

*BOOK OF MORMON LESSONS
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE*

*This Young Peoples Sunday School Lesson Book was written and compiled
in 1996 by Deb Brantner Haines for the Church of Christ (Temple Lot).*

*This lesson book is not meant to be a complete detailed account of the Book of Mormon.
The stories have been chosen to appeal to the interests of young people and
have been written in a manner that they can understand.*

The scripture quotations are from the King James Version of the Bible and the
Church of Christ 1990 Independence Edition of the Book of Mormon.

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Book of Mormon Lessons for Young People

(for age 8 years through teens)

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INTRODUCTION

The Book of Mormon is a record of the ancient people and the land of Mormon from about 2200 B.C. through many generations until about 420 A.D. It tells us how God worked and spoke to the Jaredites, the Nephites, the Lamanites and others. It was written by way of commandment, prophesy, and revelation from God. Moroni, the last of twenty-four men to write, hid up the record, as directed by God, to preserve it until the time He desired it to come out of the darkness and into the hand of the Gentiles. The purpose of this work is to reveal His truth throughout the world for the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all Nations. In it are many plain and precious things that have been lost by man. It is also an added witness of the truthfulness of God's word and love for the world.

Who wrote the Book of Mormon? Twenty-four different persons are credited with writing the accounts---twenty-three Nephites and one Jaredite. The last two writers, Moroni and Mormon, abridged the writings (shortened them), including only the most important parts. The accounts were written on metal plates to help preserve them. After Joseph Smith was given the records in 1827, he was able to translate them by the gift and power of the Holy Spirit and the *use* of the Urim and Thummim.

What is Scripture? It is God's words given by inspiration through the Holy Spirit to a person (of God's choosing), who is then to write it down as God directs. Why? So that we may better know the will of God.

A CHOSEN PEOPLE

Long ago (2500 years B.C.) there lived a righteous man named Noah, and his family. He and his wife, their three sons, and their wives were obedient to God's laws, but the rest of the world had become very wicked. They were so wicked that God destroyed every living thing by flooding the whole earth. Because Noah and his family were righteous, God saved them. God had Noah build an ark to carry a pair of every living thing with him to safety. After the flood they began to replenish the earth.

Only a few generations after the time of the great flood, the world again became wicked, as people refused to obey God's commandments. They ignored God, believing that they did not need Him, that they could rely upon themselves. The people decided to build a tower made of brick (later called the tower of Babel), a tower so high that it would reach heaven. Their idea was to get to heaven without the help of God. God was very displeased with this, because they harkened not to Him, but to the tempting of Satan, who enticed them to stray from God's teachings. God said, **"Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."** The Lord caused that they could not understand each other's speaking, and he scattered them all over the world.

During this time there lived a man named Jared. He and his family were obedient to God's laws. Jared went to his brother, a prophet of God. They cried (prayed) over and over, pouring their hearts out unto God, asking him not to confound the language of their family and friends who were good, God fearing (respecting) people. The Lord heard their prayers and did not confuse their tongues, but He did confound all others. The people could not understand each other and could not work together any more; thus, the work on the tower came to a stop. They still would not obey God. As the people of the earth were divided according to their ability to understand each other, groups of like speaking people moved to other places. The brother of Jared prayed, asking God to show them where to go and asking that it be a land choice above all others on earth. God answered, **"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. And when thou hast done this, thou shalt go at the head of them down into the valley, which is northward. And there will I meet thee, and I will go before thee into a land which is choice above all the land of the earth."**

The brother of Jared rejoiced for he had heard the voice of the Lord; his prayers had been answered! God also said, **"And there will I bless thee and thy seed, and raise up unto me of thy seed, and of the seed of thy brother, and they which shall go with thee, a great nation. And there shall be none greater than the nation which I will raise up unto me of thy seed, upon all the face of the earth."**

THE JAREDITES

The people of Jared rejoiced for God had bestowed a great blessing upon them, saying to them, **"I there will I bless thee and thy seed, and raise up unto me of thy seed, and of the seed of thy brother, and they which shall go with thee, a great nation. And there shall be none greater than the nation which I will raise up unto me of thy seed, upon all the face of the earth."**

The people of Jared were very thankful and their hearts were full of joy because of the promises the Lord made to them. The Lord spoke again to the brother of Jared and said, **"And this I will do unto thee because of this long time which ye have cried unto me."** God knew how faithful he had been in following His commandments.

Once again the Jaredites did as the Lord commanded. They gathered their flocks and seeds of every kind, and went down into the valley which was northward, called the Valley of Nimrod (named after the great-grandson of Noah). God met them there as He said He would. He stayed behind a cloud, so He could not be seen, only heard. The Lord told them to go into the wilderness where no man had ever gone before. God traveled with them, staying in the cloud, guiding them and speaking to them every day. When they came to the seashore, God instructed them to stay there and build ships. They were to travel to a land that He had prepared for them; a land choice above all others, a land fit for righteous people. For four years He left them alone to build their ships. After the four years had passed, He returned and chastised them for not crying out to Him in prayer during this time that He was absent. He also told them that they had strayed from His teachings. He told them to pray always! God said, **"I will forgive thee and thy brethren of their sins; but thou shalt not sin anymore, for ye shall remember that my spirit will not always strive with man; Wherefore, if ye will sin until ye are fully ripe, (full of iniquity or wickedness) ye shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord."**

References: Ether 1: 21-44

THE SHINING STONES

"Go to work and build, after the manner of barges which ye have hitherto built,"

commanded the Lord, again from behind a cloud. God told them how to build seaworthy ships, so the people would be safe as they crossed the great ocean. The Brother of Jared and the rest of the men built eight barges.

The barges were small, with the top and bottom tight enough to hold water like a dish. They were light upon the water like a duck gliding upon the surface of the water. The Brother of Jared was deeply concerned, for since there were no windows, there would be no light and no air when the doors of the barges were shut. Since he did not think the Lord would have them to cross the great ocean in complete darkness and with no air, he cried out to the Lord, "O Lord, I have performed the work which thou hast commanded me, and I have made the barges according as thou hast directed me. And behold, O Lord, in them there is no light; whither shall we steer? And also we shall perish, for in them we can not breathe, save it is the air which is in them; therefore we shall perish."

The Lord answered, **"Thou shalt make a hole in the top thereof, and also in the bottom thereof; and when thou shalt suffer for air, thou shalt unstop the hole thereof, and receive air. And if it so be that the water come in upon thee, behold, ye shall stop the hole thereof, that ye may not perish in the flood."** The people did as they were told, yet still desired to know if they were to cross in darkness.

The Brother of Jared again cried out to the Lord, asking how they would have light. By inspiration, he received an idea. He smelted out of rock sixteen small stones. The stones became so white and clear that you could see through them like glass. Taking the stones up onto the mountain, he knelt alone in prayer. The Brother of Jared had such great faith; he knew that with God all things were possible. He cried to the Lord to touch the stones so that they might shine forth to give them light in the crossing. And it came to pass when the Brother of Jared spoke, the Lord stretched forth His hand, and touched the stones, one by one, with His finger! As they were touched, the stones began to shine, brighter and brighter. They were being filled with power from God. The Brother of Jared was so frightened he fell upon the ground, for no man had ever seen the Lord. He had seen the Lord's finger and it looked just like the finger of a man! Because his faith was so great, the Brother of Jared received two gifts from the Lord: he was given the stones for light and he was allowed to see the Lord.

References: Ether 1: 45-68

A VISION OF GOD

The Brother of Jared had been allowed to see the Lord! **"Never have I shewed myself unto man whom I have created, for never hath man believed in me as thou hast,"** the Lord said. Since the Lord had previously told the Brother of Jared that He would show him all things, He did not withhold anything from him. The Lord showed himself to the Brother of Jared. Now he had more than faith, he had a perfect knowledge of the Lord!

The Lord told many marvelous things to the Brother of Jared and told him to write them and seal them up because the Lord was not yet ready for the world to know them. **"Behold, thou shalt not suffer these things which ye have seen and heard, to go forth unto the world, until the time cometh that I shall glorify my name in the flesh."**

The Lord gave the Brother of Jared the ability to write in an unknown language, and gave him two stones that would be used as interpreters. The Lord said. **"Behold, these two stones will I give unto thee, and ye shall seal them up also, with the things which ye shall write. For behold, the language which ye shall write, I have confounded; wherefore I will cause in mine own due time that these stones shall magnify to the eyes of men, these things which ye shall write."**

The Lord then showed the Brother of Jared all the inhabitants of the earth who had ever lived and all the people who would be born, even until the end of the earth. He explained that after His crucifixion He would come again to His people. At that time, the records that the Brother of Jared would write would come forth to the Gentiles if they repented of their iniquity and again became clean before the Lord. **"And in that day that they shall exercise faith in me. ...even as the Brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me, then will I manifest unto them the things which the Brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations."**

Coming down from the mountain carrying the stones, the Brother of Jared was filled with wonder and great joy, yet still sad because of what he had seen. He had seen the destruction that would happen to the people because of their wickedness and unbelief. Yet, he thanked God for all the rich blessings He had given him and his people, and for His tender love and goodness.

Everyone was so excited! Eagerly, they went to the barges in the harbor. The Brother of Jared placed the stones in the barges; one in each bow and one in each stern. Behold, they did shine forth in the darkness and gave light to the men, women and children. They rejoiced that they would not have to cross the great waters in darkness!

There was still much to do. The people loaded the barges with food and water for themselves and their flocks and herds. The Brother of Jared took his engraving tools and sheets to write upon, all in a large box. In it were records that spoke of the creation, Adam, the great tower, and their journey up to that point. As they boarded the barges they lifted their hearts in prayer and put themselves into the Lord's care. They knew He would bring them safely to the Land of Promise. They were on their way!

During these years, the descendants warred much with each other out of wickedness and greed. During the reign of King Shule, the son of Kib, there came prophets into the land, prophesying that the wickedness and idolatry of the people would bring a curse upon them. Although the people mocked the prophets, King Shule supported the prophets, and the people eventually repented of their wrongdoing. The Lord spared them and as they again grew righteous, He was pleased. There was peace in the land once again. Much more can be learned of the later descendants of the Jaredite peoples.

References: Ether 3: 5-102

GOD PROTECTS LEHI

A long time after Jared and his family came to America, God spoke to a man in Jerusalem. This man's name was Lehi. Lehi was a man of God. As he tried to teach others of God's laws, all he saw around him was wickedness. When he warned the people to repent of their evil ways, they mocked him.

One day, after crying unto the Lord in behalf of his people, a wonderful thing happened! There came a pillar of fire and it dwelt on the rock which was in front of Lehi. God spoke to Lehi from that pillar of fire. Lehi did not see God, but heard His voice. The Lord told him many things and showed him many sights. Returning home, he threw himself upon his bed exhausted, where he was carried away in another vision. Lehi saw the heavens open, and God surrounded by so many angels they could not be numbered. They were singing and praising God. He then saw one (the Lamb of God) coming down from the midst of heaven. He was aglow in great brilliance. Lehi also saw twelve other angels following him down to earth. The first came to Lehi and gave him a book to read. Reading it, Lehi learned that Jerusalem would be destroyed. He also learned many other great and marvelous things of joy.

Lehi, his wife Sariah, and their four sons, Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi, were very righteous people. They worshiped God and obeyed His laws, while those around them worshiped idols. When Lehi tried to tell the people of his vision of the Messiah coming to redeem all people, they scorned him. They became an angry, violent mob. Lehi ran for his life.

Lehi retired to his room to pray and to rest. Fast asleep, Lehi had another dream in which the Lord said, "**Blessed art thou Lehi, because of the things which thou hast done; and because thou hast been faithful and declared unto this people the things which I commanded thee, behold they seek to take away thy life.**" And the Lord commanded him to take his family and depart into the wilderness. So, this they did. For three whole days they traveled with just what they could carry on their backs. They came to the borders near the shore of the Red Sea and camped in a valley by the side of a river of water. Lehi built an altar of stones and gave thanks unto the Lord.

Laman and Lemuel were angry with their father because he commanded them to leave their homes. They murmured against Lehi. They did not believe that Jerusalem would be destroyed as their father said. They did not understand the dealings of the Lord and did not obey His commandments. They loved their father's riches more. Lehi was filled with the Spirit of God and he scolded Laman and Lemuel. They were so terrified of the power that went forth from Lehi that they did as they were commanded. Lehi and his family lived by the shore of the Red Sea for many days.

References: I Nephi 1: 1-45

NEPHI OBEYS GOD'S COMMANDMENTS

Nephi, the youngest son of Lehi at this time, was large in stature. Nephi had a great desire to know the mysteries of God; so with great faith he cried unto the Lord in mighty prayer. The Lord visited Nephi and told him what Lehi said was true. Nephi went to Sam, and Sam believed him but Laman and Lemuel did not believe. Their hearts were hardened, yet Nephi still loved his brothers.

The Lord spoke to Nephi again saying, **"Blessed art thou Nephi, because of thy faith, for thou hast sought me diligently, with lowliness of heart. And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments, ye shall prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise; yea, even a land which I have prepared for you; yea, a land which is choice above all other lands. And inasmuch as thy brethren shall rebel against thee, they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord. And inasmuch as thou shalt keep my commandments, thou shalt be made a ruler and a teacher over thy brethren. For behold, in that day that they shall rebel against me, I will curse them even with a sore curse, and they shall have no power over thy seed, except they shall rebel against me also. And if it so be that they rebel against me, they shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them up in the ways of remembrance."**

Nephi then ran to tell his father, but Lehi had some news of his own. Lehi had dreamed another dream. In the dream the Lord had commanded that his sons return to Jerusalem to Laban's house. The sons must retrieve the plates of brass which had the records of their forefathers upon them. The older sons did not want to go, yet Nephi was able to persuade his brothers, and they went to Jerusalem.

Laban, a man of great power, was the keeper of the records of the Jews. Lehi's sons cast lots to see who would go to the house of Laban; it fell upon Laman. He went without seeking the Lord's help. Upon entering Laban's house, Laman asked for the records which were engraved upon brass. Laban, thinking he was a robber, cried out, and Laman ran off in fear. When he returned to his brothers without the plates, Nephi came up with another plan. They would get their father's riches and see if they could make an exchange. Upon seeing their father's riches, Laban lusted for them. He tricked the young men into dropping their riches and drove them off with the help of his servants. They escaped with only their lives.

Laman and Lemuel were angry with their young brother, for now they had no riches NOR records! When they began to beat Nephi with rods, an angel of the Lord appeared and stood before them saying, "Why do ye smite your younger brother with a rod? Know ye not that the Lord hath chosen him to be a ruler over you, and this because of your iniquities? Behold thou shalt go up to Jerusalem again, and the Lord will deliver Laban into your hands." They did as they were told. When they reached the wall of the city, Nephi's brothers hid; and Nephi, led by the spirit, went to Laban's house. He saw Laban fallen down drunken with wine. Nephi grabbed Laban's sword and held it. The Spirit instructed him to take Laban's life. He obeyed, even though he did not want to do this. Then Nephi then clothed himself with Laban's garments, so that he could go into the treasury and get the plates. On the way he met Laban's servant who kept the keys to the treasury. He tricked him into giving him the plates. As the brothers of Nephi waited, they saw a man who looked like Laban coming towards them. Thinking it was Laban coming after them, they ran to hide. Nephi called out to them to return. When they realized that it was their brother, they returned. Laban's servant, Zoram, who came with Nephi, was now the fearful one. He was afraid of these young men and afraid to go back to the city for fear of his own people's accusations. The brothers offered to take him into the wilderness with them and he accepted.

Lesson #8 **GOD HELPS NEPHI**

Having received the plates, Lehi studied them. In them he found proof that he was a descendant of Joseph, the son of Jacob. The Spirit came upon him and he prophesied concerning his seed. He spoke of grandchildren and their descendants, even though, at that time, his sons were not married.

The Lord spoke to Lehi, telling him that his family should not go into the wilderness until his sons had married. There they might raise Godly families in the Land of Promise. He then commanded that the sons of Lehi again go into Jerusalem to bring Ishmael and his family to join them. The sons of Lehi were to each take a wife from Ishmael's five daughters. The young men did as their father commanded them. The family of Ishmael greeted them warmly and went with them.

On the way back, Nephi's two oldest brothers rebelled. Nephi reminded them of what the Lord had done for them already and that they must obey. They did not like their younger brother speaking to them with such authority in front of Ishmael's family. When they were alone, they grabbed Nephi, tied him, and were about to leave him alone in the wilderness to die, when Nephi began to pray, "O Lord, according to my faith which is in me, wilt thou deliver me from the hands of my brethren; Yea, even give me strength that I may burst these bands with which I am bound." Just as he voiced that prayer, the bands were loosened and fell from his hands and feet. His brothers were astonished! Although Nephi spoke to them boldly, chastising them, they did not harken. The others came and pleaded with them not to hurt Nephi. Laman and Lemuel became ashamed and repented. They begged for Nephi's forgiveness and the group once again started back into the wilderness. They joined Lehi at the camp by the Red Sea. Later the family of Ishmael settled in a nearby valley with the family of Lehi.

While they lived in the wilderness in the valley of Lemuel, Lehi was given a vision from the Lord. In his vision he saw a large field, and in it, a beautiful tree. On the tree was the sweetest fruit he had ever tasted. The fruit was whiter than anything he had ever seen. It filled his soul with much joy and he wanted his whole family to eat of it also. Looking toward the head of the river which ran nearby, he saw his wife Sariah, Sam, and Nephi. He called to them and they came and ate of the fruit. Lehi also desired that Laman and Lemuel would eat, but they would not come. He saw a river of filthy water that ran alongside the tree and a large building on the other side of the river. The big building seemed to float in the air. He saw a rod of iron and a straight and narrow path both of which lead to the tree. He saw many people coming to the path. Many started on the path, but lost their way in a mist of darkness. Many fell off the path and onto other paths where they should not have gone. Others went forward, clinging to the rod of iron and made it to the tree to eat the fruit. Some of these people were ashamed because the people in the big building were mocking them. Those who were ashamed went away into forbidden paths and were lost. Lehi, Sariah, Sam, and Nephi were not ashamed. Lehi was sorrowful because Laman and Lemuel would not eat of the tree.

The Lord showed Nephi in a vision the meaning of Lehi's vision. The tree was the symbol of the love of God, most desirable above all things. The rod of iron represented God's word. The filthy river represented the place of endless punishment for the people who would not listen to God's word. The mist of darkness was the Devil's temptations that lead some people into other paths away from the love of God. The large building contained those who did not desire the love of God. These people were very proud and only thought of themselves.

An angel of the Lord also showed Nephi, in the same vision, many things that would come to pass. He saw Mary the mother of Jesus, a virgin most beautiful. He saw Jesus, the son of God, when he was a baby. He saw John the Baptist baptizing Jesus. He saw Jesus teaching the people and healing the sick, and the twelve disciples who would follow Him. He saw Jesus lifted up upon the cross to be crucified and die for the sins of the world. He saw Jesus return to life and visit Nephi's people in the Land of Promise, teaching them the same things He taught in Jerusalem. Nephi also saw many other things in the future concerning the Land of Promise and all the nations, even down to the last days when Zion would again come upon the earth.

References: 1 Nephi 1: 158-174, 1 Nephi chapter 2, 1 Nephi chapter 3

THE BEAUTIFUL BALL

The Lord spoke to Lehi in a dream commanding him to again take his people and travel into the wilderness. They were to depart the very next day. To Lehi's surprise, upon leaving his tent the next morning, he saw upon the ground a round ball of curious workmanship, made of fine brass. Within the ball were two spindles, one pointing in the direction that they should travel. It was their compass, but not just an ordinary compass, for it was made by God! Lehi told his group about the dream he had the night before and explained that they must leave immediately for the wilderness. Everyone quickly made preparations for the trip.

They packed belongings and began their journey, crossing the River Laman, following the direction that the ball led them. For four days they traveled in a nearly southeast direction, coming to a place they called Shazar. There they rested and gathered food for their families. Continuing their journey, the ball led them into portions of the wilderness that were more fertile. They noticed that there was writing on the ball which changed from time to time. The writing taught them in the ways of the Lord. This priceless ball was theirs to have and to hold. They discovered that the more faithful they were to the writing, the more they learned and the more they were guided. Those who were weak in faith were given comfort by looking upon the ball. They were given comfort that God was near to those who put their faith and trust in Him. The ball confirmed their faith and reassured them of God's great love for His children.

Truly, the Lord had said that He would lead them to a promised land. Many times Lehi's colony had despaired of ever finding food or water. But over and over, when they prayed, the ball would lead them to more fertile parts of the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The Lord said, "**I will even make a**

way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. . . because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen." (Isaiah 43: 19-20). The Lord also said, "**Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for. . . he will cause to come down for you the rain. . . And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.**" (Joel 2:22-24).

When the people of Lehi had faith in God and obeyed the instructions that were written on the ball, He blessed them.

References: I Nephi 5: 10-18, Isaiah 43: 19-20, Joel 2: 22-24

THE BROKEN BOW

For many days the families of Lehi and Ishmael continued to travel in the wilderness near the Red Sea, directed by the brass ball. The spindle on the ball kept them moving toward the most fertile parts of the wilderness.

As Lehi's group traveled, they had to stop often to hunt for food. Their young men would use slings with stones, as well as bows and arrows, to slay the beasts. On one of these hunting trips, Nephi's bow suddenly snapped right in two as he was about to shoot! When Nephi's brothers saw this they were very angry, for Nephi was the best hunter of them all and his bow was by far the best, being made of fine steel. They all had depended on Nephi because of his fine bow, since their wooden ones had all lost their spring. They had no choice but to return to their families empty handed and greatly distressed because of the broken bow. Even Lehi was upset upon hearing the news, and as the people's hunger grew so did their anger.

They could not understand why God had allowed this terrible thing to happen. Nephi chastised them, reminding them how the Lord had taken such good care of them. He told them that they should not be thinking as they were. They were murmuring against the Lord and also against Lehi for being "foolish". Lehi then realized that he himself was also wrong for being distressed. He humbled himself before the Lord, asking for forgiveness and crying out to Him for help. The Lord answered, "**Look upon the ball, and behold the things which are written!**" They did just that, and they trembled as they saw that the ball had changed its writings. It was now plain to read and gave understanding concerning the ways of the Lord. It instructed Nephi to make a new wooden bow, arrows and sling with stones and go into the mountains to find food. Nephi did as the ball directed and killed many wild beasts. Great was the people's joy, and they humbled themselves before the Lord, giving thanks.

They began their journey again, and, after traveling for many days, pitched their tents in the place they called Nahom. Ishmael died and was buried there. Everyone was greatly saddened. The daughters of Ishmael were so upset that they wanted to return to Jerusalem. Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael took their frustrations out on Lehi and Nephi. They blamed them for their being deep in the wilderness and felt lost without Ishmael. The brothers of Nephi also did not like their younger brother being in power over them, and again resented Nephi and Lehi. The Lord was with Lehi and Nephi though, and He spoke to Laman, Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael. Therefore, they turned away their anger and repented. Because of this, the Lord blessed them again.

From that point they traveled eastward. Often they were in much danger from wandering tribes and those trying to recover the precious plates. God kept them safe although the journey was a difficult one for all of them. They traveled in the wilderness a total of eight years from the time that they left Jerusalem. They had many hardships and many children were born during the journey. Even Lehi and Sariah had two more sons, Jacob and Joseph. The Lord blessed them greatly with much food and nourishment for all. When they kept God's commandments, He kept them strong, healthy and protected. But at last, when they thought they could not go on any longer, they came to a beautiful land which they called Bountiful! Bountiful meaning "much fruit" and a sea they named "Irreantum."

The travelers rejoiced exceedingly with shouts of joy, and heartfelt prayers of praise.

THE LAND BOUNTIFUL

They called the place Bountiful. It was lush and beautiful land, abounding in vegetation. The families pitched their tents by the seashore. They named the sea Irreantum, which means "many waters". The blue-green waters went as far as the eye could see. Everyone had great cause for rejoicing. Many prayers of grateful praise arose to God almighty, the giver of life and all good things. After eight years in the wilderness they truly enjoyed the restfulness of this beautiful land.

After many days had passed, the Lord spoke to Nephi saying, "**Arise, and get thee into the mountain.**" He went to the mountain and cried unto the Lord for many hours, desiring to know the Lord's will. It came to pass the Lord spoke to Nephi saying, "**Thou shalt construct a ship, after the manner which I shall shew thee, that I may carry thy people across these waters.**" Nephi listened carefully as the Lord unfolded the plans for building the ship. Then Nephi asked the Lord where he should go to find ore to make metal tools. The Lord told Nephi where to find the ore and how to make the tools.

Everyone watched Nephi in amazement. They were interested, but did not help. When they saw him cut timbers and begin to build the ship, they began to mock him. They still would not help him with his "foolish" plan. They did not believe that the Lord had told Nephi to build the ship, according to His directions. Nephi was very sad at the hardness of their hearts. He had such great hopes that they had mended their wicked ways. When they saw he was sorrowful, his brethren rejoiced and were glad. They mocked and mocked, not even believing what they had heard or seen with their own eyes.

Filled with the spirit of God, Nephi reminded them of all that had passed. He chastised them boldly. Just as they were about to grab him and throw him in the sea, Nephi ordered, "I command you that ye touch me not, for I am filled with the power of God. . . And whoso shall lay their hands upon me, shall wither even as a dried weed; and he shall be as nought before the power of God, for God shall smite him." They backed away in great fear. They knew deep in their hearts that what Nephi had said was true. Once again their younger brother had exercised his power over them. They had seen again that the Lord was on Nephi's side. They stood way off, cowering in terror. Nephi looked at his elder brethren with deep concern and compassion warning them not to murmur any more against their father, Lehi, nor to withhold their help from him. "God had commanded me that I should build a ship. . . If God had commanded me to do all things, I could do it. If he should command me that I should say unto this water, Be thou earth, it should be earth; and if I should say it, it would be done. And now, if the Lord hath such great power, and hath wrought so many miracles among the children of men, how is it that he can not instruct me that I should build a ship?" The brothers were quieted once more.

Working with Nephi the next days, they were afraid to touch him even by accident; for fear that they would wither and dry like a reed. God commanded Nephi that he should touch them, and although He would not let them wither, He would shock them! They were shocked until their bodies shook. With great trembling and fear they cried out and said, "We know of a surety that the Lord is with thee, for we know that it is the power of the Lord that hath shaken us." They wanted to worship Nephi, but

Nephi corrected them, ". . . worship the Lord thy God," he told them.

References: I Nephi 5: 65-167

THE NEPHITES BUILD A BOAT

As the ship began to take shape, Nephi saw that their work was good. It was a marvelous sea worthy craft of skillful workmanship. It was a vessel built after the manner designed by God, not man. Nephi's brethren were very pleased with all their efforts, and they worked side by side, untiringly, day after day. Nephi went up into the mountain often to seek the Lord's counsel and the Lord showed him great things. The brothers looked upon Nephi with greater respect than ever before, as they knew his knowledge had come from the Lord. At last, the day came that magnificent ship was finished.

The Lord spoke to Lehi, and told him that they should make preparation for their journey. The next morning Lehi told everyone, and they proceeded to gather their provisions for the trip. They gathered honey, fruits, meats, the seeds they had brought with them from Jerusalem, and their belongings. They then loaded them aboard the ship. They also loaded their tents, for they knew they would need them when they reached their new home.

Sariah and their two young sons boarded. All the rest followed, with Nephi climbing aboard last. The brass ball was held by Nephi when he boarded. It would be their compass, directing them across the water according to their faith and obedience to God's ways. As they put forth into the waters, Nephi lifted his heart in a prayer of gratitude to God for all their rich blessings. They were being driven forth by the winds towards the Promised Land.

After they had been driven by the winds for many days, Nephi's brethren became bored. They began to dance and sing, and speak rudely. Nephi calmly told them about their behavior but they became angry with him. They said that they did not want to be ruled by someone younger than them. Laman, Lemuel, and the two sons of Ishmael bound Nephi with cords, treating him harshly. Lehi could not reason with them, nor did tears from Sariah change their minds. Nephi was bound by cords and could not move. The Lord allowed this to happen so that he could show forth His power and so that His word would be fulfilled which He had spoken concerning the wicked. No one could reason with the brethren, but the Lord showed them His displeasure with their actions!

Suddenly, they all realized that the ship was out of control. The compass which the Lord had prepared for their use had ceased to work! Laman did not know how to steer the ship! No matter what he did, the ship rolled heavily from side to side. From a distance, a dark cloud bank rolled in unnoticed. The once calm, blue ocean now mirrored the sullen angry reflection of the skies above. The wind shifted and a terrible storm began.

Once again Nephi's brothers forgot the commandments of the Lord and were filled with their own selfishness and pride. The Lord sent this terrible storm to humble them.

STORM AT SEA

Nephi was bound with cords by his brothers, Laman and Lemuel and the two sons of Ishmael. They were angry with Nephi for speaking to them about their behavior. The Lord showed them His displeasure by sending a terrible storm and for three days the ship was driven back upon the waters. Tons of water crashed upon the ship. All were afraid they were going to drown, yet Laman and Lemuel would not release Nephi. They did not believe that their wickedness had caused this terrible storm. On the fourth day, the storm was worse than ever, and it was only then that they realized that the judgements of the Lord were upon them.

Carefully, Laman and Lemuel came over to Nephi and untied him, though their hands were trembling with fear. Nephi was very grateful to the Lord, but he was not bitter against his brothers or the others.

Lehi and Sariah, Nephi's parents, were quite old and nearly died during the great storm, partly because of the sea-sickness that came upon them, but mostly from being "heart-sick" at the wickedness of their two eldest sons. They feared that Laman, Lemuel, and the two sons of Ishmael had not really softened their hearts, but had freed Nephi only when they saw that it was the only way to save their own lives.

It came to pass that after Nephi had been released, he took the compass in his hands and immediately it began to work again. God showed forth His mighty power by allowing this ball of curious workmanship to work again only after Laman and Lemuel and the two others had repented. Nephi was in command of the ship once again.

Nephi cried unto the Lord in mighty prayer. He praised the Lord for His mercy and His goodness. He thanked Him for causing the compass to function so he could steer the ship. He beseeched the Almighty Father of the heavens and the earth to still the tempests. He implored the Lord God to hush the angry waves of the wild ocean. Immediately after Nephi had voiced that prayer, the winds and the storms ceased and there was a great calm! Once again, they sailed forward toward the promised land.

References: I Nephi 5: 187-211

THE PROMISED LAND

For many days, Nephi guided the ship without further incident as they sailed toward the Promised Land.

Eventually they landed the ship upon the beautiful shores of what we know as the American Continent, though they called it "The Promised Land". Everyone began to unload the ship and they pitched their tents along the shore, as they had in the land Bountiful. This new land was a paradise, being more choice than the land Bountiful.

Soon they began to till the earth and plant the seeds they had brought with them from Jerusalem. The seeds grew exceedingly well in the fertile soil. They were blessed with abundance at harvest.

In the wilderness, they found wild beasts of every kind; cow, ox, horse, and goat which God had made for the use of men. They also found all manner of ore; gold, silver, and copper.

The Lord commanded Nephi to make plates of gold that he might record the happenings of his people. He was to write upon them the ministry, prophecies that were to be kept for the instruction of his people, and other wise purposes known unto the Lord. Nephi commanded his people to continue writing on the plates after he was gone, handing them down from generation to generation from one prophet to another, until receiving further word from the Lord.

Nephi taught his people all he knew of the ways of the Lord. He also taught them all he learned from the plates of brass that they had brought with them from Jerusalem.(I Nephi chapters 6 & 7)

Lehi was getting very old, so he called all the people together to speak to them. There were many things that weighed heavy on his heart, and he felt it was his duty to tell them all. Lehi told them the Lord had done many great things for them by bringing them out of the land of Jerusalem across the many waters, sparing their lives. "I have a seen a vision, in the which I know that Jerusalem is destroyed . . . We have now obtained a land of promise. . . which the Lord hath covenanted with me . . . and to my children forever; and also all they which should be led out of other countries, by the hand of the Lord. And if it so be that they shall serve him according to the commandments which he hath given, it shall be a land of liberty unto them; wherefore, they shall never be brought down into captivity: if so, it shall be because of iniquity."

Lehi prophesied that if they were to fall away from God in unbelief, and reject the true Messiah, the Lord would give other nations power over them and their nation would be taken away from them. The Lord would cause them to be smitten and scattered. Lehi told his children, "The Lord has redeemed my soul. ... I have beheld His glory, and I am encircled about eternally in the arms of His love." It was his desire that they obey the commandments of God. He feared that they might harden their hearts and be cut off from the presence of God forever.

Lehi continued, "I have feared. . . that a cursing should come upon you for the space of many generations; and ye are visited by sword, and by famine, and are hated, and are led according to the will and captivity of the devil. O my sons, that these things might not come upon you, but that ye might be a choice and a favored people of the Lord!"

Lehi then gave each of his sons great blessings and also gave Zoram and the two sons of Ishmael blessings.

Lesson #15

LAND OF ZARAHEMLA

For about four hundred years after Lehi died, the plates had been passed from generation to generation, many Nephite descendants writing upon them. There were many wars and contentions between the Nephite people and the Lamanites (called after the person they followed). The plates record very little of those years until the time of a righteous man named Mosiah.

Mosiah lived in the land of Nephi. The Lord warned Mosiah that he should flee into the wilderness, taking with him as many as would harken to the voice of the Lord.

There was much preaching and prophesying as they were being admonished by the word of God. They were led by God into a land called Zarahemla where they discovered a people called the people of Zarahemla. They were greeted joyfully, yet they had difficulty in understanding each other, for their languages were different. Mosiah felt that the people of Zarahemla should learn his language.

After King Zarahemla learned the Nephite language, Mosiah discovered that they had also been brought out of Jerusalem. Their forefathers had left Jerusalem about eleven years after Lehi and his family. They were brought across the many waters by the hand of the Lord, and had lived there ever since. They had not brought any records with them, so their belief had dwindled. King Zarahemla could give a record of the genealogy of his fathers by memory. His people rejoiced exceedingly because the Lord had sent the people of Mosiah to them with the plates of brass which contained the record of their forefathers also.

The people of Zarahemla were also known as Mulekites. They were great in number, even though they had fought many wars. The people of Mosiah united with them, and Mosiah was appointed to be their king.

One day, some of the people brought an engraved stone to King Mosiah which they had found. No one could read it, but King Mosiah was able to interpret it by the gift and the power of God. He used the interpreters which they had brought with them from Jerusalem with the plates of brass. They were a great gift of God. No man could look in the Urim and Thummim except he was commanded by God, or he would perish. Whoever uses them is called a seer (revelator and/or a prophet) . . . no man has a greater gift.

King Mosiah was able to read from the stone an account of a man named Coriantumr, who was a king and warrior. It was the sad story of how his people had been slain and the nation of the Jaredites had been destroyed. Coriantumr had been taken care of by the people of Zarahemla for nine months before he died. He had told them that his ancestors had come from the great tower and left when the Lord confounded the language. He told them that the bones of the Jaredites lay scattered in another land northward.

Under King Mosiah, this group of people worked together. They loved God. They listened to His words and obeyed His commandments. God blessed them and they lived in peace and happiness for a long time.

References: Omni 1:18-54; Mosiah 5: 72-81 and Ether 6:16-24

GOOD KING BENJAMIN

The Nephites had another good king, King Benjamin, who was the son of King Mosiah. He was a righteous and holy man who had holy men assisting him in preaching the truth of God's word. They spoke out boldly about the people's wrong doings and brought them back into righteousness.

The King had three sons, Mosiah, Helorum, and Helaman. As the King grew old, he looked forward to the day when one of his sons would take his place as ruler over his people. Therefore, King Benjamin wanted to prepare them for this great responsibility. He had his sons taught in all the languages of his fathers so that they would be men of great understanding. He taught them from the plates and of God's commandments, and testified unto them that the records were true. He wanted them to search them (study them) diligently.

King Benjamin called for his eldest son, Mosiah, and told him that he had chosen him to be the next king. He also told him that the next day he would make the announcement to his people. He asked Mosiah to send out an announcement to the people, telling them to gather at the temple so they could speak to them. Since there were so many people, a tower had to be built so that their voices would be heard. There were many hands to help construct the tower, and it went up quickly.

Leaning upon Mosiah's arm for support, the aged King Benjamin and his eldest son climbed the steps slowly. After reaching the top and catching his breath, the king began to speak. He realized then that still not everyone could hear his words, so he ordered that they be written down and sent forth to the people.

These are some of his words: (paraphrased)

"Open your ears that you may hear, and your hearts and minds that you may understand the mysteries of God. Always remember to keep God's commandments, to do as God says, for if you do, He will certainly bless you. Serve one another; do things for each other, for when you help others, you are helping God. You have been good people while I was your king. You have obeyed my words. Now I am growing to old to be king. Mosiah, my son is to be your next king. Try to do as he says, and you will prosper in the land. Do not listen to evil leaders but remember the things God has said, and the things I have told you. They are true. Be faithful to God and you will always be happy."

"Now, I want to tell you of a wonderful message which was given to me by an angel. He said the time will come soon when God's only son, Jesus, will come to live on this earth. His mother's name shall be Mary. He will do many wonderful things, such as heal the sick, raise the dead, make the lame walk, and the blind and deaf to see and hear. Even though He is the Son of God, He will be a man. He will grow very tired, he will be hungry and thirsty, even as we are at times. Some men will not listen to him. They will kill him, but on the third day He will rise from the dead and return to God."

"If you believe God's words, be sure that you do them. Teach them to others. Call upon God in prayer each day. Love one another and serve each other. Give freely to the poor and hungry. Help the sick. If you do these things, you will truly be the children of God."

As King Benjamin ended teaching, his people were filled with the spirit of God. Speaking in the Spirit, they all said together, "We do believe. . . We believe that Jesus shall come!" They had reached a very high spiritual level of understanding. They then said, "The Spirit has shown us great things, and we are willing to enter a covenant with our God. We are willing to be obedient to His commandments in all things for the rest of our lives!"

King Benjamin was very pleased with the response of his people. He said to them, "Because of the covenant which ye have made, ye shall be called the 'children of Christ', for on this day you have made a righteous promise to God. You shall be the sons and daughters of Christ, for He has begotten you spiritually, and there is no other name whereby salvation comes. Therefore take upon you the name of Christ and whoever keeps their covenant shall be found at the right hand of God; for he shall be called by the name of Christ."

King Benjamin recorded all those who had entered into the promise and taken upon them the name of Christ, which was everyone there except the babies. He blessed them and then consecrated his son, Mosiah, to be the new ruler over Zarahemla. **References: Mosiah chapters 1 through 4**

AMMON FINDS FRIENDS

About four hundred years after Lehi left Jerusalem, King Benjamin anointed his son to be the next king. Young King Mosiah was thirty years old when he became king. Old King Benjamin lived for another three years after he stepped down from the throne.

King Mosiah II was a good man and followed in his fathers footsteps. He walked in the way of the Lord and kept His commandments. Mosiah worked in the fields as did the others, laboring with his own hands so that he might not burden his people by taxing them for his support.

The people of Mosiah wanted to know what became of some of their people who had left many years ago to go to the land of Nephi. They were led by a man named Zeniff. Mosiah II announced one day that he would choose sixteen strong young men to search for the missing brethren. As soon as they were ready, they left on their search.

Ammon, a descendant of King Zarahemla, was chosen as the leader because of his strength. For forty days they traveled in the wilderness, not knowing if they were going in the right direction, looking to God for guidance.

They were just north of the land of Shilom that led to the land of Nephi when Ammon decided to take three of his men and go ahead. Since they did not know how friendly these people were, he left the others to guard the camp.

When Ammon and his men reached the city of Nephi, they were discovered by soldiers, captured, and taken to prison. After two days they were brought before the king and questioned. The king said, "Behold I am Limhi, the son of Noah, which was the son of Zeniff, which came up out of the land of Zarahemla to inherit this land."

Ammon replied, "O king, I am very thankful before God this day, that I am yet alive, and am permitted to speak; and I will endeavor to speak with boldness; for I am assured that if ye had known me, ye would not have suffered that I should have worn these bands. For I am Ammon, and am a descendant of Zarahemla, and have come up out of the land of Zarahemla, to inquire concerning our brethren, which Zeniff brought up out of that land."

When King Limhi heard this, he was so very glad, for he now knew that his brethren in Zarahemla were still alive! Ammon told him of his tired and hungry men encamped on the hill. The king sent some of his soldiers to bring them into the city and give them food and drink and a place to rest.

The next day, with everyone gathered at the temple, King Limhi explained to his people who these strangers were. He also told them that soon they would be freed from the bondage of the Lamanites, by the hands of their brethren from Zarahemla. The Lamanites had taxed the Nephites heavily in exchange for not destroying them. King Limhi told his people that if they would turn to the Lord in full purpose of heart, and not transgress, the Lord would deliver them out of bondage. Next, Ammon stood and told the people of the last words of King Benjamin and of the many things that happened to their brethren after Zeniff left.

References: Mosiah 5: 1-56; 9; 163- 175 and Omni 1:48-52

THE ESCAPE

After King Limhi dismissed his people, he took Ammon aside and asked him if he could interpret languages. Ammon replied that he could not. The king explained that many days ago he had sent forty-three of his people into the wilderness to find the land of Zarahemla, to ask them for help. But his men were lost in the wilderness for many days. During that time they discovered a land which was covered with dried bones of men and beasts and ruins of buildings. They thought it was the Land of Zarahemla. They had only returned a few days before. He brought out some very large breast plates made of brass and copper. Then he showed him a box and its contents--twenty-four plates of pure gold with engravings on them. He had hoped that Ammon could translate them.

Ammon told King Limhi of King Mosiah II and his interpreters. Ammon said a seer was a high gift of God, and only with a command from God could a man use the interpreters.

Ammon and his fifteen brethren made a study of how the people of Limhi could be delivered from bondage. King Limhi worked with them to try to find a solution. They called a big meeting so that they could all decide together on how to break from this bondage.

After much discussion, they could find no way except to flee. They planned to take their women, children, flocks, and their herds. They would also need to take their tents, supplies, and whatever else they could haul out of the city. They would have to depart into the wilderness because it would be impossible for them to battle against the Lamanites, who greatly outnumbered them.

Gideon, who was a strong captain of King Limhi's army, came forward with a plan. He explained how they could all slip through a wall on the back side of the city, late at night, when the Lamanite guards had all become drunken.

They decided that this is what they must do. They sent a proclamation throughout the land of Nephi for everyone to prepare themselves. That night, they sent the Lamanites an extra gift of wine, in addition to what they had to pay them for taxes. Gideon went ahead to be sure it was safe and found the guards fast asleep. Gideon gave the signal, and the people who had slaved to pay tribute to the Lamanites slipped through the back gate, quietly driving their flocks ahead of them. Gideon led them to safety by the light of the moon, around the outskirts of the Land of Shilom towards the Land of Zarahemla. They thanked God for their safe escape, even though they were not out of danger yet.

In the meantime, the Lamanites discovered that the Nephites had escaped from the city of Nephi during the night. Immediately, they sent their great armies to recapture them. The forest was so dense that after two days they could follow them no longer, and the Lamanite army became lost in the wilderness, unable to find their way back to the land of Nephi.

Ammon and his people finally reached the land of Zarahemla and King Mosiah II received his brethren with great joy! King Limhi and his people desired to become inhabitants of Zarahemla. Limhi presented King Mosiah with the record of Zeniff and the twenty-four plates of gold (the record of the Jaredites). Limhi was very anxious for King Mosiah II to translate the records through the power of God.

ALMA TEACHES ABOUT GOD

The records of Zeniff told of his desire to inherit the land of Nephi. He and his men had journeyed into the land of the Lamanites. Zeniff and four of his men approached the King of the land of Nephi who possessed the land of Lehi-Nephi and the Land of Shilom. The King and Zeniff made a contract and Zeniff was given the land which he desired.

Zeniff and his people worked very hard rebuilding the city and planting crops; soon they began to multiply and prosper. Laman, King of the Lamanites, was a devious man. After twelve years of letting the people of Zeniff work the land, King Laman began to threaten them. After King Laman's death, his son fought against a Nephite rebellion. Just north of the valley of Shilom, a big battle took place in which the Nephites, with the help of the Lord, won their freedom.

Zeniff became old and conferred the kingdom upon his son, Noah. King Noah was a very wicked man. He put down all the priests of his father and appointed new ones who were also wicked. He also married many wives and taxed the people very heavily. Soon many of the people began to be unrighteous. Abinadi, a righteous man who lived during this time, warned the people what would happen if they did not change their ways. King Noah did not like this and sent his priests to slay him. They could not, for the power of the Lord was with him. Abinadi taught them of the prophecies of Isaiah and many more things of God. King Noah ordered Abinadi to be put to death. One of the King's priests, Alma, believed the words Abinadi had spoken. Alma fled, but Abinadi was cast into prison and later put to death.

News of this spread throughout the land. Alma was in great danger, yet he did not fear for his own safety. Alma had a great desire in his heart to do God's will. Alma wrote down Abinadi's words, and day after day he secretly taught the people. They met in a quiet place outside the city at the water's edge, called the waters of Mormon. There he baptized over two hundred people. The Lord poured out his Spirit on them. The people formed the Church of Christ, and were called by this name from that time on.

One day, after having searched for them for a long time, some of King Noah's wicked spies discovered them. King Noah sent for his army and gave them orders to destroy Alma and his followers. Meanwhile, the Lord spoke to Alma and warned him that he and his people (450 by then) must flee into the wilderness. Quickly they departed before the king's army came for them. The people of Alma put their faith and trust in the Lord. They journeyed into the thick woods, and with strength from the Lord, pushed their way through. The army of King Noah also found it difficult getting through the dense jungle so they were unable to overtake Alma and his people. After eight days in the wilderness, Alma and his people arrived in a beautiful place with many springs of fresh pure water. There they made their new home, a city called Helam in the Land of Helam. They had no man for a king--God was their king!

References: Mosiah chapters 5 through 10

LAMANITES FIND ALMA

The Lamanites were very angry with Alma and his people. One day, some of Alma's people came to him. They had been working in the fields outside of the city and had seen a large army coming over the hills toward them. They all suspected that it was their Lamanite enemies. They knew that they were greatly outnumbered, and many of their people would be slain. Alma reminded them that the Lord their God would deliver them. They cried unto the Lord asking him to soften the hearts of the Lamanites, that they would spare them, their wives and their children.

Alma and his people surrendered to the Lamanites to avoid bloodshed. They told Alma and his brethren that if they would show them the way which led to the Land of Nephi, they would spare their lives and grant them liberty. But after Alma had shown them the way, the Lamanites would not keep their promise. They set guards around the city of Helam so they could not escape.

The King of the Lamanites, named Laman after his father, was in possession of so many lands that he had to appoint a king under him. He appointed Amulon as king over the Land of Helam. Amulon only had the power to rule according to the wishes of King Laman.

Amulon hated Alma and his people, so Amulon and his guards persecuted them. He placed hard tasks and heavy work loads upon them, for Alma and his people were now the slaves of the Lamanites.

Alma and his people began to cry unto the Lord in mighty prayer because of their great afflictions. Although Amulon did not believe in God, he commanded them to stop praying. He set guards over them and anyone caught praying would be put to death.

How sad and sorrowful the people of Alma were! They had escaped from wicked King Noah and fled into the wilderness; they had found freedom from oppression. Under Alma's leadership they had built a beautiful city and had found great joy in serving God. But now they were once again in bondage to a wicked man. No one could deliver them except the Lord their God. The Lord saw fit to chasten His people; He tried their patience and their faith.

King Amulon did not know God. He did not know that even though the people of Alma did not raise their voices aloud, they still poured out their hearts to God. Amulon did not know that God knew the thoughts that were in their hearts and minds without their speaking aloud.

As they continued to lift their hearts to God in silent prayers, the voice of the Lord came to His suffering people. The Lord said, "**Lift up your heads and be of good comfort, for I know of the covenant which ye have made unto me; and I will covenant with this my people, and deliver them out of bondage. And I will also ease the burdens which are put upon your shoulders, that even you can not feel them upon your backs, even while you are in bondage; and this will I do ... that ye may know of a surety that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions.**"

GOD DELIVERS ALMA'S PEOPLE

The Lord had spoken to His afflicted people. He told Alma He would ease their burdens and deliver them out of bondage. It came to pass that their burdens were made light, and they cheerfully and patiently submitted to the will of God. They knew that in His own time, the Lord would free them. Alma and his people exercised great faith.

One day, the voice of the Lord came to Alma with a message for the people saying, **"Be of good comfort, for on the morrow I will deliver thee out of bondage. Thou shalt go before this people, and I will go with thee, and deliver this people out of bondage."**

The people rejoiced when Alma told them that their delivery was at hand. There was much to do to ready themselves. After darkness fell, they worked secretly, gathering their grain. All night they labored; gathering their flocks, their tents, and provisions for their journey.

As dawn broke, Alma and his people departed into the wilderness, unobserved; for the Lord caused a deep sleep to come upon the Lamanites.

They traveled all day and by night they were exhausted. Finally they came to a place between two sloping hills; they called it the Valley of Alma. They rested there and poured out their hearts to God in thanksgiving.

Then the Lord spoke to Alma, saying, **"Haste thee and get thou and this people out of this land, for the Lamanites have awakened and do pursue thee; Therefore get thee out of this land, and I will stop the Lamanites in this valley, that they come no further in pursuit of this people."**

Alma obeyed the Lord and led his people out of the valley and into the wilderness.

Meanwhile, King Limhi and his people, under the guidance of Ammon, had already found their way back to the Land of Zarahemla. After twelve days of traveling, Alma and his people also found their way to the Land of Zarahemla. Great was their joy when King Mosiah welcomed them warmly. It was as if it were a homecoming for them, even though they had never lived in the land before. These were their brethren and they each felt a strong kinship for each other. Their forefather, Zeniff, had left the land about 70-80 years earlier around 200-190 B.C.

King Mosiah and Alma preached and taught the people about repentance and faith on the Lord. Due to the plain and simple truths that Alma taught, there were earnest desires for baptism. Because Alma had the authority, he baptized those who made a covenant with God. As many as Alma baptized belonged to the Church of the living God, the Church of Christ.

References: Mosiah 11: 63-104

Lesson #22

THE NEW ALMA

King Mosiah had four sons named Ammon, Aaron, Omner, and Himni. They were good friends of one the sons of Alma, whose name was also Alma. These young men were rebellious, for they would not remember the wonderful things God had done for their fathers. All their lives they lived in Zarahemla where there was peace and happiness. Alma and King Mosiah were heartsick because their sons had rejected and mocked their teachings of the Lord. All they could do was to pray for their sons and hope someday they would come to know God.

The King had already sent out a proclamation that unbelievers were not to persecute the members of the Church, but the five young men did much harm by talking against God and His church.

Young Alma was actually the leader because he was a fluent speaker and could deceive people's hearts. He was a wicked and idolatrous man. His gods were the images that were made by a man.

One day, Alma and the four princes were traveling along a dry and dusty road on their way to a nearby village. They planned to sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of the people. Alma was boasting about their great successes, when suddenly, they saw what seemed to be a cloud descending before their very eyes. An angel of the Lord appeared to them. He spoke with a voice of thunder, and the sound of it made the ground quake and tremble.

The men were struck with sudden fear. They were so astonished that they fell to earth, and the angel said, "Alma, arise, and stand forth." They did, with great fear and trembling. The angel said, "Why persecuteth thou the church of God? For the Lord hath said, **"This is my church, and I will establish it; and nothing shall overthrow it, save it is the transgression of my people."** And again, the angel said, "Behold, the Lord hath heard the prayers of his people, and also the prayers of his servant Alma, which is thy father: For he hath prayed with much faith concerning thee, that thou mightest be brought to the knowledge of the truth; Therefore for this purpose have I come to convince thee of the power and authority of God, that the prayers of his servants might be answered according to their faith. And now behold, can ye dispute the power of God?"

"For behold, doth not my voice shake the earth? And can ye not also behold me before you? And I am sent from God. Now I say unto thee, Go, and remember the captivity of thy fathers in the land of He lam, and in the land of Nephi; and remember how great things he hath done for them: for they were in bondage, and he hath delivered them. And now I say unto thee, Alma, go thy way, and seek to destroy the church no more, that their prayers may be answered; and this even if thou wilt of thyself be cast off."

With these words the angel of the Lord departed. The five young men fell to the earth again, in astonishment of what had happened. They knew it was the power of God. Alma was struck with such great fear and wonder that he became weak so that he could not move or speak. The sons of Mosiah had to carry him.

Upon returning home, the sons of King Mosiah told Alma what had taken place. Alma rejoiced, for he knew it was the power of God. He called for the priests to assemble and they fasted and prayed for the young Alma, that he might regain consciousness and know of the goodness and glory of God. After two days and two nights, a miracle happened and young Alma did regain his strength. He stood before them and bore his testimony to his father and brethren. With tears of joy, he told them of what had happened, and humbly told them of how he had repented of his sins. He told them that as he lay on his bed, the Lord spoke to him, saying, **"marvel not that all mankind, yea, men, and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters; and thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in no wise inherit the kingdom of God."**

Alma now had his own testimony of God and His son. The sons of Mosiah also came to a knowledge of the truth and the people of God rejoiced!

From that day on, young Alma and the sons of Mosiah were converted. They began to teach the people about all the things they had seen and heard. They traveled throughout the area, zealously striving to repair the injury they had done. They confessed their sins and brought forth fruit. They were instruments in the hands of God. They declared to the people that the Lord reigns!

References: Mosiah 11: 159-207

ALMA MEETS AMULEK

In the beginning of the tenth year of the reign of Judges, Alma left his home to begin a missionary effort. This time he went to the Land of Ammonihah. He preached the word of God even though the Nephites who lived there were very wicked. They would not harken to the words of Alma. They mocked him and spit at him and they cast him out of the city. He then traveled toward the city of Aaron. As he traveled along the lonely road, he was heavy with sorrow.

Suddenly, a voice spoke to him saying, "Blessed art thou, Alma; therefore lift up thy head and rejoice, for thou hast great cause to rejoice: for thou hast been faithful in keeping the commandments of God from the time which thou received thy first message from him." Alma looked up and marveled, for an angel of the Lord appeared in the air before him. The angel continued, "Behold, I am he that delivered it unto you; and behold, I am sent to command thee that thou return to the city of Ammonihah, and preach again unto the people of the city; yea, preach unto them. Yea, say unto them, except they repent, the Lord God will destroy them. For behold, they do study at this time that they may destroy the liberty of thy people, (for thus saith the Lord) which is contrary to the statutes, and judgments, and commandments which he has given unto his people."

The angel departed and Alma's heavy heart now rejoiced! He returned to Ammonihah. Bravely, he approached the wicked city, entering by a different gate than he was cast out of. He was very hungry from days of fasting and said to a man with a kindly face, "Will ye give to an humble servant of God something to eat?"

The man replied, "I am a Nephite, and I know that thou art a holy prophet of God, for thou art the man which an angel saith in a vision, Thou shalt receive; therefore go with me into my house, and I will impart unto thee of my favor; and I know that thou will be a blessing unto me and my house."

Gladly, Alma followed the man who had befriended him in that cold and unfriendly city. His name was Amulek and he took Alma into his home. After he had brought him water for washing, he brought forth bread and meat, and set it before Alma.

Alma ate and was filled. He blessed Amulek and his house and gave thanks unto God. Then he said, "I am Alma, and am the high priest over the church of God throughout the land. And behold, I have been called to preach the word of God among all this people, according to the spirit of revelation and prophesy; And I was in this land, and they would not receive me, but they cast me out, and I was about to set my back towards this land forever. But behold, I have been commanded that I should turn again and prophesy unto this people, yea, and to testify against them concerning their iniquities. And now Amulek, because thou hast fed me, and took me in, thou art blessed; for I was hungered, for I had fasted many days."

Amulek invited Alma to stay with him for a while, and Alma found peace and rest in Amulek's quiet comfortable home. While he was a guest there those many days, he taught Amulek the gospel. He received it with great joy!

Soon Amulek and Alma went to the city to preach repentance, but they met with much opposition from the people. Yet Alma did speak much, teaching the important truths concerning faith, repentance, and life after death. He explained the priesthood, spoke of ministering angels, and much more. Many people were touched and began to repent, but those who did not became an angry mob. Thus Alma and Amulek were cast into prison. Zeezrom, a cunning lawyer, had sought to persecute Alma and Amulek. But when he heard the truth, he accepted it, and from that day forth he preached the gospel.

AMMON SAVES A KING'S SHEEP

Now the land of Zarahemla no longer was ruled by a king. King Mosiah's four sons (Ammon, Aaron, Orner, and Himni) had rejected the throne. Before King Mosiah's death, he had appointed Alma as the first chief judge over the land. Alma judged for nine years until he withdrew to minister again as high priest, doing missionary work throughout the land.

On one of these missionary trips, Alma was astonished when a group of men sprang forward and embraced him. He did not recognize the four sons of Mosiah at first. Alma was overjoyed to see his brethren again, and even more joyful when he heard that they still lived the ways of the Lord their God. He wanted to know all that had happened to them in the previous years.

Ammon explained that he and his brothers had been on a missionary trip to the Lamanites for the last fourteen years, teaching the words of God. They had left during the first year of the reign of the Judges. They had arrived at the borders of the land of the Lamanites and separated, for they had much work to accomplish.

Ammon had gone to the Land of Ishmael and searched out the sons of Ishmael, who had become Lamanites. As he entered, he was captured, bound and thrown into prison, as was the custom to do with Nephites at the time. Then he was taken before King Lamoni who was a descendant of Ishmael. The king asked if it was his desire to stay, and Ammon replied, "Yes." King Lamoni was pleased with Ammon and even offered Ammon one of his daughters as a wife. But Ammon declined graciously and instead offered to be the king's servant. King Lamoni put him in charge of watching over his flocks.

After three days of watching over the king's flocks, an incident happened while he and other servants were driving the sheep to water. There were some other Lamanites there already watering their flocks, and when they saw Ammon, they stood and yelled, scattering the sheep in many directions. The other servants who were with Ammon were so frightened they began to shriek. They were afraid that because of the others' wickedness, the king would have them put to death for having lost the sheep. It was the custom for the angry king to slay servants who did their job poorly and they wept.

Ammon's heart swelled. He knew the Lord would assist him, for the Lord had promised Mosiah that He would deliver his sons out of the hands of the Lamanites. He told the others that they could retrieve the sheep, and they scurried about with swiftness and recaptured all the lost sheep. Then Ammon went to the men who had scattered the flock. He stood before them with his sling and his mighty power. He did sling stones amongst them, killing some and astonishing the others with his power. The evil men were angry at this and they came at Ammon with clubs. But as the men attacked Ammon, he cut off their arms with his sword. Those who were not injured fled in fear!

After this had taken place, the other servants of the king cared for the sheep and Ammon took care of the horses. The servants took the severed arms to the king to testify of Ammon's great strength and of all that had happened. The king was astonished! Surely Ammon was more than just a man!

References: Alma 12:1-61

KING LAMONI BELIEVES

King Lamoni's servants testified of the things they had seen Ammon do. When the king learned how faithful Ammon had been in preserving his flocks, he was very pleased and surprised! He also learned of Ammon's great power in dealing with those who tried to kill him. The king was astonished! He said, "Surely, this is more than a man. Behold, is not this the Great Spirit which doth send such great

punishments upon this people, because of their murders?"

The servants answered the king, "Whether he be the Great Spirit or a man, we know not, but this much we do know, that he can not be slain by the enemies of the king; Neither can they scatter the king's flock when he is with us, because of his expertness and great strength; therefore, we know that he is a friend to the king. And now, O king, we do not believe that a man hath such great power, for we know that he can not be slain."

When the king heard these words, he said, "Now I know that it is the Great Spirit; and he hath come down at this time to preserve your lives, that I might not slay you as I did your brethren. Now this is the Great Spirit of which our fathers have spoken." They believed in the Great Spirit because their fathers handed this knowledge down unto them.

The king ordered that Ammon be brought before him. While awaiting, he considered all which he had done wrongly in the past.

When Ammon came before the King Lamoni he saw that the king had a different look about him. Twice he asked the king what he desired of him, but the king did not answer. Ammon (being filled with the Spirit) perceived what he was thinking, and said to him, "Is it because that thou hast heard that I defended thy servants and thy flocks, and slew seven of their brethren with the sling, and with the sword, and smote off the arms of others, in order to defend thy flocks and thy servants: behold, is it this that causeth thy marvelings? I say unto you, What is it, that thy marvelings are so great? Behold, I am a man, and am thy servant; therefore, whatsoever thou desirest which is right, that will I do."

King Lamoni marveled at Ammon's words. He saw that Ammon could discern his thoughts and said, "Who art thou? Art thou that Great Spirit which knows all things?"

Quickly, Ammon answered, "I am not."

King Lamoni said, "How knowest thou the thoughts of my heart? Thou mayest speak boldly, and tell me concerning these things; and also tell me by what power ye slew and smote off the arms of my brethren, that scattered my flocks. And now if ye wilt tell me concerning these things, whatsoever thou desirest, I will give unto thee: And if it were needed, I would guard thee with my armies; but I know that thou art more powerful than all they: nevertheless, whatsoever thou desirest of me, I will grant it unto thee."

Wisely, Ammon said to the king, "Wilt thou harken unto my words, if I tell thee by what power I do these things? And this is the thing that I desire of thee."

The King said, "Yea, I will believe all thy words."

"Believest thou that there is a God?" asked Ammon.

"I do not know what that meaneth," replied the king.

Then Ammon said, "Believest thou that there is a Great Spirit?"

"Yea," answered the king.

Ammon said, "This is God. Believest thou that this Great Spirit, which is God, created all things, which are in heaven and in the earth?"

"Yea, I believe that he created all things which are in the earth," said the King, "but I do not know the heavens."

"The heavens is a place where God dwells, and all his holy angels," explained Ammon.

King Lamoni asked, "Is it above the earth?"

"Yea," said Ammon, "and he looketh down upon all the children of men: and he knows all the thoughts and the intents of the heart: for by his hand were they all created from the beginning."

King Lamoni said, "I believe all these things which thou hast spoken. Art thou sent from God?"

Ammon said, "I am a man; and man in the beginning, was created after the image of God, and I am called by his Holy Spirit to teach these things unto this people, that they may be brought to a knowledge of that which is just and true; And a portion of that Spirit dwelleth in me, which giveth me knowledge, and also power, according to my faith and desires which are in God."

Ammon began to teach King Lamoni, telling him about the creation of the world and Adam. He told about the fall of man in the garden of Eden. He spoke of the records and Holy Scriptures which had been spoken by the prophets, even down till the time their father Lehi had left Jerusalem.

The King and his servants listened carefully to Ammon's every word.

Ammon rehearsed to them all the journeying of their fathers in the wilderness and across the great waters. Ammon taught them from the records and scriptures that the Lord had given them, and he taught them of the plan of redemption which was prepared from the foundation of the world. He also made known to them about the coming of Christ.

King Lamoni believed all the words of Ammon. He began to cry unto the Lord, saying, "O Lord have mercy; according to thy abundant mercy which thou hast had upon the people of Nephi, have upon me and my people." The king fell to the earth as if he were dead and for two days he lay unconscious. Ammon went in to see King Lamoni as the queen desired. Ammon knew that the king was not dead, and said to the queen, "He is not dead, but he sleepeth in God, and on the morrow he shall rise again; therefore bury him not."

The queen believed Ammon. And it came to pass, according to the words of Ammon that King Lamoni arose and stretched forth his hand and said, "Blessed be the name of God, and blessed art thou; For as sure as thou livest, behold, I have seen my Redeemer; and he shall come forth and be born of a woman, and he shall redeem all mankind who believe on his name." As Ammon taught the people, many were converted.

References: Alma 12: 62-149

Lesson #26

HELAMAN'S TWO THOUSAND SONS

Helaman, the eldest son of Alma II, had been true to the commandments of his father. He and his brethren had worked diligently to preach the word of God. Alma had entrusted the sacred records and precious things into Helaman's care. He had commanded Helaman to keep a record of his people and he did. About ten years had passed since Alma had been last seen.

The people of Ammon had been converted and brought down into the Land of Zarahemla where they found peace and protection in a land of contentions. But it came to pass that when they saw danger, they desired to take up arms in defense of their country, even though they had taken an oath not to do so.

Helaman and his brethren convinced the people of Ammon not to break their oath. He feared that by breaking the promise they made to God, they might lose their souls. But a group of young men, sons of the Ammonites, took up arms. They entered into a covenant to fight for the liberty of the Nephites, and they called themselves Nephites. They covenanted that they would never give up their liberty but would fight to protect the Nephites and themselves from bondage.

Two thousand brave young men entered into this covenant to defend their country. Helaman trained them well. He called them his sons because he felt them worthy to be his sons. These young men were men of strength, truth and soberness, taught to keep the commandments of God and walk uprightly before Him.

And it came to pass that Helaman marched at the head of his two thousand men, in support of the people in the borders of the land on the south by the west sea. And Helaman wrote to Moroni, the Nephite commander and chief, telling him of their travels and battles. He told Moroni of the courage he had seen in his sons. They had said to him, "Father, behold, our God is with us, and he will not suffer that we shall fall; then let us go forth; We would not slay our brethren, if they would let us alone; therefore let us go, lest they should overpower the army of Antipus." So, they joined in together to defend their country. The young men had been taught by their mothers to believe that if they did not doubt, that God would deliver them.

Helaman wrote, "And it came to pass that I did return with my two thousand, against these Lamanites who had pursued us." The army of Antipus had overtaken them and a terrible battle had begun. Antipus and his men were very weary because of their long and speedy march in such a short space of time. Due to fatigue, Antipus and many of his leaders had fallen by the sword.

The men of Antipus were confused because of the fall of their leaders and they began to give way to the Lamanites. And now, it came to pass that the people of Nephi, the people of Antipus, and Helaman's two thousand sons surrounded the Lamanites and slew them; yea in so much that they were compelled to deliver up their weapons of war, and also themselves as prisoners of war.

"And now it came to pass that when they had surrendered themselves up unto us, behold, I numbered those young men who had fought with me, fearing lest there were many of them slain. But behold, to my great joy, there had not been one soul of them fallen to the earth; yea, and they had fought as if with the strength of God; yea, never were men known to have fought with such miraculous strength; And with such mighty power did they fall upon the Lamanites, that they did frighten them; and for this cause did the Lamanites deliver themselves up as prisoners of war."

God was with them in battle and they defeated that part of the Lamanite army. After the battle was over, Helaman counted his wonderful soldiers, and they were all there! Not one of them had been killed!

God had truly protected Helaman's two thousand sons!

WALLS OF FIRE

After the death of Helaman II, his eldest son, Nephi, reigned as chief judge for nine years. Nephi had no desire to serve his wicked people as judge any longer. He had grown weary because of their iniquity and because their laws and government were established by the voice of the people. At this point of Nephite history, those who chose evil were more numerous than those who chose good. They were ripening in iniquity and corruption.

Nephi accepted the responsibility to preach the word of God to them. His brother Lehi joined him, and both men devoted the rest of their lives in service to God and man. They had grown up in the Lord, being taught all righteousness, living the commandments of God. Together, they sought to bring the people to repentance.

With untiring effort and loving zeal, Nephi and Lehi went from place to place, teaching the word of God. They preached with power and authority. They brought many to repentance and baptism unto the Lord.

Because they had the Spirit of God within them, when Nephi and Lehi preached to the Lamanites, they were astonished at their power of speech. This resulted in the conversion of eight thousand Lamanites. As they were approaching the city of Nephi, Nephi and Lehi were taken captive by the Lamanite army patrol and thrown into prison.

One day, a multitude of Lamanites and Nephite dissenters went to the prison. They intended to slay Nephi and Lehi. But as they were about to lay their hands on them, the Lamanites jumped back in amazement for Nephi and Lehi were suddenly encircled by fire, and they dared not lay their hands on them lest they should be burned..

Nevertheless, Nephi and Lehi stood in the midst of fire but were not burned. When they realized they were surrounded by a pillar of fire, they said to the Lamanites, "Fear not, for behold it is God that hath shewn unto you this marvelous thing, in the which is shewn unto you, that ye can not lay your hands on us to slay us."

No sooner had they said this than the earth began to quake and tremble. Suddenly, a great cloud of darkness overshadowed those who were in the prison. They were filled with an awful dread for they feared that this heavy darkness would envelope and overcome them.

And it came to pass that they heard a voice, a voice of perfect mildness as if it had been a whisper, yet it pierced even to the very soul. It said, "**Repent ye, repent ye, and seek no more to destroy my servants which I have sent unto you to declare good tidings.**" Everything still trembling, the voice said again, "**Repent ye, repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; and seek no more to destroy my servants.**" And a third time, the voice came. It spoke of many marvelous things which can not be uttered by man.

Even if they had not been too afraid to move, the Lamanites could not flee because of the darkness. One of these men, Aminadab, was a Nephite by birth. He had once belonged to the church of God, but had dissented. The fear of the Lord was in him in great measure, and he looked to see if the pillar of fire was still there. Through the darkness, Abinadab saw the faces of Nephi and Lehi. They did shine even as the faces of angels, and it looked as if they were speaking to someone. Abinadab cried out for the others to turn and look. The cloud of darkness was still over them, but they were able to turn and look; they wondered who are they speaking to.

Abinadab said unto them, "They do converse with the angels of God."

And the Lamanites said, "What shall we do, that this cloud of darkness may be removed from overshadowing us?"

Abinadab said, "You must repent, and cry unto the voice, even until you shall have faith in Christ, which was taught unto you by Alma, and Amulek, and Zeezrom; and when ye shall do this, the cloud of darkness shall be removed from overshadowing you." Then they all began to pray and continued until the darkness was lifted. When they looked about, they saw that they were now all encircled by a pillar of fire! Yet it did not harm them, and they were all filled with that joy which is unspeakable and glorious!

Behold, the Holy Spirit of God came down and entered into the hearts of the Lamanites. They were filled as if with fire and could speak marvelous words. And a pleasant voice, as if it were a whisper, said, "**Peace, peace be unto you, because of your faith in my well beloved, which was from the foundation of the world.**" When they heard this sweet voice, they all looked up to see from whence it came. What a marvelous sight their eyes beheld. They saw the heavens open and angels came down out of heaven and ministered unto them. There were about three hundred people who saw and heard these wonderful things. They were told to go forth and to not marvel. Neither should they doubt all the wonderful thing which they had seen and heard.

The Lamanites hurried home to tell their families and friends the good tidings of great joy. They bore testimonies throughout all the regions round about. They spoke of their experiences, and because of these witnesses, most of the Lamanites were converted. They were anxious to repair the wrongs which they had done.

References: Helaman 2: 63-117

Lesson #28

SAMUEL THE PROPHET

In the eighty-sixth year of the reign of the Judges, the Nephites were living in wickedness, while the Lamanites strictly observed and kept the commandments of God.

In this same year, a Lamanite named Samuel came to the Land of Zarahemla. He was a man of great faith, for he was a prophet of the Lord. He knew of the wickedness of the Nephites and came to warn them to repent. Many days he preached unto them, but the Nephites tired of him and cast him out of the city.

Samuel was sad and discouraged. He was about to return to his own land when the voice of the Lord came to him, telling him to return to the city of Zarahemla and prophesy to the people whatsoever things came into his heart. When Samuel heard this he rejoiced, and went back to the city. The same men who had thrown him out of the city stopped him as he came back and would not let him enter. Samuel walked along the outside of the high wall that surrounded the city. When he came to where he thought the center of the marketplace was, he stopped. Samuel climbed a tree and looked over to see the multitudes of people in the marketplace.

Samuel stretched forth his hand, and with a voice loud and clear he cried out so the Nephites could hear him. He said, "Behold, I, Samuel, a Lamanite, do speak the words of the Lord which he doth put into my heart; and behold he hath put it into my heart to say unto this people, that the sword of justice hangeth over this people; and four hundred years passeth not away save the sword of justice falleth upon this people; Yea, heavy destruction awaiteth this people, and it surely cometh unto this people, and nothing can save this people, save it be repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ, which surely shall come into the world, and shall suffer many things, and shall be slain for his people."

"And behold, an angel of the Lord hath declared it unto me, and he did bring glad tidings to my soul. And behold, I was sent unto you to declare it unto you also, that ye might have glad tidings; but behold ye would not receive me." "Therefore thus saith 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 suffer them no longer, and I will turn the hearts of their brethren against them."

He told them many things that would happen if they would not repent and turn to the Lord. He told them that their great city would be destroyed by fire from Heaven, and that the Lord would take away his word and withdraw his Spirit from them.

He prophesied about the coming of our Lord: "Behold, I give unto you a sign: for five years more cometh, and behold, then cometh the Son of God to redeem all those who shall believe on his name. And behold, this will I give unto you for a sign at the time of his coming; for behold, there shall be great lights in heaven, insomuch that in the night before he cometh, there shall be no darkness, insomuch that it shall appear unto man as if it was day."

"Therefore there shall be one day and a night, and a day, as if it were one day, and there were no night; and this shall be unto you for a sign; for ye shall know of the rising of the sun, and also of its setting. Therefore they shall know of a surety that there shall be two days and a night; nevertheless the night shall not be darkened; and it shall be the night before he is born. And behold there shall be a new star arise, such an one as ye never have beheld; and this also shall be a sign to you. And behold this is not all; there shall be many signs and wonders in heaven."

Samuel also spoke concerning another sign when the Son of God would suffer death. There would be no light upon the land for three days; from the time of his death until he would rise from the dead. There would be thunder, lightning, and earthquakes. There would be great tempests, the mountains would be laid low and the valleys would become mountains. The highways would be broken up and many cities destroyed. The graves would open and saints would appear to many.

As Samuel stood on the wall prophesying, the wicked Nephites threw stones and shot arrows at him. But the Spirit of the Lord was with him and protected him from his enemies. They rushed forward to climb the wall, but before they could grab Samuel, he jumped from the wall and fled. He ran with Godspeed to the safety of his own people and was never heard from again among the Nephites.

In the meantime, the Nephites who believed in the words of Samuel went in search of Nephi. Nephi was busily engaged in the work of the Lord, crying repentance, preaching, prophesying, and baptizing. He showed signs and wonders and worked miracles among the people. He did all these things so the people might know that Christ would shortly come, and that when He did, they would remember Samuel's prophesy and believe. The words of Nephi confirmed the words of Samuel.

References: Helaman 5:1-121

A NEW STAR APPEARS

In the beginning of the ninety second year of the reign of the Judges, the prophecies began to be fulfilled more fully; there began to be greater signs and greater miracles wrought among the people. The unbelievers persecuted the believers so badly that Nephi cried unto the Lord all day, pouring out his heart in mighty prayer in behalf of his people.

And the voice of the Lord came to him, saying, "**Lift up your head and be of good cheer, for behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world, to shew unto the world that I will fulfill all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets. Behold, I come unto my own, to fulfill all things which I have made known unto the children of men, from the foundation of the world, and to do the will, both of the Father, and of the Son of the Father, because of me, and of the Son, because of my flesh. Behold the time is at hand, and this night shall the sign be given.**"

And it came to pass that the words which came to Nephi were fulfilled according to the word of the Lord. For that evening, at the going down of the sun, there was no darkness. The people were astonished because there was no darkness when the night came.

Many had not believed the words of the prophets until now, but now their hearts were struck with sudden fear. They knew that the Son of God must shortly appear. They began to tremble because of their iniquity and unbelief and fell to the ground.

There was no darkness that night; it was like mid-day. As usual, the sun arose the following morning, and the people knew that this was the day that the Lord should be born. A new star also appeared, such as had never been seen before. There were such great signs and wonders in heaven that many were overcome with amazement. All things had come to pass just as the prophets had spoken. Most of the people believed what they had beheld, and were converted unto the Lord. Nephi and other men of God were very busy going forth to the people and baptizing those who repented.

True to prophesy, the Son of God was born into the world six hundred years from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem. Yet, about two years after the sign was given, they began to dwindle in unbelief. Thus, Satan again began to get possession of the hearts of the people.

References: III Nephi

THE GREAT STORM

The people of God had not forgotten the prophesy by Samuel, the Lamanite. They began to look earnestly for the sign which he had given of the Savior's death. They waited for the time when darkness would come over the face of the earth for three days. But the unbelievers watched also, so they could ridicule and persecute the faithful.

Those who believed knew that the signs of His death would come just as they had at the time of His birth. They knew they must prepare to meet the Lord, for surely He would come to them.

In the beginning of the thirty-fourth year from the time of the Lord's birth, a great storm arose, such as never had been known in all the land. There was a great and terrible tempest. The roaring, violent winds were driving rains and hail fiercely. Never before was there such huge sharp lightning or peals of crashing thunder; the whole earth shook as if it would split wide open.

The Son of God had been crucified!

After about three long and fearful hours (some said it was longer) the fury of the terrible storm began to lessen. It came to pass that there was thick darkness that fell upon all the face of the earth. Neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars were able to shine through the mist of darkness. The people did not even have candlelight. The dark vapor was so heavy that no flame would burn, not even with the driest of kindling.

There was great mourning, howling, and weeping among all the people. They moaned and groaned because of the great destruction and darkness which had come upon them. The people were distraught and began to cry out to the Lord in repentance.

And it came to pass that here was a voice heard among all inhabitants of the earth upon all the face of the land; crying, **"Wo, wo, wo unto this people; wo unto the inhabitants of the whole earth, except they shall repent, for the devil laugheth, and his angels rejoice, because of the slain of the fair sons and daughters of my people; and it is because of their iniquity and abominations that they are fallen."**

The voice went on to tell them that the cities and peoples of Zarahemla, Jacobugth, Josh, Laman, Gad, and Kishkumen had all burned. The cities and peoples of Moroni and Gilag had sunk into the sea; the cities and peoples of Moronihah, Gadiandi, Gadiaomnah, Jacob, and Gimgimno had all been covered with earth; and that the cities and peoples of Onihah, Mocom, and Jerusalem had all been covered with water. All were destroyed!

The voice continued, **"O all ye that are spared, because ye were more righteous than they, will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you? Yea, verily I say unto you, If ye will come unto me, ye shall have eternal life. Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come, him will I receive; and blessed are they which cometh unto me. Behold I am Jesus Christ, the son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning. I am in the Father, and the Father in me; and in me hath the Father glorified his name. I came unto my own, and my own received me not. And the scriptures, concerning my coming, are fulfilled."** (Referring to Old Testament prophecy.)

The people were silent for many hours as they pondered what they had all heard. After three days of darkness, the sun arose to a bright new day of light. The people looked around and saw what terrible damage the storm had done. But they were thankful their lives had been saved. Their mourning was turned to joy, and their lamentations to praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord.

JESUS COMES TO AMERICA

Soon after the ascension of Christ into heaven, He manifested himself to those more righteous people in this land, which had been spared.

The morning broke and the people were earnestly discussing the great and terrible things that had happened, and how Christ must have died as prophesied. It came to pass that while they were talking to one another, they heard a voice which seemed to come out of heaven above. They looked about for they did not understand what they had heard. It was not a loud voice, nor a harsh voice, but a still, small voice of perfect mildness as if it had been a whisper. Yet, it pierced to the very center of every soul and caused every part of their bodies to quake; their frames trembled and their hearts burned. They heard the voice again, but still did not understand. The third time, they opened their ears and listened carefully. They lifted their eyes toward the sound of the voice, looking steadfastly toward the heavens, and behold, this time they understood.

The voice said unto them, "**Behold, my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name, hear ye him.**"

And it came to pass, as they looked up toward the clear blue sky that they saw a man coming down out of heaven. He was clothed in a bright white robe. The whole multitude focused their eyes upon Him and they were filled with wonder. They thought that perhaps He was an angel.

They watched, completely silent, as the personage descended and came close to them. He came down in the midst of the gathering, stretched forth His hand and said, "**Behold I am Jesus Christ, of which the prophets testified should come into the world: and behold, I am the light of the world, and have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things, from the beginning.**"

The people suddenly remembered it had been promised that the Son of God would show himself to them! It was prophesied that after His ascension into heaven, He would come to visit His "other sheep." And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words, the whole multitude fell to the earth.

Tenderly and lovingly, He invited them to come to Him, saying, "**Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands, and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world.**"

Oh, what joy filled their hearts! Never before had they known such great love as had been shown to them. Their God was amongst them, having laid down His own life for their sins. He now wanted them to come close and touch Him so they would know for sure that the prophet's words were fulfilled! This they did, going forth one by one, until they had all seen with their own eyes, and felt with their own hands their Savior. They knew for sure, and bore record that it was Jesus, of whom it was written by the prophets, should come.

When they had all gone forth and felt His wounds, the multitude cried out with one voice, saying, "Hosanna! Blessed be the name of the Most High God!" And they fell down at Jesus' feet and worshiped Him. Oh, what joy filled their hearts!

LESSONS JESUS TAUGHT

Nephi stood in the midst of the people, his heart filled with such great joy; for before him stood his Savior, at last.

Nephi had been the keeper of the records ever since his father Nephi had turned them over to him. His father had departed out of the land a year before the sign was given for Christ's birth and had not been heard from since. From that time on, Nephi had accepted his responsibility and remained true and faithful. He did many miracles in the name of Jesus, and angels ministered to him daily, as he in turn ministered to the people with great power and authority.

Although Nephi was the most righteous among those who had been spared from the storm, he was a very humble man. He did not rush to the Master's side; he waited until the Lord commanded him that he should come forth. He then arose and stood before Him.

The Lord said to him, **"I give unto you power that ye shall baptize this people, when I am again ascended into heaven."** The Lord also called others and also gave them the authority to baptize. Jesus then taught those whom he had called, how to baptize. He said to them, **"On this wise shall ye baptize; and there shall be no disputations among you. Verily I say unto you, that whoso repenteth of his sins through your words, and desireth to be baptized in my name, on this wise shall ye baptize them: Behold, ye shall go down and stand in the water, and in my name ye shall baptize them."**

"And now behold, these are the words which ye shall say, calling them by name, 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. And then ye shall immerse them in the water, and come forth again out of the water."

"And after this manner shall ye baptize in my name, for behold, verily I say unto you, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one; and I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and the Father and I are one."

"And according as I have commanded you, thus shall ye baptize. And there shall be no disputations among you, as there hath hitherto been; neither shall there be disputations among you concerning the points of my doctrine, as there hath hitherto been."

"For verily, verily I say unto you, He that hath the spirit of contention, is not of me, but is of the devil, which is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger one with another; Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger one against another, but this is my doctrine, that such things should be done away."

"Behold, verily, verily I say unto you, I will declare unto you my doctrine. And this is my doctrine, and it is the doctrine which the Father hath given unto me; And I bear record of the Father, and

the Father beareth record of me, and the Holy Ghost beareth record of the Father and me, and I bear record that the Father commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent and believe in me; And whoso believeth in me, and is baptized, the same shall be saved; and they are they which shall inherit the kingdom of God."

"And whoso believeth not in me, and is not baptized, shall be damned. . . And again I say unto you, Ye must repent and become as a little child, and be baptized in my name, or ye can in no wise receive these things. And again I say unto you, Ye must repent, and be baptized in my name, and become as a little child, or ye can in no wise inherit the kingdom of God."

"Verily, verily I say unto you, that this is my doctrine; and whoso buildeth upon this, buildeth upon my rock; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them. And whoso shall declare more or less than this, and establish it for my doctrine, the same cometh of evil, and is not built upon my rock, but he buildeth upon a sandy foundation, and the gates of hell standeth open to receive such, when the floods come, and the winds beat upon them."

"Therefore go forth unto this people, and declare the words which I have spoken, unto the ends of the earth."

LESSONS JESUS TAUGHT

The teachings of Jesus are simple and beautiful. His language is plain and simple, if you seek to understand. He was concerned that there should be no contention among His people. He himself has shown us the pattern which we are to follow; He is our example.

Jesus commanded that His words should be declared to this people and to the entire population of the earth. He gave this charge to Nephi and the other eleven disciples He had called. Jesus told the multitude that they would be blessed if they heeded the words of these disciples.

After that, Jesus taught the disciples how they could have a remission of their sins. Now that He had come to earth, all things had become new and the Law of Moses had been fulfilled. Sacrifices and burnt offerings were no longer acceptable to God.

Jesus said, that we are to offer a sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. What he meant by this is that when we are crushed with sorrow for our sin and we ask humbly for forgiveness, then we shall be forgiven.

These are some of the things Jesus taught the multitude:

1. Blessed are those who:

.....mourn, for they shall be comforted.

.....are meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

.....do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost.

.....are merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

.....are pure in heart, for they shall see God.

.....are peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

.....are persecuted for my name's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

2. Be a light to those around you---Let your life be a good example.

3. Do not quarrel or argue. God wants you to show others how to love.

4. Pray always to your Father in heaven; pray sincerely and God will bless you.

5. Jesus gave us the example of the "Lord's Prayer".

6. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

7. Love everyone as Jesus loves you--even your enemies; pray for them.

Now it came to pass that Jesus spoke directly to the twelve He had chosen, saying, "**Remember the words which I have spoken. For behold, ye are they which I have chosen to minister unto this people. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment?**"

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God', and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." That is to say: God will provide for your needs.

Jesus spoke once again to the multitude, saying, "**Verily, verily, I say unto you, Judge not, that ye be not judged,**" meaning God will judge you the same way you judge other people.

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? . . . Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you. Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened."

"Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? . . . Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know

them."

"Behold, I am the law, and the light; look unto me, and endure unto the end, and ye shall live, for unto him that endureth to the end will I give eternal life. Behold, I have given unto you the commandments; therefore keep my commandments."

Jesus spoke to the disciples, whom He had chosen, **"Ye are my disciples; and ye are a light unto this people, which are a remnant of the house of Joseph. And behold, this is the land of your inheritance; and the Father hath given it unto you." "And I command that ye shall write these sayings, after that I am gone, that if it so be that my people at Jerusalem, they which have seen me, and been with me in my ministry, do not ask the Father in my name, that they may receive a knowledge of you by the Holy Ghost, and also of the other tribes of the house of Israel which they know not of, That these sayings which ye shall write, shall be kept, and shall be manifested unto the Gentiles, that through the fullness of the Gentiles, the remnant of their seed which shall be scattered forth upon the face of the earth, because of their unbelief, may be brought in, or may be brought to a knowledge of me, their Redeemer."**

References: III Nephi 5: 44-115, chapters 6 and 7

JESUS BLESSES THE CHILDREN

After some time had passed in which Jesus taught the people, Jesus said to them, "**Behold, my time is at hand. I perceive that ye are weak, that ye can not understand all my words which I am commanded of the Father to speak unto you at this time; Therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand; and prepare your minds for the morrow, and I come unto you again.**"

"But now I go unto the Father, and also to shew myself unto the lost tribes of Israel, for they are not lost unto the Father, for he knoweth whither he hath taken them."

And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken this, He looked about and saw the people were in tears, not wanting Him to leave. And He said to them, "**Behold, my bowels are filled with compassion towards you: Have ye any that are sick among you, bring them hither.**"

And they went forth and He healed every one. When this was done, they all bowed down and worshiped Him. Many came forth, kissed His feet and washed them with their tears. Then He commanded that the little children be brought forth, and He sat them down at His feet. When they had all been brought forth, Jesus knelt among them and prayed to the Father. Many great and wondrous things which cannot even be written were spoken by Jesus unto God the Father. When He was finished, He blessed the children one by one, praying unto the Father for each.

It came to pass, that when Jesus had made an end of praying unto the Father, He arose; so great was the joy of the multitude that they were overcome. Jesus, with tears of joy in His eyes, said to the people, "**Behold your little ones.**" And the people saw the heavens open and angels descending in the midst of fire, surrounding the little ones.

Jesus then commanded His disciples that they should bring some bread and wine to Him. Jesus broke the bread, blessed it and gave it to the disciples to eat. When they had eaten, He commanded that they should give it to the multitude. When the multitude had eaten, He said to the disciples, "**Behold, there shall be one ordained among you, and to him will I give power that he shall break bread, and bless it, and give it unto the people of my church, unto all they which shall believe and be baptized in my name. And this shall ye always observe to do, even as I have done, even as I have broken bread, and blessed it, and gave it unto you. And this shall ye do in remembrance of my body, which I have shewn unto you. And it shall be a testimony unto the Father, that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me, ye shall have my Spirit to be with you.**"

And it came to pass that when he had said these words, he commanded his disciples that they should take the wine and bless it, and that they should drink of it and also give it to the multitude, that they might drink of it.

After the disciples had done this, Jesus said, "**Blessed are ye for this thing which ye have done, for this is fulfilling my commandments, and this doth witness unto the Father that ye are willing to do that which I have commanded you. And this shall ye always do unto those who repent and are baptized in my name; and ye shall do it in remembrance of my blood that was shed for you, that ye may witness unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me, ye shall have my spirit to be with you.**"

Jesus turned to the multitude and said unto them, "**Behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye must watch and pray always, lest ye enter into temptation; For Satan desireth to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; therefore ye must always pray unto the Father in my name; and whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you.**" And Jesus counseled them to meet together often.

When Jesus finished speaking, He touched each disciple, one by one, giving them the power to give the Holy Ghost. Then a cloud descended and overshadowed the multitude so that they could not see Jesus as He departed from them, ascending into heaven. The disciples recorded that they saw Him ascend into heaven. **References: III Nephi 8**

Lesson #34

BAPTISM

Jesus had excused the people the night before, telling them to go to their homes and rest. He wanted them to ponder what He had said to them. While He went to speak with His followers in other places (His other sheep), He told them to pray to the Father that He would help them understand what they had heard.

The next morning the people anxiously awaited the return of Jesus. Even more people had gathered as the word spread abroad. The multitude was so great that the disciples decided to separate the people into smaller groups, one for each disciple. They prayed unto the Father in the name of Jesus before they began to teach. The disciples ministered the same words that Jesus had spoken the day before, and they prayed again unto the Father in the name of Jesus, asking that the Holy Spirit be given unto them.

They all went down unto the waters edge. Nephi went down into the water and was baptized and then he baptized all that Jesus had chosen. When they were all baptized, the Holy Ghost fell upon them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost. The multitude witnessed that they were encircled with fire that came down out of heaven. Angels also came down out of heaven and ministered unto them. Then, suddenly, Jesus stood in their midst blessing them! Jesus asked everyone to kneel and pray while He went a little way off and prayed to the Father also.

Jesus returned to His disciples and smiled upon them. While they continued to pray, the faces of the disciples began to shine with the same radiant light as did Jesus. When they had finished praying, Jesus said unto His disciples, **"So great faith have I never seen among all the Jews; wherefore I could not shew unto them so great miracles, because of their unbelief Verily I say unto you, there are none of them that have seen so great things as ye have seen; neither have they heard so great things as ye have heard."**

And it came to pass that He broke the bread again, and blessed it, and gave it to the disciples to eat. When they had eaten, they served the multitude. Likewise, Jesus gave them the wine to drink and commanded them to serve the multitude also. Then Jesus said unto them, **"He that eateth this bread, eateth of my body to his soul, and he that drinketh of this wine, drinketh of my blood to his soul, and his soul shall. . . be filled."**

Behold, they were filled with the Spirit. They cried out with one voice, and gave glory to Jesus. And Jesus said unto them, **"Behold, now I finish the commandment which the Father hath commanded me concerning this people who are a remnant of the house of Israel."**

References: III Nephi 9: 1-46

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AND THE THREE NEPHITES

The Lord Jesus Christ appeared and taught the people for three days. After He had ascended into heaven the second time, the disciples began to baptize and teach as many as would come unto them. Those who were baptized in the name of Jesus were filled with the Holy Ghost. Many things that were seen and heard were not allowed to be written.

The people had all things common among them, every man dealing justly with another. They did all that Jesus commanded and they were called the Church of Christ.

Jesus will chastize any who will question this, saying, **"Ye shall call the church in my name; and ye shall call upon the Father in my name, that he will bless the church for my sake; and how be it my church, save it be called in my name? . . . 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, then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel."**

"Now this is the commandment, Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day."

"Verily, verily I say unto you, This is my gospel; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; for the works which ye have seen me do, that shall ye also do; For that which ye have seen me do, even that shall ye do; therefore if ye do these things, blessed are ye, for ye shall be lifted up at the last day."

Jesus then asked His disciples, individually, what they would desire of Him after He had gone back to Heaven. Nine of them answered that they would like to speedily go into the kingdom of heaven once they died. The other three were afraid to voice their request. Jesus discerned that they desired what John, his beloved disciple, received. He promised them that they would never taste of death, but live to behold all the things done by the Father unto the children of men, even until everything was fulfilled and Jesus returned in all His glory. At that time they shall be changed in a twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality and be blessed in the kingdom of God.

When Jesus had spoken, He touched each one of the nine with His finger and departed. The heavens were opened and the three disciples were caught up into heaven where they saw and heard many great things which are unspeakable to man. They were changed so that their bodies would never die or grow old.

Mormon writes that according to records, these three disciples went forth upon the land to minister and bring as many into the church as would believe and be baptized. Those who were baptized received the Holy Ghost. At times, these three disciples were persecuted by unbelievers; they were put into a furnace and thrown to the wild beasts but they were not harmed. Mormon was forbidden to write their names, but he saw them and they ministered to him. They were to go not only among the Gentiles and the Jews, but to all people throughout the world; none would know who they were. Many great and marvelous works will be done by them.

For two hundred years the people lived together in peace and harmony, following the commandments of the Lord. They were the happiest people to ever live on the earth. But as they multiplied and became very prosperous, they began to forget the ways of the Lord and desired to have many fine and costly possessions. They denied the true church of Christ and built churches to make money, not to worship the Lord.

Three hundred and twenty years had passed since Jesus visited the people. The records, which had been handed down through Nephi to his son Amos, and then to his brother Ammaron, were hidden by Ammaron for a time. They were to remain safely in the Lord's care and one day come again unto the remnant of the house of Jacob, according to prophecies and promises of the Lord.

It came to pass that Ammaron came to Mormon, a ten year old child and a descendant of Nephi. He told him that when he was twenty-four years old he should go retrieve the records, taking just the plates of Nephi, and engrave upon them concerning this people. This Mormon did, and the Lord spoke to him and directed him in righteousness while the people became more and more wicked.

Three hundred eighty-four years after Christ's visit Mormon wrote on the plates. His people, the Nephites, had gathered unto the Land of Cumorah. Before Mormon died he directed his son Moroni, to write, this some 420 years after the visit of Jesus. He completed the plates, pouring out his heart to us to follow the Lord's commandments and ordinances. Before Moroni died (the last of his people), he sealed up the records, and hid them up again in the care of the Lord to preserve them until the time the Lord would again direct them to be brought forward and to His people.

References: III Nephi 12:6-35 and chapter 13; III Nephi; Book of Mormon 1: 1-24, 3:1-8; Book of Moroni chapters 1 through 7

ZION

The Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Book of Commandments all agree there is to be a Zion. Speaking about the Gentiles, Jesus said, **"But if they will repent, and harken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant, and be numbered among this remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance, and they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob; and also, as many of the house of Israel as shall come that they may build up a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem; and then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem."**

"And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst, and then shall the work of the Father commence, at that day even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people."

"And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor by flight; for I will go before them, saith the father, and I will be their rearward. And then shall that which is written come to pass."

Jesus commanded them to search and study the words of Isaiah and also that they should write the words which the Father had given unto Malachi in which He told them, **"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come."**

Jesus explained that in that day those who fear the Lord shall be His jewels and He shall spare them. Also, in that day, the wicked shall burn as stubble while the Son of righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings for those who love Jesus. He said that He will send Elijah, the prophet, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, and Elijah shall bring families together. Thus Jesus went on to explain all things from the beginning until the time that He should come in all His glory, even unto that day when the elements should melt and heaven and earth should pass away; even unto the day of the judgement and the resurrection.

". . . the New Jerusalem, which should come down out of heaven, and the holy sanctuary of the Lord. . . upon this land. . . they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old; and they shall no more be confounded, until the end come, when the earth shall pass away. And there shall be a new heaven and a new earth; and they shall be like unto the old, save the old have passed away, and all things have become new. . . blessed are they which dwell therein, for it is they whose garments are white through the blood of the lamb. . ."

Zion will be a perfect holy place where each man deals justly one with another, where everything is common. It will be the center place from which the Lord's governments shall go forth. Everyone living there will be totally and completely happy and filled with love and the Spirit of God.

References: Isaiah 2: 3; 59:20; Malachi 3: 1; I Nephi 3:187-189; III Nephi 7: 42-45; 9: 54-59, 70-90, 85-89; 10: 1-8; 11: 4-33; and Ether 6: 3-13

CHANGES MADE IN REVISION:

Lesson #

2—Changed title of chapter simply to “The Jaredites Forget”

5-- They were tossed up and down (was: to and fro upon) the waves.....

(also corrected the genealogy chart as there was an error according to scripture)

7-- He obeyed even though he did not want to do this. (added) Then Nephi clothed himself...

10-- It instructed Nephi to make a new wooden bow, arrows, sling and stones, (added) and go into the mountains to find food.

Bountiful meaning “much fruit” and a sea they named “Irreantum.”

(REPLACING: What a glorious feast for "desert weary" eyes to behold: beautiful green mountains gently sloping downward to the shoreline of a vast ocean!)

The travelers rejoiced exceedingly, with shouts of joy, and heartfelt prayers of praise unto God! (REMOVING: Even though they were very weary, they pressed onward)

11-- It was a lush and beautiful land, abounding in vegetation. (REMOVE: like a tropical garden)

After eight years in the wilderness they truly enjoyed the restfulness of this beautiful land

(REMOVING: valley)

13-- REMOVED: to the ships mast

14-- REMOVED: One morning, as usual, Lehi arose before dawn. He liked to have this time to himself to pray each day. Nephi joined him after a little while, and as they watched the sunrise, off on the horizon they caught the first glimpse of land!

REMOVED: Everyone was overjoyed! Eventually (added)

15—For about (added)...

They were led by God (added), (the power of His arm –REMOVED) into a land called...

They were (added) greeted joyfully.... (them—REMOVED)

One day, some of the people brought an engraved stone which they had found (added).

Stella (REMOVED). It was a pillar of stone with engraving upon it. (REMOVED)

Reference of Mosiah 5: 72-81 added.

17—About (added) four hundred (and twenty-six—REMOVED) years after Lehi left Jerusalem...

23—REMOVED the line: Alma established a church in the city; then he and Amulek went to Zarahemla. There they found peace and rest.

29—ADDED: **Behold, I come unto my own, to fulfill all things which I have made known unto the children of men, from the foundation of the world, and to do the will, both of the Father, and of the Son of the Father, because of me, and of the Son, because of my flesh. Behold the time is at hand, and this night shall the sign be given."**

32--part 2: Changed the first word of the paragraph from "He" to "Jesus".

35-- REMOVED: By the three hundred and twenty-fifth year, the church had totally rejected the beliefs of the true church of Christ. This is called the apostasy. Because of the apostasy, the Lord took away his disciples and his gifts of healing and other miracles..... (to the end of the lesson.)

REPLACED WITH: Three hundred eighty-four years after Christ's visit Mormon wrote on the plates. His people, the Nephites, had gathered unto the Land of Cumorah. Before Mormon died he directed his son Moroni, to write, this some 420 years after the visit of Jesus. He completed the plates, pouring out his heart to us to follow the Lord's commandments and ordinances. Before Moroni died (the last of his people), he sealed up the records, and hid them up again in the care of the Lord to preserve them until the time the Lord would again direct them to be brought forward and to His people.

ALSO NOTE: References have been re-checked and some changes have been made.

