushel and sometimes more thistle roots. And we would eat them raw. I would dig until I grew faint and sit down and eat a root, and then begin again. I continued this until the roots began to fail." (Great Basin Kingdom, p49)

Author Irving Stone wrote: "Thus it was that in the year 1847 the Mormons not only settled Bonneville's Lake, bringing a whole new people and new culture to the Far West, but the presence of members of the Mormon Battalion, poising at Sutter's for the winter, was also instrumental in bringing to California, traversing Colorado, Utah and Nevada en route, the greatest rush of humanity ever to pour into a country from every radius of the earth's circumference." (Men To Match My Mountains, p104)

George Goddard was called on a "Rag Mission". Said Brother Goddard of his mission: "[This calling] was a severe blow to my native pride.... But after being known in the community for years, as a merchant and auctioneer, and then to be seen on the streets going from door to door with a basket on one arm and an empty sack on the other, enquiring for rags at every house. Oh, what a change in the aspect of affairs.... When President Young first made the proposition, the humiliating prospect almost stunned me, but a few moments' reflection reminded me that I came to these valleys of the mountains from my native country, England, for the purpose of doing the will of my Heavenly Father, my time and means must be at His disposal. I therefore answered President Young in the affirmative, and for over three years, from Franklin, Idaho, in the north, and Sanpete in the south, my labors extended, not only visiting many hundreds of houses during week days, but preaching rag sermons on Sunday. The first time I ever spoke in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,...was a rag discourse, and Presidents Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball backed it up with their testimony and enlarged upon it." (Great Basin Kingdom, p115)

WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO DO FOR THE KINGDOM?

- Are you willing to go on a rag mission?
- Are you willing to leave the gold fields when gold is in sight?
- Are you willing to tithe a tenth of our time?

WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER? ARE WE WORTHY TO PARTAKE WITH THESE PIONEER SAINTS?

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Next Week's Reading Assignment  
Our Heritage, page 131; Class Member Study Guide