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## American History Foreseen by Nephi

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**Abstract:** The remarkable vision of Nephi in 1 Nephi 13 speaks concerning the Savior's visit to America, Columbus' crossing the ocean, and the "plain and precious" truths of the gospel in the Book of Mormon that would come forth.

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# AMERICAN HISTORY FORESEEN BY NEPHI

(As recorded in 1 NEPHI 13)

Not long after Lehi's family left Jerusalem, Nephi received a remarkable vision in which he saw the important events of American history from his day to ours. As we study Nephi's vision received more than 2500 years ago, we can see how the Lord's purposes have been fulfilled and how His influence has helped guide world events.

Nephi saw events in the life and ministry of the Saviour. (1 Nephi 11:13-36.) In vision he also beheld a book which was to go forth from the Jews. This book, the Holy Bible, among other things would contain the covenants the Lord had made with Israel, as well as the teachings given through His servants, the prophets. Perhaps most important of all, this scripture would contain "the plainness of the gospel of the Lord"; wherefore these things would be "of great worth unto the Gentiles," as well as the remnant of Israel.

Nephi was also shown the work of Satan on earth. A "great and abominable church" would arise, and it would take away "many plain and precious things" out of the book which had come from the Jews. Nephi was shown that because of the Gospel truths which would be lost, "an exceeding great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them." Nevertheless, the Lord would not "suffer that the Gentiles shall forever remain in that awful state of blindness." Much of American history can be related directly to the Lord's great plan of blessing His people through restoring to them a full and unperverted understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Nephi learned through his vision that the Saviour not only would live among the Jews, but that He would also manifest Himself to Lehi's posterity in America, and they would write down the truths of the Gospel which He would teach them. Even after the people would dwindle in unbelief, their writings would be hidden and preserved by the power of God. Nephi saw that this people—a mixture of his own seed with that of his brethren—would not be utterly destroyed in spite of their wickedness, but that the Lord had a plan to bless them with the Gospel even as He would so bless the Gentiles.

In Nephi's account of his vision, the word "Gentiles" apparently had reference to Europeans. He saw that "many waters" separated these Gentiles from the seed of his own people, as well as from the hiding place of the records which would prove to be the key to unlock the spiritual blindness which had come upon the world. Nephi recorded that he beheld "a man among the Gentiles" and that "the Spirit of God . . . came down and wrought upon the man; and he went forth upon the many waters, even unto the seed of my brethren, who were in the promised land." Christopher Columbus wrote:

*From my first youth onward, I was a seaman, and have so continued until this day . . . The Lord was well disposed to my desire, and he bestowed upon me courage and understanding . . . Our Lord with provident hand unlocked my mind, sent me upon seas, and gave me fire for the deed. Those who heard of my enterprise called it foolish, mocked me, and laughed. But who can doubt but that the Holy Ghost inspired me?<sup>1</sup>*

As Nephi's vision continued, he saw that the Lord would inspire other Gentiles to cross the "many waters" to prosper in the promised land.

When the Spanish, French, and English missionaries first took the Bible to the Indians, this was a fulfillment of Nephi's vision. Yet this was only the beginning. The "plain and precious" truths still had to be restored. According to the Book of Mormon itself, that record was to be brought forth by the Gentiles.<sup>2</sup> Joseph Smith was descended of Gentiles who had crossed the "many waters" from Europe. It is appropriate that an early Latter-day Saint mission was to the Lamanites, to return to this people the record of their own fathers who once had known the fulness of the Gospel. (Doctrine and Covenants 20:9.) The importance of the coming forth of this second witness for Christ was not limited to the remnant of Lehi's seed alone. Nephi had seen that through the publication of the Book of Mormon to the world, the Lord would bring forth "much of my gospel, which shall be plain and precious." Nephi also saw "other books, which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles . . . unto the convincing of the Gentiles and the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the Jews" that the Bible is true, and above all shall make known ". . . to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved."

—Richard O. Cowan.

<sup>1</sup>(For Course 6, lesson of September 11, "The Book of Mormon—Another Sacred Record"; for Course 12, lessons of October 30 and November 6 and 13, "The Blessing of Joseph and Its Fulfillment in America," "Nephi Views Our Day," and "A Gentile Crosses Many Waters"; for Course 28, lessons of September 25 and October 2, "The Book of Mormon"; and of general interest.)

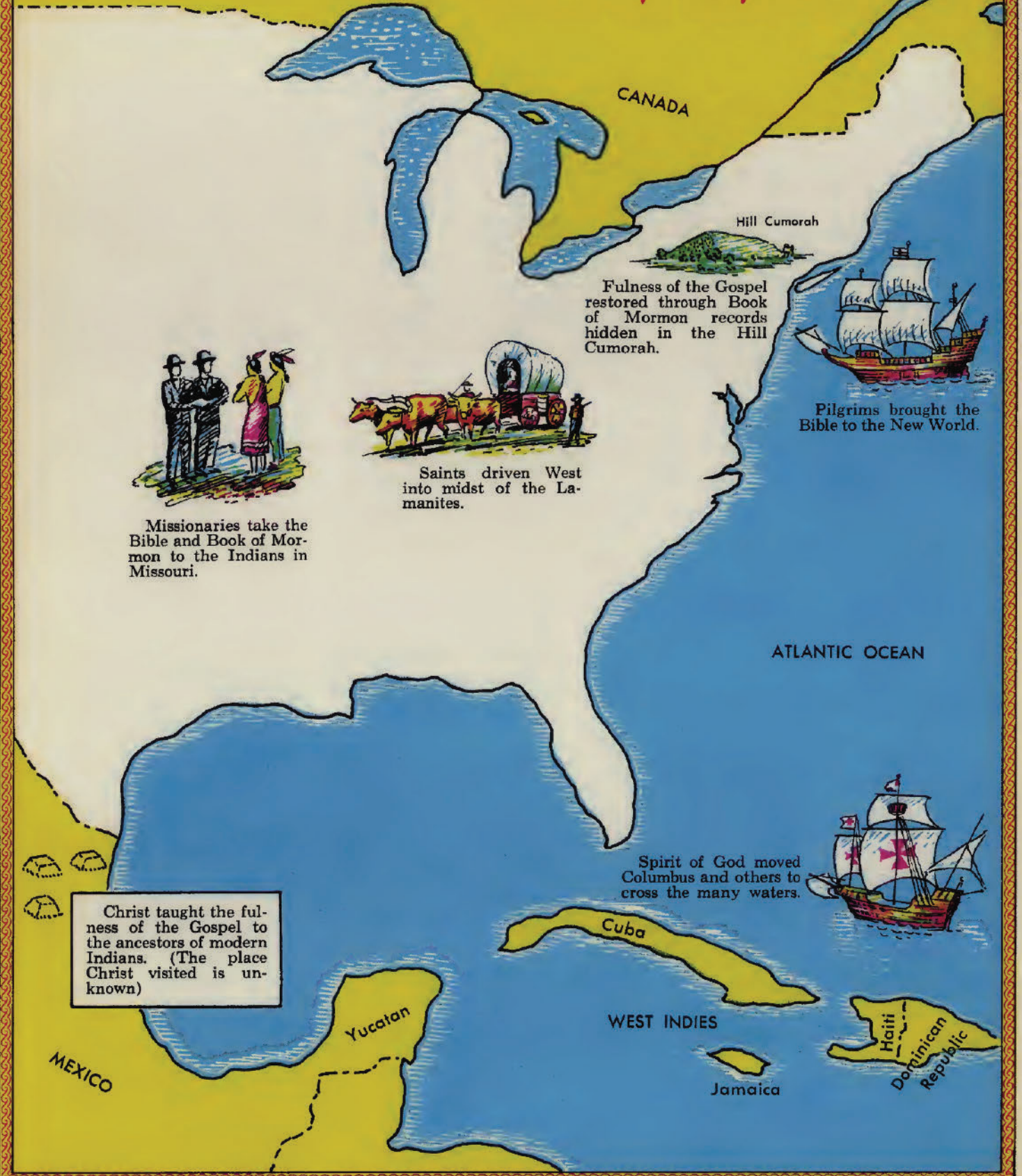
<sup>2</sup>Jacob Wasserman, *Columbus, Don Quixote of the Seas*, page 18, quoted by Daniel H. Ludlow, *Selected Reading and Reference Materials in Introduction to the Book of Mormon and Its Teachings*, page 23.

<sup>3</sup>See Book of Mormon Title Page.  
Library File Reference: AMERICA—PROPHECY.



# AMERICAN HISTORY -

## *Foreseen by Nephi*



CANADA

Hill Cumorah

Fulness of the Gospel restored through Book of Mormon records hidden in the Hill Cumorah.



Pilgrims brought the Bible to the New World.



Missionaries take the Bible and Book of Mormon to the Indians in Missouri.



Saints driven West into midst of the Lamanites.

ATLANTIC OCEAN



Spirit of God moved Columbus and others to cross the many waters.

Christ taught the fulness of the Gospel to the ancestors of modern Indians. (The place Christ visited is unknown)

Cuba

WEST INDIES

Jamaica

Haiti  
Dominican Republic

Yucatan

MEXICO