Week 25 is scheduled for study June 14-20, 2021. We are tasked with the responsibility to prepare ourselves and the world for the return of our King. This requires our heart and a willing mind in the process.

Day 1

Doctrine and Covenants 64:1-11 - I am required to forgive everyone.

President Henry B. Eyring said: "I often go to the scriptures with the questions 'What would God have me do?' or 'What would He have me feel?' Invariably I find new ideas and thoughts I have never had before".

I have written an opinion piece that discusses this topic. I suggest you read this and decide for yourself if forgiveness is worth the work it takes sometimes to let go of offense or hurt.

The Trouble With, and the Promise of Forgiveness

Day 2

Doctrine and Covenants 64:31-34 - God requires my heart and a willing mind.

President Henry B. Eyring said: "I often go to the scriptures with the questions 'What would God have me do?' or 'What would He have me feel?'

Invariably I find new ideas and thoughts I have never had before".

This lesson is closely tied to the Personal Study section below. I recommend you read the linked article for that section first then come back and read and think about this one. I have some comments about today's verses, so I have included them here.

> 31 And behold, I, the Lord, declare unto you, and my words are sure and shall not fail, that they shall obtain it.
>
> 32 But all things must come to pass in their time.
>
> 33 Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great.
>
> 34 Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days.

The "it" the Lord says the Saints shall obtain in verse 31 is Zion. That reference to Zion was in verse 30. Verse 32 refers to the things that will come to pass "in their time." The article I suggested you read on small things talks at great length about the importance and power of small things when paired with sufficient time. There are actually several places within the last few week's lessons where the Lord told the Church that Zion would not be fully established for many years to come. It is important that we remember that just because something isn't going to happen today, or this week, it doesn't mean the Lord has given up on it. He operates on small things over a long time to bring about His purposes.

Verse 33 tells us that the Saints were only laying the foundation of a "great work." He didn't say Zion, as in the city, even though that is where the Saint's focus was. The Lord knew that all that was happening with the Saints was just the beginning, the foundation of what would roll on to become the unstoppable work of His kingdom in the last days, His kingdom on earth.

This is why He requires our heart and our willing mind. We need to recognize that what we are engaged in is an ongoing work, not a final product. We are still laying the foundation of greater things to come. All those who go to and work with all their heart and willingness will be blessed during the last days.

Day 3

Doctrine and Covenants 64:41-43 - Zion shall be "an ensign unto the people."

President Henry B. Eyring said: "I often go to the scriptures with the questions 'What would God have me do?' or 'What would He have me feel?' Invariably I find new ideas and thoughts I have never had before".

An ensign (pronounced "en-sign") is a standard, a banner, a flag, a piece of signage that signifies who or what is at the head of or is sponsoring this campaign. They were used in warfare of old all the time. The flag bearer would carry the flag or ensign (again, en-sign) at the front of the army so all who saw the approach of the army knew which royal house was paying for the war. The ensign was comprised of the family crest or other symbols that told everyone who saw it what power was behind this mighty force.

The flag bearer also stood near the general directing the military campaign. When things got bad out on the battlefield the men would rally to the ensign. If the flag bearer was killed, that was usually a pretty good indication that the battle was about over, for everyone protected the ensign under which they fought.

In more familiar terms, think of Captain Moroni in the book of Alma and the standard (en-sign) he raised to rally support for freedom and family. They flew that flag all over the country from every home who was committed to the cause of freedom. In current terms, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is an ensign to the nations. The Church both declares Christ as the power behind our efforts in this world, but it also acts as a rallying point for people who want to find the truth about God and His kingdom.

Day 4

Doctrine and Covenants 65 - Prepare ye the way of the Lord.

President Henry B. Eyring said: "I often go to the scriptures with the questions 'What would God have me do?' or 'What would He have me feel?' Invariably I find new ideas and thoughts I have never had before".

Reading and thinking about section 65 can open new doors of understanding about what the latter-day work is all about. When the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith, Jr., it wasn't just to answer his questions. Their visit began the process of

founding, for the last time, God's kingdom on the earth. Jesus literally rules from on high, and his chief steward is his prophet. His church is his earthly kingdom.

When Christ returns in the Second Coming, it will be to reunite the heavenly kingdom, his rule there, with his earthly kingdom, his rule here. When we receive the injunction in the scriptures to "prepare the way of the Lord," it is referring to preparing for the day of this coming together of his heavenly kingdom with his earthly kingdom. I affectionately think of the command to "make his paths straight" as a directive to work out the kinks and figure out how to effectively use his priesthood authority and power to govern our homes and his church wisely.

The progression towards a church that is ready to receive their master is slow, but consistent. We have seen so many changes in the church in just our lifetimes, and we will see many more before he returns. But the church cannot change until the people themselves have changed, for they must be able to support the needed changes, and that takes greater and greater faith and dedication to the principles that makes the gospel work.

Much of our preparation is tied up in the missionary work needed on both sides of the veil. We have temples and chapels to build, people to convert and to be preached to. Even our individual lives need improving and "straightening." We must spend our lives glorifying God and His Christ. When Christ's kingdom is complete, and the day of judgment comes, then he will glorify us, but for now, we need to exalt and glorify God and Christ, and do all we can to assist in the work needed to prepare for the Savior's return.

Day 5

Doctrine and Covenants 66 - The Lord knows the thoughts of my heart.

President Henry B. Eyring said: "I often go to the scriptures with the questions 'What would God have me do?' or 'What would He have me feel?' Invariably I find new ideas and thoughts I have never had before".

The title of today's lesson assumes you believe that God really does know and understand the thoughts (and thus, the intents) of your heart. Does it make any

difference if He does or doesn't know what we were thinking and feeling when we did something here in mortality?

Let's look at a practical example of where the intent of an action might make a significant difference to someone. Let's suppose a parent says to a child, "Be careful. We don't want to break the glass." While child #1 is helping with the dishes, a glass slips and falls to the floor, breaking. Child #2 throws a tantrum and deliberately smashes a glass on the floor. Both children broke a glass. Should both children be punished? If so, should they receive the same punishment?

Most would probably agree that child #1 should be shown mercy, because they were helping and the breaking of the glass was a complete accident. Child #2 on the other hand broke the glass deliberately. Again, most would agree that the intent should be factored into the judgment of the action.

Most parents, coworkers, friends, enemies, etc. have probably had times when even the best intentions went woefully awry, causing suffering and sorrow on the part of all parties involved in the incident. How many parents have tried to do their best by their children, only to mess up or to have the child take offense or misread our intentions and instead of solidifying our relationship, we find ourselves with a damaged relationship that needs mending. The intention was well meaning, but something went wrong in either the delivery or the reception of our actions. We have probably all witnessed this among strangers, friends, family, and church members. Good intentions isn't always enough. Isn't it comforting to know that the Lord is judging us on our intent?

In this section the Lord is demonstrating to William E. McLellin that He knows the thoughts and desires of his heart. We don't know exactly what William's secret prayers to God were, but He, himself, stated that this revelation left him fully and completely satisfied that Joseph Smith was a prophet.

Look through the other sections in this week's lessons and see where the Lord told Joseph Smith that specific people were feeling a certain way, or that they had developed certain ambitions that would get them into trouble if they didn't repent. Reading the Doctrine and Covenants makes it very clear that the Lord really does know our innermost thoughts and desires. So the questions for each of us are, what does the Lord hear me thinking that no one else knows about? What should I do about the

conversations in my head the Lord is always listening to? (It's a good thing He is merciful.)

FHE/Personal Study

Doctrine and Covenants 64:33 - The importance of small things

This topic is discussed quite thoroughly in the following article.

Where Is the Greatness in Small Things?

We humans are so easily fooled. We look for the big, the grand, the impressive, and the overwhelming in all things. We want to be wowed! Meanwhile the Lord is working with the small, the humble, and the tiny things … Continue reading

Gospelstudy.us 2

Click the link below to

print a PDF copy of the file.

The Lord Requireth the Heart and a Willing Mind

Week 25