

Thumbnail Sketch
of the
Book of Mormon
Second Edition

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	
WHAT IS THE BOOK OF MORMON?	1
CHAPTER 2	
HOW DID THE BOOK OF MORMON COME ABOUT?	4
CHAPTER 3	
WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON?	9
CHAPTER 4	
WHERE DID THE BOOK OF MORMON GET ITS NAME?	14
CHAPTER 5	
STORIES OF THE NEPHITES AND LAMANITES	15
1. LEHI, THE PROPHET TO JERUSALEM	15
a) Lehi Leaves Jerusalem	
b) The Brass Plates	
c) The House of Laban	
d) God Prepares a Way	
e) Return Again to Jerusalem	
2. JOURNEY TO THE PROMISED LAND	19
a) The Liahona	
b) By Small Means God Does Great Things	
c) The Land Bountiful	
d) Building a Ship	
e) Crossing the Ocean	
3. REACHING THE PROMISED LAND	23
a) Arrival at a New Land	
b) Laman and Lemuel Rebel	
c) Nephi Keeps the Sacred Record	
d) A Warning from Jacob	
e) God Gives a Sign	
f) Enos Prays	

4. THE NEPHITES JOINED BY THE MULEKITES	28
a) Finding the Land of Zarahemla	
b) King Benjamin	
a) Searching for the Lost People of Zarahemla	
c) The Prophet Abinadi	
d) Alma Believes	
e) The Prophecy of Abinadi is Fulfilled	
f) Limhi Becomes King	
g) Twenty-Four Golden Plates	
h) Alma in the Land of Helam	
i) The Rebellion of Mosiah and Alma's Sons	
j) The Reign of Judges	
k) The Priestcraft of Nehor	
l) The Church Becomes Proud	
m) The Sons of Mosiah	
n) King Lamoni	
o) The King Believes	
5. ANTI-NEPHI-LEHI	44
a) Burying the Weapons of War	
b) Return to Zarahemla	
c) God Silences Korihor	
d) The Humble Believe	
e) War with the Zoramites	
f) The Title of Liberty	
g) Moroni Prepares for Battle	
h) Defeating the King-Men	
i) Helaman's 2000 Sons	
j) Protected by a Circle of Fire	
k) A Judge is Murdered	
l) God Sends a Famine	
 CHAPTER 6	
THE COMING OF CHRIST TO THE NEW LAND	60
 1. THE PROPHETS DECLARE CHRIST'S COMING	60
a) Samuel the Lamanite	
b) The Savior is Born	
c) Darkness and Destruction	

2. THE APPEARING OF JESUS CHRIST	64
a) The Words of the Prophets Fulfilled	
b) Jesus Calls Disciples	
c) Jesus Completes His Ministry Upon the Land	
d) Three Disciples to Tarry Upon the Earth	
e) Great Happiness Upon the Land	
CHAPTER 7	
THE FALL OF THE NEPHITES	71
1. THE SACRED RECORDS	71
a) Ammoron Buries the Records	
b) Ammoron Instructs Mormon	
c) Moroni Prepares the Records for a Latter Day	
CHAPTER 8	
THE MULEKITES	75
1. MIGRATION FROM JERUSALEM	75
a) King Zedekiah's Son	
CHAPTER 9	
THE JAREDITES NATION	77
1. A PEOPLE FROM THE TOWER OF BABEL	77
a) The Brother of Jared	
b) The Jaredite Kings	
c) The Destruction of the Jaredite Nation	
CHAPTER 10	
WORDS TO FUTURE GENERATIONS	83
1. MORONI SEALS THE RECORDS	83
a) The Last Farewell	

Chapter 1

WHAT IS THE BOOK OF MORMON?

The *Book of Mormon* is a record of three separate ancient migrations; groups of people led by God from the Old World to the Americas. It tells how God delivered them from the hands of their enemies and gave them a Promised Land. It is a history of kings, religion, wars and the rise and fall of great nations.

THE FIRST of these three migrations was the people referred to as the Jaredites. A man named Jared and his faithful brother, referred to as the Brother of Jared, led this migration. Jared and his brother, along with their families and the families of a few friends, left the great Tower of Babel at the time God confounded the language, about 2200 B. C. (Genesis 11:5-9 and Ether 1:7-9)

They crossed the land until they came to the ocean. They built eight barges and set forth into the sea, driven upon the water by the winds and currents. After three hundred and forty-four days, they arrived on the shores of the Promised Land which the Lord himself provided. This Land of Promise came with an everlasting decree: Those who possessed the land must serve the God of the land, which was Jesus Christ, or be swept off and destroyed. (Ether 1:29-35)

The great Jaredite nation failed to heed the warning and turned away from God. The king, Coriantumr, refused to listen to the warnings and the call to repentance from the prophet Ether. Thus, the Jaredite nation was destroyed in a civil war except for one man, Coriantumr. (Ether 6:72-73)

THE SECOND migration of people is known as the Nephites. Lehi was from the lineage of Joseph; the same Joseph who was the son of Jacob and sold into Egypt by his

brothers that he might preserve his father, Jacob, and his household from perishing with famine. Because Lehi had faithfully declared to the citizens of Jerusalem the impending destruction of Jerusalem and testified of the people's wickedness, and the coming of the Messiah, there were conspiracies to take his life. In a vision, Lehi was warned to take his family and flee out of Jerusalem. Lehi took his wife Sariah and their four sons, Laman, Lemuel, Sam and Nephi, along with Ishmael and his family, as they left Jerusalem. They began their journey during the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, the king of Judah. History tells us Zedekiah's reign began in 596 B. C. (Genesis 49:22; I Nephi 2:7-8; and I Nephi 1:3, 18-20, 164, 165)

Miraculously, God led Lehi and his family across the wilderness, then across the sea unto the Promised Land. The Nephites carried the record of their people to preserve the language of their fathers, the words of the prophets and the history of their people. (I Nephi 1:26, 54; I Nephi 5:78-82, 176-178; and I Nephi 1:82-83, 159)

A division came between Nephi and his brothers, bringing a curse upon Laman, his family and those who followed him, and they became known as the Lamanites. There began great wars and contentions between the Nephites and the Lamanites. Throughout time, the Nephites also became wicked like the Lamanites. In a great battle at the land of Cumorah, God caused the Nephites to be destroyed because they had turned away from Him unto wickedness. (I Nephi 3:128-134; II Nephi 4:27-41; Omni 1:14; IV Nephi 1:44-53 Mormon 2:1,3, 12-14; Mormon 3:3, 10-13; and Mormon 4:1-2, 6-9)

THE THIRD migration is known as the Mulekites. The Mulekites also came out of Jerusalem during King Zedekiah's reign. They began their migration a few years after the Nephites at the time King Zedekiah was carried away into captivity into Babylon, B.C. 587. Mulek was from the tribe of Judah and one of the sons of King Zedekiah. Mulek apparently was young enough to be called a child and escaped

being slain with his brothers when Jerusalem was destroyed.
(Jeremiah 39:1-2, 6-7)

Mulek and some of his family were also led by the Lord to the Promised Land and dwelt in an area called the land of Zarahemla. The people of Zarahemla (the Mulekites) were discovered by the Nephites in the land of Zarahemla. The Mulekites joined themselves into the Nephite nation.
(Helaman 3: 55-57; 2:129 and Omni 1:23-26)

Chapter 2

HOW DID THE BOOK OF MORMON COME ABOUT?

Lehi's son, Nephi kept written records by scribing them on forged metal plates. One set was called the *Plates of Lehi* and they contained many dreams and visions, prophecies and genealogy. (I Nephi 2:1-3, 92).

Nephi's record, the *Large Plates of Nephi*, contained the abridgment of the *Plates of Lehi*, a full account of the Nephite's history, the reign of kings, the wars and contentions and the appearance of Jesus Christ. This record began with Nephi but was handed down from generation to generation, each writer continuing the work of keeping the history. (I Nephi 5:218-219, 222; I Nephi 1:17; I Nephi 3:1; I Nephi 2:93-97; and II Nephi 3:27).

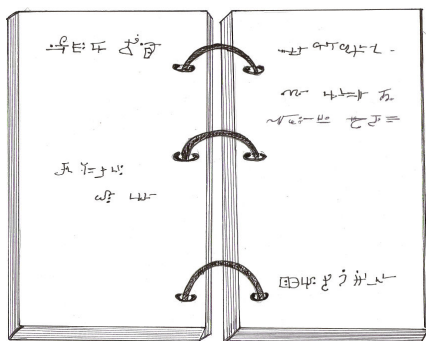
Another set of plates, *The Small Plates*, also referred to as *The Plates of Jacob*, were kept for a special purpose in God. They contain an account of the life and ministry of Nephi, and the prophecies and instructions from God. These too were passed down from generation to generation until three hundred and twenty years after Christ when Ammoron hid all the records in a hill called Shim. (I Nephi 2:92-99; II Nephi 3:28; Jacob 2:69; Jarom 1:2; and IV Nephi 1:57-59).

Ammoron instructed a young ten-year old boy, named Mormon, when he reached the age of twenty-four years to go and retrieve the *Plates of Nephi* from Shim, leaving the other plates in the ground. He also instructed Mormon to engrave upon them all the things he had observed concerning the Nephite people. Fourteen years later, Mormon remembered Ammoron's words and followed Ammoron's instructions and added his words, known as the *Words of Mormon*, to the *Plates of Nephi*. (Mormon 1:1-6 and Words of Mormon 1:13-15).

Before the destruction of the Nephite civilization, Mormon returned to the hill Shim and took all the records the Lord had entrusted to him so they would not fall into the hands of their enemies, the Lamanites. (Mormon 2:25)

Mormon abridged the records, adding a few of his own words, before he hid them up in Hill Cumorah, except for the abridgment, which he delivered to his son Moroni who concludes the account of the Nephite civilization. (Mormon 3:3-8, 4:1-6)

Moroni, the last surviving Nephite, took the abridged records given to him by his father Mormon and added his own words and the teachings of his father. Moroni also adds to his father's abridgment the account from twenty-four golden plates, known as the book of Ether. (Ether 1:1-6)



Ether, a Jaredite prophet, took shelter in a cave as he watched the Jaredites destroy each other in a great civil war. Ether recorded their history, and then hid his writings until the people of Limhi would discover them. The Nephite king, Mosiah, who possessed the gift of a seer, translated the record. (Mosiah 5:62-79; Mosiah 9:170; and Mosiah 12:14, 22).

About the year 421 A. D., these indelible words scribed on gold plates were buried by Moroni and remained buried in

the ground for fourteen hundred years, awaiting the day when God would bring them forth to a future generation.

The early 1800's was a time of great revival in upstate New York. A teen-age boy felt a burden on his heart to know the will of God as to which church he should join. While reading the Epistle of James in his Bible, he came across these inspiring words; "*If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth unto all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*" Moved by the passage, Joseph Smith knew he must do as James directed or remain in darkness. During the morning hours of a beautiful clear day in the early spring of 1820, young Joseph retreated to the forest, not far from his home in Manchester, New York, to inquire of the Lord as to which denomination was right. Finding himself alone in the quiet spot, he knelt down and began to offer up his prayers. Joseph described what happened as being seized by some power, which entirely overcame him. He called upon God to deliver him. As he became greatly alarmed as to what was taking place, he saw a pillar of light exactly over his head, descending gradually until it fell upon him. When the light rested upon him, Joseph saw two Personages standing above him in the air. One of them spake, calling Joseph by name, and said, "*This is My beloved Son, hear Him.*"¹

Joseph asked the Personage which of all the sects was right, and which he should join. The Personage told Joseph he must join none of them as all their creeds were an abomination and all were corrupt.

Joseph Smith suffered many persecutions at the hand of the religious leaders whom he told of his spiritual encounter with the Personages, yet he remained firm in his belief concerning his vision. On 21 September 1823, while he lay on his bed praying, Joseph experienced a second vision. Joseph describes it thus: "While I was thus in the act of calling upon God, I discovered a light appearing in the room which

continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noonday; when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside, standing in the air for his feet did not touch the floor.

“When I first looked upon him I was afraid, but the fear soon left me. He called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni. That God had a work for me to do, and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds and tongues; or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people.

“He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fullness of the everlasting gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants. Also that there were two stones in silver bows, and these stones fastened to a breastplate constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim, deposited with the plates, and the possession and use of these stones was what constituted seers in ancient or former times, and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.”²

While Joseph conversed with the Personage, a vision opened in his mind. He saw where the ancient plates were buried so clearly and distinctly that later it was easy for Joseph to recognize the spot when he saw it. Locating the large stone, Joseph carefully removed the earth from around it, exposing a stone box. Dislodging the stone lid with a lever, Joseph was able to look inside and see the Urim and Thummim and the breastplate. Joseph’s intentions were to remove the plates; however, the angel appeared again and told him that the time was not yet. The angel instructed Joseph to return to the same place precisely in one year and he should continue to return every year until the appointed time came for him to obtain the plates from the stone box.

According to the command, Joseph returned every year, each time finding the same messenger there and received instruction from him. When Joseph returned to the sacred spot

in September of 1827, the messenger gave the contents of the stone box to him as promised. It was Joseph's duty to keep and protect these things until the messenger returned to collect them and translate the plates by the use of the Urim and Thummim.

The work of translating the Book of Mormon did not begin until April of 1829. Joseph tells how it began: "On the fifteenth day of April, eighteen hundred and twenty-nine, Oliver Cowdery, came to my house – until then I had never seen him. He stated to me that having been teaching school in the neighborhood where my father resided; and, my father being one of those who sent to the school; he went to board for a season at my father's house, and while there the family related to him the circumstances of my having received the plates; and accordingly he had come to make inquiries of me."³

Two days after the arrival of Oliver Cowdery (being the 17th day April), Joseph began to translate and Oliver scribed the words. Oliver Cowdery wrote about the work: "These were days never to be forgotten – to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom. Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated with the Urim and Thummim... the history or record called the Book of Mormon."⁴

In July of 1829, the translation was completed and a copyright was obtained. "After Joseph and the others had conferred with several publishers, E. B. Grandin, owner and manager of the Wayne Sentinel, agreed to print the book... A contract was signed August 25, 1829, for an edition of five thousand copies."⁵ At this time Joseph Smith also returned the plates and the Urim and Thummim to the heavenly messenger who had delivered them into his hands.

Chapter 3

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON?

The *Book of Mormon* is meant to be a witness to the validity of the Holy Bible in many ways. One of the most important aspects is that it teaches us to believe the Gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ as recorded in our Bibles. The Book of Mormon says: *“Therefore repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, and lay hold upon the gospel of Christ, which shall be set before you, not only in this record, but also in the record which shall come unto the Gentiles from the Jews, which record shall come from the Gentiles unto you. For behold, this is written for the intent that ye may believe that; and if ye may believe that, ye will believe this also; and if ye believe this, ye will know concerning your fathers, and also the marvelous works which were wrought by the power of God among them.”* (Mormon 3:30-31). It also speaks about the record recorded in the Book of Mormon and the Bible as being one in purpose. *“And the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records of thy seed, as well as in the records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; Wherefore, they both shall be established in one; For there is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth...”* (1 Nephi 3: 195-197)

The beautiful promise, *“For there is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth,”* reminds us God is not a respecter of persons. His plan of salvation and His gospel is the same for every living soul of every nation of the world. When Jesus walked in Palestine he said, *“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”* (John 10:16) Many think that he was speaking about the Gentiles, but that is not so. He explains to His

disciples that He will personally teach only to the House of Israel: *“I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Matthew 15:24)*

Other tribes of Israel were scattered upon many lands and the islands of the sea, and after His resurrection, Jesus visited these other lost sheep of the house of Israel. The Book of Mormon testifies of this promise being fulfilled. *“And verily, I say unto you, that ye are they of whom I said, Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. And they understood me not, for they supposed it had been the Gentiles; for they understood not that the Gentiles should be converted through their preaching; And they understood me not that I said they shall hear my voice; and they understood me not that the Gentiles should not at any time hear my voice; that I should not manifest myself unto them, save it were by the Holy Ghost. But behold, ye have both heard my voice, and seen me, and ye are my sheep, and ye are numbered among those whom the Father hath given me. And verily, verily, I say unto you, that I have other sheep, which are not of this land; neither of the land of Jerusalem; neither in any parts of that land round about, whither I have been to minister. For they of whom I speak, are they who have not as yet heard my voice; neither have I at any time manifested myself unto them. But I have received a commandment of the Father, that I shall go unto them, and that they shall hear my voice, and shall be numbered among my sheep, that there may be one fold, and one shepherd; therefore I go to shew myself unto them.” (III Nephi 7:20-26)*

The Apostle Paul told the Galatians, *“...If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”* The Book of Mormon supports such a concept and it teaches the same gospel as the Holy Bible. It teaches the same GOSPEL OF SALVATION, which is: you must

believe in Christ, you must repent, you must become as a little child, you must be baptized, you must be obedient and you must endure to the end.

The Book of Mormon teaches the same GOSPEL ORDINANCES contained in the Bible, which are: blessing of little children, healing of the sick by the laying on of hands, reception of the Holy Ghost, baptism by immersion in water, ordination of the ministry and the need to partake of the Lord's Supper.

The Book of Mormon teaches us to follow the same church organization as Christ established in the Bible: The church is founded on Christ, the Rock, the church is to be named after Christ, beliefs are to be based on an unchangeable God, Christ called twelve to be her head on earth and the church is maintained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

There will be no new Gospel of Salvation coming forth, but God did tell us He will give mankind His words and instructions from time to time. *"For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little."* (Isaiah 28:10)

The Book of Mormon fulfills many prophecies and promises contained in the Bible. The first promise is the blessing of Joseph by his father, Israel, who said Joseph's land will be blessed. We read: *"And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills."* (Deuteronomy 33:13-16)

The Bible also tells us that Joseph's land will be across the sea. *"Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall."* (Genesis 49:22) By reading the words of prophets, we learn that prophetically the wall represents the sea. *"Art thou better than populous No,*

that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea?” (Nahum 3:8)

Another promise is that there will be two books in our hands; one for Judah, which we know as the Bible, and the other for Joseph and his descendants, which is the Book of Mormon. The two books are used together as one, for they contain the fullness of the gospel. *“Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.” (Ezekiel 37:16-20)*

The Bible calls this book of Joseph, which will come forth, a marvelous work and a wonder, because those who have been spiritually blinded by the false doctrines of men will see truth once again. *“And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.” (Isaiah 29: 11, 18, 19)*

It was not an easy task for men to keep ancient records by scribing on metal plates. A great deal of effort had to be made to find and gather the ore, smelt and fashion it into thin metal plates, then scribe upon them. Nevertheless, God commanded men to write and to pass down the records for others to write for a special purpose in Him. Faithful men did scribe all the

things they saw and heard concerning their history and God working in their lives. Contained in the pages of the Book of Mormon we can discover many of those special purposes of God. Within the pages of the Book of Mormon, God reveals these special purposes, such as: the instruction of His people, (*I Nephi 5: 22-24*); so all will know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, (*I Nephi 3:192-194*); it is to be used with the Bible to confound false doctrines, lay down contentions and establish peace, (*II Nephi 2:19-21*); it will bring the people to a knowledge of their fathers and the covenants God made with them, (*II Nephi 2:23*); and like the Holy Bible, to show forth his power unto future generations. (*Alma 17:45*)

Finally, the *Book of Mormon* is to be a test of faith. In Moroni's final words, he makes a plea to the future generations who would receive this record: "*And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; And if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost; and by the power of the Holy Ghost, ye may know the truth of all things.*" (*Moroni 10:4, 5*)

Chapter 4

WHERE DID THE BOOK OF MORMON GET ITS NAME?

Mormon is the name of a man who had the great responsibility of taking the records contained on metal plates, which had been handed down from generation to generation, and add all the things which he had observed concerning his people to the *Plates of Nephi*. Mormon also made an abridgment of the records, which he gave to his son Moroni. Moroni wrote the final words and hid the abridged record so it would not be destroyed and it could come forth to the Gentiles in due time and be carried back to the House of Israel.

Joseph Smith, who translated the Book of Mormon from the ancient language, stated in his manuscript, *History of the Church*: “I wish to mention here that the title page of the Book of Mormon is a literal translation, taken from the very last leaf, on the left hand side of the collection of books of plates.”⁶ He reaffirms in his statement that the title, “Book of Mormon”, is a literal translation as recorded on the plates he interpreted.

Chapter 5

S TORIES OF THE NEPHITES AND LAMANITES

LEHI, THE PROPHET TO JERUSALEM

Lehi Leaves Jerusalem

(1 Nephi 1:3-6, 10-12, 18-33)

Lehi was a faithful man who lived in Jerusalem during the first year of the reign of King Zedekiah, King of Judah, about 597 B.C. During that same year, many prophets came to Jerusalem, crying to the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed.

One day as Lehi was praying, a pillar of fire came down from heaven and blazed on a rock before him. A vision appeared before Lehi's eyes of what was going to happen to Jerusalem. After this experience, Lehi was very tired so he went home to rest. As Lehi lay there resting, Jesus Christ, God's son appeared before him. Jesus opened a book and said: Read this. As Lehi began to read he felt a great sadness as he saw all the wicked things that the people in Jerusalem were doing.

Jesus revealed to Lehi that if the people of Jerusalem did not repent, their enemies would attack the city. When the enemies came, they would kill many of the people and capture many others and carry them away to another land. God instructed Lehi to warn the people to repent, and that if they refused, then God would destroy Jerusalem.

The wicked people of Jerusalem did not believe the prophecies of Lehi. At first, they mocked him and claimed

that nothing could destroy their great city. They refused to see their evil and would not repent. Soon, they became tired of hearing Lehi's call to repent, so they plotted to take his life.

God had other plans for Lehi and his family and warned them that they must quickly gather their belongings and leave Jerusalem because his enemies wanted to kill them. Lehi was instructed to flee into the wilderness. Lehi did not know what the future held for his family but he trusted God.

Although Lehi was a rich man and owned many beautiful things, he, his wife Sariah and their sons packed only what they needed to live and left their home and all their wealth. They traveled into the wilderness to live in a tent. Lehi trusted God to take care of his family.

The Brass Plates

(1 Nephi 1:40-41, 47- 67)

After traveling for three days, Lehi and his family made their camp beside a river. All this time Laman and Lemuel, Lehi's oldest sons, complained: Why did we have to leave our home? Nothing can destroy the great city of Jerusalem. Our father is only imagining things.

Lehi's other sons, Sam and Nephi, trusted their father. Nephi, the youngest son, wanted to understand his father's vision. So, he asked God to tell him if his father's vision was true.

Then the Lord spoke to Nephi: You are blessed because you have prayed so hard to know the truth. If you keep my commandments I will lead your family to a new land.

Nephi went to his father's tent to tell him about his experience, but Lehi said God spoke to him again in a dream. He instructed Nephi that he and his brothers must go back to Jerusalem to the house of Laban. There they were to ask Laban for some sacred records written on brass plates which contained the record of the Jews and the genealogy of their forefathers. God instructed them to take these records into the wilderness with them.

Laman and Lemuel protested, saying that it was too dangerous and they should not go. However, Nephi was of a different heart and urged his brothers to heed God's

instructions: If God commands us to do something, He will prepare the way for us to do it.

Following Nephi, the brothers went back to the city of Jerusalem where people waited to kill them.

The House of Laban

(1 Nephi 1:68-95)

At the edge of the city, the brothers cast lots to decide which one of them would go to the house of Laban and ask him for the brass plates. When the lots were cast, Laman was the one chosen to go to Laban to ask for the plates.

Fearfully, Laman went to Laban's house and asked for the brass plates. Laban became angry, accused them of trying to rob him, and ordered him out. Laman, Lemuel and even Sam were discouraged by the failure.

They were about to go back to their father without the sacred records, but Nephi spoke up: My brothers, God desires that we have His word to carry with us on our journey. If God commanded us to go and get the brass plates, then He will prepare a way for us to accomplish it.

The brothers decided to go back to their home in Jerusalem and get their treasures they left behind when they fled the city. Laban was a greedy man, and they thought perhaps, he would sell them the brass plates. This time all the brothers went to Laban's house with their gold, silver and jewels. When Laban saw them coming, he ordered his servants to go kill them and bring him their treasures.

When Nephi and his brothers looked toward Laban's house and saw men running toward them waving their swords in the air, they were frightened. They dropped their treasures and ran. When they were safe, Laman and Lemuel got very angry and blamed Nephi for the loss of all their treasures and almost causing them to be killed. In their anger, Laman and Lemuel began to beat Nephi and Sam with sticks.

Suddenly an angel appeared before them and spoke: Why are you hitting your younger brother? God has chosen Nephi to rule over you because of your wickedness. Return to Jerusalem and God will deliver Laban into your hands.

God Prepares a Way

(1 Nephi 1:104-146, 155-166)

Night had fallen by the time the brothers returned to Jerusalem, so they hid outside the city walls. God told Nephi to go to Laban's house. Quietly, carefully, so that no one would see him, Nephi walked toward Laban's home. Nephi was alone, and did not know what was going to happen; he only knew that God would take care of him.

When Nephi reached Laban's house, he found Laban lying on the ground, drunk. God said: You must kill him. It is better for one wicked man to die than for a whole nation to forget about God.

With great difficulty, Nephi obeyed God and took Laban's sword and cut off his head.

Putting on Laban's clothes, Nephi walked toward the treasury where Laban kept the sacred records. Disguising his voice, Nephi commanded Laban's servant to unlock the door to the treasury and help him get the brass plates. Believing that Nephi was Laban, the servant helped Nephi carry the brass plates out of the house.

When Laman and Lemuel saw Nephi coming in Laban's clothes, they thought Laban killed their brother and was coming to kill them. Nephi called out: Do not be afraid, it is I, it is Nephi.

Laban's servant was so frightened he began to shake. He turned to run away, but Nephi stopped him and promised to spare the man's life and give him freedom if he promised to go with them.

The brothers returned to the wilderness and rejoined their father and mother, who were waiting by the river. They brought the brass plates, which contained the five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world and Adam and Eve. The plates contained a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah. The plates told the prophecies of the holy prophets. Upon the plates of brass was the genealogy of Lehi's fathers. Wherefore, he knew that he was a descendant of Joseph, the son of Jacob, who was sold into Egypt, and preserved by the Lord, that he might preserve

his father Jacob and all his household from perishing with famine. They were also led out of captivity and out of the land of Egypt by that same God who had preserved them.

Return Again to Jerusalem

(I Nephi 2:7-11)

The Lord spoke to Lehi once again, telling him that his family should not go into the wilderness alone. They should return to Jerusalem and bring the family of Ishmael with them. Ishmael was another man who loved God and had a family of five daughters and two sons with their own families. Lehi's sons would need wives to have families of their own. The brothers returned to Jerusalem and told Ishmael about Lehi's vision. God touched Ishmael's heart and he took his family and joined Lehi and his family on their journey to the new land.

JOURNEY TO THE PROMISED LAND

The Liahona

(I Nephi 5:10-12; Alma 17:71-74)

One night as Lehi was in his tent, God spoke to him: Tomorrow, you will continue your journey. Lehi wondered where this new land was and what direction they should travel. In the morning, when Lehi opened the flap of his tent, he saw a brass ball on the ground, gleaming in the morning sunlight. On the ball were arrows, which pointed in the direction they should travel in the wilderness. Lehi called the ball "liahona," which means compass.



The families of Lehi, Ishmael, and Zoram, the servant of Laban, headed out on their journey to the new land. As they traveled, the liahona led them to food and water.

By Small Means God Does Great Things

(1 Nephi 5:17-38)

Each time Lehi's caravan stopped to camp, his sons took their bows and arrows and set out to hunt game for their food. One day they searched for game but found none. Even if they had, they could not have taken it, since Laman and Lemuel's bows had lost their spring and Nephi's bow had broken. Tired and hungry, the brothers returned to camp. Just like so many times before, Laman and Lemuel did not trust God or ask Him for help, rather they became angry. However, Nephi remained faithful and told his brothers they must put their trust in God.

Nephi found some wood, got out his knife, and made a new bow. He knew they needed God's help to find game so he asked his Father to inquire from God where they should go to hunt. Lehi prayed, and again God told them to look at the brass ball and see the instructions written on it. On the liahona were written these words: This director will only work when you pray and obey me. If you are faithful I will write my word on the liahona to guide you.

By small means, the Lord can bring about great things, Nephi declared. The arrows on the liahona pointed to the top of the mountain, so Nephi slung his bow on his back and began to walk to the top of the mountain. Just as God promised, there at the top of the mountain Nephi found many animals grazing. He took his bow and shot the game to put meat on the table that night.

The Land Bountiful

(1 Nephi 5:55-76)

For many years, Lehi and his group walked through the wilderness. Fearing that the people of Jerusalem may be looking for them, they did not build fires to cook their meat.

Although they had to eat their meat raw, God blessed it and the meat tasted good and made them strong and healthy.

Along the way, the sons of Lehi and Zoram married the daughters of Ishmael. God blessed these young women and when they were with child, they were strong and able to continue the long walk. Their children were born in the wilderness. Even Lehi and Sariah, who were growing older, had two more sons, Jacob and Joseph.

Finally, after eight long years, the tired travelers reached the shoreline of the sea. This spot beside the sea was so full of fruit and honey that they named the land, "Bountiful." Here beside the sea, they pitched their tents and rested awhile.

Building a Ship

(1 Nephi 5:68-96, 153-173)

One day, God spoke to Nephi, commanding him to go alone up into the mountain. There on the mountain, God instructed Nephi how to build a ship that they would use to cross the great ocean.

When Nephi asked God where he could find the metal to make the needed tools to build such a ship, God showed him where to find rocks that were full of metal. Nephi kindled a fire and with bellows made from animal skins, he fanned the fire to make it very hot. As the fire grew hotter and higher, the metal for strong tools came pouring out the rocks.

When Laman and Lemuel saw Nephi working, they refused to help and began to complain, saying their brother Nephi did not know how to build a ship and he was wasting his time making tools. The brothers were also very bitter about leaving their home and riches in Jerusalem and spending the years in the wilderness.

Because of their anger, Laman and Lemuel tried to overpower Nephi and cast him into the ocean to drown. Nephi felt the power of God come upon him and warned his brothers: In the name of Almighty God, I command you touch me not, for I am filled with the power of God, and who touches me shall die. Laman and Lemuel could feel God's great power around Nephi and were afraid.

After several days, God told Nephi to touch his brothers. God promised they would not die, but he would shock them to prove His power was with him. When Nephi touched Laman and Lemuel, God's great power knocked them to the ground. After having felt the power of God, Laman and Lemuel helped Nephi in constructing the ship according to the instructions God had given Nephi.

Crossing the Ocean

(I Nephi 5:175-211)

When Nephi and his brothers finished building the ship, God spoke to Lehi and told him it was time to continue their journey. The next day, they began to pack the ship with fruit, meat, wild honey and seeds they had gathered in the wilderness for the long journey across the ocean. The ship set sail, and the liahona showed them the direction to steer, as God sent a gentle wind to push the ship across the ocean towards the new land.

Once they departed, Laman and Lemuel soon forgot it was God who kept them safe upon the ocean. Instead of thanking God, they began to make themselves merry, dancing, singing and speaking rudeness in celebration of their good trip. Nephi feared for his brothers because of how they were behaving, so he warned them to remember God.

The brothers were angry with Nephi and said their younger brother was not going to rule over them. Laman and Lemuel tied Nephi up with strong cords and then everything began to go wrong. The liahona, which gave them directions to sail, stopped working. The sky grew black, and fierce winds began to blow, whipping the ship's sails and blowing the ship backward for three days. Lehi and Sariah were so sad because of Laman and Lemuel's wickedness that they became sick. The plea to untie Nephi went unanswered; Laman and Lemuel would not listen.

Nephi's feet and hands were sore and swollen from the ropes, but still he trusted God. The storm raged on, with huge waves washing across the deck of the ship. With each wave the ship dipped lower into the water. As the ship began to

sink, Laman and Lemuel realized God was angry with them and they untied their brother.

Nephi picked up the liahona. Again, the needles pointed the direction they were to sail. Then Nephi prayed, asking God to stop the terrible storm. Suddenly, the winds grew quiet and the water became still. A gentle breeze began to blow pushing their ship towards their new homeland.

REACHING THE PROMISED LAND

Arrival at a New Land

(I Nephi 5:212-224)

After many weeks at sea, Lehi and his family spotted land on the horizon; it was the Promised Land. After they unpacked their ship, they began to explore their new land. What a beautiful land it was, with everything God promised and plenty of wild animals to hunt and to domesticate for their use. They built homes and planted the seeds they had carried across the ocean.

The land was full of ore and precious metals. God instructed Nephi to keep a record. Nephi was obedient, and made plates of metal to write upon. On these plates, he engraved the record of his father, their journey from Jerusalem and the prophecies which came to them for the instruction of his people, and other wise purposes, which purposes were known only to God.

Laman and Lemuel Rebel

(II Nephi 3:8-25; II Nephi 4:1-16, 29-44; Jacob 1:13-14)

Many years had passed since Lehi and his family left Jerusalem and made their home in the Promised Land. Lehi had grown old and he knew he would soon die. He called all his sons in, blessed them, and instructed them: For the Lord God hath said that in as much as you shall keep my commandments, you shall prosper in the land. And inasmuch

as you will not keep my commandments, you shall be cut off from my presence.

It was not long after Lehi's admonishment to his sons that he died. Upon Lehi's death, God chose Nephi to lead the people. As they had done so many times before, Laman and Lemuel became angry at the idea that their younger brother was to rule over them. Their anger increased so much against Nephi that they once again sought to take his life.

God warned Nephi that he should flee into the wilderness. Nephi took all those who believed in the warnings and revelations of God with him. They took with them the brass plates they had brought from Jerusalem, in order to instruct their children in the ways of God. After traveling many days in the wilderness, they pitched their tents and began life again. They built homes and planted crops. God supplied them with plenty of wild game to hunt. The people loved Nephi so much that they wanted to be called by his name. From that time on they would be known as "Nephites."

Laman, Lemuel and the people who stayed behind took on the name of Laman. From that day on they were known as "Lamanites." The Lamanites hearts were hardened, like stone, against the Lord. To keep the Nephites from having any desire to mingle their seed with the Lamanites, God caused a curse to come upon them, and they became a dark and loathsome people who were full of mischief. They were idle and would not plant crops but wandered in the wilderness seeking prey to eat.

The Nephites were to have nothing more to do with the Lamanites; unless the day came the Lamanites would repent and return to the Lord.

Nephi Keeps the Sacred Record

(II Nephi 4:19-20, 45-48; II Nephi 5:1-2; Jacob 1:1-18)

Nephi led his people righteously and taught them the word of God from the brass plates. He made many swords like the sword of Laban, because he knew that someday the Lamanites would attack. Sometimes in the years that followed, the Lamanites did attack the Nephites; but God always blessed and protected His people. In peace or war,

Nephi continued to keep the sacred record, recording God's blessings and the prophecies God had given him. God revealed to Nephi that His son Jesus would someday come into the world.

God also commanded Jacob and Joseph, Nephi's younger brothers, to teach the people the ways of God. Fifty-five years had passed since they left Jerusalem. Nephi began to grow old and instructed his brother Jacob to keep the sacred records, recording all the doings of God, that it might show God's power to future generations. Then Nephi died and went home to be with the Lord.

A Warning from Jacob

(Jacob 2:1-57)

Jacob became the leader of the Nephites and God continued to bless them. However, some of the Nephites began to forget their God. Jacob was worried about his people and prayed in their behalf. God instructed Jacob to go to the Temple on the following day and give them God's message.

The next day Jacob delivered God's message: Many of you are spending all your time looking for gold and silver and you are forgetting your God. Because some of you are rich, you have been cruel to those less fortunate and are poor. Every person is precious to God, and it does not matter to Him if they are rich or poor. You should not look down on people whose clothes are not as fine as yours, but rather, you must help the poor. If you continue being proud, God will punish you.

The pride and unkindness of the Nephites was wrong. However, many of them had even a worse sin in their lives. Many of them had broken the hearts of their wives and set a bad example for their children by marrying more than one wife. Jacob taught the people concerning their transgression of God's Law.

Behold, I Jacob must speak unto you concerning this evil, for the word of God burdens me because of your grosser crimes. For behold, thus says the Lord, this people begin to wax in iniquity; they do not understand the scriptures and they seek to excuse themselves in committing whoredoms, because

of the things which were written concerning David, and Solomon his son. David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, but such things are abominable before me, says the Lord your God. The Lamanites, your brothers, whom you hate, because of their filthiness and a curse which has come upon their skins, are more righteous than you. For they have not forgotten the commandments given to our fathers, that they should have but one wife and no concubines.

God Gives a Sign

(Jacob 5:1-35)

As the years passed, Jacob remembered his promise to Nephi. He kept the sacred records and taught his people about God and His son, Jesus Christ, who was coming to earth. Jacob taught them they needed to be ready for his coming.

One day an evil man named Sherem, who did not believe in Jesus, began telling the people that Jacob had been lying to them and God was not going to send His son to earth. Sherem was very clever and knew how to make a lie sound like the truth, causing some of the Nephites to believe him.

Jacob inquired of God as how to stop Sherem from telling these lies. Then one day, God answered Jacob's prayers in an unexpected way. Sherem walked right up to Jacob and said Jesus was not coming to earth. Jacob asked Sherem if he believed in the words of God written on the brass plates that were brought out of Jerusalem which told about the coming of the Messiah.

Sherem said he believed the plates but did not believe anyone could know what was going to happen hundreds of years in the future. As Sherem argued with Jacob, God told Jacob what he should say. God's words were more powerful than all of Sherem's cunning words. Finally, Sherem said he would only believe if God showed him a sign.

Jacob said if it was God's will then he would have a sign. Suddenly, Sherem fell on the ground as God struck him down and was unable to get up for many days. Sherem knew he was going to die, so he asked for the people to be called together so he could speak to them.

The next day the people gathered and Sherem spoke plainly unto them. He confessed that he had lied to them and he had been deceived by the devil. He taught them that truly Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was coming to earth. When Sherem finished his words, he died, but all the people knew Jacob's words about the coming of Jesus Christ were true. Jacob's people lived in happiness and peace for many years.

Enos Prays
(Book of Enos)

Jacob had a son named Enos, and Jacob taught him about God. Enos was like other boys; he loved to run and play. He did not think much about these things his father was saying. Enos grew to be a man, a man who was too busy for God.

One day when Enos went into the woods to hunt, suddenly, all the words of his father came to his mind: Enos, someday all who love God will live with Him in Heaven.

Enos regretted he had not taken time to think about God, and he wanted God to forgive him and desired to feel the love of God for himself.

Enos prayed all the day long and when the sun went down and the stars came out, Enos continued praying. Then Enos heard a voice: Enos, your sins are forgiven, because you believe in Christ even though you have never seen Him. Many years from now He will come to earth to teach His people.

After this experience, Enos began to think about his people, the Nephites. He knew that even though God had blessed them so much, sometimes they forgot Him. Enos began to pray for the Nephites. Again, the words of God came to him: I have given your brothers the Nephites this land. As long as they follow my commandments, I will bless their land. If they become wicked, much sorrow will come to this land.

Enos' heart was so full of love that he even began to pray for his enemies, the Lamanites. He asked God that someday they too would hear God's words and believe.

God answered Enos' prayer and told him: Someday they will be taught concerning the Lord and they will believe.

Enos spent the rest of his life teaching the Nephites what God had told him. The Nephites tried to tell the Lamanites about God, but they would not listen. The Lamanites hated the Nephites and wanted to fight them. Enos and his people did not lose hope, knowing someday, perhaps, long after they were gone the Lord would keep His promise to bless the Lamanites.

Before he died, Jacob passed on the job of keeping the plates to Enos. Enos faithfully engraved on the plates the words of God. When he grew old, Enos passed on the job of keeping the sacred records to his son. Therefore, for many generations this job passed from father to son.

THE NEPHITES JOINED BY THE MULEKITES

Finding the Land of Zarahemla

(Omni 1:19-34, 40-43)

It had now been almost four-hundred years since the Lord led the Nephites to the Promised Land. By this time, the majority of the Nephites had become wicked; and in their wicked ways, they wanted to injure those who continued to believe in God.

The leader of the Nephites was named King Mosiah, and he was numbered among the few that continued in faith. God warned Mosiah to take the believers and flee into the wilderness. Trusting God, Mosiah and his people left the land of Nephi and took the sacred records with them.

As they traveled in the wilderness, they found a new land filled with people. This new land was called Zarahemla and it was inhabited by a people who also came out of Jerusalem at the time King Zedekiah, King of Judah, was carried away into captivity.

There was one great difference between the people of Zarahemla and the Nephites; for the people of Zarahemla had

not brought with them any records containing the word of God. Without His word to teach them, they no longer believed in the God of their forefathers.

The people of Zarahemla and the people with Mosiah united themselves together as one people. They choose Mosiah to be their king. Mosiah taught the people of Zarahemla his language so they could learn about God from the sacred records.

Mosiah ruled the people of Zarahemla until he grew old; then his son Benjamin became their king. Like his father before him, King Benjamin continually taught his people the word of God from the brass plates.

Since the time of Jacob, the brass plates had been handed down from father to son and were now in the hands of a man named Amaleki, but Amaleki had no son to carry on the record. Knowing that King Benjamin was a righteous man, Amaleki gave him the plates.

King Benjamin

(Mosiah 1: 1-7, 16, 27-37, 49, 97, 102; Mosiah 2:21, 25-28; Mosiah 3:1-7)

Like all men, the day came that King Benjamin had grown old. He called his sons to him and instructed them that they must remember to teach the people the word of God handed down to them on the brass plates. Then he spoke to his son Mosiah. He told him that he would soon die and the kingdom would be his to rule over and instructed him to rule righteously. King Benjamin gave Mosiah the sacred records and the sword of Laban, which had also been handed down by Nephi from generation to generation. He also gave Mosiah the Liahona, which had led Lehi in the wilderness so long ago.

King Benjamin made one last request; he wanted to speak to the people. He ordered that they send messengers throughout the land and tell the people to gather at the Temple the following day. The people of Zarahemla loved King Benjamin, so they packed up their families and came quickly. When they arrived at the Temple, each family set up a tent and eagerly waited to hear the words of their king.

The gathering was so great, they had to build a tower for King Benjamin to stand on wherein he could look out upon the people. They could see and hear him as he delivered his final words.

The king said: My people, I have grown old and will soon go to my God. I want to talk to you this last time. In the night, an angel of the Lord came to me and he told me that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is soon coming to earth. I want to teach you how to live righteously so you will be ready for Him. You must pray every day. Help those who need your help, for when you serve others, you are serving God. Be kind to everyone. Parents, teach your children not to fight and quarrel, but to serve one another.

King Benjamin asked them: Do you believe my words?

The people cried back: We believe. The people believed so much that they made a covenant to serve and follow God all their lives.

Searching for the Lost People of Zarahemla

(Mosiah 4:5-8; Mosiah 5:1-19)

Only three years after Mosiah became king, his father, Benjamin, died. Mosiah was a good king and his people lived in peace and great happiness in the land.

Many years earlier, during the reign of Mosiah's father, King Benjamin, a small group of people wanted to leave and return to their former homeland. Forty-five people, led by a man named Zeniff, left Zarahemla to return to the land of Nephi. After many years passed away, the people of Zarahemla began to worry because they had not heard anything from Zeniff and his followers since they departed. The people inquired of King Mosiah as to what could have happened to Zeniff's people and asked the king to find them. King Mosiah sent sixteen men, led by Ammon, to look for Zeniff.

Ammon and his men searched for forty days before they arrived at their old land. Ammon saw the king of the land surrounded by his guards just outside the city walls. When Ammon and three of his men went to speak to them, the king's guards took them prisoner. After two days, they

brought Ammon and his men before King Limhi. The king told Ammon that he was the son of Noah and the grandson of Zeniff who came from Zarahemla.

Then the king demanded Ammon to tell him who he was and where he came from. When Ammon explained they were from Zarahemla and had come looking for the people who left with Zeniff, King Limhi rejoiced and commanded the guards to release the prisoners, for they were their brothers.

The Prophet Abinadi

(Mosiah 5:25-27; Mosiah 6: 1-23; Mosiah 7: 1-75, 100-110; Mosiah 8:11-13; Mosiah 9:8-27)

King Limhi sent a proclamation throughout the land for the people to gather. As he stood before them, he declared that they would soon be free from the Lamanites. Then the king told the story of how his people had become slaves to the Lamanites.

When King Limhi's grandfather, Zeniff, and his small band of people had found the land of Nephi, the Lamanites had moved onto the land and were living there. Zeniff made friends with the Lamanites, but Zeniff did not know that Laman, the King of the Lamanites, was just being deceptive about their friendship. King Laman gave Zeniff and his little group some land where they planted crops and raised herds. For twelve years, they lived in peace with the Lamanites, but then the Lamanite soldiers began to raid their farms and take their crops and herds. With God's help, Zeniff and his people were able to fight off the Lamanites.

Zeniff grew old and his son, Noah, became king. Noah was not like his father; rather, he was an evil king and had many wives. He made his people work hard, and then taxed them so he could build big beautiful buildings. King Noah got rid of all of God's chosen priests, and then chose his own priests who were evil like him. The king and his priests did not work. Instead, they just took money from the people and spent all their time serving themselves. King Noah was full of pride and boasted that fifty of his soldiers were stronger than a thousand of the soldiers of the Lamanites. Because of the

bad example of the king and priests, many of the people began to do evil.

God sent a prophet named Abinadi to the land of Nephi to warn the people to repent and follow God, or they would become slaves to the Lamanites. King Noah and the people refused to heed the prophet's words. Noah ordered the people to capture Abinadi and kill him, but God's protection was on Abinadi and he escaped out of the land.

Two years passed and God commanded Abinadi to return and give one last warning to the land of Nephi. Abinadi warned the people that since they had not repented, they would be afflicted with many problems: their crops would fail, their king would die, and they all would become slaves to the Lamanites.

Abinadi was captured and thrown into prison. When Abinadi was brought before the priests they tried to trick him with their questions, but God gave Abinadi the words to speak. He told the priests: You are teaching the people to disobey God's laws.

The king was angered and ordered them to take Abinadi away and kill him. Abinadi warned them: Do not touch me. Abinadi had not yet finished speaking the message from God. His face glowed with a bright light and the priests could see God's power was with Abinadi so they were afraid to touch him. Abinadi taught the priests of Noah that God was going to send His Son, Jesus Christ, to earth and many more things about the way God wanted them to live. Then he fell silent, for Abinadi finished the job God sent him to do.

King Noah sent Abinadi back to prison for three days before calling him back to see him. The king told Abinadi that if he took back all the words he had spoken, he could go free. Abinadi refused and told the king he could not take back the words he had spoken concerning these people because they were true. Abinadi warned the king that if he killed him, he would be shedding innocent blood. Such an action would stand as a witness against him before God.

King Noah was about to release Abinadi, for he believed his words, but the priests spoke evil and accusing words against Abinadi and demanded his death.

Abinadi was taken out, tied to a pole and a fire was kindled beneath him. Abinadi was not afraid, for he knew he would soon be with God. Before he died, Abinadi told the people: Even as you have done unto me, so shall it come to pass unto your seed to suffer the pains I suffer, even the pains of death by fire.

Alma Believes

(Mosiah 9: 1-7, 28-48, 65-73)

When Abinadi had been teaching the priests of Noah, one young priest named Alma quietly listened to his words. While Abinadi was in prison, Alma begged King Noah to spare the prophet's life. This made King Noah so angry that he tried to kill Alma.

Alma ran from King Noah's palace and hid in the forest. While he was hiding, he wrote down all the words of Abinadi. Alma repented to God for all the evil things he did as a priest of King Noah. Alma secretly taught the people the words of Abinadi. Many believed and they began to meet together in the forest to learn more about God. They gathered near a fountain of clear water called the Waters of Mormon where two hundred and four people were baptized. God called more men to be His ministers, and the church began to grow until there were about four hundred and fifty souls.

Somehow, King Noah learned about Alma and the other believers meeting in the forest, so he sent his soldiers to kill them. God warned Alma of the coming of the king's army and told them they must leave. The believers packed their tents and went into the wilderness. When the soldiers of King Noah arrived at the Waters of Mormon, no one was there. God had saved His people.

The Prophecy of Abinadi Is Fulfilled

(Mosiah 9:75-100)

The citizens in the land of Nephi soon began to protest the taxes they were forced to pay to King Noah. A strong man named Gideon gathered a small group and they plotted to kill King Noah. One day Gideon drew out his sword and began the attack on the king. As their swords clashed, King Noah

tried to escape and ran up into a high tower with Gideon chasing after him. Just as Gideon was about to kill the king, they saw the Lamanite armies coming. King Noah begged Gideon not to kill him so he could save his people from the Lamanites. King Noah's concern was not truly for his people. Rather, he wanted to save himself. Gideon believed King Noah and let him live.

King Noah commanded his people to flee from the approaching army. However, the women and children could not keep up with the men and were slowing them down. The king told the men to leave their wives and children behind, and some of the men left their families and ran away with King Noah. Other men would not leave their families, so they chose to stay and perish with them.

When the Lamanites came, the men sent the women out to beg the Lamanites for mercy. The Lamanites were charmed by the beauty of the women and agreed to allow them to live in peace in the land under the conditions that every year they would give the Lamanite king one half of all their gold, silver and everything they possessed.

Out in the wilderness, the men who fled with King Noah wanted to return to their families, but the King would not let them go. Eventually, the men rebelled against King Noah and they burned him to death, even as Abinadi had prophesied. The soldiers returned to the land of Nephi and to their families.

Limhi Becomes King

(Mosiah 9:103-133)

When the people of the land of Nephi learned that King Noah was dead, they chose his son, Limhi, to become their king. Limhi was not like his father; he was a good man. Under his reign, the Nephites lived in peace for two years.

Not all of King Noah's men returned to the land. His wicked priests feared if they came back, the people would kill them, so they hid in the wilderness. One day, they saw a group of young Lamanite girls and they kidnapped them. When the king of the Lamanites learned the girls were

missing he thought it was the Nephites who had kidnapped them, so he sent his army to attack them.

The Nephites, seeing the Lamanites coming, made ready for the attack and were able to defeat them. King Limhi's soldiers found the Lamanite king lying on the ground, almost dead from his wounds. They carried him to King Limhi.

When King Limhi demanded to know why the Lamanites had broken their promise to let them live in peace, he learned about the Lamanites' daughters being stolen and carried away into the wilderness. King Limhi searched the land to learn who had done this terrible thing, and Gideon remembered the wicked priests of King Noah were afraid to return, and they still lived in the wilderness. King Limhi told the Lamanite king about the priests of King Noah and again the Lamanites made a promise to let the Nephites live in peace, but as slaves, just as Abinadi had prophesied.

Twenty-Four Golden Plates

(Mosiah 5:60-73; Mosiah 9:166-170; Mosiah 10:1-19)

While his people were in slavery to the Lamanites, King Limhi sent men to find Zarahemla and ask for help. They could not find Zarahemla, but they did discover the ruins of another people who had lived in the land. In these ruins were twenty-four gold plates with strange writing on them. The men returned to the land of Nephi with the golden plates, and King Limhi kept these records hoping someday he would find someone who could understand what was written on them.

When King Limhi finished telling Ammon the story of how his people became slaves to the Lamanites, he told him about the mysterious golden plates and asked if he knew anyone who could read them. Ammon told Limhi that Mosiah, the king of Zarahemla, had a special gift from God which allowed him to read unknown languages.

Though Ammon could not help King Limhi to understand the unknown language on the golden plates, he helped King Limhi and his people learn about God. He taught them the words of Zarahemla's wise King Benjamin and about the coming of Jesus. King Limhi and many of his people were

sorry for all the evil things they had done, and they made a covenant with God.

It was time to find a way to escape from the Lamanites. The Lamanites were too strong to fight and their guards surrounded the land, so Gideon devised a plan. When it was time to give half of their wine to the Lamanite king, they should make it extra strong so the Lamanites would become drunk and fall into a deep sleep. While they were sleeping, King Limhi and his people would escape.

King Limhi told the Lamanites that he was sending extra wine as a present. The greedy Lamanites drank all the wine and fell into a drunken sleep. The people of Limhi gathered their families and all their belongings, and then quietly left the land of Nephi. They took with them the records written on golden plates they had found in the wilderness.

God blessed their journey and the Lamanites only looked for their lost slaves for two days, and then gave up. After traveling many days, Ammon and the people of King Limhi returned the land of Zarahemla

Alma in the Land of Helam

(Mosiah 11:1-5, 16-22, 28-76, 81-104)

The people of King Limhi were free at last, but Alma and the other believers who fled into the wilderness to escape King Noah had found a new land where they planted crops and built homes. They called this new land, Helam

As people were working in their fields, they saw an army of Lamanites coming toward them. Though the Lamanites came into the land, they did not kill anyone. The Lamanites told Alma that if he showed them the way to Zarahemla they would let them go free, but after Alma showed the Lamanites the way to Zarahemla they made Alma's people their prisoners.

The Lamanites found King Noah's wicked priests who had married the Lamanite girls they kidnapped. The Lamanites and the priests of King Noah had become friends, joining against the people of Nephi.

One priest, named Amulon, remembered when he and Alma were both priests of King Noah. He remembered Alma

was the only one who had believed the prophecies of Abinadi, and those prophecies had come true. Instead of being sorry for his wickedness, Amulon hated Alma more. The Lamanites put Amulon in charge of the land of Helam, and he made the people of Helam his slaves.

The day came when Alma told the people they must prepare to leave; God was going to deliver them. When the time came, God made the Lamanites fall into a deep sleep and Alma's people left the land of Helam. They traveled for many days until they reached the land of Zarahemla. All the people of Zarahemla were back together at last.

Even some of the children of the wicked priests of Noah had become believers and followed Alma to Zarahemla. King Mosiah wanted all the people of Zarahemla to know how God brought them all back together. He gathered the people and read to them the records of Zeniff. The people of Zarahemla learned how Zeniff's people became wicked and how they had become slaves because of their wickedness. They heard the story of how God forgave them and saved them from their enemies when they turned to Him. Then King Mosiah sent Alma among the people to teach them more about God. King Limhi and all his people believed Alma's words and were baptized.

Alma and King Mosiah worked together to care for the church and the land. God blessed the people and they lived happily for many years.

The Rebellion of Mosiah and Alma's Sons

(Mosiah 11:103-109, 159-206)

As time passed, some of the children which were born in the land of Zarahemla had forgotten what King Benjamin had taught them and how God saved Alma. Some began to rebel against the church. Although they had been taught about God, even the sons of King Mosiah and Alma rebelled. They secretly tried to destroy the church by telling lies against the church and against God. One day, as Alma and the sons of Mosiah were walking down the road to spread more lies against God, an angel of God suddenly appeared from out of the clouds. The angel spoke in a voice like thunder, which

shook the ground beneath their feet. Alma and the sons of Mosiah were so frightened that they fell on the ground.

The angel commanded Alma to stand up and then asked him why he was fighting against the church. Alma was warned that he would be destroyed if he continued trying to destroy the church. The young men were so frightened they fell on the ground again. Finally, all but Alma were able to stand. Alma could not speak or move and his friends had to carry him to his father, the High Priest, and told him what had happened.

Alma, the father of the stricken Alma, called the people and all the ministers of God together. For two days they fasted and prayed that Alma would be able to speak and move again.

After two days, young Alma stood and spoke to the people and confessed his sins and confessed that he believed in Jesus Christ. Alma and the sons of Mosiah began to travel around the land telling people how sorry they were for their lies. They told people the truth about God and that Jesus was coming. Many people believed because of these young men.

The Reign of Judges

(Mosiah 12:1-13; Mosiah 13:3-23, 34, 62-65)

All the young men who were on the road that day had changed. The sons of King Mosiah came to their father and told him how sad it made them to think that any soul would be lost. They wanted to go to the Lamanites and teach them about God. The king knew how dangerous it was for his sons to go to the land of the Lamanites, but God reassured Mosiah that He would be with them and many people would believe in their words. So the sons of King Mosiah went to a land where people hated them so much that they wanted to kill them.

In the land of Zarahemla, times were changing. Mosiah was growing old and it was time for someone else to lead the kingdom. He asked the people who they wanted be their next king. They choose Mosiah's son, Aaron, but Aaron did not want to be king; rather, he wanted to preach to the Lamanites.

None of Mosiah's other sons wanted to be king; all of them wanted to spend their lives teaching people about God.

King Mosiah told the people that it would be better for them not to have a king. He explained how a good king helps his people, but a wicked king can destroy his people. Then he told them to choose godly men to be judges. The people agreed and a group of judges were chosen.

Young Alma changed so much that God called him to be a minister and he was chosen to be the chief judge in the land.

The Priestcraft of Nehor

(Alma 1:3-24)

Alma was a wise and fair judge. One day a man named Nehor was brought before Alma to be judged because he had been going through the land teaching cunning words to the people. He taught them that they did not have to keep God's laws, and God would forgive them so they could do whatever they desired.

Nehor also taught the people that God's ministry should be paid and they did not have to work for their own support. Many people liked Nehor because of his flattering words. He started his own church and they began to pay him to teach them.

One day as Nehor was preaching, Gideon stood up to him and told him to stop teaching such lies. Nehor was so angry that he pulled out his sword and killed Gideon.

Nehor was brought before Judge Alma. This is the first time priestcraft (*receiving money, honor or glory for preaching*), had come among this people. Alma told Nehor that he was guilty of priestcraft and he was guilty of killing a righteous man. It was the law in Zarahemla that anyone who murdered someone must be put to death. Nehor was sentenced to die. Even after Nehor was dead, some of the people still believed in priestcraft.

The Church Becomes Proud

(Alma 2:1-28)

It was the sixth year of the Reign of the Judges. These were happy times in Zarahemla with no contentions or wars.

All were thankful to God that He delivered them from their enemies. Three thousand people joined the church, and the people of the church were happy and prosperous.

After a few years of peace and prosperity, things began to change. Instead of being grateful to God for their blessings, the Nephites became a proud people. They began to spend all their money on beautiful clothing and looked down on people who could not afford the beautiful silks and linens. They began to be cruel to the poor and would not help them. They became so proud that they fought and argued with anyone who did not believe just as they did. The people of the church became even more proud than those who did not belong to the church. The church was setting a bad example for everyone.

Seeing the wickedness of the church grieved Alma, and he knew he must do something to save his people. He chose Nephiah, a godly man, to take his place as judge. From that day on, Alma went through the land preaching.

The Sons of Mosiah

(Alma 12:10-19, 27-58)

The sons of King Mosiah left their father and the chance to be king and set out for the land of the Lamanites. As they traveled through the wilderness, they fasted and prayed that God would give them the power of His Spirit to preach His truth. God assured them that they would be used to save many souls.

When they reached the borders of the land of the Lamanites, they separated and each man went his own way. One day as Ammon was traveling he was surrounded by Lamanite soldiers. They tied Ammon up and brought him before their king, a man named Lamoni.

King Lamoni demanded to know what Ammon was doing there. Ammon explained that he wanted to live in their land, perhaps for the rest of his life. The king was impressed with Ammon so much, he offered him one of his daughters as a wife. Ammon declined the king's offer of a wife, and then Ammon offered to be the king's servant.

King Lamoni put Ammon to work as a shepherd. One day as Ammon and the other shepherds were herding the sheep to

water, a band of men appeared. These men frightened the sheep, causing them to be scattered in all directions. With the flocks scattered, the shepherds were afraid and began to complain and weep in fear that king Lamoni would slay them. Ammon was not afraid and rejoiced in the chance to show the power of God unto his fellow servants.

Ammon told his fellow servants: Do not be afraid. We must go search for the king's sheep and gather them back together, then the king will not slay us.

The shepherds gathered the flocks back to the water, and when the bandits returned Ammon confronted them. The bandits thought any one of them could kill this one man; however, the power of God was with Ammon. As each man lifted his sword against Ammon, Ammon cut off his arm. None of the thieves were strong enough to kill Ammon, so they ran away. Ammon finished his work with the sheep, then returned to the king's palace, and began taking care of the king's horses.

King Lamoni

(Alma 12:60-178)

When King Lamoni's shepherds told the king what Ammon had done, the king was amazed and thought Ammon must be more than a man; perhaps he was a Great Spirit who came to punish them for all their murders. The king told his servants he did not know if Ammon was a Great Spirit or a man, but he did know that no servant had been so faithful, and he could not be slain by the enemies of the king, neither can the king's flocks be scattered when he was there. When the king asked where Ammon was, the servants told him Ammon was taking care of his horses.

When Ammon finished his chores, he came to speak to the king. King Lamoni was frightened by Ammon's power and he did not speak. Ammon turned to leave, but the king ordered a servant to tell Ammon to stay. Still the king did not speak for an hour. As Ammon waited, God showed him the king's thoughts.

Ammon knew the king was wondering where his power came from and if he was a god. Ammon told the king he was

only a man like him. The king offered half of his kingdom to Ammon if he only told him how he got this power.

Ammon began to teach King Lamoni everything about God. He taught how God created Adam, the first man, the story of Lehi's great journey from Jerusalem, and all the scriptures written on the Brass Plates, which Lehi brought from Jerusalem. Ammon explained how God would soon be sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to the earth.

When King Lamoni heard these words, he knew in his heart they were true. He was so sorry for all the people he had killed. King Lamoni cried out: Oh, Lord, have mercy on me. Then the king was overcome with the Spirit of God and he sank to the floor. The king's servants took him and laid him on his bed, and he did not move for two days, making many believe he was dead.

When the servants told the queen about Ammon being a powerful man of God, the queen sent for him. When Ammon came before the queen, she told him how many people believed the king was dead, but she believed he was alive. Ammon assured her the king was alive and tomorrow he would rise up from his bed.

Just as Ammon prophesied, the next day King Lamoni stood up and told the people he had seen the Savior, Jesus Christ. He explained Jesus was coming to save all who believed in Him. The king and queen's hearts were so full of happiness that they both fell to the ground. Ammon's heart was overcome with joy that these Lamanites, who had been so wicked, had found God; he too fell to the earth. Even the king's servants were overcome by God's Spirit and collapsed upon the earth.

Only one servant, named Abish, was not overcome by the Spirit. Many years before, her father had been given a vision from God. Her family all believed in the Lord, but they kept it a secret. Abish thought this was her chance to show the Lamanites God's power. So she ran from house to house telling the people to come and see what the Lord had done for the king and queen.

People came running to the palace to see, but found the king collapsed on the floor and thought God was punishing

him for all his murders. Others believed it was the Nephite, Ammon, who brought evil upon their people. One man stepped forward to kill Ammon as he lay helpless on the floor. But as the man lifted his sword, God struck him dead.

The people then thought the Nephite must be a god, and they all began to argue among themselves.

Abish touched the queen's hand and she stood. The queen praised God and asked for mercy on the people. When the queen took the king's hand, he too stood. The king told his people what he learned as he was carried away in the Spirit of the Lord. Then, Ammon arose and he too began to teach the people the ways of God. Many believed and were baptized; it was the beginning of a great work among the Lamanite people.

The King Believes

(Alma 13: 23, 30-68; Alma 14:1-9)

Ammon was led by the Lord back to the land of Ishmael, as God sent Aaron and his other brothers to the land of Nephi, where Lamoni's father, the king of all the land waited. Aaron and his brothers went to the king and bowed before him, then, introduced themselves as the brothers of Ammon. They offered to be the king's servants, but the king only asked them to stay and talk with him about the Great Spirit which Ammon had taught Lamoni. Aaron taught the king how God created all things, both in heaven and in the earth and about the plan of redemption God had prepared through His son, Jesus Christ, from the foundation of the world.

After Aaron had spoken all these things, the king asked what he should do that he could have this eternal life. The king told Aaron: I will give up everything which I possess and forsake my kingdom to know such joy.

Aaron instructed the king in humility and repentance: You must bow before God and call on His name in faith, confessing your sins.

The king bowed before the Lord and cried: God, will you make yourself known unto me? I will give away all my sins to know you that I may be raised from the dead, and be saved at the last day.

When the king said these words, he was overcome with the Spirit of God and dropped to the floor as if he were dead. The servants ran to tell the queen.

When she came and saw the king on the floor as if he were dead, and Aaron and his brethren standing as though they had been the cause of his fall, she was angry with them, and commanded the servants to kill them. Now the servants had seen the cause of the king's fall, therefore they feared to lay their hands on Aaron and his brethren and they pled with the queen, saying: Why do you command us that we should slay these men, when one of them is mightier than all of us?

The queen saw the fear of the servants and she also began to fear some evil would come upon her. She commanded her servants to go and call the people, that they might slay Aaron and his brethren.

Aaron saw the determination of the queen, and also knowing the hardness of the people's hearts, he feared the multitude would come together and there should be a great contention and a disturbance among them. Aaron put forth his hand and told the king to stand. The king stood upon his feet, receiving his strength in the presence of the queen and many of the servants.

The king stood before the people and began to minister unto them. And he did minister unto them insomuch that his whole household were converted unto the Lord. When the people arrived, the king stood and spoke to them and also caused Aaron and his brethren to stand forth in the midst of the multitude to preach the word unto them.

The king issued a proclamation throughout the land among his people, that no harm should come to the sons of Mosiah and they were free to preach anywhere in the land. Aaron and his brothers traveled to many cities and established churches throughout the lands of the Lamanites.

ANTI-NEPHI-LEHI

Burying the Weapons of War

(Alma 14:17-20, 23-55)

The Lamanites who were converted to the Lord made a great change and were no more an idle people. They became friendly with their former enemies, the Nephites. They had changed so much that they desired to have a name which would distinguish them from their Lamanite brethren. They chose to be called the Anti-Nephi-Lehi. The king who ruled over all the land was an old man and he knew he would soon die; thus, he conferred the kingdom upon his son and he called his name Anti-Nephi-Lehi.

The Lamanites who rejected the message of God became angry with the new believers. They gathered an army to come to war against the people of God. Anti-Nephi-Lehi and the sons of Mosiah gathered in the land of Ishmael to discuss with King Lamoni what they should do to defend against the Lamanites.

Now there was not one soul among all the people who had been converted unto the Lord that would take up arms against their brethren. Their king commanded them they should not even make preparations for war. They gathered and buried all their weapons of war deep in the earth; then they vowed to die before taking up their swords again.

This did not stop the armies of the Lamanites from coming to battle. In the land of Ishmael, the footsteps of a marching army were heard coming closer and closer. When the army arrived, the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi dropped to their knees and called upon God. The Lamanites attacked and began to slaughter the believers with their swords. When some of the Lamanites saw their former brothers refusing to fight and praising God even as they died, their hearts were touched and they repented of the thing which they had done and threw their weapons down. That day more than a thousand Lamanites were brought to the knowledge of God. More numerous were the Lamanites who came to the truth of God than the number of believers who were killed.

Return to Zarahemla

(Alma 15:1-31)

For awhile the Lamanites stayed away, but eventually they returned to attack the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi and began to destroy them. The Anti-Nephi-Lehi refused to take up their weapons and suffered themselves to be destroyed by their enemies. Ammon and his brothers could not bear to see this destruction of their new brothers and they said to the king: Let us gather the people together and go down to Zarahemla. But the king feared the Nephites would remember their many murders and would want to kill them.

Ammon said: I will go and inquire of the Lord. If he says unto us, go down unto our brethren, will you go? And the king said: If the Lord says for us to go we will go down unto our brethren, and we will be their slaves until we repair unto them the many murders and sins which we have committed against them.

Ammon told the king: It is against the law of our brethren that there should be any slaves among them. So let us go down and rely upon the mercies of our brethren.

The king said: Inquire of the Lord, and if He says unto us to go, we will go. Otherwise we will perish in the land.

Ammon inquired of the Lord, and the Lord said to him: Get this people out of this land. Blessed are this people in this generation, and I will preserve them. Ammon went and told the king all the words which the Lord revealed to him.

The people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi gathered all their flocks and herds, and then traveled to the border of Zarahemla. There they anxiously waited while Ammon went to speak to the chief judge of the land. The judge sent a proclamation throughout the land asking the people if they would accept the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi as their brothers and give them a place in the land.

When Ammon returned to the border camp, he brought a message from the people of Zarahemla: We will give you, our new brothers, the land of Jershon. We will protect you with our armies. We ask only that you supply food for our army. What joy there was among the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi.

As they settled into their new home in the land of Jershon, the Anti-Nephi-Lehites came to be called the people of Ammon, or the Ammonites, and they were known from that time on for their great faith in God, their hard work, their honesty and their goodness to all.

God Silences Korihor

(Alma 16:6-77)

All the people of Zarahemla lived in peace for a time. Then in the seventeenth year of the Reign of the Judges, an evil man named Korihor came into the land. He began to teach that the prophecies of Christ's coming were nothing but foolish traditions. He told the people: Do whatever you want because when a person dies, that is the end. Many Nephites believed the words of Korihor.

The faithful people who did not believe Korihor's lies tied him up and brought him before the High Priest, named Giddonah. The High Priest asked Korihor: Why do you go about perverting the ways of the Lord? Why do you teach this people that there shall be no Christ, to interrupt their rejoicings? Why do you speak against all the prophecies of the holy prophets?

And Korihor answered Giddonah: Because I do not teach the foolish traditions of your fathers, and because I do not teach this people to bind themselves down under the foolish ordinances and performances which are laid down by ancient priests, to gain power and authority over them, to keep them in ignorance. You say that those ancient prophecies are true, but I say you do not know that they are true. You say Christ shall come, but I say you do not know that there shall be a Christ. And you say Christ shall be slain for the sins of the world and lead away this people with the foolish traditions of your fathers, and according to your own desires.

Then Korihor was sent to the land of Zarahemla to be brought before Alma, the chief judge. Korihor spoke out in rebellion against Alma: You only teach about Christ to keep people under your control. You sit back while they work, then you take their money.

This was untrue. Alma had never taken money for serving the Lord but had always worked with his own hands to support himself. Then Alma asked Korihor: Do you believe there is a God? Korihor answered: No! But Alma knew the thoughts of Korihor's heart and that he did believe.

Alma spoke unto Korihor: And now, what evidence do you have there is no God, or that Christ will not come? I say you have no evidence, save it be your word only. I have all things as a testimony that these things are true; and you also have all things as a testimony unto you that they are true. Will you deny them? You are possessed with a lying spirit, and have put off the Spirit of God. The devil has power over you, and he carries you about, working devices, that he may destroy the children of God.

Korihor spoke: I will deny, except you shall show me a sign that I may be convinced there is a God and he hath power, and then will I be convinced of the truth of your words.

Alma was grieved because of the hardness of Korihor's heart and that he resisted the spirit of truth. Alma told Korihor it would be better that his soul should be lost, than he should bring many souls down to destruction by lying and flattering words.

Alma told Korihor: If you deny again, God shall smite you, and you will become dumb, and you will never open your mouth any more, so you can not deceive this people any more. Now when Alma said these words, Korihor was struck dumb.

Alma handed Korihor a note: God has showed you a sign, do you believe? Korihor wrote back: The devil came to me in the form of an angel. He told me to go gather the people that follow an unknown god. Please ask God to take this curse from me.

Alma knew that if Korihor could talk he would return to his old ways and teach his lies once again so the curse was not taken from Korihor. When Korihor's followers saw him, they knew he was being punished for his lies and they returned to the Lord. Korihor left Zarahemla and went to another land. He went from house to house begging for

money until the day he was trampled to death by a group of angry people. So we see the end of him who perverts the ways of the Lord; and thus we see that the devil will not support his children at the last day, but doth speedily drag them down to hell.

The Humble Believe

(Alma 16:78-134, 175-181, 219-222, 242-250)

Soon after hearing of Korihor's death, Alma learned that another man named Zoram was trying to destroy the church. Now, Zoram led a group of people to the land of Antionum to start a new church wherein he would teach false doctrines. Alma wanted to save the people who now called themselves Zoramites, so Alma, two of his sons and some other ministers went to the land of Antionum to preach.

When the men arrived in Antionum, they saw the grand churches the Zoramites had built. In the center of each church was a high platform they called a "Rameumpton." This Rameumpton was only big enough to hold one person. The people went to church dressed in fine clothing and were adorned with gold and silver. During the church service one person at a time would climb on the Rameumpton. He would raise his hands and say the exact same prayer: Oh God, we thank you for separating us from our brothers. We thank you for choosing us to be a special people who do not believe in the foolish idea that Christ is coming. We thank you that we are going to be saved, while all around us are going to hell. After the people offered their prayers they returned to their homes and never spoke of God again until they assembled themselves once again, to the Rameumpton, to offer the same prayer.

When Alma saw this his heart was grieved. He could see these people of Antionum spoke to God with their mouths, but they did not care about Him in their hearts. They only cared about their beautiful clothes and their gold jewelry. God gave Alma and the other ministers the power of His spirit to preach to the Zoramites. They separated and went throughout the land teaching in homes and preaching in churches.

One day, as Alma was speaking on top of the hill named Onidah, a great crowd of people came to him, and many of them were the poor. One of their leaders among the poor people told Alma that because they were poor, the priests would not allow them in the church. We have no place to worship God, they said: What shall we do?

When Alma looked at the faces of these poor people he rejoiced. He could see they had been humbled by their troubles. They were ready to hear the true gospel. He stopped talking to the rest of the crowd and talked just to these poor people.

Now when Alma heard this he said: Do you think you can only worship God one day a week at church? You can pray in your homes, in your fields and over your crops. Pray for your families and against the power of the devil. It is well that you are cast out of your synagogues, that you may be humble, and that you may learn wisdom. It is because you are cast out, that you are despised by your brethren, because of your exceeding poverty you are brought to a lowliness of heart, and made to be humble. Now because you are compelled to be humble, you are blessed. Sometimes, if a man is compelled to be humbled, he seeks repentance. Now, I say to you, because you were compelled to be humble, you were blessed. Do you not think that they who truly humble themselves because of God's word are more blessed? He who truly humbles himself, repents of his sins, and endures to the end, shall be blessed; even much more blessed than those who are compelled to be humble, because of their exceeding poverty. Blessed are those who humble themselves and believe in the word of God, and are baptized without stubbornness of heart.

The rulers and priests were very angry because they knew they would lose their power if people followed Alma. After Alma and his brethren returned to Jershon, the Zoramite leaders went around privately asking people if they believed in the words of Alma. Those who believed were cast out of the land. The good people of Jershon remembered what it was like to leave their homeland, so they took in the Zoramites.

War with the Zoramites

(Alma 16:247-255; Alma 20:17-100; Alma 21:1-2)

The evil Zoramites were not satisfied with forcing the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi to leave the land. Satan stirred up even more anger in their hearts and the Zoramites joined with the Lamanites to come to war against the land of Jershon. The land of Jershon was on the border of the Lamanite kingdom and was an easy place to attack.

When the people of Jershon saw the Zoramites and Lamanites preparing for war, they fled to another part of the land. The Nephite armies moved into Jershon and prepared to meet the Lamanites in battle. The Nephites were ready to battle as they followed their chief captain, a twenty-five year old man named Moroni.

The Lamanites came against the Nephites to battle during the eighteenth year of the Reign of the Judges. The Lamanites were dressed in thin pieces of cloth. The first sight of the Nephite army filled their hearts with fear. The Nephites were wearing thick clothing and metal breastplates. Glistening in the sun were hundreds, perhaps thousands of metal shields. The leader of the Lamanite army, a man named Zerahemnah, ordered his men to change course and attack another part of the land.

The army of the Nephites had something even more powerful than breastplates and shields to protect them; they had the power of God. They had been taught by God that if they did not start a war, they had the right to defend their church, their families and their land. God told the Nephites where the Lamanites were planning to strike. As the Lamanites prepared to attack they saw they were encircled by the armies of Moroni. The Lamanites were terrified.

When Moroni saw how frightened the army of Zerahemnah was, he commanded his army to stop fighting. Moroni called out to Zerahemnah: We do not want to kill you. You can see that the power of God is with us. This is because of our faith in Christ. Promise not to fight us and we will set you free.

Zerahemnah gave up his sword but when Moroni saw this he said: I will not set you free unless you promise never to come to war against us again.

Zerahemnah picked up his sword and commanded his soldiers to fight. Some of the soldiers would not fight, but others stood with Zerahemnah and began to fight once again. When Zerahemnah saw that soon all his men would all be killed, he surrendered and made a covenant of peace. The Nephites rejoiced and gave thanks to God for delivering them from their enemies.

The Title of Liberty

(Alma 21: 3-7, 16-72)

One day, Alma, the High Priest, called his sons to him: Helaman, my son, the responsibility of keeping the sacred records is now yours. Remember my son, the blessing and cursing of this land. All who live here shall be blessed if they serve God, but cursed if they turn to wickedness.

After Alma said goodbye to his sons and his people, he left them to preach the gospel of Christ throughout the land and was never heard from again. Some in the land believed that because of Alma's great righteousness he did not die, but was taken straight to God.

Helaman and the other sons of Alma began to teach and strengthen the church. The people of Zarahemla had become very prosperous and sadly, some of them had become proud of their riches and forgot God. When Helaman and the other ministry preached to them, they turned away and would not listen. An evil man named Amalickiah stirred up these proud people, telling them: If you make me king I will give you power. Many left God and the church and followed Amalickiah.

Commander Moroni was determined to stop Amalickiah from destroying their freedom. Tearing off a piece of his coat Moroni wrote on it: *In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives and our children.* Moroni fastened the torn piece of cloth on the end of a pole and he called it the "Title of Liberty." Then Moroni bowed to the

earth in mighty prayer: Oh, God, bless and protect us as long as a band of Christians remains in the land.

Moroni went forth among the people, waving the Title of Liberty and announcing: Whoever is willing to fight in the strength of the Lord let them enter into a covenant. The Christians grabbed their swords and came running. They made a covenant by tearing their coats just as Moroni had done and threw the pieces of their torn clothing at Moroni's feet.

The people exclaimed: If we break God's laws let us be torn just as this cloth. Moroni went through the land and gathered all that were willing to stand against Amalickiah.

When the people of Amalickiah saw they were outnumbered, they fled toward the land of Nephi where the Lamanites lived. Moroni knew if Amalickiah joined the Lamanites he would stir them up to make war again. Moroni's army stopped the followers of Amalickiah and took many of them prisoner, but Amalickiah escaped with a few of his men.

The Title of Liberty waved from the top of every high tower in the land of Zarahemla. Once again there was peace in the land.

Moroni Prepares for Battle

(Alma 21:78-186; Alma 22:1-24)

While the Nephites were living in peace, Amalickiah was slowly taking over the land of Nephi where the Lamanites lived. By his deceit and murder, Amalickiah became King of the Lamanites. Amalickiah wanted even more power; he wanted to make the Nephites his slaves. So as the new king, he stirred up the Lamanites to make war with the Nephites.

While Amalickiah was deceiving the Lamanites, Moroni was preparing his people for war. He made each Nephite city into a fortress by heaping great mounds of dirt around them. Moroni did not like bloodshed, but he was willing to fight if he must. His heart was full of thanksgiving to God, for the many blessings given to the people of Zarahemla. He had great faith that if the Nephites obeyed God's commands He

would protect them by telling them when to flee and when to fight.

When the Lamanites attacked, they were amazed to see the Nephite cities could not be conquered. As the Lamanites tried to enter the cities over the great banks of dirt, the Nephites showered them with arrows and stones. More than a thousand of the Lamanites were killed. Though some of the Nephites were wounded, not one of them lost his life. When the Lamanite soldiers saw their chief captains had been killed, they fled into the wilderness. When they came to King Amalickiah they told him about their defeat, he was very angry and cursed God, then swore to kill Moroni.

While Amalickiah was cursing God, the Nephites were thanking Him for delivering them from their enemies. The Nephites prospered and began to build cities. One great city was named after their beloved commander, Moroni. How merciful and just God had been to His people.

Defeating the King-Men

(Alma 22:38-44; Alma 23:1-44)

In the twenty and fifth year of the Reign of the Judges, Pahoran was the chief judge of the land. He was a good and righteous judge. In that year a small group of people wanted to change the just laws of the Nephites. They came to Pahoran with their complaints, but Pahoran ruled: Our laws will stand.

These rebels were so angry that they wanted to overthrow the government and establish a king, and they called themselves “King-men.” The people who wanted to keep the laws that made them free to worship God called themselves “Freemen.” A vote was taken to decide if they would have a king or not. The vote of the freemen won; there would be no king and Pahoran remained in the judgment seat.

The King-men were a rich and proud people who wanted power over others. This was a very bad time to have these disagreements within the land since Amalickiah was again stirring up the Lamanites to battle. When the King-men learned the Lamanites were coming they were happy and said: We will not fight for Pahoran, let his government fall.

When Moroni saw the people he had fought so hard to protect would not defend their country, he was very angry. He sent a message to Pahoran: Give me the power to make these King-men support their country. Pahoran sent a message to Moroni granting him this power. Moroni's army marched against the King-men, and four thousand King-men were killed. The remaining King-men agreed to join with their brothers who were fighting bravely for their country.

Helaman's Two Thousand Sons

(Alma 22:27-33; Alma 23:40-41; Alma 24: 63-79;
Alma 26:1-66)

While Moroni was busy fighting the King-men, the Lamanites were able to attack and conquer many cities. Amalickiah was killed, and his brother Ammoron took command of the Lamanite armies. His hatred was as great as his brother's towards the Nephites.

When the people of Ammon saw their Nephite brothers fighting and dying for them, they were about to take up their swords again. When Helaman saw this, he stopped them: You made a vow to God not to take up weapons of war to shed blood.

The sons of the Ammonites stepped forward: We have not taken the vow which our fathers took and we will fight to protect our freedom. These two thousand young men asked Helaman to be their leader and they followed him into battle. Though they had never fought before, they fought with great bravery and were not afraid to fight or even die. Their mothers had taught them that if they put their faith in God, that He would deliver them. God did protect them, and not one of Helaman's two thousand brave sons fell in battle.

Protected By a Circle of Fire

(Helaman 2:32-118)

Helaman had two sons of his own he named Lehi and Nephi. When Helaman grew old and died, his son, Nephi took his place as Chief Judge in the land. Nephi was a good and righteous judge. Because of their great riches, the people had become very proud and rebellious. In the fifty and seventh

year of the Reign of the Judges, the Lamanites attacked them again. Because of their wickedness, the Nephites had become so weak that the Lamanites conquered even the great land of Zarahemla. This terrible loss would not have happened if the Nephites had not become so proud. They had forgotten that it was God who gave them strength. Nephi remembered the words of his father, Helaman, who said: I have given you, my sons, the names of your first fathers in this land. When you remember their names, also remember their good works. Remember how God blessed them.

Nephi gave his judgment seat to a man named Cezoram. Nephi and his brother, Lehi, went out into the land, from city to city, preaching and teaching, trying to bring their people back to God. Many Nephites believed and repented, as well as eight thousand Lamanites who repented and were baptized.

From there, Nephi and Lehi went to the land of Nephi, the kingdom of the Lamanites. There, they were captured and thrown into prison for many days without food. One day the Lamanites came to kill their prisoners, but before they could, God encircled Nephi and Lehi with a ring of fire.

The Lamanites were afraid to come near them. Though Nephi and Lehi were standing in the middle of the fire, they were not burned. This gave them great courage and they began to preach to the Lamanites. They told them: Fear not, God is showing you His great power. When they said these words, the earth and the walls of the prison began to shake, and a dark cloud covered the prison.

As the Lamanites shook with fear, a voice spoke: Repent, the kingdom of heaven is near; do not try to destroy my servants. This voice was not a loud voice, but it was a gentle quiet voice, yet when it spoke the earth trembled. Three times the voice spoke, and the Lamanites were so frightened they could not move.

In this land was a Nephite named Aminadab who deserted his country to live with the Lamanites. When Aminadab looked at Nephi and Lehi, he saw a glow upon their faces as they spoke towards the heavens. Aminadab cried to the crowd to look and as they did, they too saw Nephi and Lehi's shining faces looking and speaking to heaven. The Lamanites

wondered who the Nephites were talking to and then they asked: What can we do to make this cloud of darkness leave us?

Aminadab had once been a member of God's church, and he remembered the things he had been taught. Aminadab answered them: You must repent and cry to the voice. Cry until you have faith in Christ. They cried to God and the darkness lifted, and they too were all encircled by pillars of fire and felt the great joy of God's spirit.

The voice again spoke: Peace be unto you because of your faith in my Son. The people looked up and angels came down from heaven and ministered to them. Three hundred people saw this great miracle that day, and they went throughout the land telling everyone what they had seen and heard. Almost all the Lamanites believed them. The believers laid down their weapons of war and gave the Nephites back the land they had conquered. The Lamanites were so strong in their faith that they became more righteous than the Nephites. Some of them even went to the land of the Nephites and testified to them of God. It was now the sixty and second year of the Reign of Judges and the Lamanites and Nephites lived in peace with one another.

Nephi traveled on to the country northward to preach to the people there.

A Judge is Murdered

(Helaman 3: 1-24, 32-42, 63-90, 96-112)

During the sixty and seventh year of the Reign of Judges, Nephi returned to the land of Zarahemla. He was shocked to find the people there had completely forgotten God. They had turned to a love of money, so much so that they were willing to rob or murder to get it. Many of the Nephites had joined with a secret band of thieves called the Gadianton robbers. Even some of the chief judges in the land joined the ranks of the robbers.

Nephi was overcome with sadness for the sins of his people and he climbed upon a tower and began to weep and pray for his people. As a crowd gathered to see the cause of this great sorrow he spoke to them: God has told me that if

you do not repent, your cities will be lost and you will all be destroyed.

The Chief Judge was angry with Nephi and he tried to get the people to kill Nephi, but many were afraid to touch him. Then Nephi told the crowd: God has shown me that your Chief Judge has been murdered by his own brother, one of the Gadianton robbers. Go and look. You will find him.

Five men went to see if Nephi's words were true. There they found the Chief Judge murdered, and they were overcome with fear and collapsed. When the five men were discovered prostrate upon the ground and the Chief Judge dead, the evil judges accused Nephi of plotting with these men to kill the judge to make them think he was a prophet.

Nephi told them go to the house of the brother of the dead judge. There they would find blood on his robe. Nephi told them: When you ask him if he killed his brother, he will begin to tremble. He will confess that he killed his brother.

The judges sent men to the home of the brother of the Chief Judge. Just as Nephi said, he confessed to killing his brother. Some believed because of this great sign, while others hardened their hearts and refused to believe. Nephi went to his home that day with a sad heart for the sins of his people.

God Sends a Famine

(Helaman 3:113-132; Helaman 4:1-25)

Many Nephites had become exceedingly wicked and would not listen to Nephi's preaching. Their hearts were so full of hatred they began to fight and kill one another. The Gadianton robbers had great power in the land because of the sin of the people.

As Nephi was sadly thinking about the wickedness of his people, God spoke: Nephi you will be blessed because you have declared my word. You have testified even when you are weary or when they have tried to kill you. Because of this your prayers will be answered. Nephi's heart was filled with courage and he went back to preach to the people.

During the seventy and second year of the Reign of Judges, Nephi prayed: O Lord, do not let this people be

destroyed by fighting, let there be a famine in the land to make them remember you.

God answered Nephi's prayer, and for a long time the rains ceased, causing all the crops to dry up. In the more wicked parts of the land, many people died. The fighting stopped as the people spent their time seeking food. Realizing they were about to die from the lack of food, they remembered Nephi and that he was a man of God. The judges came to Nephi begging: Please ask God to end this famine so we do not all starve. Nephi could see they were truly humbled and were turning from their sins. They had even driven out the Gadianton robbers.

Nephi prayed once again in behalf of the people: O Lord, because of their humility, will you forgive this people and cause the rains to return to our land.

The Lord answered Nephi's prayer and forgave the once wicked people and sent the rain to fall on the thirsty land. Soon the fruit hung from the trees, and corn and wheat stood tall in the fields. The people rejoiced and thanked God. They esteemed Nephi and his brother, Lehi, as men of God. The seventy and sixth year of the Reign of Judges ended in peace.

CHAPTER 6

THE COMING OF CHRIST TO THE NEW LAND

THE PROPHETS DECLARE CHRIST'S COMING

Samuel the Lamanite

(Helaman 4:30-41; Helaman 5:1-82)

For a few years the Nephites and Lamanites lived in peace; then once again they became proud. Many Nephites rebelled against the Judges and joined the unbelieving Lamanites. The Gadianton robbers appeared again in the land and continued their robbing and murdering. These robbers became so powerful they could even stand against the armies of the Nephites and the Lamanites. By the eighty and sixth year of the Reign of Judges, the Nephites had become very wicked, but the converted Lamanites still faithfully served God.



God sent Samuel, a Lamanite prophet, to warn the Nephites. He prophesied to them: Behold, I am Samuel, a Lamanite, and I speak the words of the Lord which he put into my heart; and God has put in my heart to tell this people that the sword of justice hangs over this people. Four hundred

years shall not pass until the sword of justice falls upon this people. Nothing can save this people except it be repentance and faith on the Lord, Jesus Christ. This Jesus Christ will come into the world and suffer many things, and be slain for His people. Therefore, thus says the Lord; Because of the hardness of the hearts of the people of the Nephites, except they repent I will take away my word from them, and I will withdraw my Spirit from them, and I will turn the hearts of their brethren against them; I will cause that they shall be smitten with the sword, and with famine, and with pestilence. I will visit them in my fierce anger, and the enemies of the fourth generation will see their destruction. This will surely come, except you repent. If you will repent and return unto the Lord your God, I will turn away mine anger. Blessed are they who will repent and turn unto me, but wo unto him that repents not.

Samuel preached for many days in Zarahemla. His words made people angry and they tried to chase him out of their city. As Samuel walked away from Zarahemla, he thought how the people would not listen to the warnings. Then God spoke to him: Samuel, go back to Zarahemla and I will give you the words to say.

Samuel returned to Zarahemla and climbed up on the city wall. From there he addressed the people again: People of Zarahemla, God has sent me to tell you to repent or terrible things are going to happen.

As a crowd began to gather near the city wall, Samuel told them: You love money more than God. If you do not change, your land will become full of thieves. If you leave something lying on the ground, it will be gone by morning for someone will come and steal it.

Samuel prophesied of Christ: In five years, Jesus Christ, the Son of God is going to be born into the world. On the night He is born, the sun will go down but the sky will still be light and a new star will appear in the sky. The Lord Jesus Christ will come and suffer many things. He will die for the sins of His people. At the time of His death God will send terrible storms and earthquakes, worse than any you have ever seen. For three days neither the sun, or the moon or the stars

will shine and the land will be covered in darkness. Watch for these signs.

A few of the people believed on Samuel's words and remembered the teachings of Nephi. The rest of the people would not listen. They got increasingly angry and wanted to kill Samuel. They cast stones at him and shot arrows, but Samuel escaped by the power of God. He jumped down from the wall and returned to his own land. He was never seen in the land of Zarahemla again. The few humble people who believed Samuel's words gathered with Nephi who taught them about God.

The Savior is Born

(III Nephi 1:1-24)

Nephi left the land, and no one knew where he had gone. His son, also named Nephi, now kept the sacred record. He was a man of God like his father. As the time for the Savior's birth grew near, God showed more signs and wonders. However, Satan hardened the hearts of the unbelievers, and they began to mock those who waited faithfully for the sign of their Savior's birth. Soon, the five years had passed, and it was time for the sign prophesied by Samuel the Lamanite to appear.

The wicked people scoffed and asked: Where are these signs of the coming of your Savior? The time has past as spoken by the prophet.

The unbelievers set a decree: If the sign foretold by Samuel the Lamanite does not appear by the day we choose, all who believe in the prophecy of the Savior will be killed.

Nephi went into the wilderness alone to pray in behalf of the people and plead for the sign to come that the people would be spared. Then, God spoke to Nephi: Do not fear Nephi, tomorrow the sign spoken by the prophet will come.

The next day, all those who believed the words of the prophet and had been looking for the signs prophesied by Samuel the Lamanite, were captured. The wicked leaders of Zarahemla were going to put them to death at the going down of the sun if the sign of a day and a night and a day without darkness did not come. They all waited, watching the sky.

The sun went down but there was no darkness. Shining so brightly in the heavens was the brightest star anyone had ever seen. The sign foretold by Samuel the Lamanite had come and all knew that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had come into the world.

Darkness and Destruction

(III Nephi 3:10-70; III Nephi 4:1-48)

How soon the people forgot God once again. The Nephites became proud again, more proud than they had ever been. The whole land broke into groups of people, the rich and the poor. Even the church was broken up. Only the rich could afford to go to school and they looked down on the poor because they were not educated. Though the rich people spoke evil words to the poor people, the humble poor who believed in God did not answer back with unkind words; rather they trusted God to give them comfort.

The Chief Judge of the land was killed and the government fell apart, which caused the people to break up into tribes. Satan was continually stirring up the hearts of the people to do evil. So, God sent prophets through the land to warn people to change. However, only a few believed the words of the prophets, and the wicked killed some of the prophets.

It had now been thirty and three years since the sign of Jesus' birth. The believers began to look for the sign of His death. Thirty and four years from the birth of the Savior, the next sign came. The sky grew black and rain poured down, and the thunder shook the ground. Lightening struck with such power that whole cities were burned. The land began to break apart with terrible earthquakes, and some cities were covered with dirt while others fell into the ocean. For three hours the power of God shook the land.

Throughout all the land could be heard the sound of weeping and wailing. Absolute darkness settled over the land like a vapor. The sun, moon and stars refused to shine. In the thick darkness, not even a candle would burn. No fire could be kindled, and there was not any light seen. So great were

the mists of darkness that there was only blackness for three days.

Out of the darkness came a voice: I have saved you because you were more righteous than your brothers, who killed the prophets, and you listened to my servants. I am Jesus Christ; I created the heavens and the earth. I am the Light of the World.

THE APPEARING OF JESUS CHRIST

The Words of the Prophets Fulfilled

(III Nephi 4:61-64; III Nephi 5:1-17)

On the fourth day the wind grew quiet, and the earth stopped shaking. The darkness lifted, and the people gathered at the temple in a place called the Land Bountiful. As they looked around at their land, they were amazed. Places that had been smooth were heaped with piles of rocks. Buildings lay in ruins; parts of the land had split into deep canyons, and mountains covered the places where once great cities had stood.

Then a voice was heard from heaven. It was not a loud voice, yet it touched their hearts with great power. They looked toward the sky and heard the words again: Behold my beloved Son, hear you Him.

Coming down from the sky was a man dressed in white. Jesus Christ came down and stood before the multitude and stretched out His hands. Then He spoke: Behold, I am Jesus Christ who the prophets have testified should come into the world.

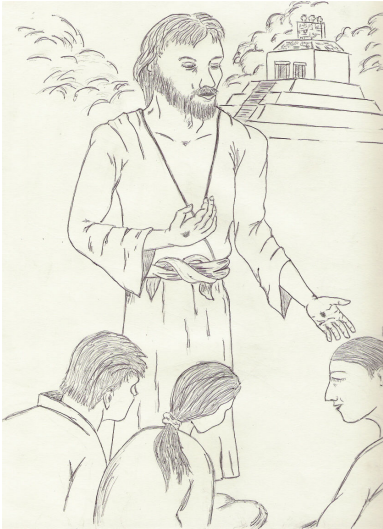
The people fell on their knees before Jesus and He said unto them: Come and feel the nail prints in my hands so you will know that I have been killed for the sins of my people. One by one the multitude went forward. All at once they cried: Hosanna. Blessed be the name of the most high God.

Jesus Calls Disciples

(III Nephi 5: 18-22, 45-115; III Nephi 6:1-37; III Nephi 8:1-41)

When the crowd had settled, Jesus called Nephi to come forward. Nephi came and fell on his knees at the Master's feet. Jesus told Nephi that He would give him the authority to baptize this people, and then Jesus called eleven other men and also gave them the authority to baptize. Behold you shall go down and stand in the water, and in my name you shall baptize them. I will tell you how to baptize, so there will be no more disputes among the people.

And now these are the words which you should say, calling them by name, and saying: Having authority given me of Jesus Christ I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Then you shall immerse them in the water and bring them out of the water again.



Jesus then stretched out His hands to the multitude: You will be blessed if you listen to these twelve which I have chosen to teach and serve you.

Then Jesus taught the multitude to love one another, be kind and forgive one another, trust in God like a little child trusts his father, repent of your sins, humble yourselves and be baptized.

Jesus instructed them how to pray: When you pray do not just repeat the same words or pray as the hypocrites, standing in the synagogues or on the streets to be heard of men, for they have their reward, but you should pray from your heart.

Then Jesus spoke again to his twelve disciples: You are the ones I have chosen to minister unto this people. Take no

thought of your own life, what you should eat or drink, or what you should wear. Is life not more than meat or clothing? You should seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you. Now go and teach this people. After I am gone, write down my words so that many can learn them in the years to come.

Seeing the people were becoming weary, Jesus told them: Go home, rest and think about what you have heard. Come back tomorrow and I will teach you more.

As Jesus looked out at the people gathered before Him, He saw that they were in tears, and they looked at Him as if to ask Him to stay a little longer with them. Jesus could see that some were sick, crippled, deaf and blind. Jesus was filled with compassion towards the people, and told them to bring their sick to Him. They came forward and, one by one, Jesus laid His hands on each of them, and they were healed.

Then Jesus told them to bring all their children to Him. He took the little children, one by one, and prayed to the Father for them. Jesus then said: Behold your little ones. As the people looked, they saw the heavens open up and angels descending from heaven came down and encircled the children with fire and ministered to them.

Jesus commanded the twelve disciples to bring bread and wine. When they had brought it, He broke the bread and blessed it and each man ate, then they drank of the cup of wine. After the twelve had partaken of the bread and wine, they gave it unto the people gathered before Him.

When the people had eaten, He said to His disciples: There shall be one ordained among you, and to him I will give authority to give unto the people of my church who repent and are baptized. He commanded them to do it in remembrance of His body which He had shown them.

Jesus taught them: Hold up your light that it might shine unto the world. Behold I am the light; I have set an example before you. He touched each of His disciples and blessed them.

After Jesus had touched them, there came a cloud that over shadowed the multitude and they could not see Jesus. When the cloud lifted Jesus was gone.

Jesus Completes His Ministry Upon the Land

(III Nephi 9:1-43; III Nephi 10:27-32; III Nephi 12:8-22;
III Nephi 13:28-41, 50-51)

Now Jesus had ascended into heaven, and the people returned to their own homes. But the word went out that Jesus would return and show Himself again to the people the following day. Many people worked all night to accomplish their labors, so they would be free to go see Jesus when He appeared again.

When morning came, Jesus' disciples looked out at the crowd gathered together. The crowd was so great they divided the multitude into twelve separate groups so each disciple could teach them. The disciples taught them to kneel and pray to God in the name of Jesus and taught the words Jesus had spoken, nothing varying from which Jesus spoke.

After they prayed, Nephi went down into the water and was baptized. When he came up from the water he baptized the other eleven which Jesus had chosen as His disciples. As they came up out of the water, they were filled with the Holy Ghost and with fire. And they were encircled by fire, which came down from heaven, and angels came down from heaven and ministered unto them.

As the angels were ministering to the disciples, Jesus appeared in their midst. Jesus prayed with His people, and He prayed to the Father for those whom He had chosen. Jesus then walked away from the multitude and bowed Himself to the earth; and He prayed again unto the Father, saying: Father, I thank thee that thou hast purified these whom I have chosen because of their faith. And I pray for them, and also for them who shall believe on their words. I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me out of the world, because of their faith, that they may be purified in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me, that we may be one, that I may be glorified in them.

And when Jesus had spoken these words, He came again unto His disciples, and found they were praying without ceasing unto Him. And again Jesus went a little way off and prayed unto the Father in a tongue which can not be spoken or

written by man, but the multitude did hear Him pray and their hearts were open, and they did understand in their hearts the words which He prayed. When Jesus had made an end of praying, He came again to the disciples, and said: Such great faith I have never seen among all the Jews.

Now there had been no bread or wine brought by the disciples or the multitude; but Jesus gave unto the disciples bread to eat. And when they had eaten He commanded them that they should break bread, and give it unto the multitude. When they had given unto the multitude, He also gave them wine to drink, and commanded them that they should give wine to the multitude.

Then Jesus said: He that eats this bread, eats of my body to his soul, and he that drinks of this wine, drinks of my blood to his soul, and his soul shall never hunger nor thirst, but shall be filled. When the multitude had all eaten and drunk, behold they were filled with the Spirit, and they did cry out with one voice, and gave glory to Jesus, whom they both saw and heard.

Jesus began to teach again. He taught employers to pay their employees a fair wage. He taught His people to care for the poor, the widows and the orphans. He taught them to give their tithes, a tenth of what they have to the Lord. He promised them that if they did this, they would be greatly blessed. He commanded His people to study the scriptures so they would understand His words. Again Jesus called the sick to Him to be healed. Then, He ascended again to His Father in heaven for the second time.

From that time on, the disciples began to teach and baptize. God showed great signs and wonders to those who repented and were baptized.

As the disciples were gathered together fasting and praying, Jesus Christ appeared a third time. He asked them what they would like to know concerning His doctrine. The disciples answered: We want to know what we should name your church. The people are arguing about what to name the church.

Jesus said to them: Have they not read the scriptures, which say, you must take upon you the name of Christ, which

is my name? For by this name shall you be called at the last day; and whoso takes upon him my name, and endures to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day. Whatever you do, you should do it in my name; therefore you shall call the church in my name; and you shall call upon the Father in my name, that He will bless the church for my sake. How can it be my church, unless it be called in my name? If a church be called in Moses' name, then it would be Moses' church; or if it be called in the name of a man, then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name, the Church of Christ, then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel. And if the church is built upon my gospel, then will the Father show forth His own works in it.

Three Disciples to Tarry Upon the Earth

(III Nephi 13:12-34)

When Jesus had finished teaching, He spoke to each of His disciples and asked them: What is it that you desire of me after that I am gone to the Father?

They all spoke, except three, saying: We desire that after we have lived our lives that our ministry may have an end and that we come unto thee, in thy kingdom.

Jesus said to them: Blessed are you, because you desire this thing of me; therefore after that you are seventy and two-years old, then you shall come unto me in my kingdom, and with me you shall find rest.

Then Jesus spoke to the three which had not spoken and said: What do you desire when I am gone unto the Father?

They feared to speak what they wanted from Jesus. Then Jesus said: I know your thoughts, that you desire the thing which John, my beloved, who was with me in Jerusalem, desired. Therefore more blessed are you, for you shall never taste of death, but you shall live to behold all the doings of the Father, until I shall come in my glory, with the powers of heaven; And you shall never endure the pains of death; but when I shall come in my glory, you shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, from mortality to immortality; and then shall you be blessed in the kingdom of my Father. And all this

will I do that you might bring the souls of men unto me, while the world shall stand.

It was time for Jesus to return to His Father in heaven. He touched each of His disciples, all but the three who would live on. Heaven opened and Jesus lifted those three men into the sky with Him. They were changed in an instant and from that moment on they would never die. Then the three disciples were back on earth and Jesus was gone.

Great Happiness Upon the Land

(IV Nephi: 1-21)

All of the disciples went throughout the land teaching the gospel of Christ and formed the Church of Christ. By the thirty and sixth year after the birth of Christ, everyone in the land, both Nephite and Lamanite, were converted. The disciples of Jesus did great miracles, healing the sick, made the deaf to hear, the blind to see, the crippled to walk and they even raised some from the dead.

The Lord blessed His people, and they rebuilt many of the cities that had been destroyed at the time of Christ's crucifixion. The church was strong because they were careful to fast and pray and meet together often to pray and hear the word of God. Their hearts were full of the love of God, and there were no more divisions among the people. There were no more Nephites and Lamanites, rich and poor. There were no thieves or murderers in the land. Their love was so great that no one had jealousy or anger towards one another.

The first disciples died, and more were called by God to fill their place. Still the people stayed strong and faithful. It was now one hundred and ten years since the birth of Christ and all who had seen Christ had died, but their children continued to teach the words of Christ. Never before in the land had a people been so full of joy.

Chapter 7

THE FALL OF THE NEPHITES

THE SACRED RECORDS

Ammoron Buries the Records

(IV Nephi: 22-59)

In the two hundred and first year there began to be some people who were lifted up in pride. They began wearing costly apparel and possessed all manner of the fine things of the world. The people began to be divided into classes, the rich and the poor. The rich began to build up churches unto themselves, to get gain, and began to deny the true church of Christ.

By the end of the two hundred and ten years, there were many churches in the land, which professed to know the Christ, but they denied most of Jesus' gospel. These churches received all manner of wickedness and grew quickly because of iniquity, and because of the power of Satan which took hold of their hearts.

The three Nephite disciples who had remained living, preached against this evil church. They were thrown into prison, but the prisons could not hold them. The prisons split apart and crumbled to the ground. They were thrown into furnaces of fire, but they walked out unharmed. They were thrown into dens of wild beasts, but the beasts did not hurt them.

In spite of all these miracles, the unbelievers began to persecute the believers even more. The believers called themselves Nephites, and the unbelievers called themselves

Lamanites. The Lamanites taught their children to hate the Nephites. The people became increasingly wicked, until the unbelievers were more numerous than believers.

Nephi, the first disciple called by Christ, had taken the job of keeping the sacred records. He passed that duty on to his son, Amos. After Amos died, his son Ammoron became the keeper of the records. By the time three hundred and twenty years had passed away, the people had become so wicked that God's spirit told Ammoron to hide the sacred records in the earth so that they would not be destroyed.

Ammoron Instructs Mormon

(Mormon 1:1-81; Mormon 2: 25- 26; Mormon 3: 7-19;
Mormon 4: 1-2)

In spite of all this wickedness, there were still a few good people left in the land. One of those good people was a young man named Mormon. When Mormon was only ten years old Ammoron said to him: Mormon, I can see that you are a serious child and are quick to observe. I want you to watch carefully everything that happens around you. When you are twenty-four years old, go to the land of Antum. There, buried in the Hill Shim, you will find the sacred records of our people. I want you to engrave on the plates everything that you saw as you were growing up. Mormon promised to do this.

As the years passed, Mormon remembered his promise to Ammoron. When Mormon was eleven years old, the Lamanites attacked. The Nephites were victorious over the Lamanites, and for a few years there was peace in the land. However, the Nephites did not repent or thank God for their victory. The people became so wicked that the three Nephite disciples left the land and God's Spirit left with them. There were no more healings or miracles.

When Mormon was fifteen years old, he was visited by the Lord and he came to know God's goodness. After this, Mormon tried to preach to the people, but he was forbidden. The people had willfully rebelled against God and the words given by the disciples.

The Gadianton robbers, who had organized themselves again during the previous years, had begun to rob and murder the people. Instead of repenting and praying to God for help, the people began to believe in magic and witchcraft.

Mormon was tall and strong, and at the young age of sixteen, he was chosen to lead the Nephite army. When the Lamanites attacked again, there were furious battles and many Nephites were killed. Throughout the land was heard the sound of people weeping and wailing. The Nephites kept fighting, even though they lost many of the battles.

When Mormon reached the age of twenty-four, he kept his promise to Ammoron and went to the Hill Shim and dug up the sacred plates. He wrote upon the plates a full account of his people and their wickedness and abominations, and then returned the plates to the ground.

Because of Mormon's encouragement, the Nephites won a few battles. For ten years there was peace in the land. One day, the Lord spoke to Mormon and instructed him to preach to his people. Mormon told them to repent and build up a faithful church. If they would do this then God would save them from their enemies, but they would not listen.

The Lamanites attacked again and the Nephites defeated them, but they did not thank God for their victory. Rather, they swore by the throne of God that they would not rest until they had revenge on their enemies. Mormon was so angry at this great wickedness that he said he would no longer lead them into battle.

For fifteen years Mormon stood by as the Nephites and Lamanites battled each other. Three hundred and seventy-five years had passed since the time of Christ. Mormon could see the whole land would soon fall to the Lamanites. He dug up the sacred records from the Hill Shim and carried them with him.

Mormon's heart was so full of sorrow to see the great destruction of his people, the Nephites; he agreed to lead them once again. The battles raged on and on. Mormon gathered all the people together in the land of Cumorah. There at Cumorah was the last great battle between the

Nephites and the Lamanites. When it ended, only twenty-four of the Nephites were left alive.

As Mormon looked out at all the people who had been killed he wept and asked: How could you have rejected Jesus, who stood with open arms to receive you?

Mormon was old now, so he gave the duty of keeping the sacred record to his son, Moroni.

Moroni Prepares the Records for a Latter Day

(Mormon 4:1-28)

Moroni wrote for the last time on the plates before they were hidden in the Hill Cumorah. He wrote to a future people who would someday read these sacred records.

Moroni said: It is God's will for me to finish these records. The words of the people who once lived on this land will be a testimony of Christ to you. It will be as if they are speaking to you out of the dust.

Moroni was left all alone now, but he trusted God and did not give up. As Moroni was hiding from the Lamanites, he proceeded to abridge the account written on the twenty-four golden plates found by the people of Zarahemla in the north country, a record of a people known as the Jaredites.

Chapter 8

THE MULEKITES

MIGRATION FROM JERUSALEM

King Zedekiah's Son

(Omni 1: 23-38; Helaman 3:56)

During the first year of King Zedekiah's reign, the Lord had directed Lehi and his family to leave Jerusalem. Now in 587 B.C. King Zedekiah, the king of Judah was carried away into captivity into Babylon. The Lord caused that Zedekiah's young son, still considered a child, and the surviving members of Zedekiah's family, to leave Jerusalem and they too arrived in a new land beyond the sea and are referred to as Mulekites.

Mosiah, king of the Nephites and a descendant of Lehi, had sent out a group of men into the wilderness, and they discovered the people of Mulek, or the Mulekites, in the land of Zarahemla. They called them the people of Zarahemla. At the time Mosiah discovered these people of Zarahemla, they had become exceedingly numerous. Nevertheless, they had had many wars and serious contentions, and had fallen by the sword from time to time. Their language had become corrupted, and the Nephites could not understand them. The Mulekites had not brought any records with them to remind them of God. Without the word of God, they had come to deny that there was a Creator.

The people of Zarahemla did rejoice because the Lord had sent the people of Mosiah with the plates of brass, which contained the record of the Jews. Mosiah taught them the

language of the Nephites. After they were taught in the language of Mosiah, the people of Zarahemla gave a genealogy of their fathers, according to their memory. And it came to pass that the people of Zarahemla and of Mosiah did unite together; and Mosiah was appointed to be their king.

The Mulekites had with them a large stone with engravings on it that gave an account of Coriantumr, the last Jaredite and the slain of his people. Coriantumr was discovered by the people of Zarahemla, whom he lived with for nine months.

Chapter 9

THE JAREDITES NATION

A PEOPLE FROM THE TOWER OF BABEL

The Brother of Jared

(Ether 1:7-27, 36-85; Ether 3: 1-14)

The story of the Jaredites began with a man named Jared who came from a great tower being built to reach heaven in the land of Shinar. This was the time the Lord confused the language of the people, and he scattered them upon all the face of the earth.

Jared asked his brother, who was a mighty man, and highly favored of the Lord, to ask the Lord to have mercy upon them, and not confuse their language so they could continue to understand each other. The Brother of Jared did ask the Lord, and the Lord had compassion upon Jared. Therefore, God did not confuse their language.

Then Jared said unto his brother: Ask again that the Lord will turn away His anger from them who are our friends, that He will not confuse their language.

And it came to pass that the Brother of Jared did pray to the Lord, and the Lord had compassion upon their friends, and their families also.

Jared spoke again unto his brother: Go and inquire of the Lord whether He will drive us out of the land, and if so, ask Him where we should go.

The Brother of Jared asked the Lord where they should go, and the Lord answered him: Go to and gather together thy flocks, both male and female, of every kind; and also of the

seed of the earth of every kind, and thy family; and also Jared thy brother and his family; and also thy friends and their families, and the friends of Jared and their families.

God led them all the way to the sea. When they reached the coast, every one was tired from their long journey. They set up tents and lived by the sea for four years.

As they dwelt at the edge of the sea, the Lord instructed them to construct eight boats to carry them across the sea to a new land. These boats were built according to the instruction of the Lord. They were small and light upon the water, and they were very exceeding tight and water proof. There was a hole in the top and also in the bottom; and when they would need air, they should unstop the hole and receive air. And if water comes in they should stop up the hole that they would not drown.

God said: I am going to send strong winds to push you across the sea. Sometimes the wind will make waves as big as mountains and drive the boats below the water.

When the boats were finished, they wondered if the Lord wished them to cross the sea in darkness. The Brother of Jared knew God could put light in the boats, so he climbed a mountain and took out of the rock sixteen small stones. These stones were white and clear like glass.

The Brother of Jared carried the sixteen stones up to the top of the mountain, and cried again unto the Lord, saying: Oh Lord, you had said at times we must be covered by the waters. Lord, suffer not that they shall go forth across this raging deep in darkness. I know you have all power, and can do whatsoever you will for the benefit of man; therefore touch these stones with your finger, and prepare them that they may shine forth in darkness so we may have light while we shall cross the sea.

The veil was taken from off the eyes of the Brother of Jared, and he saw the finger of the Lord touch each of the stones. The Brother of Jared came down out of the mount, and put two stones in each of the vessels.

Jared, and those with him, put forth into the sea and the boats were driven by the winds and waves for three hundred and forty days before they reached the Promised Land.

The people who came with Jared, known as the Jaredites, knew they would possess this Promised Land as long as they followed the requirement set by God.

The Lord had said to them: Behold the decrees of God concerning this land of promise. Whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall serve God, which is Jesus Christ, or they shall be swept off when the fullness of His wrath shall come upon them. And it is not until the fullness of iniquity among the children of the land, that they are swept off. For this is the everlasting decree of God

When the people stepped onto the shores of their new home, they knelt and thanked God for His blessing.

The Jaredite Kings

(Ether 3:15-48; Ether 4: 1-7)

God blessed the Jaredites as they dwelt in the new land. The Brother of Jared was their spiritual leader, and he taught them to humbly follow God. When Jared and his brother had grown old, they wanted to bless their people before they went home to the Lord. They called all the people together and the Brother of Jared asked the people: What would you like us to do for you before we die?

The people desired that they choose a king to lead them. The Brother of Jared warned them: surely this will lead you into captivity. But the people insisted on a king to be their leader.

Jared told his brother to allow the people to have their king, and they choose Pagag, first born son of the Brother of Jared. Pagag, however, refused to be the king, as did all the other sons of the Brother of Jared. The sons of Jared also refused to be king, except one, his name was Orihah, and he was anointed to be king over the Jaredite people.

Jared and his brother died, and Orihah became king. He was humble before the Lord and ruled righteously, and after him, his son Kib also ruled righteously.

Kib had a son named Corihor, who was rebellious against his father and took many people away to live in a land called Nehor. There he gathered together an army and came up unto the land of his father's kingdom and took him captive, which

brought about the saying of the Brother of Jared that they would be brought into captivity.

While Kib was in captivity he became very old; nevertheless, Kib had another son, named Shule. When Shule grew in years he became a mighty man in strength and judgment. He became angry with his brother. Shule went to the hill Ephraim, and he made swords out of steel for himself and those who would help him retake the kingdom.

Armed with swords, Shule returned to the city Nehor and battled his brother, Corihor. Shule was victorious, and he obtained the kingdom and restored it unto his father, Kib. Because of what Shule had done, his father gave him the kingdom, and he reigned in the stead of his father. Shule ruled in righteousness, and his kingdom grew in numbers, and Shule also had many sons and daughters.

When Shule grew old, he gave the kingdom to his son Omner, who also was a godly king. Omner had a son, named Jared, who desired the kingdom for himself. Jared took part of his father's kingdom and made his father a prisoner. While in captivity, Omner had more sons that grew up and defeated their brother Jared.

Jared begged his life, and his brothers had mercy on him and they let him live. Jared was not content with the mercy shown to him by his brothers; his desire was to regain the kingdom back. Jared had a daughter who was very beautiful, but her heart was evil like her father's. Jared's daughter told her plan of how she would help her father take back the kingdom. She told her father: Invite your friend, Akish, to dinner. I am very beautiful. I will dance for him and he will want to marry me. You tell him that he can not marry me unless he brings you the head of your father, the king.

Jared invited Akish to dinner and everything worked out as they had planned. Akish agreed to kill King Omner in order to marry Jared's daughter.

God warned King Omner in a dream to leave the land. Omner and his family were saved, but Jared took over the kingdom. Akish was not satisfied to have a beautiful wife; he wanted to be king too. With the help of his secret society he murdered Jared, and became the king.

The Destruction of the Jaredite Nation

(Ether 4:32 - Ether 6:109)

Over the years, the Jaredites built many great cities and their people covered much of the land. When God-fearing kings ruled the land, the people were blessed, but when wicked kings ruled, the land was cursed. One wicked king, named Heth, killed his own father to take his throne. During the time of Heth, God sent prophets through the land declaring God's warning to the people: You must repent, or there will be a great famine in the land.

The Jaredite people would not listen and they killed some of the prophets and threw others out of the land. Then the rains stopped and their crops dried up in the fields. But this was not the entire curse to come upon them. God caused hundreds of poisonous serpents to come upon the land. The terrified sheep, goats and cattle ran away from the serpents, and soon there was nothing left to eat. In their troubles, the people repented and turned back to God. When God saw they were truly humble, He sent the rain back to the land and took away the poisonous serpents. For a time the people lived in righteousness, led by a godly king named Lib. No people could have been more blessed. But more wicked kings came into power, and the Jaredite people returned to their evil ways.

Finally, during the reign of King Coriantumr, God sent one last great prophet named Ether. Ether preached from sunrise to sunset warning the people to repent, or they would be destroyed and their land would be given to another people. The people refused to hear the words of the prophet.

A man named Shiz was trying to take Coriantumr's kingdom, which caused a great civil war to break out in the land. The Lord commanded Ether to go and prophesy unto Coriantumr, that if he would repent, and his entire household, the Lord would give unto him his kingdom, and spare the people. If Coriantumr refused to repent, then his people and household would be destroyed, and he alone would live to see another people receive this Promised Land.

Coriantumr did not repent; neither did his household nor did the people. The civil wars continued on, and the people



wanted to kill Ether. Ether fled and hid in a cave during the day, and at night he came out to watch the destruction of his people.

After four years of fighting, the battle was so great and lasting that the whole face of the land was covered with the bodies of the dead, and there were none left to bury the dead. The armies marched forth shedding blood, leaving the bodies of men, women and children, scattered upon the face of the land.

The two armies gathered for what would be their last battle. During the day they fought, and at night they slept on their swords. Everyday, more were killed and fewer people were left to fight. After several days of battle, only Shiz and Coriantumr were left standing. Coriantumr killed Shiz, and then he remembered the prophecy of Ether: You will be left alone.

As Ether looked at the battlefield, he saw all the Jaredites were dead except the one man, Coriantumr. Ether finished writing the story of the destruction of his people, and then he concluded his record with his own words: It does not matter if the Lord takes me now or if I die. All that matters is that I am saved in the Kingdom of God.

Coriantumr lived on until he was found by the people of Zarahemla. There he died among a strange people as Ether had prophesied.

Chapter 10

WORDS TO FUTURE GENERATIONS

MORONI SEALS THE RECORDS

The Last Farewell

(Moroni 10:3-5, 31)

As Moroni was sealing the records, he wrote one last message to the people who would be reading the Book of Mormon in the last days: Behold, I would exhort you that when you shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that you should read them, that you would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam, even down until the time that you shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts. And when you shall receive these things, I would exhort you that you would ask God, the eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; And if you shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost; and by the power of the Holy Ghost, you may know the truth of all things.

Moroni concluded his message with humble words: And now I bid unto all, farewell. I soon go to rest in the paradise of God, until my spirit and body shall again reunite, and I am brought forth triumphant through the air, to meet you before the pleasing bar of the great Jehovah, the eternal Judge of both quick and dead. Amen.

The End

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